

*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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From the Archbishop's desk :

The time for reconciliation

In November this year, there will be an All-American Council of The Orthodox Church in America, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. This Council takes place just over one hundred years after the very first Sobor of our young Church, in eastern Pennsylvania. Those who read *The Orthodox Church* magazine will have been reading important historical articles, which contribute seriously to our preparation for the coming Sobor. I am grateful to God that these articles are being provided to us. Because we are North Americans, we often just go to such a meeting without any sense of its historical context. We tend to live only in the present.

As those who also will have been reading will understand, our Orthodox Church in America has been passing through a very difficult period in her history. Those who understand history will also understand that this is not, by any means, the first time our Church has faced what could be called "life-threatening injury." In fact, certain past events have been much worse, in their own context. Nevertheless, the Lord, who is the Head of the Church, the Head of the Body of Christ, has been keeping His flock together, and moving in the correct direction. In contrast, we, the sheep, have tended to behave very like sheep under an attack of some sort. We tend to become hysterical. We tend to scatter : we tend to distrust each other, and reject each other. Sometimes, we even butt, or bite each other in our fear.

In this state, it often takes us some time to come back to equilibrium, because it takes us a lot of time to remember to call on the Lord for help. As I frequently will be saying, we are much like the Apostle Peter, when he was walking towards the Lord upon the water, in the wind. When we look at the mess around, and forget to look intently towards the Lord, we invariably sink in the stormy waters. When we look towards the Lord, we can keep our equilibrium, and have confidence that even if

there is a messy situation, it will be resolved according to the Lord's will in the end.

I often find myself comparing our relatively small crisis with the many crises faced by St Patriarch Tikhon, and the Russian Orthodox Church, over the last hundred years. Those who kept their peace in Christ, even if they had to die, nevertheless enabled the Church to make progress in recovering herself, even before the fall of communism. So we all have our responsibility within the Church, when we are facing a difficulty. We must always remember to pray. We must always prayerfully support those who have the responsibility of leadership (this is how the Gospel, and the Apostle, teach us). I know very concretely that I, myself, am able to survive (even if it is marginally) as a bishop, because the Faithful do pray. I make a lot of mistakes. People pray. The Lord makes the best of it. It is really important that we not neglect intercessory prayer, but rather, that we constantly bring each other before the Lord with at least the prayer "Lord, have mercy." In doing so, we bring His love to action in each other, and in ourselves. Such prayer brings life.

Our current crisis has had mainly to do with administrative difficulties. Our structure, as an Autocephalous Church, does not yet properly support the way we should be living our ecclesiastical life. As a result, there is vagueness of responsibility, which allowed for big mistakes to be made, and at the same time, made it difficult for them to be seen until it was far too late. True, the Holy Synod of Bishops is always in the end responsible for everything — for good, or for bad. At the same time, both the Holy Synod of Bishops, and the Metropolitan Council (both of whose specific responsibilities need refinement in the Statute) depend upon the clear presentation of facts, for them to make proper decisions. Both bodies not only had unclear information presented (although it appeared to be clear), but they also lost the needed personal connection with each other. And when questions latterly began to be

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asked, or even accusations made, it was difficult for some time to comprehend what needed to be done. One must understand that, at the regular meetings of both the Holy Synod of Bishops, and of the Metropolitan Council, there has been a flood of information being presented through all kinds of reports. When such reports are seen for the first time when they are presented, and with very little time before the next report, few persons have the gift of spiritual, mental, and intellectual acuity to catch things that can be developing problems. Bishops are human beings too, and they have their limitations. In the end, we have not been able to account for the movement, and destination, of a rather large amount of money. For some of it, recent investigation seems to reveal a bit more.

The results of all these very painful events have been both good, and bad. They have been bad in that there developed a rupturing of trust, and of communication, between old friends, relatives, and co-workers ; there have been many phantastic accusations made by one person or another, and against others in authority, based on shadows of fact ; and there has been spread the poison of bitterness. As an extension, some began to express doubt that our Orthodox Church in America could survive. They have been positive in that it became clear, at least to an extent, what had happened ; that there has been a deep internal examination of our structure, and an extensive repair undertaken in our administration ; that there has been put into action repentance — a turning about, a righting of wrongs, a correction of direction. Some of our older, and experienced parishioners have said something to the effect that it is only money, after all, and we never did have much any way.

Still, there seems to be remaining forgotten, to some extent, the basic need to turn to Christ first in everything.

We have taken many concrete, and necessary, steps towards the reform and renewal of our administration. Yet seldom does one see, or hear reported from various meetings, evidence that we are very well remembering the Lord — that it is His Church, that He is in charge, that we are exercising our responsibility in harmony with, and in consultation with Him. It looks as if we are determined to repair things ourselves. Sometimes I hear that references to the Lord, and to the Gospel, and to the Way are not well accepted by participants in some meetings. We are in a phase of blaming someone else, perhaps anyone else. And the worst of it, from my perspective, has been shown in some dark, verbal attacks against our Metropolitan. This is completely against both the Gospel and our Tradition. It can be seen as a kind of spiritual patricide. As a result, we are still in a very dangerous stage of our recovery. Without direct, constant reference to the Lord, and without our deliberately and specifically referring to Him, we are lost. The work of the adversary, the divider, the father-of-lies, is evident amongst us, and it is crucial that we turn away from this, and allow the Lord to heal us.

That is why I am encouraged by the preparatory work being done towards the next All-American Council. The focus is reconciliation and forgiveness. This is absolutely the right way. Even if we were not in this painful situation, it would still be the right way. The Preconciliar Commission, under the leadership of Bishop Nikon of Boston, is working very hard to help us with this needed work. It appears that there will be offered, in preparation for the Sobor, some significant opportunities for improving communication among us all, and between the Bishops and the Faithful. Because I know of the work of this Commission, I also know that it is very much moved by consciousness of the Lord, and of the Gospel. I am encouraged, because if we follow through on this work of mutual forgiveness and reconciliation, our restructuring will be blessable by the Lord. If we follow through on this, we will be able more effectively to do what the Lord has given us to do here — to be the Church in, and for, North America. If we follow through on this, we will have hope at last of being the catalyst for the accomplishment of the complete reunification of the Orthodox Church in North America. We will be able to accomplish effectively our missionary work here, and to shine clearly with the light of the love of Jesus Christ.

So — if you can possibly attend this All American Council, be there. It cannot be like the more recent Councils, because of lack of resources. It can be effective, however, if we fast, pray, and act.

†Seraphim

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*Dedicated to the memory of St Tikhon,
Patriarch of Moscow (+1925),
Archbishop Arseny (Chahovtsov),
and other missionary labourers
of the Orthodox Church in America.*

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Bells for St Herman's

What does the modern commitment to recycling have to do with the ancient faith of the Orthodox Christian Church? Bells! On Sunday, April 6 the parish of St Herman of Alaska in Langley BC blessed their six newly-created bells, which began life as oxygen cylinders. Air Liquide donated the empty cylinders of high quality steel, which produces a beautiful sound.

Members and friends of St Herman's, Deacon Kurt Jordan, Themis Harmantzis, Dan Steenburgh, Gabe Friesen, Dave Pasivirta and Peter Durovic made up the team that created the bells. The process included cutting the bottoms of the cylinders and grinding them to the right size to produce the proper tone for each bell, then sand-blasting them clean and painting them. Now there are six less cylinders as potential land-fill and six more instruments to beautify the world with music and proclaim the glory of God.



Photo: D. Pasivirta

From l to r, Gabe Friesen, Dan Steenburgh and Deacon Kurt Jordan examine and work on the cylinders.

At the newly-built bell tower are, l to r, Thomas Wildemann, Fr Lawrence, Themis Harmantzis, and Stephen Quissy.



A short tower was built to house the bells at the front entrance of St Herman's temple building by Stephen Quissy and Thomas Wildemann.

In the rite of blessing, each bell was sprinkled with Holy Water, anointed and named. The bells are each named for different saints who brought the Orthodox Faith to North America. The largest and deepest-voiced is named for the parish's patron, St Herman. The others are: St Innocent, St Tikhon, St Peter the Aleut, St Juvenaly, and the smallest, highest-voiced for Blessed Matushka Olga.

After the blessing, musician Dan Steenburgh rang the bells for the first time, while the assembled faithful proceeded into the church for Liturgy. Dan learned how to ring the bells from the monks at Holy Transfiguration Monastery at Gibsons BC, who were the first to use recycled cylinders for bells, followed by All Saints parish in Victoria. St Herman's bells make the third set, so it appears that this is now a firmly established tradition on the west coast! — Matushka Donna Farley, St Herman's, Langley

A gentle reminder by example:

Loving communities remember their elderly!

This past March 29th I visited two members of our Sobor's Sisterhood's old guard: Mary Shtym and Martha Shaborda.

Since last summer, Mary Shtym, weakened by her age and ailments, had to vacate her apartment and move into a senior citizens' home in Lasalle (suburb of Montreal). She was recently joined by her longtime friend and team member from Sts Peter and Paul's Sisterhood, Martha Shaborda who, weakened by surgery she underwent on Christmas Day 2007 (25 December), had to rapidly move into a home as well. Initially, she found a place on West Island. But she found it rather lonely, far from her friends and acquaintances who would visit rarely, owing to the long travel distance. Fortunately, Mrs

Shaborda managed to get an apartment in the same building where Mrs Shtym lives.

Now the two friends spend time lunching together, and reminiscing about yesteryears. Still, this is a difficult time for Mrs Shaborda, since Mrs Shtym's memory is failing her. So, each week Martha gives a call to her other close friend from the Sisterhood, Nelly Boiko. Nelly is the third member of the so-called "three-some" who, over the course of several years, worked tirelessly in support of Sts Peter and Paul parish by treating parishioners to Sunday coffee with their wonderful pirozhkis, sandwiches and desserts. Last spring, Nelly

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... Archdiocesan community life ...

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also had to sell her home and move in with her daughter in Nova Scotia, because she was no longer able to care for herself. I called her not long ago. She is very happy in her new home, surrounded by people who love her and take good care of her. Thank God.



*From l to r,
Martha
Shaborda,
Nelly
Boichuk, and
Mary Shtym,
at the Sobor
in 2006.*

Hamilton parish launches online Aleut 'Life of St George'

The parish of All Saints of North America in Hamilton, Ontario is pleased to announce the electronic release of its 38th Alaskan Orthodox electronic publication, "The Life of St George" in the Aleut (Unangan) language.

"This was an exceedingly rare manuscript dating from 1868, of which we think only three copies are known to exist. Two copies are in Alaskan academic institutions, and the third copy is resting in our basement!" says the parish's rector, Fr Geoffrey Korz.

"The saints unite us. It is incredible to see the love and veneration of St George by the Aleut people, as evidenced by their translation of his life. This is another chapter in the life of St George, whose veneration is already well-known among the English, Russian, Arab, and Georgian Orthodox peoples, among many others. May his prayers join together with our North American saints for the help and salvation of the Church in this land."

This rare manuscript was authored by Anthony Ugaril'nikov in 1868 on the island of St George in the Pribilof Islands, located in the Bering Sea, roughly 500 miles off the coast of Siberia.

"This text marks the 38th publication of historic Alaskan Orthodox materials by our parish since the project began in May 2005. It was completed in time for the celebration of St George's Feast day on April 23 / May 6. Many thanks are due to the Alaska Native Language Center at the University of Alaska Fairbanks for their great efforts in providing a copy of the manuscript 'Life of St George.'"

The Aleut-language "Life of St. George" is available on-line at: <http://www.asna.ca/alaska/aleut/life-st-george.pdf>

And so goes life. Not long ago, these three wonderful ladies were amongst us. Now they, as many others, are frail, weakened by age, and no longer have the strength to come to church and pray with us. But they do not give up, as I witnessed firsthand. They are hanging in, and are only waiting for someone to visit, to sit down with them, have a chat, and show them some love and courtesy. And they are so happy and full of joy when someone does show up. Well, if they cannot come to us, we can certainly go to them.

If you have the desire to help your elderly parish members, but do not know how to go about it, please turn to your parish priest. He will have a list of parishioners who are in need of care and attention, and he will give you the proper instructions. May God bless you in this endeavour! — *Michael Woinowsky-Krieger, Sts Peter and Paul, Montreal*

Monastic community to be site Of Orthodox peace conference

The Monastery of All Saints of North America will be the site on 13 - 14 September 2008 of a conference entitled "War and Peace in the Post-human Era." The Canadian Chapter of the Orthodox Peace Fellowship will be a co-host of this major symposium. The presentations will focus on how, currently, both war and peace are conducted in ways that impinge upon our humanity. Subjects will range from biomorphic micro chip implants to the negation of humanity in the ecological crisis.

Speakers will include noted ecologist and scientist Dr Timothy Cooper, head of the department of physics at Fraser Valley University College ; Canadian social philosopher David J. Goa, director of the Chester Ronning Centre for the Study of Religion and Civil Society (University of Alberta) ; Dr Scott Fast, professor of political science and sociology ; Dr Ronald Dart, professor of religion and political history ; and Archbishop Lazar (Puhalo), who is the Abbot of the Monastery, Secretary of the Canadian Chapter of the Orthodox Peace Fellowship, and a noted theologian.

The Symposium will be held at the Canadian Orthodox Monastery of All Saints of North America (OCA), in Dewdney, BC (near Vancouver). For more information, contact the Canadian Secretary of the Orthodox Peace Fellowship, Archbishop Lazar (Puhalo), at synaxis@orthodoxcanada.org or telephone 604 826-9336.

The event is also co-hosted by the Canadian Centre for Orthodox Christian Biblical and Patristic Studies (OCA).

The registration fee is \$50 (includes breakfast, lunch and supper).

Adventures in prosphora!

I awake to see the clock shining a bright 5:47 am. It is Saturday morning, and despite the fact that I don't particularly enjoy being up before the sun *all* the time, today it's worth it : I'm going to make prosphora! I have a very busy day ahead of me, and this is the only time available. Since my regular morning schedule wakes me at 4:00 am, quarter to six really isn't all that early after all.

While my husband remains a wanderer in Dreamland, I creep into the kitchen and coax the overhead lights to come on. In their usual habit, they refuse, and so I must make do with the little lights around the kitchen to help illumine my own journey into the wonderful world of bread-making. I've set a little diptych up on the edge of the kneading-board to remind me what this bread is for, and to motivate my best efforts. Everything is laid out and waiting. With a little prayer and quick crossing of myself, I begin the adventure.

As I blend together the velvety mixture, I can feel the soft dough forming in my hands. It is a wonderful sensation between my fingers! I roll the dough out onto the kneading-board and begin the 10-minute upper-body workout that is involved in a task like this. While my triceps and deltoids scream for oxygen, I repeat the Jesus prayer in my head, trying to numb the increasing pain. "It's all for good," I remind myself. "and with practice, it'll go away . . . I'm certain of it!" After the allotted time, the dough still feels a little strange—not so pliable and elastic as I had anticipated it to be. But since this is my first time, I am not sure what to expect, and lay my newly created dough-ball in a floured bowl to rise. I set the timer and sit down with a book to await the next stage.

After an hour, the chiming timer beckons me back to check on the dough and evaluate its progress : hmm....! A quick mental calculation tells me that it doesn't look twice the original size, but then I can't remember exactly what the original size was! Hoping against hope that the recipe is right and I am not fooling myself, I throw a fist into the mildly deformed, swollen shape of what was once a perfectly round dough-ball, and watch it deflate. Okay, so that means it *must* have at least risen a little bit, and that's promising. Again, the timer is set, the bowl is placed back on the warm oven-top, and I return to my book for the next waiting period.

Once more, the timer rings, calling me away from the elaborate world of David Copperfield and reminding me that there are loaves to be made! As I peek under the towel, the sight that catches my eyes causes my heart to sink: I don't think it's risen at all this time! What am I doing wrong?! Remembering back to when Andrea showed me how to make the beginner's dough, I can envision the perfectly rounded

top of her dough-mound, and the lovely texture it boasted. My dough looks like a lump of flesh which has sat in the bath too long and become wrinkled beyond recognition, swollen incongruently where the skin has not folded. What's more, when the dough is pulled away, it seems as though the bowl in which it had been nesting had become much too warm, beginning to bake the dough in it. I was now beginning to worry.

The clock on the stove announces 8:30 am. We will have to get going soon, and there simply isn't time to prepare a new batch. Crossing myself again and pleading for help with my eyes at the faces looking back at me from the diptych, I begin to tear away at the dough to make the loaves. Each one, as my inexperienced hands try to form it, turns out worse than the previous. Fretfulness begins to pick at my heart as I wonder "will they sort themselves out in the oven? Will they rise to suitable heights in the blasting heat to which they are destined?"

With hope fluttering around in my spirit, I press the prosphora stamp into each loaf, mark the Cross, and cast them into the blazing oven. I cannot help but pace the length of the kitchen while they bake, nervous for how they may turn out, and what I will do if they are unacceptable! I wait. And wait some more. Twenty minutes never felt so long! Finally the 'brrrring!' of the buzzer shakes me from my reveries, and I fly to the oven only to open it and find . . .

. . . that the heat has definitely filled the loaves, making them bigger, but has done nothing to amend their misshapened forms. I utter a small whimper as I pull the tray out, "Ooooooh . . ." By this time my husband has relinquished his Dreamland wanderings and joined me in the kitchen. "What's up?" he asks cheerfully. I direct his gaze to the collection of loaves which have just been released from their fiery prison. While his attitude is more positive than my own, he recognizes the oddities that they have become and suggests, "Maybe Father won't even have a chance to look at them?" And it is too late to make another batch. I will just have to hope . . .

The hunchback-loaves are packed into the car as we head out for the day, their warm, home-made aroma filling the cavity of our vehicle. More and more I am wishing that there were more hours in the day. More and more I play out all the different options available to present to the priest in the event of his dissatisfaction with my failed attempt to make *pretty* prosphora loaves. In the end, he chuckles kindly at my story and accepts them graciously, and I am reminded that God does take the humble things of the world and fills them with his Grace to make them wonderful. And for that, I am thankful! — *Meike (Macrina) Hall, St Herman of Alaska, Langley BC*



Foremost Canadian iconographer Reposes in Edmonton

Heinrich (Heiko) Schlieper, who was born on 25 May 1931, reposed in the Lord in Edmonton on 13 April 2008. His funeral was held at St Herman of Alaska's Sobor on April 17. He is survived by his wife Anne, sons Paul and Mark, daughter-in-law Anna, grandson Luke, his nieces and nephews, and many friends in Edmonton, Ottawa and Montreal.

He was Canada's foremost iconographer. St George the Victory Bearer Ukrainian Catholic Church in Edmonton is his grand work. His panel icons are in museum and private collections around the world and have been featured in a number of exhibitions including "Anno Domini : Jesus throughout the Centuries" in 2000. The major collection of his work is held in the H C Schlieper Museum of Iconography at All Saints Monastery in Dewdney BC.

All Saints Monastery has recently published *The Life of the Virgin Mary, Theotokos : The Schlieper Iconographic Handbook of Icons*. (See p. 10 of this issue



Heiko Schlieper, photographed on March 16 in Edmonton at the celebration of the launching of his iconographic handbook

of the *Canadian Orthodox Messenger* for a brief review of this work by David J. Goa.) Just a month prior to the iconographer's repose, his family, friends, and colleagues gathered with him in Edmonton to celebrate the publication of this work

For those who might like to memorize Heiko in a tangible way, contributions in his memory may be made to the H.C Schlieper Museum, c/o All Saints of North America Monastery, Dewdney BC V0M 1H0.

Memory eternal!

Pillar of Narol MB church Reposes at 87

Reader John Barchyn, lifetime member of St Nicholas Church in Narol MB, reposed in the Lord on 23 July 2007 at the age of 87. John was predeceased by his parents, Wasyl and Magdalene, who were among the founders of the parish. Remembering him are his wife Sophie, son Derek, daughter Marlene (Merv), and grandsons Jonathon and Anthony who are altar servers at St Nicholas, as well as numerous nieces and nephews.



Reader John Barchyn

John was the last of a family of six. He was able to remember that when he was a youngster, his mother kept the teapot filled for the saintly Archbishop Arseny as he chatted with the family at the kitchen table on the eve of a feast or a Sunday. John lived his entire life where he was born on the family farm, just north of St Nicholas Church. He and Sophie Semenchuk, whom he married in 1956, raised their children there. Except for a short stint in the army during the Second World War, John was a market gardener well known at local markets for his high quality zucchini, cucumbers, potatoes, onions, peas, and tomatoes, all of which were hand picked. John always maintained his fields well ; weeds were not acceptable. He was also the Secretary-Treasurer for Grower's Co-op from 1944 to 1982, until development in the area forced its closure.

John loved to go dancing with Sophie. Dance halls were everywhere in earlier days. He had good shoes just for dancing. He was best man at many weddings. Many pictures from these weddings are to be found in the Barchyn house. John also became godfather to many. He had a wonderful sense of humour, loved to laugh, loved to hear a funny story, and loved to tell one. During hard times, the family saw little if any money. But they were able to grow or raise what they needed and the family were always known for their hospitality, no matter how hard the times.

John was always an active member of St Nicholas Orthodox Church in Narol. He was a reader and sang in

the choir. Produce grown by him arrived at Church for blessing at the summer feasts of Transfiguration and Dormition. At Thanksgiving, John provided a “horn of plenty” for the church. He saw the first temple destroyed by fire in the early fifties, and helped rebuild the present one. He was also there to clean the church, maintain the building and property, and blow snow in the winter. He saw and participated in the reconstruction of recent years, including a basement, which holds a kitchen and a hall. An elevator was installed in June of 2007, and he was one of the first to try it out but made use of it only a few times prior to his repose. John was a big supporter of the elevator because of his own declining health and also for many others who would benefit.

Due to the anticipated numbers of people for the memorial and funeral services, these were held in a Winnipeg funeral home, but John’s relics were brought into the church for a Panikhida prior to burial in the church cemetery where so many of his family are buried and which he helped tend lovingly over many years.

An important lesson his children learned from him was always to be truthful and honest, and always to be fair in their dealings with others.

Memory Eternal! Vichnaya Pamyat!

— Fr Robert Kennaugh, Dean of Manitoba/Saskatchewan

Antiochian pilgrims experience OCA Annunciation Hermitage

It is an early Monday morning in November, and there is a chill in the air as a small group of men pack their SUV with supplies for their trip. An onlooker might think they are a hunting or a fishing party, but in truth they are after nothing this world has to offer—they are on a spiritual pilgrimage. They are the men of Sts Peter and Paul Antiochian Orthodox Church in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, and they are headed to the Holy Lands of Eastern Canada—New Germany, Nova Scotia—the locale of the Maritimes’ first and only Orthodox (OCA) monastery. They are going to see Fr Roman and Fr Cassian, the monks of the Hermitage of the Holy Annunciation, to hold their annual men’s retreat. It will still be an hour before the sun breaks the eastern horizon. They bow their heads and cross themselves as their priest prays for safe passage, then they get into the SUV and set out on their five-hour drive.

Everyone is excited as they turn off the secluded dirt road and start up the long driveway to the hermitage. For most of the men, it is not their first time on this annual retreat, and as they are greeted warmly by Fr

Roman and Fr Cassian, they feel a sense that their spiritual pilgrimage has begun. First they go to the Chapel, to thank God for their safe passage and to venerate the many icons, most of which were written by the Hieromonk (“Monk-priest”) Roman. Then there is lunch and unpacking.



Fr Roman, blessing loaves, with Fr Cassian in the background.

After all the pilgrims are settled in their cells, they are gathered into the common room, and Fr Roman sets out the rules of the monastery. “You are here to live like the monks for a few day,” Fr Roman begins as he tells them just what that entails. Fr Cassian then sets everyone up with an obedience—one will wash the dishes, one will dry, one will sweep the floors, while another will clean the bathrooms, and so forth. Then it is time for Vespers followed by a light meal and the Great Silence. One of the new comers will state after his first full day, “Where do they get the strength to pray so long!”

The topic of the retreat is Christian renunciation and detachment, and Fr Roman leads the pilgrims daily through discussions and talks. The highlight of the retreat, however, is the Feast of St John Chrysostom, of whom the hermitage has a Holy Relic. Faithful Orthodox from across the Maritimes arrive in the wee hours of the still night for the morning Divine Liturgy and the veneration of the Holy Relics of St John Chrysostom.

The praying begins at 5:30 am with the Rev Fr. Roman (the Elder of the Hermitage), the Very Rev Fr Maximos Saikali (Rector of St Anthony’s Orthodox Church of Halifax), and the Rev Fr Stephen Allen (Sts Peter and Paul Orthodox Church of Charlottetown, PEI) concelebrating. The services are not finished until 11:00 am. Strangely enough, even after five and a half hours of the faithful’s listening to the beautiful chanting of Fr Cassian in the traditional Znamenny tones, no one is in a hurry to leave the small chapel where heaven and earth

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were just joined. Even the Rev Fr Daniel (of St Mina's Coptic Orthodox of Halifax), who was in attendance, said "really, I don't know if I was on earth anymore."

Now it is Thursday afternoon and once again the men of Sts Peter and Paul Antiochian Orthodox Church



Shown from l to r are Fr Stephen, Fr Maximos, Fr Roman, and Fr David.

of Charlottetown are packing their SUV. The Annual retreat is over for yet another year—and all agree that they will not miss next year's, "God willing." So, with a sweet sadness, they all receive Fr Roman's blessing and ask for both his and Fr Cassian's prayers. They set off back to the world, but taking a little piece of heaven with them. — Fr Stephen Allen, Sts Peter and Paul Antiochian Orthodox Church, Charlottetown PEI

Montreal Orthodox women Hold conference for 17th year

On Saturday, March 1st, over eighty people participated in a pre-lenten conference sponsored by the Orthodox Christian Women of Montreal. This was the 17th conference sponsored by the OCW. Although in the early years the participants were mainly women, over time more and more men have been attending since the topics addressed are of interest to all. The conference is truly pan-Orthodox with participants from all the Orthodox churches in the area. Some travel quite a distance, and this year five women drove from Vermont through a snow storm for three hours to attend.

The speaker this year was Mother Christophora, Abbess of Holy Transfiguration Monastery in Ellwood



Mother Christophora, Abbess of Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Ellwood City PA.

City PA. Her topic was "The Joy of Repentance and the Healing of Confession." Using examples from Scripture and the Holy Fathers, Mother Christophora was able to explain not only why the sacrament of confession is so important in our lives, but as well was able to lighten the apprehension so often felt when one goes to confession.

As attested to by the participants, her message made its mark:

"Mother Christophora took away the fear of going to confession"

"I now can understand why confession is healing."

"For me today's talks were eye-openers leading to a change in my life."

"Today's messages went straight to the heart. I witnessed true love delivered."

The day ended with Great Vespers as a grateful group gave thanks for having had the opportunity to spend a day together in fellowship and in learning more about our faith.

You can order the three-CD set of the day's conference for \$35. Please send your inquiries to Masha Tkachuk at masha@pusinka.com

Asking a question of Mother Christophora is Matushka Julianna Schmemann, who was the OCW's first guest speaker at its founding 17 years ago.



Orthodox women of the west Hold 7th annual retreat

Yet another blessing was our 7th Orthodox Woman's Retreat held at the Entheos Retreat and Conference Centre, 18 km west of Calgary city limits. We were thankful for the priests representing the different church families of Calgary who served throughout the weekend—Fr Michael Lupu from St Mary's Romanian Orthodox Church, Fr Taras Krochak from St Vladimir's Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Fr Ibrahim Chahoud from the Antiochian Orthodox Church of the Annunciation and by Fr Richard Rene from Holy Martyr Peter the Aleut Orthodox Church.

Once again we were all warmly welcomed by Shirley Din, one of the four coordinators. The other coordinators, Myra Reinheimer, Ghada Ziadeh, and Joan Popowich, also in their own personable ways, made all of us feel very much at home. Participants came from as far west as BC, right across the prairie provinces, and from as far east as Ontario. In all, eighty women attended this year!

Featured speaker was Khoureiya Maggie Hock from Omaha, Nebraska, who arrived with excellent credentials. Director of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese Department of Marriage and Parish Family Ministries—specializing in crisis and trauma therapy, individual, marital, parenting group and corporate dynamics—Kh Maggie counsels from an Orthodox Christian perspective. She is also a priest's wife and the mother of five. Her topic for the retreat was "The Importance of Forgiveness in Spiritual Growth: Spiritual Healing through Forgiveness."



The retreatants.

She began the retreat by sharing with us how crucial the understanding of the practice of forgiveness is, as shown in the Scriptures and the Church Fathers. As we began to look at what forgiveness actually is, she led us in reflecting on what she sees as its four stages: (1) hurt, (2) hate, (3) healing, and finally, (4) harmony.

Practical steps that one can take in moving toward forgiveness was her next focus, as she led us to specific exercises which would help in achieving it. The sessions ended with our realizing without any doubt that forgiveness is truly the gate to the path of salvation. We need only to think on The Lord's Prayer to realize how conditional forgiveness is. Receiving forgiveness from God, but only if combined with our forgiving others, leads to our salvation. Forgiveness opens the door to healing. It is love's antidote to pain.

During this retreat, it was most evident that we were not "going to a retreat" but that we were "going to retreat," as we were given a number of quiet times to reflect on what had been presented. Forgiveness has many faces. As Kh Maggie clearly emphasized, forgiveness is not easily cultivated, especially where we have been deeply wounded by another person and our human dignity has been affronted. Forgiveness is not a simple feat. Ultimately, however, it is choosing to forgive that allows us to live in peace, even as it is essential to our salvation.

Once again we left our annual retreat thankful for the blessing of being able to come together as a community of sisters each year. We are already looking forward to next year, when we can retreat once more!

"Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you." Ephesians 4:32 — *Marina Mantle, St Peter the Aleut, Calgary AB*

Pastoral Notes

On 11 February 08, **Priest Constantine Katsilas** was assigned Rector of the Church of St John the Divine in Windsor ON.

On 27 February 08, **Archpriest Waldemar J Kuchta** was released from the Archdiocese of Canada to the Omophor of Metropolitan Herman, for transfer.

On 27 February 08, **Deacon Alexander Tefft** was released from the Archdiocese of Canada to the Omophor of Metropolitan Herman, for transfer.

On 9 March 08, **Priest James Griggs**, retaining his other duties, was recalled from his service in the Greek Orthodox Church in Ottawa, and was assigned as Third Priest at the Cathedral of the Annunciation in Ottawa.

On 27 February 08, **Hierodeacon Theodosios (Bourjeily)** was received into The Orthodox Church in America, transferred to the Archdiocese of Canada, and attached to the Communauté Monastique de St-Séraphim de Sarov in Rawdon. He assists primarily at the parish of St-Benoît de Nursie in Montréal.

On 18 April 08, **Priest Walter Smith**, retaining all his other responsibilities, was released from his duties as Rector of Holy Trinity Church, Kayville SK.

From 18 April 08, the Church of the Holy Trinity in Kayville SK is to be served as needed by Deanery Clergy.

H.C. Schlieper, *The Life of the Virgin Mary, Theotokos : The Schlieper Iconographic Handbook of Icons.*



Dewdney BC: Synaxis Press, 2008. Paperback with a colour reproduction of H.C. Schlieper's The Annunciation, 76 black and white drawings, and 5 colour reproductions of original icons. \$30.00.

[www.synaxispress.org]

On the 16th of March 2008, the Feast of the Triumph of the Icons, the family, friends and colleagues of Heiko Schlieper, who would repose in less than a month, gathered with him in Edmonton to celebrate the publication of *The Schlieper Handbook of Orthodox Iconography*. It was appropriate for Synaxis Press to undertake the publishing of the multi-volume *Handbook*, because several years ago the H C Schlieper Museum of Icons and Iconography was established at the monastery of All Saints of North America, which is also the location of Synaxis Press. A body of Heiko's icons is the core of the Museum at the monastery, along with a large suite of drawings and other memorabilia associated with the remarkable contribution of Canada's foremost Orthodox iconographer, Heiko Schlieper.

The Life of the Virgin Mary, Theotokos has an introductory essay by Heiko in which he writes of his approach to iconography, as well as of the prototypes that have informed his work over the last thirty years. The book then unfolds some 76 lovely drawings from the "Offering of Joachim and Anna" through to "Thomas Displaying the Virgin's Sash." Each drawing is accompanied by an explanatory note on the icon and on the prototype for Heiko's drawing.

Great iconographers and schools of iconography have produced handbooks such as this over the last thousand years, and no doubt before that as well. Some readers may be familiar with *An Iconographer's Patternbook : The Stroganov Tradition*. The first English translation of this classic work of line drawings of figures, icons, and scenes of Russian icon-writing was published in 1992. The original work was published following the Council of the Hundred Chapters in 1552. It became a new standard for Russian iconography, endeavoring to free it from its colonization by Western holy painting.

Some may also know *An Icon Painters Notebook: The Bolshakov Editon*, a 19th century book and *The Painter's Manual of Dionysius of Fourna* from the 17th century. None of these works were known in North America when Heiko began writing icons. His *The Life of the Virgin Mary, Theotokos* takes its place in a prestigious line

of contributions made by those rare skilled workers in the vineyard of the Ecclesia, giving future generations opportunities to begin within the canonical tradition when they set out to serve the church through the writing of icons. This was an opportunity Schlieper did not have when he began his study of the tradition back in the 1960s. The process open to him was one of reconstruction. Iconography was deeply fractured through a series of events from the 17th through the 20th century. In North America the immigration process exacerbated these fractures.

This work, as well as the forthcoming *The Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, the 2nd volume in the series, provides a foundation for a new generation of iconographers at this important moment in the history of the Orthodox Church. Orthodox iconography has been given a canonical benchmark with this work, the first complete set of drawings of the life of the Theotokos. It ought to be in every parish library and close at hand for every iconographer seeking to serve the life of the Church. — *David J Goa*

Psautier liturgique orthodoxe. Traduction, introduction et notes par la moniale Anastasia (Delphine Weulersse).



Préface par Père Boris Bobrinsky. Paris: Editions du Cerf, 2007. 363 pages. (20 Euros pour l'édition brochée.)

[www.editionsducerf.fr]

Cette traduction en français du Psautier orthodoxe de la Septante se veut à l'usage de la liturgie et de la prière personnelle. L'introduction souligne que cette traduction est une interprétation personnelle enracinée dans la prière. Mère Anastasia, moniale au Monastère Notre-Dame de Toute-Protection à Bussy-en-Othe, confesse que la prière des psaumes a transformé sa vie. "Un véritable coup de foudre... je suis tombée comme une météorite au beau milieu du dialogue d'amour entre Dieu et David" (p.14). "Le témoignage de David a provoqué en moi une véritable révolution. Il a déverrouillé mon coeur" (p.17). Dès lors, sa prière ne cessera d'adhérer à celle des psaumes où elle trouve un "discours amoureux [qui] se glisse partout, tantôt léger comme le murmure d'un ruisseau sous la neige, tantôt impétueux comme un torrent" (p.15). Dans la douleur, elle y trouvera une alliance de paix avec la vie et la mort.

On oublie souvent que la rumination des psaumes, pour reprendre le vocabulaire des Pères, est prière de l'Eglise et conduit à une authentique Vie en Christ. Le mouvement même de toute vie spirituelle est celui du Psautier, explique la traductrice: "chute progressive, immobilité et relèvement instantané" (p.29). L'introduction, qui a l'allure d'un journal intime, est une illustration de la manière de prier avec les psaumes. "En répétant les mots

qui étaient ceux d'un autre, j'ai compris qu'ils recouvraient mes propres pensées. Et peu à peu, je me suis laissée aller à parler en mon nom propre" (p.18). C'est ainsi que Mère Anastasia en vint à faire sa propre traduction. "Mon interprétation des psaumes est donc née d'un besoin intérieur, d'un désir profond de dire les psaumes avec les mots de mon âme.... Plus que l'aboutissement d'un labeur intellectuel autour des psaumes, elle est le fruit presque naturel d'une fréquentation amoureuse, et quotidienne de la parole prophétique" (p.20).

La traductrice préfère le terme d'"interprétation" à celui de "traduction". Cela ne veut pas dire pour autant que la traduction ne reste pas fidèle au texte. Toutefois, pour des passages qui ouvrent à une pluralité de sens, il arrive qu'une interprétation s'impose par les choix linguistiques, la recherche poétique et la volonté de transcrire les germinations d'un coeur priant. Il arrive aussi, bien que rarement, que la traduction s'écarte du texte et de ses sens reçus, ce qui est regrettable. Toute prière est en effet théologie en acte; et à partir du moment où un texte de prières est publié, il devient véhicule de la prière des autres qu'il doit introduire aux mots de la révélation aussi exactement que possible.

Citons quelques exemples. (1) Ps 50,3 : *eleos*, miséricorde ou pitié, est traduit par "bonté." (2) Ps 50,3-4: *anomema*, transgressions, et *anomias*, iniquité ou injustice, par "méchanceté." (3) Ps 72,7 : *adikia*, injustice, par "hypocrisie." (4) Ps 50,15 : *asebeis*, les impies, les sans-dieu, les sacrilèges, par "les méchants," qui n'est pas synonyme même si parfois les prophètes assimilent les uns aux autres. (5) Ps 72,15 : "il vivra" devient "il sera la vie," ce qui est christologique mais n'est pas ce que dit le texte. (6) Ps 38, 3 : "j'ai gardé le silence, par bonne conscience." Littéralement : "je me suis abstenu de parler, même de bonnes choses." Il s'agit de se taire, même pour dire une bonne chose, lorsqu'on est en présence d'ennemis. Il n'est nulle part question de "bonne conscience." (7) Ps 62,9: "Mon âme est blottie contre Toi, Tu me tiens dans tes bras." L'image est biblique mais altère le sens du verset et fait perdre le sens théologique. Le verbe *kollao* n'a pas le sens de protection ("être blottie") mais celui de suivre, de coller à, ou d'adhésion (Vulgate: *adherere*) qui a pris dans la tradition un sens spirituel d'attachement et d'imitation. Il en est de même pour la seconde partie du verset. Il s'agit de "la Droite" de Dieu qui renvoie à la puissance divine et au Christ. Le Christ reçoit l'Eglise au sens où il meurt pour nos péchés (Cassiodorus); ou, après le travail fourni par l'homme pour s'attacher à Dieu par l'amour, le Christ s'empare de l'Eglise dans sa providence (Théodoret de Cyr). Ce que Père Placide Deseille rend par "Ta droite m'a saisi," donnant l'image d'un amour divin auquel on ne peut résister.

Ces critiques ne diminuent en rien les qualités de cette traduction. Le style poétique nourrira ceux qui savent savourer la Parole de Dieu, et il donnera soif à ceux qui n'ont pas soif. Il n'est pas possible ici d'en rendre compte

en détail. En voici simplement trois exemples: "Quand vous vous reposez au milieu des pacages, l'aile de la colombe se revêt d'argent, et ses rémiges prennent le pâle éclat de l'or" (Ps. 67,14). "La charrerie de Dieu, myriade de myriade, milliers à profusion" (Ps. 67,18). Le Seigneur "retourne ma vie" pour exprimer la conversion du coeur (Ps. 22,3).

Il faut regretter que les Odes bibliques manquent; mais par ailleurs, après chaque cathisme, se trouvent les prières à dire pour la récitation du Psautier en privé. On signalera que dans chaque psaume les versets utilisés dans le Nouveau Testament et dans les textes liturgiques sont imprimés dans des couleurs différentes. Mère Anastasia nous fait ainsi découvrir "à quel point les Psaumes, les Évangiles et l'Office divin se placent dans un rapport de consubstantialité. Chacun de ces ensembles contient les deux autres et renvoie aux deux autres dans un perpétuel mouvement de don et de réception" (p.21). Il reste à faire mention des annexes: répartition des psaumes aux offices, glossaire des termes liturgiques, table des titres des psaumes, bibliographie des éditions du Psautier. Il y est rappelé que le Psautier de la Septante, qui est celui du Nouveau Testament et des Pères, est le seul Psautier canonique de l'Eglise. Bien plus qu'une traduction technique de l'hébreu, il s'agit d'une traduction inspirée par le Saint Esprit en fonction des progrès de la révélation au peuple de l'Ancienne Alliance.

On recommande vivement l'usage de ce Psautier et la lecture de l'introduction, non seulement aux francophones mais aussi aux allophones. A Mère Anastasia qui a quitté la vie présente, Mémoire éternelle! — *Hieromoine Romain*

Chris Armstrong, "The Future lies in the Past : Why Evangelicals are connecting with the early church as they move into the 21st century," in *Christianity Today* : February 2008, Vol 52, No 2, pp. 22 - 29.



[www.christianitytoday.com]

The cover article of a recent issue of *Christianity Today*, a prominent Protestant magazine, discusses a growing trend among evangelical Protestants to incorporate the tradition, liturgy, and wisdom of monastics and Church Fathers into their worship experiences—both individually and corporally. The article acknowledges that there is a gap in Protestant worship, and claims that rediscovering the early church can help fill this gap.

The author is thoroughly Protestant in his discussion by maintaining a very strong opinion that one does not

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need to convert (or, “de-convert” as the author puts it, displaying an obvious bias) to either the Roman Catholic or Orthodox traditions, even though some others have chosen to do so. (He even mentions Fr Peter Gilquist and the Evangelical Orthodox Christian movement.) Rather, he encourages readers to enrich their worship experiences by selecting aspects of tradition that appeal to them. It seems that his vision is that of a sort of spiritual buffet, where one can remain basically Protestant while choosing liturgical garnishes that suit one’s lifestyle.

While this suggestion may be appalling to those within both Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches, where the emphasis is on allowing established Church doctrines and traditions to shape what we believe, it is acceptable within the Protestant traditions which thrive on allowing their members to discover their own expression of Christianity.

And so, as Orthodox Christians, we should be aware that people are searching for Christ. Not everyone wants to hear about Orthodoxy, but some do. There are many people who are now members of the Orthodox Church who were once numbered among these seekers. There are people searching for depth and truth, and Orthodoxy has something to offer them, regardless of whether or not they choose to embrace the faith through baptism.

We need to be kind and lovingly sensitive to them when they come through our parish doors, or while sharing a conversation with them. We need to pray for them and their salvation, even as we pray for our own. And we need to live each day with Christ as our focus, so that others will see not only the richness of our tradition, but may also encounter Christ Himself and thereby be drawn to Him. — *AmandaEve Wigglesworth*

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