



## *“Joy of All Who Sorrow”*

No 19 June ‘10

### **THE FEAST OF ALL SAINTS OF RUSSIA**

The feast of All Saints of Russia is not a feast of just righteous ones, but of saints. God is filled with holiness; “Holy is the Lord our God.” But man is created in the “image and likeness” of God, and the Lord at creation blew into him the power to partake of the Divine essence and thereby come closer to God, and the closer a man is to God, the holier he is. Saints are those who have partaken of the Divine essence and made it their own; to God, they become “His own.” The saints enjoy blessedness, for God is blessed. From them there is light for men. Through them the power of God is revealed. Saints retain all that is characteristic of the human condition; they know everything that is ours. They are near to God, but they are also near to us; they walked and dwelt among us. The people of Holy Russia venerated them, kissed their icons and holy relics, wanted to be as close as possible to the saints, touched holiness, and the Russian land was filled with it. Holy Prince Vladimir demonstrated the regenerating power of the Divine essence upon himself. Previously wild and passionate, he was completely reborn, so that he became a new person, radiating light and joy, and was called “beautiful sun.”

Do not think that contact with holiness is the fate of only the Russian nation. No! All peoples can live in the spirit that Holy Russia lived and lives in, and then they are close and comprehensible to each other. St. Anthony of the Kiev Caves and St. Anthony the Roman were men of different countries, but together they built the Russian Church, and they are equally near and dear to her. Until recent times we did not have martyrs, but there was a multitude of saints. They influenced the direction that the Russian people took; the people loved them and tried to follow them, and this determined the way of life. All of life was illuminated, until spiritual apostasy began, which led to a fall. But Holy Russia is alive. When the persecution began, strugglers were revealed, confessors, and now we have martyrs. The spirit of Holy Russia lives. Holy Russia is part of the Oecumenical (i.e. the entire) Church. Celebrating the saints, we desire to be together with them and to acquire the power of God through their holiness. They know us, our nature, our characteristics and spirits, and they know our souls, too-what is necessary for us. We are close to them as children are close to parents. The Apostle Peter prayed for his disciples. St. Demetrius of Thessalonica rushes to help the Greeks because this is his own nation. Sts. Boris and Gleb help their relatives (e.g., Alexander Nevsky), and their own Russian people.

Sermon by Vladika St John

*[Note: the following Sunday (11<sup>th</sup> June this year) we celebrate all the Saints who have shone forth in the British Isles. What Vladika St John says at the end of his sermon can equally be applied to the ancient saints of this country, and their prayers for us.]*

*All Saints Day is always on the first Sunday after Pentecost. All Saints of Russia and All Saint of Mount Athos are commemorated on the second Sunday after Pentecost . Then on the third Sunday, we commemorate All the New Martyrs of the Turkish Yoke and All Saint of the British Isles.]*

## **CHURCH NEWS**

### **PLEASE PRAY**

In your prayers, please remember all who are sick and suffering, especially those known to us and for whom prayers are requested according to their various needs including: Mary, the foundress of our church, Priest Elias, Priest Peter, Hieromonk Athanasius, Archpriest Ilyan, Subdeacon Gregory, Matushka Barbara, Stephen, William-John, Grace-Mary, David, Leon, Ronald, James, Leslie, Laura, Catherine, Orlando, Anastasios, Jacqueline, John, Suzanne, Kenneth,, Elizabeth, Martha, Edna, Anona, Margaret, Thaisia, and Paul.

### **SERVICE TO HIEROCONFESSOR LUKE OF SIMFEROPOL**

On Thursday 10 June at 6pm, we will have an akathist to St Luke (+1961), a highly gifted scientist and surgeon who showed extraordinary courage and faithfulness in the face of the Soviet Regime. At the service we will be particularly asking the saint's intercession for the sick. If you would like anyone to be specially commemorated then please send us their name(s).

### **THE KURSK IKON OF THE MOTHER OF GOD**

The Wonderworking Kursk "*Root*" Ikon of the Mother of God; so called because it was found at the root of a tree near Kursk in 1295 following a Tartar invasion which had laid waste the whole area. It has been the instrument of numerous healings, including that in childhood of St Seraphim of Sarov . Also Vladika St John (Maximovitch) reposed before it in 1966.

Earlier this year we understood that the Kursk Ikon would be in Britain from 17-30 June visiting the parishes here. We have tried so hard to arrange for such a visit to Mettingham but several changes to the schedule have made this virtually impossible. The latest information is that the ikon has to be back in America by 26 June. This has all been frustrating and disappointing. However, if miraculously the ikon does arrive here in Mettingham, we will do our utmost let everybody know.

### **SOUROZH DIOCESAN CONFERENCE**

Mark & Elizabeth Tattum-Smith will represent our church at the Sourozh Diocesan Conference, the first weekend in June.

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## **40<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF SAINT GEORGE ORTHODOX INFORMATION SERVICE**

As was mentioned earlier, this year we reach the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of SGOIS and we had planned a big celebration on Saturday 24 July. Sadly, this is now in doubt because of my wife illness. However, a final decision about this will be taken at the end of June. - Fr Dcn Andrew

### **THE INCARNATION AND THE MOTHER OF GOD**

Below is an excerpt from an article by Fr Georges Florovsky of pious memory:

"But when the time had fully come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman" (Gal. 3:4). Now, what is the full meaning and purpose of this phrase: "born of woman?" Motherhood, in general, is by no means exhausted by the mere fact of a physical procreation. It would be lamentable blindness if we ignored its spiritual aspect. In fact, procreation itself establishes an intimate spiritual relation between the mother and

the child. This relation is unique and reciprocal, and its essence is affection or love. Are we entitled to ignore this implication of the fact that our Lord was "born of the Virgin Mary?" Surely, no docetic reduction is permissible in this case, just as it must be avoided anywhere else in Christology. Jesus was (and is) the Eternal God, and yet Incarnate, and Mary was His Mother in the fullest sense. Otherwise the Incarnation would not have been genuine. But this means precisely that for the Incarnate Lord there is one particular human person to whom He is in a very special relation, — in precise terms, one for whom He is not only the Lord and Saviour, but a Son.

On the other hand, Mary was the true mother of her Child — the truth of her human maternity is of no less relevance and importance than the mystery of her divine motherhood. But the Child was divine. Yet the spiritual implications of her motherhood could not be diminished by the exceptional character of the case, nor could Jesus fail to be truly human in His filial response to the motherly affection of the one of whom He was born. This is not a vain speculation. It would be impertinent indeed to intrude upon the sacred field of this unparalleled intimacy between the Mother and the divine Child. But it would be even more impertinent to ignore the mystery. In any case, it would have been a very impoverished idea if we regarded the Virgin Mother merely as a physical instrument of our Lord's taking flesh. Moreover, such a misinterpretation is formally excluded by the explicit teaching of the Church, attested from the earliest date: she was not just a "channel" through which the Heavenly Lord has come, but truly the mother of whom He took His humanity. St. John of Damascus precisely in these very words summarizes the Catholic teaching: He did not come "as through a pipe," but has assumed of her a human nature consubstantial to ours (De Fide Orth., 3, 12).

Of course, Jesus the Christ is the only Lord and Saviour. But Mary is His mother. She is the morning star that announces the sunrise. She is "the dawn of the mystic day". And in a certain sense even the Nativity of our Lady itself belongs to the mystery of salvation. "Thy birth, O Mother of God and Virgin, hath declared joy to all the universe — for from thee arose the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God" (Troparion of the Feast of the Nativity of our Lady). Christian thought moves always in the dimension of personalities, not in the realm of general ideas. It apprehends the mystery of the Incarnation as a mystery of the Mother and the Child. This is the ultimate safeguard against any abstract docetism. It is a safeguard of the evangelical concreteness. The traditional ikon of the Blessed Virgin, in the Eastern tradition, is precisely an ikon of the Incarnation: the Virgin is always with the Babe. And surely no ikon, i.e. no image of the Incarnation, is ever possible without the Virgin Mother.

[Note: 'docetism' was an early heresy which stated that our Lord was not really human, but only appeared to be so.]

## **NAMEDAY IN JUNE - MANY YEARS**

3 June (St Helen, Equal-to-the-Apostles +AD327) Helen Bardsley (Note: date given according to the regular civil calendar designation)

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Orthodox Church of the Mother of God *Joy of All Who Sorrow*  
The White House, Low Rd, Mettingham, Suffolk NR35 1TP Tel 01986 896708  
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](mailto:churchmettingham@aol.com) Website [www.joyofallwhosorrow.org.uk](http://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