St Herman of Alaska:

“let us love God above all”

28 November will be the Feast of St Herman of Alaska, a holy monk from Valaam Monastery in Russia who came to Alaska as a missionary. Below is the account of St Herman’s famous conversation with Vasily Golovnin and his crew.

Once [in the Summer of 1818] the Elder was invited to a frigate that had arrived from St. Petersburg. The captain of the frigate [Vasily M. Golovnin] was a rather learned man, highly educated. He had been sent to America by imperial decree to inspect all the colonies. There were at least twenty-five officers with the captain, likewise educated men. In this company sat a man of rather short stature, with worn-out clothing—a desert-dwelling monk, who with his wise conversation, brought all these educated men to such a state that they did not know how to answer him. The captain himself related: ‘We were at a loss how to answer, like fools before him!’ Fr. Herman posed one common question to all of them: ‘What do you, gentlemen, love more than anything else, and what would each of you wish for your happiness?’ Various responses began to pour out. Some wished for riches, others glory, others a beautiful wife, others a beautiful ship that he would command, and so on in the same vein. ‘Isn’t it true,’ said Fr. Herman to them, ‘that all your various wishes could be summed up in one—that each of you wishes that...’
which, according to his understanding, he considers the best and most worthy of love?’ ‘Yes, that is true!’ they all replied. ‘Tell me,’ he continued, ‘what could be better, higher than all, more superlative and most worthy of love if not the Lord, our Jesus Christ Himself, Who created us, adorned us with such good qualities, gave life to all, maintains and nourishes everything, loves everyone, Who is Himself love, and is more wonderful than all people? Shouldn’t one therefore love God far more than all things, and desire and seek Him more than anything?’ All began to speak: ‘Well, yes! That is self-evident! That is true in itself!’ ‘But do you love God?’ the Elder then asked. All replied: ‘Of course we love God. How can one not love God?’ ‘And I, a sinner, have been trying to love God for more than forty years, and cannot say that I perfectly love Him,’ replied Fr. Herman, and he began to demonstrate how one must love God. ‘If we love someone,’ he said, ‘we always remember him and try to please him; day and night our heart is occupied with that object. Is that how you, gentle-men, love God? Do you often turn to Him, do you always remember Him, do you always pray to Him and fulfill His holy commandments?’ They had to admit that they did not. ‘For our good, for our happiness,’ concluded the Elder, ‘at least let us make a vow that from this day, from this hour, from this minute we shall strive to love God above all else and to fulfill His holy will!’ What a wise and wonderful talk Fr. Herman conducted in society: without a doubt this conversation must have been impressed in the hearts of his listeners for the rest of their lives!”

Archimandrite Lazarus (Moore) (1992 – 2012)

2012 marks the 20th Anniversary of the repose of Archimandrite Lazarus (Moore). Below is a brief overview of his life from the Fr Lazarus Moore Foundation. Please join us on Monday 26 November at 7.30pm for a panikhida for the soul of Archimandrite Lazarus. We hope also to launch a special booklet on this occasion with the long obituary by Fr Andrew Midgley.

Fr Lazarus was born Edgar Moore in Swindon, England, on October 18, 1902. At eighteen he moved to Alberta, Canada and worked as a shepherd, longshoreman, farm laborer and on the railroad. It was here, in Canada, that Fr Lazarus experienced a profound spiritual awakening and heard “a call from God” to become a missionary. With God’s calling in his heart, Fr Lazarus returned to England to study at St Augustine’s, an Anglican missionary college in Canterbury, England, for five years. He was ordained deacon in the Church of England in 1930 and in 1931 ordained Anglican priest.

Fr Lazarus travelled to India in 1933, where he joined the Christa Seva Sangha, an Anglo-Indian brotherhood with an ashram at Poona. Studies in church history and tradition brought him to the Holy Land and Mount Athos where his desire to embrace Orthodox Christianity flowered. Fr Lazarus communicated with Russian hierarchs and visited Serbia. He was received by Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) into the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia (ROCOR), which at that time was centred in Sremsky Karlovsky, near Belgrade.
At Mikovo Monastery, before being ordained by Archbishop Feofan in January of 1936(?) to the Priesthood, Fr Lazarus became a monk. His heart and mind deepened in the Orthodox Faith, and he was assigned to the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission which is in Jerusalem, at the Convent of St. Mary Magdalene in Gethsemane. Two martyred saints, Grand Duchess Elizabeth Feodorovna of Russia and her fellow nun Varvara Yakovleva are buried in the church. Fr Lazarus worked closely with the Abbess, Mother Mary (Robinson) and Mother Mary (Sprott), also converts from Anglicanism. He taught at the school at Bethany (in Palestine) which was maintained by the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission. Here he completed a first draft for The Life of St. Seraphim.

But then war broke out. Battle and the ensuing social chaos forced Fr. Lazarus and his small community of St Mary’s to flee, on foot, through the desert to Transjordan. Following the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, the newly-founded state of Israel handed the property of the convent to the militant-atheist government of the Soviet Union, essentially dissolving the mission and convent.

Fr Lazarus then lived in the Transjordan area for one year and in 1952 returned to India, helping a group of non-Chalcedonian Syrian Orthodox in Malabar, South India, who had approached the Russian Synod seeking admission into Chalcedonian Orthodoxy. Fr. Lazarus stayed in India for the next 20 years. He helped in missionary work, translating lives of the saints and Church services, and writing. He served God with all his heart, mind and soul amid poverty, disease and political and social tumult. He broadcast radio sermons, labouring under extreme conditions of heat, bouts of malaria, and incredible isolation. Much of his translation work from Slavonic and Greek into English was completed and published during this time, often in the magazine Orthodox Life put out by the Jordanville monastery in New York.

Here Fr Lazarus translated the Old Jordanville Prayer Book, the Arena, the Ladder of Divine Ascent and numerous other manuscripts. He laboured with an old, manual ribbon-style typewriter transferring precious spiritual words page by page. He often had to curtail his labours because the electricity would go out. Because black cassocks were culturally offensive to local residents, Fr Lazarus wore a white cassock during this time. It was during this period, in India, that he met Ghandi, and Mother Gavrilia, the ascetic of love.

In 1972, Fr Lazarus was summoned to Greece, where he laboured and contemplated settling for good but in 1974, he was called to serve Australia. Here, his efforts over an 8 year period blossomed into what is today the thriving, beautiful Orthodox Mission of Holy Cross. During his time in
Australia, Fr Lazarus sought canonical release from the Russian diocese and was accepted into the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Antioch.

In 1983, Fr Lazarus received an invitation from Fr. Peter Gillquist to come and live among the Evangelic Orthodox Church in America to help their transition from Protestantism into canonical Orthodoxy. Fr. Lazarus accepted, and by 1987, several thousand individuals were received into the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese. Fr Lazarus lived in Santa Barbara for five years, a beloved elder and teacher for the thriving St. Athansius church where he touched many lives.

But by 1989, his health began declining and he moved to the community of St John’s Cathedral in Eagle River, Alaska. Here, Fr Lazarus shared the last years of his life helping the community of St John’s transition to Orthodoxy. On November 27, 1992, Fr Lazarus fell asleep in the Lord. On the fourth day after his repose, he was buried in St John’s Cathedral Cemetery. A clear sign of the Resurrection, the snowy, Alaskan landscape was miraculously thawed to reveal brightly-springing green turf. Three bald eagles flew overhead; Fr. Lazarus left us “travelling with angels.” Through his labours as a monk, priest, translator, teacher, friend and author, countless souls were, and still are, nurtured in love for and by God.

**Praying for the Dead**

To downplay the importance of prayer for the dead is a grave error. We fall into such complacency in various ways- ‘Everyone will be saved because God loves us’, ‘He was a good person,’ ‘She was Orthodox. ‘But as well as heaven, there is hell; although God is a loving Father, He is also a righteous Judge: ‘If the righteous is scarcely saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?’ (1 Peter 4:18).

Complacency is a dangerous snare which lures us away from our duty of care for the departed. The time of our present life is a time for action, while it still remains to us to pray for those who have gone before us, for after we have died, unless we gain boldness before the Lord with the saints, we will lose this ability. Besides, there is a story which shows that it lies within the power of the living to do even more for the souls of the departed than those blessed ones who stand before His throne!

...The renowned Staret Alexis of Goloseyevsky Hermitage...dozed off and saw before him the Saint [St Theodosius of Chernigov], who told him: "...I beg you...when you will serve the Liturgy, to commemorate my parents." ... "How can you, O Saint, ask my prayers, when you yourself stand at the heavenly Throne and grant to people God's mercy?" the priest-monk asked. "Yes, that is true," replied St. Theodosius, "but the offering at the Liturgy is more powerful than my prayer.

May this knowledge fill us with zeal for ensuring our loved ones are commemorated at every possible Liturgy.
Notes & Jottings
CATECHUMEN
Before the Liturgy, on Sunday 28 October, Christian Daniel was made a catechumen. Please pray for him as he prepares for baptism, particularly remembering him in the Litany for the Catechumens.

NEW ELECTRONIC ON/NEW E-READER VERSION OF BULLETIN
The first electronic edition of ON is going out this week with the hard copy mailing. If you haven’t signed up already, click here to subscribe to ON and receive each issue direct to your inbox. The Electronic edition will be fully illustrated and have additional content not in the paper version. It is possible either to download, view and print the electronic version as a pdf file, or, for a more authentic experience, try reading each issue through our new ISSUU E-Reader account. We will also use this account to publish the Joy of All Who Sorrow Bulletin so readers have a choice of format. Finally, you can now not only read each issue of ON, but also tell us what you think by commenting on specific articles/reviews through our new ON Blog. Take a look!

CALENDARS
SGOIS has 2 Calendars for 2013 in stock ~

St Herman Calendar – This calendar is in book form and is a lectionary. It gives details of the saints commemorated on each day throughout the year, together with the bible readings for festal services as well as both the Sunday and daily services. The theme for this year is Orthodox Palestine. £6.50

A2 size wall calendar – This is published by the Fund for Assistance, a charity run by the Russian Orthodox Church to give financial support to poor Orthodox communities and missions. Proceeds from the sale of this calendar contribute towards the work of the Fund. £10.00

SERVICES IN NOVEMBER
November has two important days for our church community, firstly, our patronal feast on Tuesday 6 November and then Founders Day on Thursday 15 November. It would be wonderful to see as many of our friends as possible on these occasions, please make a special effort to attend if you are at all in a position to do so.

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<tr>
<th>5 – 6 NOVEMBER</th>
<th>14 – 15 NOVEMBER</th>
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<tr>
<td>PATRONAL FEAST OF THE IKON OF THE MOTHER OF GOD: JOY OF ALL WHO SORROW</td>
<td>FOUNDER’S DAY: 2nd ANNIVERSARY OF THE REPOSE OF MARY BOND</td>
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<td><strong>Monday 5 November</strong></td>
<td><strong>Wednesday 14 November</strong></td>
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<td>6pm ~ Prayers before the Ikon</td>
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<td>7.30pm ~ Vigil (<em>with anointing with oil from the lamp that hangs over the Ikon of the Joy of All Who Sorrow in Moscow</em>)</td>
<td>7.30pm ~ Vigil for the Departed</td>
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<td><strong>Tuesday 6 November</strong></td>
<td><strong>Thursday 15 November</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>10.10am ~ Hours</td>
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<td>10.30am ~ Divine Liturgy followed by refreshments and fellowship in the College.</td>
<td>10.30am ~ Requiem Divine Liturgy followed by the Litia (weather permitting) in front of the grave. Followed by refreshments in the College.</td>
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<td>1.45pm (approx.) ~ Akathist in Honour of the Ikon Joy of All Who Sorrow.</td>
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CARDS
You can buy your Christmas cards and browse our new “Rural Scenes” blank card collection online through the SGOIS store. Profits from the sale of the Rural Scenes cards will go directly to the Mettingham Orthodox Trust.

Each folded card & envelope costs just 20p

NAMEDAYS
We send congratulations and wish *Many Years* to all who are celebrating a Nameday at this time especially:

3 November – *St Hilarion the Great* – Metropolitan Hilarion
27 November – *Holy Apostle Philip* – Archpriest Philip Steer

Church of the Mother of God Joy of All Who Sorrow
The White House, Low Road, Mettingham, Suffolk NR35 1TP
01986 895176
E-mail: churchmettingham@aol.com Website: www.mettingham.org.uk
Cheques 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
Registered Charity (No. 1145765)