



“Joy of All Who Sorrow”

No 25 December ‘10

MEMORY ETERNAL!

Of your charity, please pray for the repose of the soul of Mary Bond (nee Galitzine), foundress of our church, who died on 15 November, after a long battle with cancer.

Mary, the youngest daughter of Prince and Princess Nicholas Galitzine, was born in London. With her pedigree as a member of one of Russia’s oldest princely and aristocratic families, she could have presented herself as one of the grandest ladies in Suffolk, but that was not her way. She was shy and retiring to such a degree that few people would have guessed her background.

Being brought up in a pious Russian Orthodox family, the Church was very much part of her life. Moving to Mettingham in 1997 was not something that happened by chance, although the significance was not understood or appreciated at the time. Indeed, I remember a conversation I had with Abbess Tamara in Jerusalem, many years ago, in which I used the words “by chance” about something. Abbess Tamara corrected me by reminding me that nothing happens by chance, even if we do not perceive the reason at the time.

From 1997 to 2008 we supported the Orthodox Church in Felixstowe and travelled there every weekend despite the fact that it is a journey of 47 miles from Mettingham. Indeed it is from one side of Suffolk to the other. When we discovered that the church presence in Felixstowe was to end and be replaced by a church in Essex, it was a shock. Mary wanted a shorter journey on a Sunday morning rather than a longer one. Thus began the consideration of alternative options. We heard that the owner of the former Methodist church in Bungay might consider selling the building. The further we looked into this, it became obvious that there were too many problems. It was then that Mary decided to build, at her own expense, her own domestic chapel in the grounds of The White House, here in Mettingham. The chapel has been welcomed and appreciated by Orthodox Christians living in the area and is being used by the Church to raise the profile of Orthodoxy in the Waveney Valley (border of Suffolk and Norfolk) area.

Looking back, it is now clear that Mary was becoming ill as long ago as last Christmas. Sadly, at that time, the symptoms were not seen as indicators of anything really serious. Soon after Easter, it became clear that something was seriously wrong. Mary was admitted to the Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital, which she hated. This led to her being discharged too soon. With the result that she was re-admitted at the beginning of May and then it was discovered that she was suffering from a malignant duodenal tumour which was inoperable due to its extensive nature and her generally very weak condition. However, the treatment she received did give her a period of remission. In fact, during the summer Mary’s condition improved to such an extent that some people began, mistakenly, to think that the diagnosis was wrong. At the beginning of October, Mary’s condition took a turn for the worse, resulting in her admission, on Tuesday 9 November, to All Hallows Hospital, at Ditchingham, for hospice care. She reposed in the Lord at about 11.30am on Monday 15 November.

All Hallows Hospital was originally a cottage hospital, founded and run by All Hallows Convent. Today it is run by the NHS and they no longer do surgery there. It is now mostly used for convalescent care for people who have undergone surgery in one of the large hospitals. There is also a hospice ward for terminally ill patients and a day-care centre. Some of the character of the old hospital is retained. Each of the rooms has a saint's name over the door. Mary's room was St Andrew. The hospital has a calm atmosphere and this makes it feel like a very safe environment.

Mary's Requiem Liturgy and funeral were on Friday 19 November in her church. She was buried in the grounds on the south side of the church. No specific instructions were given concerning flowers. There were flowers, but some people gave donations instead. So far the total is £300 and this money has been given to All Hallows Hospital. If anybody else would like to contribute, we will pass on to the hospital any further monies we receive to thank them for their kindness to Mary in her last days.

The date for the baptism of Mary's newest great-niece, Ana Meade, had been arranged, before Mary died, for Saturday 20 November. It seemed ill-timed coming, as it did, on the day following Mary's funeral. But, on more mature reflection, it was obvious that Mary would not have wanted the date to be changed and so it went ahead as planned. Her dearest wish was that the church she had built would be loved and used. As just a building, it would be merely a monument, but as a living centre of church life it is truly her memorial.

The vast number of very kind messages I have received has been truly wonderful. May God bless you all for your love and care. Mary could hardly have imagined the volume of prayers offered for her both during her illness and now for the repose of her soul. I would like to share with you the kind words of Metropolitan Hilarion:

“I was deeply saddened to learn of Mary's repose. We had hoped and prayed that God would give her strength and healing to be with us longer on this earth. But now that our Lord has called her to Himself, we pray that He will receive her into His heavenly Kingdom to be in eternal blessedness among the righteous. May He grant her forgiveness for her sins, voluntary and involuntary, and that her memory may be eternal.

Please accept my heartfelt condolences with this painful loss and assurance of ardent prayers for your health and salvation.”

Mary's 40th day actually falls on Friday 24 December. Therefore, on Thursday 23 December, evening service will be at 6pm as usual. After this, at 8pm we will sing the panikhida (memorial service) for Mary.

Fr Dcn Andrew

ARCHBISHOP MARK'S ANNIVERSARY

On 30 November our superior, Archbishop Mark, celebrated the 30th anniversary of his consecration to the episcopate. There was a Liturgy in the cathedral in Berlin, to celebrate this memorable event, at which the concelebrants included Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, Metropolitan Hilarion of New York and Eastern America, Archbishop Feophan of Berlin, Bishop Agapit of Stuttgart and Bishop Sofian of Bravos (representing the Romanian Orthodox Church).

Below is the text of Patriarch Kirill's message of congratulations.

Your Eminence!

I send heartfelt greetings to you on the 30th anniversary of your episcopal consecration.

Your love for the Slavic languages revealed to you the beauty of Orthodox divine services and the depth of the legacy of the Holy Fathers. Accepting Holy Orthodoxy became for you the beginning of your great labours on the path of serving God and His Church. Gaining zeal for spiritual gifts and remembering the words of the Saviour: "He that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad" (Matthew 12:30), you left behind a worldly career as a brilliant philologist, preferring to labour in the harvest-fields of Christ.

Beholding your zeal and your prayers, the Lord has included you among the successors to Apostolic grace. As the Bishop of Munich and South Germany, you accomplished a great deal towards the reestablishment of the Monastery of St Job of Pochaev, towards the strengthening of the life of Orthodox communities of the Russian tradition in Western Germany, and for the education of the people of God through the words of the truth of the Gospel.

Elevated to the Cathedra of Berlin and Germany, you continued your archpastoral service with tireless purpose, love and zeal in the Lord. Following the Apostolic commandment, "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," you became an active participant in the discussions between the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia and the Moscow Patriarchate. With your carefully weighed arguments, you attested to the importance of re-establishing canonical unity within the Russian Church and greatly aided in the success of this God-pleasing endeavour.

In view of your earnest hierarchal service, I deem it proper to grant you a commemorative panaghia.

I prayerfully wish you physical strength and spiritual salvation, patience and spiritual joy. Through the mercy of the Saviour and Redeemer of mankind, may your archpastoral efforts continue to be fruitful to the benefit of His Holy Church.

With love in Christ,
+KIRILL, PATRIARCH OF MOSCOW AND ALL RUSSIA

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We send our congratulations to Archbishop Mark and wish him MANY YEARS.

SAINT ANDREW THE APOSTLE

Sermon by St John of Kronstadt

The holy Apostle of Christ, Andrew the First-called, was originally a disciple of St. John the Baptist who prepared the people to receive the Messiah. When the Saviour came out of the wilderness, the Forerunner told the people: "Behold, the Lamb of God" (John 1:36). Immediately Andrew followed after Him. Turning round and seeing him together with John's other disciples, the Lord asked them: What do ye seek? They answered: Master, where dost Thou dwell? He said to them: Come and see. The disciples saw where He lived and spent the day there with Him. Soon after this the Lord called Andrew and his brother Peter to follow after Him and told them that they were to become fishers of men unto the salvation of many. From that time forth, they remained with Christ; they were faithful to Him to the end and gave their very lives out of love for Him.

Dear brothers and sisters on this day I would ask you the same question: What are you seeking? Why did you come to church today? What are we all seeking in our lives? Are we seeking Christ, as He was first sought by the humble fishermen, among whom was the Apostle Andrew?

What is it that people seek in life: health, riches, success, acquaintances, friends, prestige, various worldly pleasures, vain knowledge... Only a few seek Christ the Saviour. Some may even think it strange to seek Christ. They say, we call ourselves Christians after Christ, we see His holy image both in our homes and at church; we pronounce His sweetest name and hear it in God's temple. It appears we have no need to seek for Christ. People seek that which they don't have, that which they need. But we seem to have Christ.

It's true, we have icons of Christ, but we do not have Christ Himself; we have His name, but only on our lips; not in our hearts; we know Him, but only in word not in deed. Here, beloved, is a big difference; it is the same difference as between a shadow and the object which casts the shadow. It is, however, precisely with the heart that Christ is truly known, that is, in our soul; because Christ, as God, is Spirit, "Who is everywhere and fillest all things."

The kingdom of God is within You (Luke 17:21), says the Lord. The holy Apostle Paul earnestly desired that through faith Christ would dwell in the hearts of Christians. He wrote: May God grant you according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith. (Eph. 3:16-17)

We have to admit that most of us do not have Christ in our hearts. Instead, our hearts are occupied with that which is opposed to Christ, our God and Saviour, that which is opposed to our own good, which hinders the salvation of our souls. And because of this we do not lead a genuine Christian life.

What is it that occupies our hearts? God alone, Who searchest out the hearts and reins (Ps. 7:9) sees what is in our hearts, its attachments. If the Lord granted us to see the full depths of our hearts, we would turn our eyes away in horror from such an overwhelming accumulation of filth. Let each of us look into his heart and say before the witness of our conscience what it is that occupies our hearts most of all. Passions, sins voluntary and involuntary, are these not our heart's constant inhabitants?

But where does Christ dwell?; in pure hearts, hearts that are humble and contrite, there where He is not grieved by doubt or unbelief, by indifference towards Him Who is God and Saviour; there where men do not prefer the temporal sweetness of sin; where the idols of the passions have been chased out; where crude materiality is not preferred to the Kingdom of God. where Christians often turn their thoughts to the heavenly, as those created for heaven, for eternity; there where they seek God's truth, where every day and every hour they are attentive to His commandments. Here is where Christ dwells. And what does He do there? If only we knew (some, of course, do know) what He does in souls worthy of His abiding presence; what rest, comfort and joy He imparts, what heavenly bliss He gives them to experience while still on this earth...

Having once embraced Christ, the holy Apostle Andrew became entirely committed to Him, and no matter what difficulties, sorrows, misfortunes and persecutions, unavoidable in preaching the Gospel, came his way, he remained faithful to Christ, enduring everything out of love for Him, even crucifixion.

It is of utmost importance that we seek after Christ and find Him. Without Christ, who will save us from our sins which ensnare us every day and hour, and from the eternal torments? Only the Son of God has power on earth to forgive sins; He alone has the keys to hell and death, the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven and life.

To find Christ is not difficult. He is everywhere, filling the world with Himself. God says to us through His prophet Jeremiah: "I am a God nigh at hand...and not a God afar off" (Jer. 23:23) As soon as He sees our hearts incline to receive His grace, He immediately enters, bringing with Him peace and comfort. I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me (Rev. 3:20), says the Lord. Oh, how often He converses with His

faithful servants, as with true friends. Christ Himself is seeking you: if you but incline your heart toward Him, you will surely find Him.

But how are we to know if we have found Christ and are close to Him? Those close to Christ often turn to Him in prayer with faith and love; they often pronounce from their heart His sweetest name, often call upon Him for help; they often read or listen to His word with childlike simplicity and love; they seek frequent union with Him in His life-giving Mysteries; they are satisfied with whatever they have and accepting of what happens to them; they strive according to their strength to fulfil Christ's commandments... It happens that they also experience trials which are allowed by the loving Master--in order that their hearts be cleansed of every sinful impurity. Those who desire to be with Christ must not run away from trials, but even in times of joy, they must not forsake the carrying of their cross.

My dear brothers and sisters! Seek Jesus Christ with faith and love. Do not forget that He gave His life on the Cross for our sakes, to deliver us from sin and eternal torment, and to dwell in our hearts, that we might have great joy. Do not forget, we have all been bought with the price of His blood, and we should belong to Him, as to our Redeemer.

Our days are numbered. Every stroke of the clock reminds us to seek Him Who created time and Himself stands above the measure of time. He alone is able to pluck us out from the ravaging torrent of time... Every stroke of the clock tells us: Be watchful! You now have one hour less until you must cross the threshold into life after death which knows neither days nor hours. Do not be seduced by the momentary sweetness of sin which vanishes like a dream, leaving the soul empty, ailing, anguishing; it steals away precious time and ruins it forever. Do not waste time in useless occupations or idleness. Every one of you has a God-given talent to put to use. Busy yourselves in acquiring incorruptible wealth in the Kingdom of Heaven. Take the example of the thousands who have gone before you, having attained eternal rest and joy through their ceaseless labors in this temporal life, through sweat and tears. Make haste to uproot from yourselves sin in all its various manifestations, through the help of Christ the Saviour. Remember, man sows what he reaps (Gal. 6:7), according to the immutable law of God's righteousness.

While there is still time, therefore, let us hasten to find Christ and in faith create for Him an abode in our hearts that we not fall prey to the fire of gehenna, as it is written: "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned" (John 15:6). Amen.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

Design A

Photograph of the Church of the Ikon of the Mother of God, *Joy of All Who Sorrow*, Mettingham taken in the snow last Christmas. These cards are published on behalf of the church and all proceeds will go to church funds. Folded card, in colour, complete with envelope - 25p each

Design B

CHRIST IS BORN! - design by Grace Meeking, folded card, full colour, with envelope 20p each

Design C

STAR OF BETHLEHEM - design by Grace Meeking shows the place of Christ's Nativity, which is marked on the floor with a silver star, in the cave under the Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem. Folded card, full colour, with envelope. 20p each

Design D

IKON OF THE MOTHER OF GOD with a silver riza, folded card, colour, with envelope 20p each

Design E

JOY OF ALL WHO SORROW Church in Mettingham - watercolour painting by John Constable Reeve, folded card, full colour, with envelope 20p each

When ordering cards, please add 15% to cover the cost of postage and packing.

CHURCH LIFE - Patronal Festival

On Saturday 6 November celebrated our Patronal Feast of the Ikon of the Most Holy Theotokos *Joy of All Who Sorrow*. Despite scaling down the arrangements, at the Liturgy there were guests from near and far, including Subdeacon Michael Astley from the Parish of St Elisabeth the New Martyr in Birkenhead, Reader Stephen Weston of St Fursey's, Sutton and our friend Nick Clarke, who made many of our church furnishings, and his wife. We were delighted to welcome Fr Philip Steer, who delivered a beautiful homily on the meaning of the Ikon. Despite the joyfulness of the occasion, it was a sad time for us, as our foundress Diaconissa Mary was ailing and only nine days later she departed this life. Rather than singing 'Many Years' as we would usually for the foundress of the Church on the patronal feast day, we sang a solemn 'Kyrie Eleison' for her. The Liturgy was followed by a buffet meal at the Emmanuel Hall in Bungay. Many thanks to all those who brought food and helped in the kitchen. Both in church and afterwards, we celebrated the festival as best we could under the circumstances, and we truly found joy in the midst of our sorrow.

Elizabeth Tattum-Smith

NAMEDAYS - To all who will celebrate a nameday this month, we send congratulations and wish you Many Years.

7 December - Great Martyr Catherine of Alexandria - Catherine Meyer

17 December - Great Martyr Barbara - Matushka Barbara Jones

19 December - St Nicholas of Myra - Nicholas Meade

Date given according to the regular civil calendar for convenience.

Orthodox Church of the Mother of God *Joy of All Who Sorrow*
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REGULAR SERVICES: Every Sunday 10.30am - Every evening 6pm

Extra services for festivals and saints days will be announced in the bulletin.

e-mail churchmettingham@aol.com Website www.joyofallwhosorrow.org.uk

Cheques for the church fund should be made payable to "*Joy of All Who Sorrow*" Church.

The account is in HSBC Bank, 3 New Market, Beccles, Suffolk NR34 9HQ

Account No 71395912 Sort Code 40-09-24