

SELECTED DECISIONS OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX
CHURCH OUTSIDE OF RUSSIA

On 2/15 November, 1983, the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia HEARD: the oral report of the President of the Synod of Bishops, concerning the news received from Buenos Aires that, on 21 October/3 November, Archbishop Afanasy of Buenos Aires & Argentina reposed.

RESOLVED: 1. Offering up prayer for the repose of the soul of His Grace, Archbishop Afanasy, to take cognizance of the report on his repose.

2. To entrust to His Grace, Archbishop Laurus, together with His Grace, Bishop Innokenty of Asuncion, to perform the burial service for the late Archbishop Afanasy and to bury him in the place chosen according to the provisions of his last will and testament.

3. To entrust the administration of the Diocese of Argentina to His Grace, Bishop Innokenty of Asuncion, whose name is to be commemorated as administrator of the diocese in all of its churches.

[Resolved also:] To send His Grace, Bishop Innokenty a decree for appropriate action.

On the same date, the Synod HEARD: the petition of His Grace, Archbishop Seraphim of Caracas & Venezuela, to be released from the administration of the Diocese of Venezuela because of the state of his health and allowed to retire to a place of residence within the boundaries of the Diocese of Los Angeles.

Reference: By a decision of the Council of Bishops dated 30 July/12 August 1983, it was proposed that the Synod of Bishops release His Grace, Archbishop Seraphim from his see and permit him to retire, with the right to take part in the sessions of the Council of Bishops, when a petition to this effect is forthcoming from him.

RESOLVED: 1. In accordance with the petitions of His Grace, Archbishop Seraphim of Caracas & Venezuela, to release him from the administration of the Diocese of Venezuela and to permit him to retire to the Diocese of Los Angeles, and to retain the right to participate in the sessions of the Council of Bishops.

2. To entrust the administration of the Diocese of Venezuela temporarily to the President of the Synod of Bishops through the Dean, Archpriest John Baumanis.

[Resolved also:] To send a decree to His Grace, Archbishop Seraphim and to the Dean, Archpriest John Baumanis, to be announced to the clergy and parishes in Venezuela.

On the same date, the Synod HEARD: the oral report of His Grace, Archbishop Vitaly, that the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia's Diocese of Montreal & Canada and the Brotherhood of St. Job of Pochaev have been registered as corporations in Canada. In addition, His Grace, Archbishop Vitaly will submit these acts of incorporation to the Synod of Bishops.

RESOLVED: The report of His Grace, Archbishop Vitaly on the incorporation of the Diocese of Canada and the Pochaev Brotherhood are taken into consideration.

On the same date, the Synod HEARD: the account of Archpriest Valentine Ivashevich on the activity of the Holy Trinity parish in Buenos Aires, and, in particular, the renovation work being undertaken in the church.

RESOLVED: Noting the activity of Holy Trinity parish and the extensive labor for the renovation of the church with satisfaction, the Synod of Bishops recognizes both in this and in missionary-pastoral activities the energy and diligence of the rector of the parish, Archpriest Valentine Ivashevich, and expresses its gratitude to him.

The Synod also heard the report of Archpriest Vladimir Shishkoff on the pilgrimage to the Holy Land undertaken by the Organization of Young Russian Scouts, which was organized for the first time by A.Th. Zakharin. The pilgrimage went very smoothly and with benefit to the souls of the participants.

RESOLVED: To thank S.Th.Zakharin for the organization of the pilgrimage to the Holy Land and to invoke upon him the blessing of God with the bestowal upon him of a gramota.

On the same date, the Synod HEARD: the oral report of His Grace, Bishop Gregory on how the lamentable anniversary of the Russian Revolution was marked at Washington's cathedral. After the reading of the letter of His Grace Bishop Gregory, the address of President Reagan on the 66th anniversary of the communist usurpation of power was read from the porch.

RESOLVED: 1. To express our gratitude to President Reagan for his address on the recent anniversary of the usurpation of authority in Russia by the communists.

2. To note with thanks that a number of states of the United States, as for example New York, California and others, have marked this anniversary with special declarations.

On the same date the Synod HEARD: information reported by His Grace, Archbishop Laurus on the state of affairs at the St. Vladimir's Memorial Church, and also facts presented by the Diocesan Administration of the Eastern American Diocese.

RESOLVED: To consider the situation at St. Vladimir's Memorial Church at a special meeting with members of the administration of the St. Vladimir's Society.

On the same date the Synod Heard: the oral report of His Grace, Archbishop Anthony of Western America & San Francisco on the upcoming celebration in honor of Abbess Ariadna on the occasion of the 45th anniversary of her assumption of the abbatial authority within the Our Lady of Vladimir Convent in San Francisco.

RESOLVED: To greet Abbess Ariadna on the occasion of the 45th anniversary of her assumption of the abbatial authority in the Our Lady of Vladimir Convent, and to invoke upon her the blessing of God with the bestowal of a gramata.

On 18/31 January 1984, the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia HEARD: the oral report of His Grace, Bishop Laurus, concerning his intention to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land between June 1-20.

RESOLVED: To acknowledge the report of His Grace, Archbishop Laurus, to bless this initiative, and to inform the Chief of the Mission, so that he be aware ahead of time of the time of the arrival and the schedule of the pilgrimage.

On the same date, the Synod discussed the fact that the Synod has not received accounts of the life of Holy Trinity parish and the convent in Santiago, Chile.

RESOLVED: To suggest to Archimandrite Benjamin and Abbess Juliana that they send their reports on the life of the parish and convent, together with the school attached thereto, for the year 1983. Such reports must be made annually.

On the same date, the Synod HEARD: the resolution of the Council of Bishops dated 31 July/13 August 1983, concerning the acceptance of the text of the anathema against the heresy of ecumenism.

RESOLVED: To add to the Rite of the Triumph of Orthodoxy the following text:

"To those who attack the Church of Christ by teaching that Christ's Church is divided into so-called branches which differ in doctrine and way of life, or that the Church does not exist visibly, but will be formed in the future when all branches or sects or denominations, and even religions, will be united into one body; and who do not distinguish the priesthood and mysteries of the Church from those of the heretics, but say that the baptism and eucharist of heretics is effectual for salvation; therefore, to those who knowingly have communion with these aforementioned heretics or who advocate, disseminate, or defend their new heresy of ecumenism under the pretext of brotherly love or the supposed unification of separated Christians, ANATHEMA!"

[Resolved also:] To send a decree to all diocesan bishops concerning this.

On the same date, the Synod HEARD: the oral report of Bishop Gregory on the continuing work for the organization of theological courses at the Synod of Bishops residence, in the hope that they may open in the fall of the current year.

RESOLVED: To accept with satisfaction the report of Bishop Gregory on the progress made in the organization of theological courses at the Synod of Bishops, and to wish success to this good initiative.

On the same day, the Synod HEARD: the oral report of His Grace, Bishop Gregory on the fact that the custom of sending paper icons as festal greeting cards is becoming more widespread now. Many do not know what to do with them after the feasts and incidents of disrespect are possible with regard to them. The faithful ought to be warned that they should not send holy icons as greeting cards but should send cards of another type as greetings.

RESOLVED: To warn the faithful against sending icons as festal greetings which afterwards might be subjected to insufficiently respectful treatment inconsistent with their significance, and place the receiver in a difficult position with regard to the appropriately reverent disposal of them.

On the same day, the Synod HEARD: the oral report of the Secretary of the Synod on the question received from His Grace, Bishop Mark on the divergence in the newly printed Liturgicon of the form of commemorating the Russian people during the litanies at the liturgy and vigil.

RESOLVED: To ask Archbishop Laurus to take measures to disseminate corrections for the new edition of the Liturgicon.

On the same day, the Synod HEARD: the report of the Secretary of the Synod on how the Synod's Chancery is continually receiving petitions from various non-Russians who request that the Synod undertake to make them priests of the Church Abroad and appoint them to parishes in which the services are conducted in the English language. Similar questions

also arise concerning clergymen of other Orthodox Churches. In certain cases, the original petition is followed by reports from people who know the petitioners that they are persons of bad morals, not excluding even the sin of homosexual activity.

RESOLVED: Mindful that, not having the proper information in time, certain hierarchs may ordain to the priesthood, or receive into their jurisdiction a clergyman with a bad reputation, to request that all bishops exercise particular care with regard to candidates who do not have solid recommendations, and, before receiving them into their clergy or ordaining them to the priesthood, to check with the Synodal Chancery, to see if there is any information on the candidate in question.

For Western Europe, the Chancery of His Grace, Archbishop Anthony of Western Europe and that of Bishop Mark may serve for such a purpose.

[Resolved also:] To send a decree to all the bishops concerning this.

On the same date, the Synod HEARD: the decision of the Council of Bishops on the collection of funds for the major renovation of the Synodal Residence Building in New York and the draft for the Synod of Bishops' appeal for donations.

RESOLVED: 1. To approve and sign the appeal for donations towards the renovation of the Synodal Residence and to disseminate it widely amongst our flock

2. To take up a plate collection for this in all the churches of our Church on the Sunday of Orthodoxy.

3. To ask the bishops whose diocese are in countries where English is not used to see that the appeal is translated into other languages: German in Germany, Spanish in South America, etc.

[Resolved also:] To send an encyclical decree to all diocesan bishops and the rectors of churches subject directly to the President of the Synod of Bishops, concerning this, together with the appeal for donations.

On the same date, the Synod HEARD: the proclamations published by the American civil authorities on the lamentable anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution (November 7 N.S.) in San Francisco and other places. Archbishop Anthony has expressed his gratitude to the Governor of California for a similar action.

RESOLVED: To thank the Governor of New York, in the name of the Synod of Bishops, for his proclamation on the Day of Tribulation.

On the same day, the Synod HEARD: the proposal of His Grace, Archbishop Paul that the priest Nikita Chemodakov be awarded the Synodal pectoral cross for his diligent work in the construction of the church at the "Novoe Shamordino" Convent.

Note: The last award given the priest Nikita Chemodakov was that of the kamilavka, which was awarded him two years ago.

RESOLVED: By way of an exception and not as an example for others, to award the priest Nikita Chemodakov with the gold pectoral cross for his especially diligent labor in the construction of the church at the "Novoe Shamordino" Convent.

OTHER AWARDS:

In recognition for his many years of particularly diligent service, Archimandrite Gelasy (Maiboroda), who has reached the age of 80, is,

at the suggestion of the President of the Synod, awarded the right to wear a second jewelled pectoral cross.

A gramota is bestowed upon Boris Ivanovich Mitrokhin, choir director at the Non-Diveyevo Convent, for his particularly zealous fulfillment of his duties and for attracting young people and children to church hymnody.

A gramota is awarded to Alexandra Ivanovna Merger, head of the St. John of Kronstadt Fund in Los Angeles, for her zealous and active work, and also for the building of an old-age home to house twenty-two individuals.



**Synod of Bishops
of the Russian Orthodox Church
Outside of Russia**
75 East 93rd Street
New York, NY 10128
Tel.: 212-534-1601

21 January/3 February 1984
#1/51/6/35/

AN URGENT APPEAL

Faithful of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia!

In 1958, thanks exclusively to the generous donation of the late Sergei Yaklovlevich Semenenko, the Synod of Bishops acquired ownership of a beautiful building, in which it has proved possible to construct a magnificent cathedral, a second church in which the services are celebrated daily, as well as the offices of our pan-diaspora ecclesiastical center and living quarters for its staff. Since 1982 our building has been an official national landmark.

Hitherto, the Synod of Bishops has been able to maintain the building in fair condition, arranging for the interior to be painted and for minor repairs to be carried out. Now, however, the past twenty-five years have begun to take their toll on the exterior brick walls and the building's mechanical and electrical equipment. Time and the climate of New York have had their affect, and we are now confronted with the necessity of undertaking a major restoration of the building.

Considerable work on the plumbing and, to a certain degree, the heating system and windows, has almost reached completion; but much remains to be done in repairing the roof, drainage system, the stairway leading to the cathedral, and the walls of the building themselves. A general estimate of costs for these very essential repairs stands at approximately \$150,000, of which \$30,000 has already been invested, leaving a remainder of \$120,000, which is quite beyond the means of the Synod of Bishops.

For this reason, having familiarized itself with the general financial state of our ecclesiastical center, the Council of Bishops has adopted a number of resolutions, recognizing the necessity of issuing an appeal for donations towards the work of restoration and for the support of the Synodal Residence, to all the children of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, wherever they may live.

The Synodal Residence is, in the first instance, the permanent home of our Directress in the diaspora, the miraculous Kursk-Root Icon of the Mother of God. In the second instance, it is the residence of our First Hierarch, and therefore represents our Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia before all the Orthodox and heterodox of the world. To preserve and maintain it in good order is the obligation of each member of our Church. This beautiful building, situated in one of the best sections of New York, represents our Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia worthily and is now very important for its international prestige. That it be preserved in a state worthy of its significance depends entirely upon us.

The Council of Bishops has resolved to appeal to all the members of our Church to respond generously to its appeal and to bring about the restoration of the Synodal Residence to its proper state through the efforts of everyone, mindful of the fact that this property is our common heritage and that in donating funds towards its restoration we are investing in a task which uniquely serves our Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia.

Donations should be sent to the Synod of Bishops at the above address. Check should be made payable to the Synod of Bishops.

Metropolitan Philaret,
President of the Synod

Members of the Synod:

Archbishop Seraphim

Archbishop Vitaly

Archbishop Anthony

Archbishop Laurus

Member & Secretary:

Bishop Gregory