

Founded by the blessed Archbishop Arseny (Chahovtsov), 1866 – 1945
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A personal account of the Metropolitan's election :
It's a new day !

—Archpriest Lawrence Farley, Dean of British Columbia

“It’s a new day.” These words, spoken by (then) Bishop Jonah late Tuesday night November 11, 2008 proved to be prophetic : the 15th All American Council meeting in Pittsburgh to deal with the current crisis in the Orthodox Church in America, did indeed signal a new day. But for the first few days of the Council, one would never have known. Rather, it felt to many too much like the *old* day.

Delegates and observers arrived on Monday, November 10, looking forward to the final scheduled event of that day—Compline and Act of Repentance. Many hoped that the Act of Repentance would involve a longed-for and cathartic reconciliation with the Holy Synod, a catalyst for what Mark Stokoe (of the Preconciliar Commission) had described as “the healing of hearts.” It was not to be. One delegate described it as simply the normal Compline service, at which the celebrant bows down and asks forgiveness of the assembled congregation, who respond by returning the bow. There was nothing special to it at all, nothing specific to the current crisis of estrangement. The same delegate also confided that he was so distressed and angry that he questioned whether he should receive Holy Communion the next morning. Not, I should think, a promising beginning to the longed-for Council of healing.

At the plenary sessions the next day, things were not much better. Bishop Benjamin guided everyone through the Special Investigative Committee Report. In the question and answer period which followed, His Grace referred to a statement made by a sympathetic person outside of the Orthodox Church that “at least your problem is only about money” (meaning that at least you Orthodox are not facing controversies about the divinity of Christ, as that person’s church was). In response, a delegate took sharp issue with His Grace, and asked that he retract the statement. His Grace responded by simply walking away from the microphone, leaving the question unanswered and thus concluding the session. To me



His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah (Paffhausen)

this exchange was symbolic of the way things were going. It did not look like the estrangement between the Holy Synod and the rest of the Church was going to be overcome or healed any time soon.

That evening, our own Vladyka Seraphim hosted a wine and cheese social time in his suite for all the Canadians present at the AAC. At the conclusion of this time, he spoke to all of his decision to withdraw his name as a candidate for Metropolitan. He had written a letter which would be given to the assembled Council delegates the next day, but in his usual pastoral way, he wanted to share it beforehand with his own Canadian family. Though he of course allowed us to vote according to our hearts, he made plain his own desire to be spared this office, writing in his letter, “I am stating plainly at this time that I will not accept any such nomination (to the office of Metropolitan).” He then bowed down and asked our forgiveness. At the end of the responses that followed, Matushka Julianna Schmemann rose up dramatically and, leaning on her cane with all the authority of maternal love, spoke what was in the hearts of many :

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though we loved our dear Vladyka, his reasons for his decision were his own reasons, and should be respected.

During an earlier plenary session, the delegates were asked to write down their questions for the Holy Synod, to be answered by them at a later session. When it seemed as if this process might be overlooked, our own Fr John Jillions came to the microphone and asked when this would be dealt with. It was replied that the Holy Synod had not yet been able to look at the questions together and formulate a collective response, though the questions had been collated into a single sheet of paper. Then Bishop Jonah came to microphone to make a response. [This response can be viewed in full at <http://www.oca.org/jonah-15aac-qna.html>.]

He spoke for a long time, and spoke plainly. With surprising candour and bluntness, he spoke of the Church's being "looted" and "raped." He said that the last two Metropolitans were "corrupt," that one had abandoned his responsibility in favour of the bottle, that it was not surprising that the Holy Synod had been unable to function properly, since they had been left leaderless for so long. What he said resonated in the hearts of many, as he articulated the pain of betrayal felt by all. Here were the words we had waited for. But now, he said, it was a new day. We had to let go of resentment and anger, or it would destroy us. The time had come to let it all go.

Everyone in the place was still and silent as he spoke. At the end, a fellow delegate quietly said to me, "I think we just heard from our next Metropolitan." I hoped that it could be so, but knew it was impossible. Bishop Jonah had just been consecrated to the episcopate eleven days (that's *eleven days*) previously. He could never be chosen, I thought. After this, Bishop Nikon also spoke, echoing the message, telling everyone that there was nothing the Holy Synod could do to re-establish trust. That trust, he said, they would have to earn.

Bishop Jonah spoke again at the Liturgy the next morning, speaking the same message, calling everyone to forgive and keep their eyes on Jesus. It seemed to me to seal the words of the previous evening.

When it came time for the election of the new Metropolitan on Wednesday, November 12, I was in something of a turmoil, as I suspect many others were. Our own Archbishop had told us to vote with our hearts, and my heart said, "Jonah." But it seemed like a waste of a vote. The Holy Synod, I thought, would never elect someone so much their junior, so episcopally inexperienced, to be their head. In the end, I followed my bishop's lead, and voted with my heart.

So apparently did others. The first ballot required the delegates to write down but a single name. When the ballots were counted, of the 645 total voting delegates, Bishop Jonah received 233 votes, and Archbishop Job 212. (Archbishop Seraphim received 33, despite his letter to delegates saying that he was resolute in his decision not to accept nomination.) Because no one received the necessary two-thirds of the total votes, a second ballot was held.

On this ballot, two names only were required from each delegate. On this ballot, Bishop Jonah received 473, and Archbishop Job 364. (Archbishop Seraphim received 140.) The Holy Synod then retired to deliberate and vote and choose their own head, based on these votes/nominations.

They deliberated, for what seemed to be a long time, in the altar behind the closed curtains. As they emerged, everyone present stood breathlessly awaiting their decision. When they announced that they had chosen Bishop Jonah to be the next Metropolitan, I at first did not believe it. I listened carefully to hear it announced the second time before it actually sank in.

The response was immediate and electrifying. People wept for joy, they shouted, they clapped, they cheered. As one priest later told me over and over again, "It was like Pentecost." Archbishop Dimitri, *locum tenens* until then and senior hierarch, was gracious and joyful. With a smile, he said that he did not think this was going to happen to his (then) Auxiliary Bishop either: "I just brought him here to show him off!"

At the banquet that evening, the Chancellor of the OCA, Fr Alexander Garklavs, gave the address. At the end of it, he thanked many people, including the Holy Synod. When he thanked the Holy Synod, everyone rose to their feet, and gave them a thunderous ovation. One person at table with me leaned over to whisper, "This is our forgiveness of the Holy Synod." Indeed it was. It seemed as if the longed-for reconciliation had finally come. The Holy Synod had shown themselves both humble and receptive, having the vision and wisdom to embrace the will of the delegates and choose a man consecrated bishop less than two weeks previously. It was indeed a new day. When the new Metropolitan shared his vision for the future at the end of the meal, his words were met with tumultuous ovations, and cries of "Axios!" One brother, perhaps of Pentecostal background, went through the crowded foyer afterwards shouting "Hallelujah! Hallelujah! We have a leader!" Pentecost indeed.

One short and sad postscript may be added. On Tuesday, November 12, it was announced that the

delegate Archpriest Stephen Karaffa had suddenly died that morning. He therefore did not live to see the surprise, almost fairy-tale ending, to that historic Council. But it seemed to me and to many that he was with us still, praying for us, and looking down from heaven upon his fellow delegates. And rejoicing too, adding his heavenly “Axios!” to our earthly ones.

And so, now what? The election of Metropolitan Jonah, though historic and marking a turning point and (I believe) an end of the current dark days of crisis, is only the beginning. It is true that trust must still be re-earned. Work remains to be done and other challenges stemming from those dark days faced and overcome. But now we can do this work with hope. Like the man said, “It’s a new day.”

Who is Metropolitan Jonah? Some biographical notes

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah was born James Paffhausen on October 20, 1959, in Chicago IL, and was baptized into the Episcopal Church. While still a child, his family later settled in La Jolla CA, near San Diego. He was received into the Orthodox Church in 1978 at Our Lady of Kazan Moscow Patriarchal Church, San Diego, while a student at the University of California, San Diego. Later, he transferred to UC Santa Cruz, where he was instrumental in establishing an Orthodox Christian Fellowship.

After completing studies at UCSC, James attended St Vladimir’s Seminary in New York, graduating with a Master of Divinity degree in 1985 and a Master of Theology in Dogmatics in 1988.

He went on to pursue studies towards a Ph.D. at Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, but interrupted those studies to spend a year in Russia.

In Moscow, working for Russkiy Palomnik (“*The Russian Pilgrim*”) at the Publishing Department of the Moscow Patriarchate, he was introduced to life in the Russian church, in particular monastic life. Later that year, he joined Valaam Monastery, having found a spiritual father in the monastery’s Abbot, Archimandrite Pankratiy. It was Archimandrite Pankratiy’s spiritual father, the Elder Kyrill at Trinity-St Sergius Lavra, who blessed James to become a priestmonk. He was ordained to the diaconate and priesthood in 1994 and in 1995 was tonsured to monastic rank at St Tikhon’s Monastery, South Canaan PA, having received the name Jonah.

Returning to California, Fr Jonah served a number of missions and was later given the obedience to

establish a monastery under the patronage of St John of Shanghai and San Francisco. The monastery, initially located in Point Reyes Station CA, recently moved to Manton in Northern California, near Redding. During his time building up the monastic community, Fr Jonah also worked to establish missions in Merced, Sonora, Chico, Eureka, Redding, Susanville, and other communities in California, as well as in Kona HI.

In the spring of 2008, the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church in America elevated Fr Jonah to the rank of Archimandrite, and he was given the obedience to leave the monastery and take on the responsibilities of auxiliary bishop and chancellor for the Diocese of the South.

Metropolitan Jonah’s episcopal election took place on September 4, 2008, at an special meeting of the Holy Synod of Bishops. Earlier in the summer, his candidacy was endorsed by the Diocese of the South’s Diocesan Council, shortly after he had participated in the diocese’s annual assembly.

Metropolitan Jonah was consecrated Bishop of Forth Worth and Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of the South, at St Seraphim Cathedral, Dallas TX, on Saturday, November 1, 2008. On Wednesday, November 12, 2008, he was elected Archbishop of Washington and New York and Metropolitan of All America and Canada at the 15th All-American Council of the Orthodox Church in America, in Pittsburgh PA. — *from the OCA.org website*

In his Tuesday evening speech to the AAC, (then) Bishop Jonah said, in speaking of the authority of the episcopacy, “Authority is responsibility. Authority is accountability. It’s not power.”

And in his speech of acceptance after he was elected Bishop of Fort Worth, Metropolitan Jonah had also said, “If the episcopacy is about me, manifesting my talents, abilities, and ego, then there is nothing sacramental about it; or rather, that which is sacramental and holy is defiled by my ego, my self-opinion and self-will. The Church does not need me; the Church only needs Christ. If by my self-emptying I can become a vessel of Christ, of His Will and His Grace, His Presence and His activity, so that we together as Church can fulfill His Will by His Grace, and glory in His Presence, then His ministry will be fulfilled in me.”

The community of the faithful of the Archdiocese of Canada adds with heartfelt gratitude to God,

AXIOS! AXIOS! AXIOS!

Funeral of Patriarch Alexei II

On Tuesday, December 9, 2008, His Eminence, Archbishop Seraphim of Ottawa and Canada, Chairman of the Office of External Affairs and Inter-Church Relations, of The Orthodox Church in America joined His All Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, the Primate of the Orthodox Churches of Georgia, Romania, Greece, Albania and the Czech lands and Slovakia, together with representatives of all Local Autocephalous Orthodox Churches and the Holy Synod of Bishops and nearly all hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church, in concelebrating the funeral services for the newly departed and ever memorable Most Holy Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, Aleksei II, at Moscow's Christ the Savior Cathedral.

Accompanying Archbishop Seraphim as part of the official delegation of The Orthodox Church in America were Archimandrite Zacchaeus, Moscow Representative of The Orthodox Church in America, and Archpriest Leonid Kishkovsky, Director of the OCA's Department of External Affairs.

Also praying at the funeral were Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, the Presidents of Serbia, Belarus and Moldova; and senior ranking ministers and other officials of the Russian government as well as ambassadors of foreign nations.

The funeral service took place following the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy that was led by the *Locum Tenens* of the Russian Orthodox Church, His Eminence, Metropolitan Kyrill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, together with hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church. The funeral began with a stirring sermon by Metropolitan Kyrill on the life and Patriarchal ministry of His Holiness, Patriarch Alekei.

At the conclusion of the funeral, the concelebrating Primate of Local Orthodox Churches, hierarchs and clergy offered the last kiss to His Holiness, whose body was then taken in procession to Moscow's Epiphany Cathedral to be buried. His body will rest in the Church.

His Eminence, Archbishop Seraphim of Ottawa and Canada offered the official condolences of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah of All America and Canada, the Holy Synod of Bishops, clergy, monastics and faithful of The Orthodox Church in America at the memorial meal held at Christ the Savior Cathedral.

— from the web site of the OCA Representation Church in Moscow

In memoriam : Patriarch Alexei II

The measure of the life of His Holiness Patriarch Alexei II is difficult to assess. During the Communist era he led his diocese and then his archdiocese in a manner that he could truly say "by faith we passed through the Red Sea." The Russian people by the tens of thousands were willing to hazard and even to give up their lives for the name of Jesus Christ and His Gospel. This is a people who have proved themselves in the fire and who deserve the respect and reverence of all.

For a hierarch serving in the Soviet era, maintaining the precarious balance between acceptance and destruction by the Soviet authorities took a heavy emotional and physical toll. On the one hand, the sincere desire to maintain and strengthen the faith, and on the other, the need to soothe the government so it would not destroy every church and imprison every priest, took an enormous amount of faith, courage, diplomacy, and the risk of freedom and life.

Following the collapse of the Soviet regime, the rebuilding task was staggering. How did one get the alienated, often half-destroyed church property returned, and the sites of those churches that were in ruin? The military was still officered by generals and high ranking men and women who were products of the Soviet era, many of whom were members of the Communist Party. Formidable though it was, Patriarch Alexei, by patient but unyielding labour, and exquisite diplomacy, managed not only to rebuild churches and monasteries, but also to re-institute military and hospital chaplaincies, often in the face of strong objections from the generals and admirals. He led in the restoration of prison ministries, the opening of orphanages and alms-houses supported and operated by the Orthodox Church. Seminaries were rebuilt and flooded with students; monasteries, the very heart of Orthodoxy in every nation, were rebuilt, lands returned, and the monasteries have once again become centres of charity outreach.

One must acknowledge all those, both clergy and laity, who participated in all this great spiritual rebirth, but we must especially reverence His Holiness. During the Soviet era, he placed himself in the breach and became a moral martyr in balancing the compromises necessary for the physical survival of the Church with both pastoral care for his flock and loyalty to the Gospel. As Patriarch, he was under even more heavy a burden, and after the fall of Communism, he gave the last of his strength and life to the rebuilding and rebirth of the faith in Russia.

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8th Orthodox Women's Retreat held near Calgary

What a true blessing our 8th Orthodox Women's Retreat was this year—a gift! Seventy women gathered at Entheos Retreat and Conference Centre, just west of Calgary from Sep 19th to 21st. We are very grateful to the four priests who so beautifully served the various services throughout the weekend, all representing the different church families of Calgary: Fr Michael Lupu from St Mary's Romanian Orthodox Church, Fr Taras Krochak and Fr Tim Chrapko from St Vladimir's Ukrainian Orthodox Church, and Fr Ibrahim Chahoud from the Antiochian Orthodox Church of the Annunciation.

Our faithful coordinators—Shirley Din, Myra Reinheimer, Ghada Ziadeh and Joan Popowich—welcomed us all warmly. Our sisters in Christ arrived from Winnipeg, Abbotsford, Osoyoos, Vernon, Cranbrook, Edmonton, Smoky Lake, Red Deer, Okotoks, Airdrie, Cochrane and Calgary. And we were delighted to welcome “first timers,” as well as “old attendees”!

Our topic this year was “Faith, Hope and Love.” How truly blessed we were to have Mother Christophora, Abbess of the Holy Transfiguration Monastery in Ellwood City PA, along with Sister Mary. At the opening session, Ghada introduced Mother Christophora who immediately connected with the women and we, in turn, knew that this would be a very special retreat ahead of us!

. . . *Patriarch Alexei*, continued :

It is a tribute to him, and to the Russian people who have come to Canada and blessed our homeland with the presence of those who have confessed the faith in the face of persecution, prison, and the risk of death for the sake of the Gospel, that we serve a Russian Liturgy in our monastery once a month. Many of the Russians who are here for the Liturgy on that day saw their fathers, mothers, grandparents, brothers, sisters and other relatives, martyred for the faith, and stood ready to follow in their footsteps. How could we not reverence such people? At the head of all, stood His Holiness, Alexei II, Patriarch and Confessor of Moscow and All-Russia.

Glory and honour to him both in this age and in the age to come. Let his memory be from generation to generation. — *His Eminence, Archbishop Lazar (Puhalo) and synodia, Monastery of All Saints of North America, Dewdney BC*

Mother Christophora began her talk to us by introducing us to the lives of St Sophia and her three daughters, Faith (12 years of age), Hope (10 years of age) and Love (8 years of age), excellent examples of



The sisters with priests' wives at the retreat: l to r, Pres Lillian Lupu, Dobr Brenda Mielnik, Dobr Donna Krochak, Sr Mary, Mother Christophora, Pres Jaime Rene, Dobr Julie Chrapko, Pres Myra Reinheimer, Dobr Kathy Yamniuk.

possessing the three virtues, showing us what it means to be a Christian woman—accepting and following Christ amid trials and struggles on our journey through life. By giving birth to these three virtues, our lives become totally meaningful. The best way to learn to put them into practice is to make friends who are faithful, hopeful and loving! As children of God, our whole lives in Christ should be joyful, life-giving, and live-creating, for He created everything for us. Emphasis was put on the fact that faith, hope and love are descriptions of God himself; therefore, growing in Christ is growing in these virtues. Faith is a gift and must grow. Faith is a virtue as we start our journey. Faith can grow, can be tested, is rational, and requires that we work with God, to believe and to trust. Mother Christophora quoted St Nicodemus who said “As a root is to a tree, so faith is to the soul!”

Mother Christophora then introduced us to the virtue of hope, sharing with us that hope is oriented to the future, a vision of the heart, which penetrates through time. Hope is the opening of the heart, and coinciding with the victory of the hope that is in us, is an alleviation of many of our cares and anxieties. Truly, the opposite of hope is despondency and despair. What a joy to have an expressed gratitude for being alive, with the hope we have in Him!

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Several verses from Scripture, specifically dealing with love, were then emphasized, as well as the commandment on love as given by our Lord—to love God with all one’s heart, soul, mind, and strength and to love one’s neighbour as oneself. Love is to be expressed in actions, expressed in every aspect of our lives : in community, home, church—with the people who surround us at all times. This is to love according to God’s teachings and His commandments. And we must try to scatter our love without expecting anything in return.

A very interesting and informative short video of the life of Mother Alexandra, the founding abbess of the Monastery of the Holy Transfiguration was shown, since she was a woman who exhibited the three virtues of faith, hope and love. Some of the women in the Bible, who possessed these virtues, were St Mary Magdalene, Sts Mary and Martha, and St Photini, the Samaritan woman who was told that she could have “living water forever.” Mother Christophora encouraged us to be living water for others, a way of living out our calling in Christ to its fullness.

Sister Mary concluded the sessions with a most compelling description of life in their monastery. The monastery is founded in prayer, spiritual council and hospitality, to be an icon to the families of the world. Sister Mary explained monasticism clearly, delicately, and lovingly.

We left this inspiring weekend with a deeper sense of the virtues of faith, hope and love as we try to make our lives a gift to the Lord. Everything can be complementary to spiritual life, everything unified in Christ, as we embrace our world in prayer and in love. Two paramount thoughts we should have each day, and many times a day are “Thank you, Lord, for your many blessings” and “We worship you!”

It was such a blessing to hear the positive thoughts of our sisters in Christ at this retreat. We are forever grateful to have the opportunity to grow in Christ by being guided by such inspiring speakers as Mother Christophora and Sister Mary. Already we are looking forward to the 2009 retreat with prayer and thanksgiving! — *Marina Mantle, St Peter the Aleut’s Church, Calgary AB*

The next western Orthodox Women’s Retreat will be held from Sept 18th to 20th, 2009.

For further information, please contact :
Presbytera Myra Reinheimer at 403-938-4929.

New deacon for Ottawa Cathedral

On Sunday, 2 November 2008, Archbishop Seraphim ordained Alexander Dan Moisa to the Holy Diaconate in Annunciation Cathedral, Ottawa.

Deacon Alexander and his wife and daughter immigrated to Canada from Romania in 1995. Since 1998 they have been active members of the Cathedral parish. The new deacon has, over the years, served as a member of the choir, a member of the parish council, a Reader, and then a Subdeacon. He is a graduate of the OCA’s Late Vocations Programme for the training of deacons, and he is a software engineer at IBM.



Deacon Alexander is shown with Archbishop Seraphim, Fr Oleg Kirilov, Dean of Ontario, and other clergy at his ordination. To the deacon’s right are his daughter Andreea, and his wife, Matushka Simona.

Hospitality to the poor At St John’s, Windsor

On the 12th of October 2008, our parish of St John the Divine in Windsor, Ontario had a Thanksgiving dinner after Divine Liturgy. We have a common meal after church about every two to three months. Plus, we have members whose families live far away, so our Church family provides the love and friendship that they have missed. This Thanksgiving dinner, however, we also opened our doors to our neighbours.

We are in the city and have many neighbours who are less fortunate than we are. For example, there is Billy, (not Bill), who takes it upon himself to pick up trash along our sidewalk and has been known to be our security guard for night services. Also, there is Shirley, who collects bottles and cans and entertains us with a celebrity

birthday each day. Then there is Randy, along with his son, who work across the street and keep a constant watch, as well as Emery, who looks like either a wise sage or Santa Claus. So we invited them to a Thanksgiving dinner after church (going to the service was optional).

Alison, a regular, brought a large corkboard with the heading “what are you thankful for?” Then she had cards so that we could write our responses. Some wrote that “Fr Dean is thankful for liver with onions”—not true, but he was, and is, thankful for the flock that our Lord has entrusted to him.

We had two turkeys and *plenty* of food. Afterwards, we stuffed styrofoam containers with left-overs and gave them to our guests. One of the guests commented on how much food we had! I remarked that Orthodox Christians are both a fasting and feasting people. It was a lot of work, but when the last dish was washed, we pledged to do it all again next year—only bigger!

Not too long after this event, we began our participation in “Operation Christmas Shoebox.” Essentially, one takes a standard size shoe box and fills it with Christmas gifts. These include toys as well as practical things like toothbrushes and socks. Then these get put on ships, planes, trucks and even donkeys so that they can be delivered to children all over the world.

When I picked up the empty shoe boxes, I was given fifty of them. I thought that this was, most likely, too many for our small parish of about twenty-five people. We watched a video about “Operation Christmas Child” during coffee hour. In the video, one eight year old Russian girl, living in an orphanage, said that this was the first present she had ever received. Some of our folks were tearful over the suffering and abject poverty of these children.



With the shoe boxes: Fr Dean's son Zak (l) with Angie, Lauri, and the chairman of the project, Nyasha.

Our faithful really enjoyed the shopping and packing up of their shoe box gifts, and most of them did more than one. When we were ready to deliver our shoe boxes, we had sixty-two in all! It is heart-warming for me, as their priest, to see these out-pourings of God's love, working through the faithful of our parish! — Fr Constantine (Dean) Katsilas, St John the Divine, Windsor

Presentation of *Peresopnytsia* Gospel Held at Canadian Parliament Library

On 1 December 2008, the facsimile edition of the *Peresopnytsia* Gospel was presented to the Library of the Parliament of Canada in Ottawa. Presenting the Gospel was a delegation of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church: Chair of the Department for External Church Relations of the UOC, Archimandrite Cyril (Hovorun); Chair of the Synodal Department “Church and Culture,” Hegumena Seraphima (Shevchyk); and an official of the Department for External Church Relations of the UOC, Archpriest Mykolai Danylevych. All participated with the blessing of His Beatitude, Volodymyr, Metropolitan of Kyiv and All Ukraine.

At the presentation among the representatives of the Churches there also were Archbishop Seraphim of Ottawa and Canada (OCA); Administrator of Moscow Patriarchal parishes in Canada, Bishop Job (Smakouz) of Kashira; the representatives of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Constantinople Patriarchate) in Canada, Archpriest Igor Kutash and Priests Igor Okhrimchuk and Volodymyr Kushnir; Archpriest Maxim Lysak of the Carpatho-Russian Diocese of the Patriarchate of Constantinople; and other representatives of the Orthodox and Greek-Catholic communities of Ottawa. Taking part in the solemn event also were teachers and students of St Paul University, including their Rector, Fr Dale Schlitt; Director of Andrey Sheptytsky Institute of Eastern Christian Studies, Archpriest Petro Galadza; Professor Archpriest John Jillions; and other representatives of the theological and scientific circles of Canada.

Archimandrite Cyril (Hovorun) began by reading the Address of His Beatitude Metropolitan Volodymyr of Kyiv and All Ukraine. Then in his own speech, he noted that this presentation of the *Peresopnytsia* Gospels to the country where one of the most numerous Ukrainian diasporas exists (over a million people), carried not only religious and spiritual, but also cultural significance. He also underscored that the bringing of the *Peresopnytsia* Gospels to Canada was also an occasion for restoration of communication with the UOC's fellow Orthodox in diaspora, who should not forget their spiritual roots while living far from their native land.

Among other high-ranking political leaders of Canada taking part in the presentation of the *Peresopnytsia* Gospels was the speaker of the Parliament of Canada, Peter Millinken. Present at the festive event were also representatives of the diplomatic corps of Australia, Argentina, Belarus, Bulgaria, Dominican

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The Paschal mystery

—Hieromonk Vladimir (Tobin), *St Vladimir of Kiev's Mission, Halifax NS*

As we observe the Great Lent, the joyous celebration of Nativity and Theophany are behind us, and we are making our journey towards Pascha and the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Resurrection is central to our Orthodox Faith; it is the climax and pivot point of our Lord's life, the triumph and establishment of the Kingdom of God. True, the Kingdom of God is not manifestly established throughout the whole of the Creation, for that will come only at the end of time when "the Kingdom of this world is become the Kingdom of Our Lord." Yet, despite the fact that the fullness of the Kingdom is not yet come, we can even now know and experience it by faith and by our union with our Lord in the Sacrament of His Body and Blood.

When the Christian arrives at the Pascha and joyfully cries, "Christ is risen!" he can truly claim to stand in the actual presence of the Lord who has conquered death and ushered in the New Creation.

These words may sound very grandiose and triumphal, but all too often the reality which they stress does not become our own personal reality. We may for a few hours—or maybe even less—experience something of the joy of the Resurrection, but it can also quickly fade. However, it fades not because of any intrinsic weakness, but because of our own failure to seize upon the magnitude and full reality of the dominion and actions of God. God, the Holy Trinity, does not exist in the boundaries of time and space. Indeed, the Holy Trinity does not simply *exist*; the Holy Trinity *is* in what we can see only as past, present and future, and the acts of God are thus not carried out only in time, but in all eternity and for all eternity.

We, in the limited state of our created nature, can experience God's mighty works only in time and space, but the significance of His mighty works transcends all time and space. So it is with the economy of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was born in Bethlehem at a specific point in history; he lived his earthly life over a specific number of years; his Resurrection occurred in a particular geographical location and at a specific hour. This is the only way our limited intellect and understanding, our limited vision, can see our Lord's economy. Surely in this we have the ultimate expression of His *kenosis*, His self-emptying, that the eternal God humbles Himself to the point that we can behold him.

If we contemplate the Resurrection in this manner, that is, through our earthly senses, we may partake of something of its joy, but its fullness will elude us. The Pascha cannot be celebrated in a vacuum, for it is the great climax of our Lord's earthly life, and in the Pascha is contained the fullness of our Lord's Incarnation, life and eternal kingship. Indeed, when seen more clearly through the eye of faith, the Pascha stretches even beyond this. It points to the Creation, to that moment—not in time but in eternity—when God spoke, and it was so. Even here in the Creation the Resurrection is revealed, for the Creation is the entity which is renewed and transformed in the new life of the Risen Christ.

The Resurrection further points to the whole of sacred history, that process in which the people of God sought the reality of God's Kingdom, although, because of the bounded abilities of our human nature, not knowing the fullness of that Kingdom. In the Hebrew Passover, the people celebrated freedom and new life, a freedom which was on a very limited scale, but which served as a foretaste of the greater freedom and eternal new life in the Risen Christ. When Job exclaimed, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," what exactly was his meaning? In the context of the Old Testament alone, this is a statement of which the full meaning is very uncertain. But the Resurrection of Christ gives it a newer and greater significance, pointing not only to the Resurrection of our Lord in Jerusalem, but beyond that to the eternal Pascha of the fullness of the Kingdom.

In Exodus 19:6, the people of Israel who have left Egypt in the Exodus are told, "You shall be for me a royal priesthood and a holy nation." But the word *holy* does not mean just pious or spiritual; it means set apart, different, consecrated, completely other. That task and privilege which God once gave to His chosen people Israel is now passed on, through the economy of Christ, to His Church, His new People of God. But because the Christian is baptized into Christ, he has already passed with Christ through His death and Resurrection into the eternal Kingdom of God, experiences known only by faith, but nonetheless, the one true reality. "Christ our Passover has been sacrificed" (II Cor 5:7). Our Lord not only keeps the Passover, He *is* the true and eternal Passover, the paschal lamb that takes away the sin of the world, and through our baptism into Him unites us to the eternal life of the Father. Hence, we are become "partakers of the divine nature" of God Himself. (II Pet 1:4).

This is not a dream; this is not an illusion; this is not a poetic fancy. This is the reality, the one true reality of which the Christian is made a member. According to

Mark's Gospel, when the women at the tomb were given the news of Christ's Resurrection, they "went out and fled from the tomb for trembling and utter bewilderment had taken hold of them." The women were amazed, shocked and overwhelmed because they somehow realized that they were in the presence of something which was totally beyond them, totally other—the holiness of the Eighth Day, the new Creation. And in the fact of this they were speechless, as indeed we all must be, for no words can possibly be found to express the greatness of God's actions, actions carried out in eternity, breaking into historical time and space to transform and sanctify them. And as time and space are sanctified, so too are the people of God sanctified, those who have been baptized into Christ and thus "have put on Christ" (Gal 3:27). And to be baptized into the Resurrected Christ means to enter even now with Him into the eternal Kingdom of God.

The Christian Pascha moves far beyond the old Hebrew Passover, for in it "Christ our God has led us from death to life, from earth to heaven, singing a song of victory," as the great Pachal Canon proclaims. Pascha now moves from time to eternity, from earth to heaven, and we are called to the blessing of sharing this experience. The fullness of the joy of the Resurrection can be ours even now, and it is a joy that surpasses all that we can know on earth, a joy which dwarfs all temporal happiness. Indeed, is there any permanent joy and satisfaction to be found in a life which is only physical and only of this earth? All the so called "great" powers of this world, the tyrants, the conquerors – what true happiness did they ever know? And now they are gone and all but forgotten. There is only one true goal, one lasting reality—the Kingdom of God, and the Pascha with the Resurrection of Christ makes that real to us even now in the midst of the temporal world.

This is what we were created for, this is our destiny, and it is given to us now in Christ. In His Resurrection, He is the point where time and eternity meet; He is the portal which leads us even now from earth to heaven. To attain to the knowledge of God and to union with Him is a slow and long process. It takes a lifetime and beyond that even into eternity. It is a process which will never end as we become "partakers of the divine nature." The Christian—renewed, reborn, transformed, and sanctified in Christ—can now in a very real sense say "I am," for he has been given the grace to share in the life of Christ and in the being of the Holy Trinity. This is what Pascha offers us. We must only strive to open our hearts and our minds to the reality of the Paschal cry : "CHRIST IS RISEN!"

Walking with the wounded, part I

Welcoming those who suffer From mental illness

—Nikita J Eike, MD

"Lord when did we see You.....sick . . . ?" [Matt 25:44]

In the case of mental illness, the answer is simple: every day of our life, outside and inside the Church, if we *have eyes to see* those around us who are walking wounded. Unfortunately, they often go unnoticed in the middle of our parishes, the very places where they have come to receive healing for what is ontologically at the root of illness : corruption and sin. Sin is a separation from God, and as the Fathers explained, once separated from God, man became insane.¹ Hence, in his post-lapsarian state man no longer enjoys a state of genuine mental health ; we are all ill to varying degrees on the continuum between illness and health. As a measure of self-protection, it is common to draw sharp and sometimes arbitrary distinctions between what is considered healthy and what is not, usually at the expense of those who are sicker and more vulnerable amongst us.² We are all walking wounded. Some are more broken than others and have become mirrors that reflect images of ourselves we would rather ignore.

Prominent in Christ's ministry was His ministry of healing; the salvific actions that restored the whole of human nature to its fullness. "And Jesus went about Galilee . . . healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of diseases amongst the people." [Matt 4:23] The early Church has even been described as a "society of well organized psychiatric clinics."³ The healing quality of a person or of an organization like a parish, is first measured by its ability to truly embrace those who are ill. To embrace means to enclose, to accept within as being fully part of each other. It is easy to confuse embrace with tolerance, which means something that can be endured or accepted. Although we are all ill to some degree, some are suffering from a clinical mental illness, whether or not they have been formally diagnosed. The kind of reception they receive in any given parish depends on the health of the parish. It is sad to witness people who suffer

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¹ Larchet, J.C. (2007), *Thérapeutique des Maladies Mentales*, Editions du Cerf, Paris, p. 24.

² Klein, M. *Melanie Klein and Object Relations*, <http://science.jrank.org/pages/10906/Psychoanalysis-Melanie-Klein-Object-Relations.html>, visited 29 Aug 2008.

³ Puhalo, Lazar (Archbp) 2006, *The Impact of Orthodox Christian Thought on Medicine*, Synaxis Press, Dewdney BC, p. 48.

. . . continued from p. 9:

from mental illness being only tolerated at a distance. The mouth may be speaking kind words but the body language is clear in its rejection. “Lord when did we see you sick, and we did not minister to You?” [Matt 25:44]

Unlike other medical diseases, mental illness carries a social stigma.⁴ As if someone, who suffers from mental illness were somewhat less a human being. This attitude can only perpetuate an atmosphere of shame and fear, and prevent many sufferers from seeking treatment, thereby aggravating their pain. A person with a mental illness is first, and will always be, a person, created in the image and likeness of God. The mental illness does not alter or obliterate that image. Prejudices come into the Church with the people carrying them. It deprives those with mental illness of rest in the place where they have come to soothe their sorrows.

A sign of mental health is to be able to relate to the other as a restored human being in the fullness of his personhood; and to acknowledge the mental illness as a temporary, extraneous condition. It is not part of our nature to be ill. Only worldly eyes veiled by hopelessness will see illness as finality and not as something foreign that will eventually pass if we look beyond the limitations of our world. Insofar as we can only truly relate with others via the parts in us that are healthy, we should not identify and reduce the other to the illness that is affecting him. We have to be careful not to turn the illness into a living entity; it has no life of its own. A great source of pain for those who are thus afflicted is to be defined by their illness, the act of labeling.⁵ We have all heard: “this is a depressive or a schizophrenic.” The illness does not define the person. Because of corruption and sin, the fullness of personhood is affected in all of us; but the potential for full personhood is present in everyone regardless of the presence of a mental illness.

It is an unfortunate state of affairs that those who suffer from mental illness are not always made to feel welcome in their own parish.⁶ The reasons are manifold, ranging from fear, lack of concern, or a sense that those who suffer from mental illness are burdensome, to a refusal to accommodate them, or to the erroneous conception that mental illness is something that belongs

outside the Church. Yet many types of mental diseases are symptoms of spiritual illness for which there is no other place to turn but to Christ and His Church. If closing the doors emotionally to a subset of the population were not damaging enough, the reverse—enabling—can be as destructive.⁷ Without a clear understanding of what mental health (normalcy) and mental illness are, communications, boundaries, reactions and behaviours will remain pathological, creating a toxic environment that might be felt but not consciously recognized as such because it has become a stable, albeit unhealthy, status quo. Such a condition will last until a seemingly innocuous event will upset the balance, creating another crisis that will see a resolution toward health if great efforts are expended or, if the path of least resistance is followed, toward a different balance as pathological as the former. The healing qualities of the priest, the health of the parish and the spiritual health of the laity are in direct correlation with one another in a dynamic state of balance.

Psychiatry and psychology have their place in the treatment of Orthodox Christians suffering from mental illness, but only as an adjunct to the most important part of the therapy—the spiritual care that we all require. Secular treatments are no substitutes for the spiritual treatment that is a life in the Church, where prayers, ascetic works, purification, and participation in the Sacraments occupy a central role. Secular treatments are sometimes necessary to render the person more receptive to healing at the spiritual level.

The anthropology underlining psychiatry and psychology is a product of a secular culture that was widely influenced by Western Christianity, and is different from Patristic anthropology, ethics, and soteriology.⁸ They coincide at some levels, and may bear some resemblance on the surface, but their foundations are widely different. Western medicine is not concerned about the health of the whole person now or in the age to come. There are no Christological, soteriological and eschatological dimensions to it. Secular psychotherapy can only be partial and incomplete. The care of those who are ill is not the sole responsibility of physicians; it belongs to everyone in accordance with their own capacities. From a simple smile to a greeting or a greater involvement, we can all care for one another. Washing our hands of the problem is just not an option.

In the post-modern era, or as some blindly label it, the post-Christian era, there has been an expansion of the number of conditions classified as mental diseases and

⁴ Marsella, A.J., White, J.M. (1982), *Cultural Conceptions of Mental Health and Therapy*, Springer ed, p.44.

⁵ Angermeyer, M.C., Matschinger, H., *The stigma of mental illness: effects of labeling on public attitudes towards people with mental disorder*, Acta Psychiatr. Scand. Oct 2003; 108(4):304-309.

⁶ Author's note: It is a complaint I have often encountered in my psychiatric practice coming from Orthodox and non-Orthodox patients. Some may be due to rejection sensitivity but there is certainly a measure of truth here.

⁷ Breck, J., Breck, L. (2006), *Stages on Life's Way: Orthodox Thinking on Bioethics*, Foundation, Huston TX, p. 118.

⁸ Puhalo, Lazar (Archbp), *op.cit.*, p.2.

an increase, perhaps artificial, in the need for psychiatrists. People do not sin anymore, they “have issues.” Consequently, there is no longer a need to go to confession. It is plausible that this may contribute to an increase in the perceived need for psychotherapy. Ignorant of the living frame of reference provided by the Church, people are left at the mercy of an ever-changing worldly ethic with norms that are aimed at the individual, and an ethic that is dissociated from the whole of mankind, and oblivious as to his destination. It is the ethic of man worshipping man, with no internalized sense of his origins or his calling, and ignorant of his fate. Without a clear destination—the Kingdom of God—man is left in a state of *anomie* while wandering on the various paths of life without the clear purpose that only obeying the Will of God can provide. This *mal de vivre* (literally: the weariness of living) is responsible for the existential suffering that often comes to the attention of mental health professionals,⁹ who have very few valid answers to offer since such answers belong to the Church. Adding to the difficulty for the patients in finding help are the facts that many priests are overworked or not at a stage where they can offer spiritual psychotherapy, and many parishes are not prepared to welcome the mentally ill. To be willing is only the first step towards becoming ready and able.

For those who suffer from a psychiatric illness, psychotherapy in its many forms can be an invaluable tool and a complement to a full participation in the life of the Church and in the Sacraments. The role of the physician cannot be conceptualized as happening outside of the Church, but only as something inherent to the Church. Psychotherapy stripped of its Christian perspective can only miss some of the real issues since the requirement to “lay aside all excuses” is not there as a guardrail. Without a holistic approach, it comes as no surprise that the rate of success of therapeutic interventions is disappointingly low.¹⁰

In recent years, psychology and psychiatry have started to take an interest in the Orthodox approach to mental and spiritual health. The work of Metropolitan Hierotheos (Vlachos), and Dr J.C. Larchet, to name two, has rekindled the interest of Orthodox Christians in therapeutic methods that have been ours for almost two thousands years. It has also attracted the interest of Western secular culture in a form of therapy that was previously unknown in the Occident.

⁹ Minois, G. (2003), *Histoire du Mal de Vivre: de la mélancolie à la dépression*, Editions de la Martinière, Paris.

¹⁰ <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/mentalhealth/chapter2/sec6.html#issues>. Visited 30 Aug 2008.

Certain types of psychotherapy currently in use in Western medicine—supportive psychotherapy, cognitive behavioral therapy, reverse psychology—all of fairly recent origin, share some similarities with techniques of spiritual warfare used by generations of ascetics over the centuries. For instance, the Fathers used methods like catarrhesis, reframing, countering, antirrhesis, and paradoxical interventions in their treatment of spiritual illness.¹¹

The origins and development of the types of secular psychotherapies mentioned above do not stem from Patristic sources. It is a case where modern science has confirmed what Orthodox Christianity already knew. However, their *telos*, the Christological perspective of the patristic therapeutic methods, and their indissoluble association with the sacramental life of the Church, distinguish them from any secular equivalent. The context of Orthodox psychotherapy seems to have escaped many of the non-Orthodox interested in our approach to health and illness. There is also the misconception amongst Orthodox that it is an approach to spiritual warfare belonging only to monastics. Orthodox psychotherapy is a therapeutic system that addresses the illnesses ravaging the souls of every human being, regardless of their calling, and with proper guidance, it can be personalized for monastics and the laity.

The American Psychology Association recently included a discussion of the treatment of Orthodox Christians in their list of existing therapies.¹² Having more visibility may be positive in some ways, but popularization out of context can lead to trivialization. Orthodox psychotherapy applied outside of the Orthodox Church is completely meaningless. Orthodox psychotherapy as the Fathers intended it and understood it, is not “one of the types of existing psychotherapy”; it is “The Way” to healing our corrupted nature, and there lies the crucial difference from other forms of therapy.

It is a rather unfortunate development of our history that the secular concept of mental illness is so far removed from the understanding of the Fathers. The Patristic concept starts with the premise that after the Fall, mankind became ill; that separated from God we became insane. Therefore, our abilities to think, reason, feel, understand, and the rest of our cognitive faculties,

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¹¹ Coniaris, A.M. (2004), *Confronting and Controlling Thoughts—According to the Fathers of the Philokalia*, Light and Life Publishing, Minneapolis MN.

¹² Richard, P.S., Bergin, A.E. eds (2000), *Handbook of Psychotherapy and Religious Diversity*, American Psychology Association Washington DC, p. 110.

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emotional abilities and intelligence, became corrupted.¹³ Consequently, our behaviors and inner life no longer reflect the image in which we were created. If then, we are for all intent and purposes crazy, when do we speak of mental illness?

One of the secular definitions of mental illness reads as follows: “Mental disorder or mental illness or mental disease are terms used to refer to a psychological or physiological pattern that occurs in an individual and is usually associated with distress or disability that is not expected as part of normal development or culture. The recognition and understanding of mental disorders has changed over time.”¹⁴

We call mental illness a departure from what has become “a norm” in our fallen world, in the particular society and at the particular time where and during which we live. This definition does not take into consideration the fact that the world is not normative; the Church is. Some specific conditions, like melancholy, phobias, schizophrenia and delirium, to name a few, have been known and recognized throughout history; while other conditions, like Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder or Adjustment Disorder are newer additions to the classification of mental diseases. It does not mean that they did not exist; they may have, but society did not recognize them as illnesses. In some cases, they were considered a normal reaction to an abnormal world. In a fallen world, the appearance of perfect mental health should be a cause of worry and raise the question of spiritual indifference, a deadly disease, or more accurately, a spiritual suicide. Although useful in a medical setting, the concept of mental health is, in this world, only a fabrication of the untrained spiritual eye.

Modern Society also has a penchant for calling “disease” what in the past would have been called a lack of virtue, enslavement to the passions, or sin. A lack of virtue is indeed an illness of the soul, but by medicalizing such a condition we are exonerating people of their responsibility when they act-out the problem, making it almost impossible to get to the root of it, which is spiritual in nature. By rejecting the fact that absolute truth does indeed exist and was delivered to us by the One who is the Truth, we are now facing a society that is constantly redefining what a trespass is. Once we have redefined what sin is, the ascent toward increasingly greater levels of denial is effortless.

Those who argue for a biological etiology of mental illness will rightly demonstrate that there is a

molecular basis for pathological behaviors. The debate of nature versus nurture has been going on for decades, but no matter what the outcome is, it remains an explanation of what we are observing, a symptom. We have to go beyond the symptoms to get at the root of the problem. For scientists this means finding which neurochemical pathways or chromosomal structure might be affected; for science, that is the etiology; for us Orthodox it is a symptom of our state of corruption. We are not looking here at competing theories to explain the problem at hand; science and religion are looking at the same issue from different standpoints. To ignore science is foolish, for the Fathers always looked at science as a complement to the exploration and the understanding of the universe. The problems with science occur when the Christological perspective is lost, and we could say with Dr R.D. Laing, a psychiatrist: “Scientists cannot see the way they see with their way of seeing.”¹⁵

Although the experts in medical etymology try to dismiss the word “illness” as a vague and antiquated colloquialism, it is a useful term when looking at the various pathologies from an Orthodox perspective. The origin and usage of the word “illness” reminds us of the situation at hand. It derives from the word ill that appeared in the Middle Ages. Its origin is unknown but it was used to express what is evil or the condition of being afflicted. An older English expression would have been: “the difference between good and ill” instead of “the difference between good and evil.” This is exactly what an illness is : the opposite of what is good. The dying Socrates¹⁶ and existential philosophers after him have referred to “life as an illness.” Orthodox Christians will rightly argue that being a gift from God, life can hardly be construed as an illness, even if in this world we are ill from the start. Our health is a tenuous reality, with the power of life in a precarious equilibrium with the powers opposing it. It is with this perspective firmly in mind that we should approach those who suffer from mental illness, regarding them as co-strugglers in this world and embracing them in a self-sharing relationship that is the love that God has for all His creation.

“And in sins did my mother bare me” [Ps 51:7 LXX] declares the psalmist, indicating that we are born in a state of illness, our fallen condition. We start dying from the moment of conception. Our body carries at the molecular level the codes that will lead to cellular

¹³ Larchet, J.C. (2002), *The Theology of Illness*, SVS Press, Crestwood NY, p. 17-53.

¹⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mental_illness. Visited 30 Aug 2008.

¹⁵ Laing, R.D. (1982), *The Voice of Experience*, Pantheon, New York.

¹⁶ Lichtenberger, H., MacFarlane-Kennedy, J.(1912), *The Gospel of Superman: The Philosophy of Frederick Nietzsche*, Macmillian, New York NY, p. 54.

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apoptosis¹⁷ or cellular death and eventually the death of the body. This illness is the Fall, the separation from God. The whole person, body and soul, became fractured to the very core of its being, to the point where every one of its components is affected and where molecules can no longer communicate properly with the others. Because of sin, death entered the world, and because of death, sin was perpetuated. We became ill and our illness extended to our relationship with others, with the creation, and with God.

Our task in this world is to die as healthy of soul and body as we can. What the world labels as disease is only a departure from what are considered the physiological norms in the world. It does not say anything about the state of spiritual health. A person may suffer diseases and yet be healthy of spirit, even in the throes of mental illness. A person can be depressed and yet, still experience the joy that comes from communion with God and the hope of the world to come. There often is confusion between joy and happiness. Happiness is the pleasure that comes from the fulfillment of worldly desires, which are by definition fleeting and temporary. The pursuit of worldly happiness is a passion that will lead to a further fracturing of the mind. Joy cannot be taken away and can coexist with a mental illness once the person has acquired enough insight to separate what is worldly and temporary, the mental illness, and what is eternal—the joy of God’s presence. “Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.” [2 Cor 12:10].

When addressing issues in the mental health field, we have to balance the secular concept of health, which is the relative absence of disease and a sense of well-being, and the Orthodox holistic concept that encompasses every aspect of the person in a soteriological and eschatological perspective of health. The two are not mutually exclusive, but need to be integrated harmoniously. In the Orthodox perspective, our greatest hope is to die spiritually healthy—in a state of normalcy; spiritual health does not end because of diseases and death. In this world health has no intrinsic value or in the words of St Basil the Great: “Insofar as it does not render good those who possess it, health cannot be counted amongst those things that are good by nature.”¹⁸

In regards to mental health, the term “normalcy” is more useful than “normality” because it denotes a desire to return to “what was before.” Under this definition normalcy is the desire to return to our status before the Fall, to our natural state: to restore the image of God in us, to

become by Grace in His likeness; in other words, to attain *theosis*, to become Christ-like, to turn all our faculties towards God.¹⁹ The only truly normal person ever to live in this world was our Lord Jesus Christ. It is in striving for that state of normalcy that we have to bear the mental and physical illnesses that are affecting us, as well as helping others who are thus affected. It is what is Christ-like in us that can properly bear our own illnesses and those of others.

Ironically in our struggles to become Christ-like, the world will undoubtedly call us crazy and sick, because we will not behave according to its norms. Norms are an interesting concept. Norms of behaviour are defined as what is statistically or socially acceptable, does not cause personal distress, and is not a maladaptive behaviour that would cause distress to others.²⁰ Christ gave us a different set of rules: “by telling us the truth about Himself, Christ told us the truth about ourselves.”²¹

The norms that the world gives us, although valid for specific purposes, can only be so inside of the parameters that they intend to measure and only if they are not in conflict with the Word of God. Consciously or not, each person carries a set of norms by which others are measured and as an organization, parishes do likewise. Christ showed us His love and compassion for all those who are sick. His love and compassion towards the sick and the suffering are normative for us and should guide the way we interact with those who are affected by mental illness.

As individuals, we should welcome an illness as an opportunity to grow spiritually. Likewise, a parish should embrace, with bright sadness, its members that are mentally ill; it is a measure of the healing and anal-epptic qualities of the parish. We cannot love what we do not desire, and without faith and love healing is not possible; “the prayers of faith will save the sick.” [Js 5:15] As the Body of Christ, the Church shares in the healing ministry of Christ who was sent “to heal the broken-hearted” [Is 61:1]. It is a praxis that should be well established in every parish, to welcome the sick and the suffering who are sent to us as blessings. Blessings that we can only see in the manner in which “God appears to the mind of the heart.” (St Nikoforos the Solitary)

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¹⁷ <http://www.caspases.org/>. Visited 30 Aug 2008.

¹⁸ *Letters*, CCXXXVI.7

¹⁹ Larchet, J.C. (2002), *Le Chrétien devant la maladie, la souffrance et la mort*, Editions du Cerf, Paris, p. 172.

²⁰ Berg, J., Dickhaut, J., McCabe, K. (July 1995), “Trust, Reciprocity and Social History,” *Games and Economic Behaviors*, Vol. 10, Issue 1, p. 122-142.

²¹ Archbishop Dimitri of Dallas, Conference, Oct 2007.

John and Carol Garrard,
Russian Orthodoxy
Resurgent. Princeton NJ:
Princeton University
Press, 2008. 326 pp.



*Reviewed by His Grace, Varlaam (Novakshonoff),
Retired Bishop of Vancouver*

Most of us have heard of the renaissance of Orthodoxy in Russia: new churches are built, decrepit temples are restored, people are being baptized and more, but this information reaches us piecemeal. Now, Princeton University Press presents us with *Russian Orthodoxy Resurgent* by John and Carol Garrard, a work which delves into the mystery of this resurgence, meticulously using Russian history, Soviet and post-Soviet realities to weave a tapestry that anyone can behold with both interest and even awe. The primary thread that creates this tapestry is recently-reposed Patriarch Alexei II himself

It is common knowledge that in the Soviet Union, anyone who had a position of responsibility, whether in government, industry, education or even the Church, was scrupulously examined beforehand and ordered to comply with the Communist Party's wishes. Without such an approval, the person was condemned to a life of drudgery and repression. It is not surprising, then, that Patriarch Alexei II, while yet a priest, was subjected to such a procedure. Should we not perhaps concentrate on the redemptive qualities and actions of many of these people who rose above the crushing stagnation of the Soviet era to rebuild the nation into a new Russian entity, with no trace of the "homo-sovieticus," while leaving the real collaborators in ignominy?

The authors constantly return to the 1991 uprising that was quickly crushed, and they show the influence the Patriarch had in its resolution. This, in turn, set into motion an attitude on the part of the governing and military bodies to view the Russian Orthodox Church as a magnet to draw nationalism, patriotism, pride and even prejudice together into a formidable movement. The authors also show how the Patriarch masterfully dealt with extremists on the right and the left, gradually obliterating them from the Russian mainstream.

With all these problems which arose in post-Soviet Russia, the authors carefully show how the Patriarch was skilled in diplomatically resolving them, how his immense contacts in the various regions and aspects of Russian life helped him in dealing with whatever arose.

It is a pity that the editors missed a few glaring errors, such as stating that all the Eastern prelates,

except Isidore of Russia, signed the agreement to union with Rome in 1453 in Florence. Saint Mark of Ephesus would not have been pleased to hear that, as he himself was the only hierarch who had refused to sign the document. It was apparently said by the Latins that, "If Mark of Ephesus does not sign, then all is lost." A number of other lesser inaccuracies occur, but mainly with the incorrect usage of titles. Also there seems to be some confusion regarding ROCOR and ROCA and their participation in the reunification with the Moscow Patriarchate.

Nevertheless, this book should be read by everyone interested in the rebirth of the Russian Orthodox Church because the clarity in illuminating this phenomenon shows us the power the Orthodox Church has had on the authors, one of whom is an agnostic, the other Lutheran.

In October and November of 2008, a delegation from the Russian Orthodox Church had made an unprecedented tour of Latin America, consecrating a large church in Havana, then continuing on to Central and South America. The Garrards would undoubtedly have been able to juxtapose these events with previous ones to show the prowess of Patriarch Alexei II in creating the Russian Orthodox Church as the uniting element in Russian society.

Perhaps there is a cryptic message in this work for each one of us, since the Orthodox faithful in North America are prone to divisiveness, suspicion and outright hostility, not so much to the heterodox, but rather to our fellow Orthodox believers.

Archdiocesan members In Orthodox media

As Fr Thomas Hopko noted in his article *A Spiritual Springtime for American Orthodoxy: Reflections on the last 40 Years*, Orthodox media in North America have come a long way in the last four decades. This past year or so, at least three members of our own Archdiocese of Canada have been very active in this fast-growing ministry field, with some recent new projects deserving particular attention.

Father John Hainsworth of All Saints, Victoria BC, has for some time been producing his *Paradosis: Studies in Living Tradition* podcast series for Ancient Faith Radio [<http://ancientfaith.com/>]. These talks are recorded as they are given to his parishioners and inquirers, centering on an Orthodox view of varied cultural and theological topics.

Also from All Saints parish in Victoria, Bev Cooke has recently published a new book with Conciliar Press. *Royal Monastic: Princess Ileana of Romania (The Story of Mother Alexandra)* was released this past summer. While researching the book, Bev spent some time at the monastery founded by Princess Ileana/Mother Alexandra, Holy Transfiguration in Ellwood City PA. There Bev was able to access documents and talk to the nuns who had known and loved this founder of Orthodox women's monasticism in North America. Bev's article about this experience appears online at the Conciliar Press site [www.conciliarpress.com/], as well as in the Fall 2008 issue of *The Handmaiden Journal*. The book may be purchased from Conciliar or on www.amazon.com.

Also on Ancient Faith Radio, Archpriest Lawrence Farley of St Herman's, Surrey BC, recently began a podcast series. Dubbed the *Coffee Cup Commentaries*, these daily podcasts are ten-minute meditations on Scripture for the busy listener. Like Fr John Hainsworth's *Paradosis* series, they can be heard when they are broadcast on the Ancient Faith talk schedule, or accessed at the archive page at any time. — *Matushka Donna Farley, St Herman's, Surrey BC*

Archbishop Lazar (Puhalo), *Not by Bread Alone: Homilies on the Gospel according to St Matthew*. Dewdney BC: Synaxis Press, 2008.



*Reviewed by Professor Ron Dart,
University of the Fraser Valley*

There is a variety of scholarly and devotional books in the marketplace on the Gospel of Matthew, and there is a long debate between the devotional and scholarly worlds about how to interpret and exegete such a text. The university and academia are often more concerned about intellectual rigour and the finest insights of historic higher and lower criticism. The devotional tradition tends to be more interested in the meaning and significance of the text for the heart and personal life journey.

It is from within the wisdom tradition of Orthodoxy that a more contemplative read of Biblical texts has emerged that evades both the scholarly and devotional approach to a reading and application of Biblical texts. *Not by Bread Alone*, by Archbishop Lazar (Puhalo), stands very much within the classical Orthodox tradition of contemplative exegesis.

There is no doubt that Archbishop Lazar Puhalo is one of the the most published Orthodox theologians in North America, and he is certainly one of the wisest and most insightful. The short and succinct homilies in *Not by Bread Alone* amply illustrate why Archbishop Lazar is one of the finest Orthodox contemplative exegetes today. The verses and chapters that are interpreted go straight to the pure gold of Matthew, then present distilled wisdom to the listening ear, heart and mind. Needless to say, the tome deserves many a meditative read and reread.

There are twenty-seven chapters in *Not by Bread Alone*, and chapters 1-26 deal with Matthew's Gospel. Chapter 27 is a short collection of homilies given over a period of years by Archbishop Lazar, in Juneau Alaska (1976), Pascha 2001, Pascha 2002, Pascha 2005 and Pascha 2007. This final chapter is a fine way to crown the book.

Not by Bread Alone is a must read for anyone interested in how to read, interpret and internalize sacred texts in a way that leads to transformation and deification.

Publishing in your parish

Very helpful advice about publishing both weekly parish bulletins and parish websites can be found on the website of the OCA's Diocese of the Midwest. The notes give good advice on both content and form. Check out <http://midwestdiocese.org/>, and click on the pertinent articles on the right sidebar.

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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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From the Archbishop's desk:

Dearly Beloved in Christ,

With this note, I would like to greet you all with the beginning of Great Lent. In asking forgiveness, I pray that you all will pass through the Great Fast in peace, prayer, and joy.

You all are certainly aware that the Archdiocesan Council, and faithful Members of the Archdiocese have for a long time been trying to organise our Archdiocesan Centre, "Fair Haven," to become truly a centre of our spiritual life and growth, in which all might feel welcome, and free to come to visit, pray, and even to rest, and to receive the Grace of the Holy Spirit. In the past, there have been generous contributions towards the Metamorphosis Project, and much has been accomplished. Much more needs to be done, however, and we are renewing our efforts to plan for the continuing renewal of Fair Haven, so that it can better serve the Archdiocese.

We will share more with you in the near future. In the mean time, at this time in Great Lent, in anticipation of Pascha, we are appealing to the generosity of you, our beloved flock, for contributions towards this renewal. Donations are, as always, tax-deductible, and can be accompanied by lists of those whose names you would like to be commemorated in the liturgical services of St Silouan's Chapel..

Thanking you all for your loving support, I remain, with archpastoral blessings, and love in Christ, yours, the unworthy

†Seraphim

Peresopnytsia Gospel, continued from p. 7:

Republic, Greece, Latvia, Lebanon, Mexico, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, USA, Croatia, Sweden.

The Primate of The Orthodox Church in America, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah, also sent his greeting to organizers of the presentation of the *Peresopnytsia* Gospel. This message was read on November 30, after the Divine Liturgy in the the OCA's Annunciation Cathedral in Ottawa. At this time, present also was Metropolitan Onuphry of Chernivtsi, who was making a private visit to our Archdiocese of Canada.

Pastoral Notes

7 November 08: **Deacon Daniel Boerio** was released from the Cathedral of the Annunciation in Ottawa, and from Archdiocese of Canada, and transferred to the Omophor of Archbishop Job of Chicago, and the Diocese of the Midwest, for assignment.

25 December 08: **Igumen Philip (Sperenza)**, retaining all his other responsibilities, was released from his attachment to the Monastic Community of St Silouan in Johnstown ON, and he was installed as Abbot of the Hermitage of the Protection of the Theotokos in Edmonton, Alberta.

1 January 09: **Priestmonk Basile (Paradis)** was released from his assignment as Second Priest at the Bishop's Chapel of St Silouan, while remaining a Member of the Monastic Community of St Silouan the Athonite in Johnstown ON.

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