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PASCHAL EPISTLE OF THE FIRST HIERARCH OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH ABROAD
METROPOLITAN VITALY

CHRIST IS RISEN!

I greet you with these words, beloved brothers and sisters of our great Diaspora, dispersed throughout the world, on the Radiant Feast of the Resurrection of Christ. From all sides I can hear your triumphal, joyous response -- "Truly He is Risen!" For our Orthodox Pascha is not just a festival, but the Festival of all festivals, an event far exceeding all the events of this world. Pascha shakes the whole cosmos: the sun, by our faith, dances and becomes iridescent with every color of the rainbow, and all of creation rejoices. Some observe a magnificent silence, lacking the strength to express inexpressible feeling of Paschal joy which fills their souls. Others hasten to share their feeling of the Paschal triumph. All people and all things begin to move, the tedious vanities of this world are cast aside, and all are transfigured. Pascha is, first of all, in us ourselves, in our hearts. God's gift of the feeling of love penetrates our whole being, and we love each person and all things. This relates not just to the animal kingdom, but to the whole of creation, extending to the smallest blade of grass and the smallest flower. Nothing escapes our loving attention. May the Lord help us all to keep ourselves like this, for as such did the Lord create us. Amen.

Metropolitan Vitaly

Pascha of Christ -- in the year 2000

PASCHAL EPISTLE
of His Eminence Valentin,
Archbishop of Suzdal and Vladimir
to the Faithful Children of the Russian Orthodox Church

The Day of Resurrection! Let us be illuminated:
The Passover, the Passover of the Lord!
From death unto life and from earth into heaven...

Again and again, as the most treasured guest, from eternity the feast of Holy Pascha comes to us. Once more our hearts will rejoice with great joy and everything around us will resound paschally: Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

The human race has greeted this holiday variously. For some it was a joyous event. For others it was a great trouble, which kindled enmity and animosity not only towards the resurrected Christ, but also His followers.

From the Lord's grave the light of the Resurrection enlightened the world, because it annihilated death and granted everlasting life.

The Resurrection of Christ demonstrates to us, the Orthodox faithful, but also the whole world, that life is stronger than death, goodness stronger than evil and that love conquers hatred.

Faith in the Resurrected Christ is the very first condition for our salvation. "If Christ be not risen... our faith is also vain." (1 Cor. 15:14) "But without faith it is impossible to please God." (Heb. 11:6)

If we deeply believe then we are ready to sacrifice ourselves for the benefit of another person, because we live with love for our neighbor. Our love is evident when we are patient in times of trials, when we suffer with the suffering, grieve with the grieving and are joyful with the joyful.

Humankind is deeply connected to the world, therefore if humanity is saved, the world is saved. If salvation does not reach a person, he degenerates and finally perishes; and with him inevitably the world perishes.

We have lived through the proud, insane in its godlessness and blasphemy, 20th century. People who rejected the risen Christ, desired to build a new, bright, cloudless life -- a bright future.

Being foreign to the spiritual light, people were able to express only diabolical cruelty towards anyone and everything. Rivers of blood were shed, the nature was wounded. Impossible to achieve dreams of a worldly human happiness without faith and God, came crashing down like the tower of Babylon and there remained only a yawning emptiness.

We were deprived of the spiritual, but we also did not achieve the material. Was this lesson of some benefit to the human race? There are in preparation new models of "happiness for all the world," a new tower of Babylon is being prepared, even as Christ's commandment to follow His salvific Truth is forgotten, which leads to God, to truth and the eternal salvation. This is a path which God crowns with His blessing. The path of truth -- this is a noble and royal path. It has its start within the enclosure of the Church, established by the Lord and it ends in eternal life in the heavenly Church, which is rejoicing in the joy of her Lord.

It is very important that everyone who entered into this radiant night recognize himself as a part of body of Christ's Church. The Church about which the Lord said that "the gates of Hades will not prevail her." What does it mean?

St. Theophilus of Alexandria says: "For seamen God made the islands as a shelter and for the world, overcome by sin, He provided holy Churches in which the true teaching is preserved." ("Works," Moscow, 1858, p. 28).

But one must remember that the preservation of the Truth within oneself, within the Church, in many ways depends on our own decisions of will.

"Never, O man, can that which relates to the Church be corrected by compromises: there is no middle ground between the truth and a lie," warns St. Mark of Ephesus in his Epistle to Scholarius.

The entire past century, unfortunately, has been one unbroken effort to effect such a compromise in the Church. And what was the end result of this? The saving islands for those navigating this worldly ocean -- the holy Churches -- are everywhere desecrated by false teachings which were introduced into them. The enemies of Christ seek to destroy the Lord's work on this earth -- His Church. In place of the Church a false church is created; in place of the Pillar of Truth, the tower of falsehood. And what is most grievous is that this lie is believed by almost everyone!

"The faith in the Truth saves and faith in demonic delusion destroys," warns Bishop Ignaty Brianchaninov.

Without the restoration of the Orthodox Church there cannot be a genuine Paschal Festival in the Russian land. This is why there is no resurrection of our unfortunate Fatherland without even the slightest relief in sight, no stabilization of her condition. We see, instead, that Russia is sliding further and further into the abyss, and with her the rest of the world. Is not the pitiful situation in our Homeland evidence that the foundation -- spiritual well-being -- is being destroyed, without which no external well-being is possible.

In our lukewarm times it is vital to fire up our hearts with the energy of Divine Truth. The Lord when He gathers us into the Church, does not act with coercion and arbitrariness, but rather by selecting from the ranks of those living persons who are capable of making room within themselves the Word of His Divine Revelation -- the Word of Truth. "Know the truth and the truth shall make you free," (Jn. 8:32) once came forth from the mouth of Christ.

And in bearing witness to the immutable truth of our Faith, we cry aloud: "Truly He is risen!"

Beloved in Christ the Resurrected Jesus!

I greet and salute you with the coming of the Feast of the Lord's Holy Pascha, the radiant Divine Resurrection of Christ!

"The light of Christ enlightens all. Come and we shall walk in the light of the Lord" (Is. 2:5) "Our Pascha, Christ, is sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the Feast, not with the old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice nor wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." (I Cor. 5:7-8)

Let us be radiant with the dawn rays of Paschal joy; let us be bearers of the Orthodox light and Christian joy, flooding towards the life-giving Source, which is inexhaustible for those who thirst for the Holy Patristic heritage, which in our day some seek to replace with destructive innovations.

Let us preserve and strengthen within ourselves the spiritual foundation, upon which is built the temple of our souls, the temple of the Resurrected Christ, dawning upon the world with the light of His three-day Resurrection.

Christ is risen!

Truly He is risen!

with much love,

+ A. Valentin, Archbishop of Suzdal and Vladimir

TWO VERSIONS OF THE SAME EVENT

Church News received off the Internet a short history of the Holy Virgin Protection Church in Manchester, England, a parish which until 1996 was in the jurisdiction of Archbishop Mark.

According to this statement in the section entitled "Jurisdiction" it is related that "Originally our parish belonged to the jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad. With the agreement of the Archbishop Mark of Berlin and Western Europe, our parish joined the Diocese of Sourozh in 1997. The reason for the change of jurisdiction was the necessity to have a priest, who was not available from the Church Abroad at that time. The Sourozh Diocese kindly suggested the pastoral care of Archbishop Anatoly, and this was gratefully accepted. By God's grace, all took place in the spirit of love and agreement. Though fully aware of problems between various jurisdictions (sometimes by our human weakness and with the interference of the enemy of men even producing sharp conflicts), we wish to think of them as temporary...."

A second document we received comes from Archimandrite Seraphim (Scouratov) residing in England. Regarding the question of "jurisdiction" his signed report is as follows:

"I have spoken to Mr. George Dance of the parish council in order to establish the facts. Contrary to the statement regarding jurisdictional changes posted on the Internet, the Russian Orthodox parish of Manchester (formerly) 64 Clarence Road, Longsight, Manchester, Great Britain, did not leave the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad with the agreement of Archbishop Mark of Berlin and Great Britain.

The Manchester parish were without the ministrations of a priest, despite their appeals to their Archbishop. He aggravated the parish when he demanded the deeds to their parish property. They understandably refused to comply with this request, allowing him to take the antimins and after he had berated them for a lack of humility they asked him to leave the property.

Following this example of Archbishop Mark's dictatorial behavior, sadly not an isolated one, the parish decided to seek acceptance by the Sourozh diocese (Metropolitan Anthony Bloom) of the Moscow Patriarchate. Archbishop Anatoly of Kerch has now the pastoral care of this parish and due to the influx of new young Russians there is no possibility of a temporal or temporary measure of jurisdictional change."

Is not it amazing that the loss of this ROCOR parish to the Moscow Patriarchate was nowhere reported?

There was a contradictory Internet correspondence between Protodeacon Christopher Birchall and Vladimir Moss about this situation with the Manchester parish.

WORRIES OF THE NON-RUSSIAN ROCOR CLERGY

Noticeable deviations from some basic principles of the ROCOR in various places long ago has now created serious concerns, mainly among the clergy of the Church Abroad of non-Russian origin. While our Russian clergymen like ostriches hide their heads in the sand and in no way show their concern, the non-Russian clergy is sounding an alarm.

On March 31 there was put on the Internet a letter by Fr. Elias (e-mail: frelia@netdoor.com) addressed to: "Dear Fellow Priests and Monks of the Russian Church Abroad." It states that "A countless multitude of Orthodox Christians who are not Russian have fled to our Metropolitan Vitaly, and our Synod, not because they were russophiles, but because they felt forced to do so. Forced, by the compromises and betrayals of their own churches, no matter how much they loved them. We are the Synod in Exile.

But little by little things have been slipping over the years. We know that many of these were directly opposed by Metropolitan Vitaly, and his deputies have acted in defiance of his wishes.... Now we all know that the Metropolitan would never, never, never have blessed a priest of the Moscow Patriarchate to desecrate our altar on the Mount of Olives, or a bishop of the so-called "Paris Jurisdiction" to desecrate our pure chalice, seizing it and somehow communing our clergy on the Mount of Olives. I know that in my time of service there, Archimandrite Anthony (Grabbe) and his predecessor Archimandrite Dimitri, I would have been ordered to physically eject these traitors from the altar and from the church. In fact, I know of a certainty that both would gladly have died in preventing these traitors access to our chalice! What has happened? My letter to Bishop Gabriel has gone unanswered. Only by Fr. Alexis Duncan's personal conversation with him do we even know that he is still alive and well at Synod. The Synod met. No rebuke has been published. The sacrilege (yes! sacrilege!) has not been condemned. No one has been punished for this sacrilege, but quite the contrary, Archimandrite Bartholomew and Abbess Juliana, under whose guardianship this could never have happened, were removed with opprobrium!!! Isn't this unbelievable? Where are we headed?

Dear fellow priests, monastics, and faithful! We have been betrayed! It may not be clear by whom, but we have been absolutely betrayed... We are told that Archbishop Mark "hopes that it will not happen again"! What has he done to prevent it happening again? Twice we know from pilgrims. What didn't we know? What will the third time be? We know what was done to permit it; the reliable guardians were removed! What penance has Archbishop Mark done for this sacrilege? Fr. Alexis von Biron? Mother Moisseia? For the love of God, why were the watchmen removed and these set in their places? Didn't we all know what would happen? Our beloved Metropolitan certainly knew the character of Archbishop Mark when he wished to expel him from the Synod!"

The letter is signed Abu Jordan, Ibn Sina of the Sacred Scete of the Burning Bush.

The priest who wrote this passionate letter is an Arab.

Under this signature there is a short appeal by Fr. Andrew Kencis:

"Father write another letter to our 'ad hoc' list! We must stir up the troops!!!"

The reason (possibly with Archbishop Mark's knowledge) why a Moscow Patriarchate clergyman was permitted to serve in the Mt. of Olives Convent is not clear from this correspondence, but for the Paris bishop to serve there was a very "important" reason: some time ago he was the confessor of Abbess Moisseia!

Another priest, Fr. Alexis Duncan writes about it: "I am going to be quite straightforward and blunt. I am appalled at the difficulties with serving bishops and clergy from other jurisdictions in Eleon. However, I must also keep faith. We know with certainty the history of our church and the courageous stand our leaders have made over the past years. Today we see major changes and upheaval as the Church of Christ is tossed on the sea of the end times. The Church Abroad is different today than it was when I first entered her in the 70's. That is sad to me as I yearn sentimentally for these days. She still is the only place left."

ROCOR CHANGES TEXT WHICH ANATHEMATIZED ECUMENISM

The Council of Bishops of the ROCOR in Montreal in 1983 made a decision to anathematize the heresy of Ecumenism which disturbed many Orthodox circles. In regard to this, Metropolitan Vitaly (at that time

Archbishop of Montreal and Canada) in his leaflet "Orthodox Review" (#58 for April 1984) wrote: "Without doubt, the time for discussion and polemics has passed and the time has come to judge this movement and, however insignificant our Council of 1983 may seem, it has at last condemned Ecumenism and anathematized it in the following words: '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" of 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'..."

For a number of years this very same text was announced in the Synodal cathedral on the Sunday of Orthodoxy.

However in the meantime, there were widely circulating the rumors (even quoting the words of the Secretary of the Synod of Bishops, Archbishop Laurus) that during the sessions of the 1983 Council of Bishops the matter of Ecumenism, supposedly was never discussed but Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) behind the backs of the Council of Bishops without authorization inserted it as a conciliar decree.

However, the periodical "Pravoslavnaya Rus" (# 9, 1998) when reporting the major decrees of the Council of Bishops wrote: " In connection with the matter of Ecumenism, which at present is causing not a few problems even within the local Orthodox Churches, *after a thorough discussion of the question, it was decided to confirm the anathematizing of Ecumenism, the text of which had been approved at the conclusion of the Bishops Council of the ROCA in 1983* [italics added]."

Just a short while ago we received a tape-recorded cassette of the rite of the Feast of Orthodoxy, made in the Synod cathedral this year, 2000. According to this cassette, the above written text was changed to the following: "To Theosophists, and like heretics, to Masons, occultists, spiritualists, magicians, who have fallen away from the Orthodox Faith and who accept other (heresies) to the scandal of our brethren, to the persecutors of the Church of Christ and to impious apostates who attack the Church of Christ, and to those who have Communion with them, and with these heretics or who abet them, or defend the new heresy of Ecumenism under pretext of brotherly love or the unification of the various Christian groups: Anathema."

Since the original text of the anathema of the Ecumenical heresy was decreed by the Bishops' Council in 1983 and confirmed again with the same text by another Council in 1998, there inevitably arises the question: since between 1998 and 2000 no Council of Bishops was convoked, then, on what grounds has the Synod of Bishops (according to its statutes just an executive body within the Council) dared on its own to change a text that was approved by the two previous Councils of Bishops?

In any case, the new text composed by the Synod of Bishops not only demonstrates a presumption on the rights belonging to the entire Council of Bishops, but on top of that was watered down, and was combined with a long known anathema of atheists and others so as to now include Ecumenism.

SOME MORE ABOUT HOLY GHOST PARISH IN DETRIOT

In our last issue # 3 (85) for March in the article entitled "Beginning of an Exodus?" there was mentioned the Holy Ghost parish in Detroit, which left for the Moscow Patriarchate. Now, according to information from the Orthodox Christian News Service, Inc. on April 14, Priest Steven Sunderland was ordained to serve this parish and signed an contract with the Parish Council. Yet, quite unexpectedly the priest summoned an extraordinary parish meeting at which he declared that he is entering the Moscow Patriarchate jurisdiction. Rev. Sunderland insisted that this move was made in accordance with mutual agreement between himself and his parishioners, who number some 150 persons. Archbishop Alipy immediately replaced him and the Parish Council also stopped paying him his salary and life insurance after which the priest sued the parish on grounds of breach of contract. The lawyer of this parish, Mr. Cojocar, declared that there is no way this priest may continue ministering this church. According to the temporary decision of the court, Priest Sunderland is permitted to stay in the rectory until a permanent decision of the court which was to be handed down at the end of the Great Lent.

On Sunday (no date given) in this parish there were 2 services: in the church building by Priest Sunderland and for loyal parishioners to the ROCOR in the bingo hall.

According to the same agency, on April 23, the Court made a final decision favorable to the Church Abroad and requested that Fr. Sunderland leave the rectory. The former rector insists that only a part of parishioners was unhappy with his transfer to the Moscow Patriarchate and that "It was always understood that when the atheists lost control in Russia that we would reunite with the church in Moscow. A majority of our church members voted to switch." Yet the judge decided that the contract was drawn up in such a manner that it cannot be considered valid and has recognized the rights of the Chicago-Detroit Diocese.

Considering present state of mind of the majority of our episcopate and clergy, the story of Chicago-Detroit parish is an graphic example of future church events in every parish of the ROCOR as well as in Russia.

It is quite obvious that the ROCOR is facing big temptations, which as one can see, will start shortly after the Bishops Council scheduled for month of October.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE CHURCH IN AUSTRIA

The former Austrian Diocese of the ROCOR at present consists of some 7 parishes/communities in the jurisdiction of Mark, Archbishop of Berlin and Germany, and is ministered by two clergymen, who were just recently joined by one more. Before the Second World War there was a St. Nicholas church which in 1945 was seized from Church Abroad by the Moscow Patriarchate.

According to a journalist, Andrew Dubrov, in violation of the local laws in Vienna, which permit in the church the sale of candles only while such items as post cards and books are to be sold outside the church building and are taxable, the Moscow Patriarchate has a shop in our former church, selling church equipment under the pretext that the church property closely adjoins the Russian embassy and is under diplomatic immunity.

According to the Komsomol newspaper "Smena" ("Replacement") published in St. Petersburg, a clergyman of the ROCOR, Priest-monk Arseny, arrived in Vienna who was previously assigned to Copenhagen's St. Alexander Church in Denmark. The paper reports that the services are held by Fr. Arseny in a room belonging to an art-gallery. "The pride of Fr. Arseny is the church choir" in which several renown singers participate. "It is a fact that Fr. Arseny carefully follows politics, art and even sports." When he was informed that in Vienna there would be competitions for a figure skating championship, Priest monk Arseny... served a moleben for the victory of a Russian skater, Eugene Pliushchenko.

One must believe that this is the sole case of a clergyman of the ROCOR praying not for the health and salvation of an Orthodox person, but for their successful sports career. It would seem that in the sense of reviving the spiritual level of the communities in Austria, Fr. Arseny is not a great investment.

"THE STORY OF SUZDAL"

During the past year a richly illustrated booklet was published with this title about one of the ancient Russian capitals, the city of Suzdal which was founded almost a millennium ago.

Historical information about this charming little city was gathered by His Eminence Valentin, Archbishop of Suzdal and Vladimir, for an private publisher which published the booklet in three languages: Russian, English and German.

Unfortunately, it was discovered too late that the English translation in some places does not correspond to the Russian text and the German is very different from the English! Also, both translations have unauthorized abbreviations, and fabrications, made up by the "translators" for which the author of this article, Archbishop Valentin bears no responsibility.

THE MOSCOW PATRIARCHATE AND THE STATE

The newspaper 'Pravoslavlje' ("Orthodoxy") of the Serbian Church of April 1 relates interesting information about the nearly completed Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow. At present there are hurried efforts to make sure the church is ready for the consecration scheduled for August.

Within the cathedral there is under construction a meeting hall for 1,500 and a corresponding dining room. The arched walls are 8 meters high and are decorated with Florentine mosaics, stones and paintings. The meeting hall will be used also for concerts, therefore there are in the works special audio equipment to improve the acoustics.

The civil authorities which have already very generously contributed toward the construction of this church again demonstrated their generosity by giving the Moscow Patriarchate 20 million rubles (roughly one million US dollars).

As we reported in our January-February issue in connection with excitement of the "jubilee year" there were several offers made by the heads of the Churches as how to do something special for this occasion. Among them the Moscow Patriarchate announced it is going to publish an Orthodox dictionary of 25 volumes.

But now, as according to the newspaper "Pravoslavlje," the dictionary (the first of the 25 vols. is about to come out) is published not by the Moscow Patriarchate's funds but with grants from the Russian Federation and the city of Moscow! And this is while millions of Russian people literally live below the poverty line!

As for the relations between Patriarch Alexis Ridiger and the "authorities" already quite a bit has been said. Even the transfer of presidential power by Yeltsin to Putin was given the "blessing" of "Drozdo" who just "happened" to be present for this occasion!

The Austrian newspaper 'Neue Kronen' ("New Crowns") on April 23 published an article entitled "Russia's Putin is quite different..." with a photograph of Alexis Ridiger, Vladimir Putin and his 15 year old daughter Masha.

The article describes the special piety of Putin which he had to hide during the years of Communism so that he had his children secretly baptized with Ridiger's assistance. According to the article, Putin has a long standing friendship with Ridiger, who "in order to help the high standing churchgoing man to survive during the Soviet regime even got him a job with the secret police. Therefore today Putin can rely on the military, whose interests he always defended, and on the Russian Church. In the village of his birth there are rumors circulating that his grandfather was an illegitimate son of the "demonic monk" Rasputin, although Rasputin was a married man and never a monk! A public revelation about Putin being very pious (as opposed to the merely religious former president Yeltsin) resulted in appearance in the Vienna church of many members of the diplomatic corps, who come to church with wives and children in order to demonstrate their loyalty to the Putin's regime!

This information about the friendship between Ridiger and Putin was verified by Putin's personal declaration made to the Minister of the Austria's Internal Affairs Ferraro-Waldner, who said he himself recruited A. Ridiger as an agent of KGB so he can be more easily promoted within the hierarchy of the Moscow Patriarchate. Although, according to the Keston News Institute, in view of the scandalous commercial affairs of the Moscow Patriarchate, especially of its Foreign Relations department, for the time being Putin does slightly distance himself from the MP, believing that a close relationship with it might harm his political career, especially keeping in mind the close relationship of the Patriarch with such a dubious personality as Gulia Sotnikova, which has a bad reputation due to her illegal commercial activities. She regularly sits next to Ridiger during the most important official receptions!

Still despite the fantastic wealth of the Moscow Patriarchate, its relations with the authorities remain unshaken!

PLANS TO SEIZE THE PROPERTY OF THE ROCOR BY THE MOSCOW PATRIARCHATE

The newsletter "Vertograd Inform" in its # 2 issue for year 2000 published a cynical plan of the Moscow Patriarchate to seize all property belonging to the ROCOR.

According to this article: "The Deputy President of the Foreign Relations Department of the Moscow Patriarchate Abbot Mark (Golovkov) chaired on March 9 in the conference hall of the First Humanities wing of the Moscow V. M. Lomonosov State University a round table conference on 'Problems of property of the Church Abroad,' which was held within the framework of the First Conference of the Orthodox Press.

" 'The matter of church property is a closed area for studies,' remarked Abbot Mark. In this sensitive region it is necessary to have basic materials... and to tightly cooperate with the For. Rel. Dept. of the MP. In most cases,' said Fr. Mark, 'the problems of foreign church property arise in connection with the problematic relationship of the Moscow Patriarchate and the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia.'

"The interest by widespread church and secular circles in the problem of Russian church property abroad instigated the resistance which has lasted for more than two months in Jericho (Palestine) where the Palestinian government on January 15 evicted from the church real estate the representatives of the ROCOR in order to transfer it to the Moscow Patriarchate. In connection with this Fr. Mark criticized the stand of the Russian media and in particular, the 'NG-Religions' newspaper, which according to him 'expresses the position of the ROCOR.'

"The Deputy President of the FRD of the MP presented in detail a history of acquisition of church property in the Holy Land, its legal status and 'the experience with returning' this property to the MP to whose jurisdiction 3 properties were already delivered, which had belonged to the ROCOR. This take over was possible not only because Palestine has received its political independence from Israel, and because it wanted 'to strengthen friendly relations' with Russia, but because the Moscow Patriarchate happened to possess the titles of purchase for properties in Jericho and Hebron, which were previously kept in the Synod of Bishops archives and were stolen by unknown persons (Underlining by "Ch N").

"When discussing Russian church property in other countries, Abbot Mark specially paused on Germany in which until now there has been in effect a law of 1938, according to which the historical Russian churches are under the ROCOR's jurisdiction. According to Fr. Mark lawyers of the FRD of the MP at present are trying to end this situation and secure 'the return' of all the property to the Moscow Patriarchate. Similar real estate are located in Switzerland, France, Denmark, the USA and Argentina. The most effective way to extricate it from the ROCOR and transfer it to the MP according to Fr. Mark would be 'to use the channels of Foreign Affairs Ministry of Russia.'

"The participants of the round table discussed a wide range of matters connected with the status of church property in Georgia, China, Italy, Finland, Greece (partly on Mt. Athos) also and in other countries. In connection with that there was a discussion of contemporary state of relations between ROCOR and the MP."

The facts concerning this "round table" meeting are unequaled in their cynicism! Above all we have the revelation that the property deeds were "stolen" from the Synod's archives by "unknown persons."

Can there possibly be a more obvious treachery within the Synod administrative headquarters than to steal anything? Nevertheless, there are sufficient reason to know at least to one of those "unknown persons"

and give the name. We have in mind Synod's lawyer, Ms. Lena S. Zezulin, who with her colleague the lawyer Martin who raided the "Raskopki" (OPS property) in Jerusalem and managed to seize quite a few archive folders. Then, as we know from the communiqué published by the President of OPS in Paris, Mrs. Kameneff, Synod's lawyer L. Zezulin, while on a business stay in Moscow and transferred there a portion of the archives on May 22, 1995 wrote to Mr. Martin: "I have just this morning shipped my entire arbitration file to Russia, including originals of the affidavits, etc. If it all gets lost in transit, I shall have to reconstruct it from your files!" Can one have any doubt that the originals in question did happen to be "lost in transit"? Unfortunately, we do not know which originals of the deeds were "stolen by unknown persons."

It is also worthwhile to notice that at that time Bishop Hilarion was the Synod of Bishops Deputy Secretary, and freely permitted anybody to "work" in the Synod's archives, even employees of the Moscow Patriarchate! Once when protests were made to Bishop Hilarion by the former Synod office manager, he just shrugged his shoulders and declared: "We have no secrets in the Synod!"

It is quite obvious that the Synod archives, with the permissiveness of the Synod secretaries in general has been cleaned out. By accident it has become known that the original minutes of the Synod meetings of 1920's, the first years of ROCOR's establishment abroad, are missing.

If there were no traitors within the body of Synod of Bishops, it should sue in the first place its lawyer L. Zezulin and then the MP, since according to international law, the one who has somebody's stolen property is subject to the same laws as the thief. Before it is too late the faithful children of the ROCOR should wake up from passive dreams and demand immediate expulsion of its traitors from the Synod's organization.

ABOUT THE RUSSIAN "EXCAVATIONS" AND THE JUDGMENT GATE CHURCH IN JERUSALEM

The Russian Excavations in Jerusalem, belonging to the Orthodox Palestine Society, which has adjoining walls with Church of the Resurrection, is the holiest of our holy places in the Holy Land.

As a result of bad weather during the last 16 years, the roof of the building has started to leak and needs urgent repairs. The situation is so drastic, that due to the danger of the roof falling in, by an order of the municipal authorities the church is closed.

The administration of the OPS approached a German organization presided over by Elisabeth Weerret, who is a member of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre and a honorary member of OPS. She already has helped with the restoration of the Holy Sepulchre Church and of St. Mary Magdalene Church in Gethsemane and an agreement was almost complete when Archbishop Mark stopped this holy deed. Under the pretext that the benefactor was sending a group from Germany to inspect the premises, a group of German men was sent to view the inside of the building. An OPS representative, who was overseeing the restoration work, had no keys to the building and did not let them in. A few hours later, two members of OPS got suspicious and called the benefactor. She reacted very surprised and said she had never have sent anybody and it must be Archbishop Mark's doing who is administering the matters of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem. Archbishop Mark has no right to interfere with the independent Orthodox Palestine Society. The restorations have to be done before the rainy season starts.

It seems Archbishop Mark, by not permitting the restoration of the Excavations, has a sin on his conscience.

"ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA" DECIDES TO CANONIZE BISHOP RAPHAEL

The official publication of the Antiochian Patriarchate in America, "The Word," in its issue for May reported that at the synod of the "OCA" on March 27-30 passed a resolution to canonize Bishop Raphael, an Arab, who from 1904 was a ruling bishop of Brooklyn. He died in Brooklyn on February 27, 1915.

Before the Soviet Revolution, all the Orthodox dioceses in America, regardless of nationality or membership in any autocephalous Church were under the jurisdiction of the Russian Church since it was the first to found missionary parishes. While Bishop Tikhon (later Patriarch Tikhon of Moscow) was in America, at his recommendation, Raphael was ordained a bishop in 1904. His appointment was proclaimed in the St. Nicholas church in NYC and the ordination also in a St. Nicholas church, but in Brooklyn. Bishop Raphael was appointed as vicar to Bishop Tikhon and was ministering to the Syrian parishes. In the absence of Bishop Tikhon, he consecrated the land for St. Tikhon's Monastery in Pennsylvania, which became the very first Orthodox monastery in the USA. Before his arrival in America, Archimandrite Raphael was a professor at the Kazan Ecclesiastical Academy and held the chair for the Arabic language.

The decision of the 'OCA' to canonize Bishop Raphael was enthusiastically supported by the Antiochian Exarchate.

Bishop Raphael was a zealous and pious pastor and compared with the contemporary Antiochian modernist bishops he undoubtedly looks like a saint. Compare him with the clean shaven Metropolitan Philip who wears a secular suit with a panagia, lets himself be photographed with girls in ball dresses! At the beginning of the 80's the church magazine (by the way, established by Bishop Raphael in 1904) published a

photograph of Metropolitan Philip and Bishop Michael horseback riding in full cowboy attire with guns in their hands!

The rite of canonization was scheduled to be performed in St. Tikhon's Monastery on May 28-29 in Pennsylvania. The canonization committee consists of members of the "OCA" and the Antiochian Exarchate.

A BIT MORE ON THE "ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA"

As we reported before, the "Orthodox Church in America" remains shaken by financial scandals.

A newsletter published by the agency of Orthodox Christian News Service, Inc. of April 17, reported that the amount of money outside the auditing by the Metropolitan Council reached the amount of 3 million dollars.

In November of last year the Metropolitan Council approved a decision of the church administration to hire an independent auditor but so far there has been no information coming from the administrative center and the Chancellor of the "OCA," Archpriest Robert Kondratik three months ago refused to give any information regarding the auditing of the funds to be checked.

A declaration made by Nina Tkachuk Dimas, published by the newsletter, reveals that a whole number of statutes of the 'OCA' have been violated regarding financial book-keeping and purchases of real estate without the knowledge of the Metropolitan Council. It seems also, that the "discretionary" fund is not the only one which lacks bookkeeping records.

After the Treasurer of the "OCA," Deacon John Hopko was retired, three more executive officers of financial office of the "OCA" handed in their resignations and the secretary of Metropolitan Theodosius asked for a new assignment!

Nina Dimas sadly notes that the Metropolitan Council should urgently take the responsibility for this situation. At the same time, it will take a lot of time to restore the clergy's morale and stop further hemorrhaging of dedicated individuals who serve this Church.

A DEMONSTRATION OF ARABS AGAINST THE JERUSALEM PATRIARCHATE,

The newspaper of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the USA "The Path of Orthodoxy" for April-May reported that on a Sunday (no date given) there was a demonstration of some 200 Arabs in Bethlehem, who protested the "Judaization" of the Holy Land by the Jerusalem Patriarchate, which shamelessly sells land to Israelis. The Arabs stress that the Patriarchate sells land which previously had been donated to the church by their ancestors. But now "the Greek Patriarchate is selling land, they are not looking out anymore for the feelings, the aspirations, the demands of the Arab laity and Orthodox community in Palestine."

The demonstration was organized by the Chairman of the Arab Committee in Palestine, Marwan Toubassi. There was no response from the Patriarchate.

The Jerusalem Patriarchate owns a great deal of real estate in the Holy Land, and especially in the city of Jerusalem, which at present has much political value. Jews are trying with every means available to evict Arabs from the traditionally Arabic blocks of the city and therefore, any land sales, long ago donated by the Arabs to the Jerusalem church, creates a very negative reaction.

In 1967 Israel seized the Arab eastern part of Jerusalem and called it their "eternal and indivisible" capital, while the Palestinians hope to make the eastern part their capital. But the Patriarchate sells or rents these areas (for up to 99 years) to the Jews. Arabs believe that selling these lands just strengthens the "Judaisation" of Jerusalem.

Arabs are also very upset because the money received from these lands which they donated are never used to support impoverished Arabic parishes. The Greeks do not build nor even restore Arabic churches. Coming to the end of their patience, the Arabs are even considering barring ethnic Greek clergymen from the Arab churches.

DESECRATION OF THE CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL IN MONTREAL

A very conservative Catholic newspaper "The Wanderer" of March 23, reported that on March 7 a group of demonical feminists, screaming for abortions, stormed the cathedral in Montreal, dedicated to Holy Virgin and started to throw around the altar used sanitation napkins, condoms and dirty woman's linen. Then, with graffiti they spray-painted "Neither God nor Master" and "Religion, a trap for fools." These terrorists tried to overturn the tabernacle, but were prevented by two American tourists, who happened to be there. In the cathedral they yelled obscenities and blasphemies and started to rip the prayer books in the pews, until they were stopped by police, which finally arrived. But they still found time to burn several crosses on the cathedral stairs.

As a result, 7 persons were arrested, but despite a complaint about the public demonstration of hatred toward Catholics (at present a very fashionable reason for arrest) the police decided that no charges should be filed because "the elements were not there for that kind of charges" and therefore they will not be sentenced.

This attack of godless feminists was described in detail in the Canadian newspaper "National Post", but all the other major Canadian press outlets completely ignored this female rampage. It is interesting, that nothing was mentioned about this outrageous act also in the USA press or TV, which are so eager to find something sensationalist!

The National Post wrote: "Imagine the reaction if a Jewish synagogue in Toronto were attacked by an anti-Semitic mob.... Not only would the police charge those involved with everything from trespass to arson, to vandalism, to spreading hatred against identifiable groups, but federal and provincial human rights commissions would slap the offenders with civil actions as well," but "it happened in Montreal, and instead of a Jewish synagogue or a black church, it was a Catholic church that was attacked, robbed, vandalized and desecrated with a burning cross... What is missing, however, is media and political outrage, the usual outcry from the human rights lobby...."

HOMOSEXUALS IN EUROPE

The Christian News Service, Inc. of March 27 reported that the so-called European Union, consisting of 15 countries introduced to their parliament a project to give to homosexuals equal rights with people legally married. This project was sharply criticized by the head of the Greek Church, Archbishop Christodoulos who said in a sermon during a service, that giving equal rights to homosexual partners with married couples would mean to "to legalize a sin."

The Greek official Orthodox Church just recently confirmed her Orthodox views on sexual relations and called young people to follow the Church's teaching.

Greek homosexual organizations were very disappointed with this decree of their hierarchy. The leader of the largest homosexual Greek organization, Evangelos Yanellos declared: "I am a Greek citizen and I expect my government to protect my rights and not to have them interfered with by any church."

At present, more and more countries recognize the equality of the legal cohabitation of people of the same sex as those legally married in the church or even before a justice of the peace.

According to "U. S. News and World Report" of April 10, only two weeks after the state of Vermont officially recognized same sex "marriages" the largest group of "reformed Jews" immediately recognized this new law. The resolution about it was confirmed by a majority at the annual meeting of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, who represent one and a half million of Jews. They declared that the gay couples are "worthy of affirmation through an appropriate Jewish ritual." According to this resolution, the rabbis are allowed to officiate at same sex ceremonies, but are not obliged to do so. A Rabbi Menitoff admitted that during the last 25 years the reformed Jewish movement has sought to create a "hospitable environment" for homosexuals and lesbians and stop any "discrimination" against them.

Although the Holy Bible quite plainly calls homosexuality an "abomination" in the eyes of God and even demands that these perverts be stoned to death, the reformed rabbis found an justifying explanation. First, these rabbis do not literally believe in the God's law and claim that it was written by men who responded in it to contemporary times and situations; and, second, according to Rabbi Menitoff, now "we have more information. Sexual orientation isn't something we decide, we are who we are."

The marriage ritual of two women was performed by a woman rabbi, Suzan Schnur, which is also a blatant violation of Jewish traditions. Every Orthodox Jew in his morning prayers is to thank God for being created a man and not a woman.

COMPELLED TO RESPOND

At present, there is circulating widely among members of the ROCOR "an answer of an Orthodox priest to the Statement of the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad Addressed to the Russian People". This answer-letter is signed by a "clergyman of the capital city of Moscow, Leonid Kalinin, dated March 31, 2000." It was disseminated on the Internet in the Russian and English languages.

Since a month and a half have passed since this letter addressed to the Episcopate of the Church Abroad and it has not been answered by anyone, the Editor in Chief of "Church News" has taken the liberty of responding to this attack of a "clergyman of the capitol city of Moscow." Those interested, may obtain from us a copy of Priest Kalinin's letter by sending us a self-addressed envelope and \$1.00 to cover printing and postage charges.

Dear Fr. Leonid!

It is not without interest that I became acquainted with your widely circulated answer to the hierarchs of the ROCOR, with your response to the declaration of our Synod to the Russian people.

First, what attracted my attention was your declaration that 'I am a nobleman by blood' and only then comes the indication that you are a clergyman of the Moscow Patriarchate. Maybe it might be of interest to you to find out that of all the members of our episcopate, Metropolitan Vitaly is the only one who is a 'nobleman by

blood.' But in the Church what is important is not ancestry nor titles, but the preservation by a person of the Orthodox faith and principles.

You 'dare with solemnity, but firmly' to insist that 'that in the Russian Orthodox Church there were never such deadly sins that you, Your Graces, dare to charge it with, calling the Church an Apocalyptic 'wanderer' and then continue: 'I have no desire to delve into the fine points of the canons of this tragic schism between ROCA and the Moscow Patriarchate' (underlined by "Ch N"). Such a statement made by a priest from a capital city (which implies someone of better education and culture) is quite unusual. The Church, from Apostolic times has based her life on dogmas and especially the canons in which occasionally also are included doctrinal statements. But it seems you are interested only in the property which had been supported and managed by the Orthodox people in the diaspora of the Church Abroad and for nearly 80 years, whether well or poorly, was guarded from certain seizure by foreigners and now by the Moscow Patriarchate. You must know that your godless government in the 30's officially renounced any rights to church property outside the USSR! If the ROCOR had not taken care of it -- nothing would remain of it outside Russia. But now, in the guise of the Moscow Patriarchate, the political successors to Lenin and Stalin use the Russian Church once again to brazenly seize something they long ago abandoned and, for example, intend to establish a consulate and a hotel in the just recently seized property in Jericho.

You quite properly point out that the persecution of the Church by the atheists in Russia may have exceeded the persecutions by the pagan emperors of Christians during the first centuries. Yet, there is a tremendous difference between persecutions by pagan emperors and persecutions by Soviet atheists of the Russian Church. The pagans persecuted Christians as their political enemies. Every Roman Emperor had divine pretensions and accordingly demanded the worship of his person, while Christians saw God only in the Person of Christ the Saviour. Nevertheless, no matter how pagans persecuted and tortured Christians, they never made an effort to manipulate the inner liberty of the Church.

The persecution in Russia was quite different. Yaroslavsky, Touchkov, Kouroyedov, Karpov, Kharchev and Co. intended to spiritually destroy the Orthodox Church, and in exchange for compromises, provided her only with very limited external church services. Touchkov literally tortured Patriarch-Confessor Tikhon with his demands to surrender to him the internal liberty of the Church. In the end, he did not succeed. Then, right after the repose of Patriarch Tikhon, the atheists directed all their powers toward the rather opportunistic Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky), who at one time was even a Renovatist. Lured by the promises of atheists of legalization of an administrative center which he had usurped, Sergius Stragorodsky in 1927 published his sickening and treacherous 'declaration' in which in the name of the Russian Church he said that the 'joys' of atheists are also the joys of the Church and an attack against the godless government is equal to an attack against the Church! In addition, he misrepresented the teaching of the Apostle that 'there is no authority but of God' (Rom. 13:1). It is quite obvious that the Apostle had in mind the authority to preserve justice and order and not a power which was to lead the destruction of the Church. Instead of expressing the Church's interpretation of these words, Sergius Stragorodsky called upon the faithful to serve this authority conscientiously and not out of fear and to support the godless government and their helpers, which previously had been anathematized by the Patriarch-Confessor Tikhon and the Local Council of the Russian Church as well as by the Catacomb Church!

In the exchange of polemical letters between the New Martyrs and Confessors and Metr. Sergius, in which the former protested against his policy and his obvious usurpation of rights, he always justified his acts by saying that 'he was saving the Church!' By thus totally ignoring the faith of the Church that she is saved by her Head, Christ Himself, Metropolitan Sergius decided to 'save the Church' with lies and countless human compromises! It is specifically this new teaching of Metropolitan Sergius, that it is possible 'to save the Church' with lies and compromises with atheists, that the Church Abroad defines as the heresy of Sergianism.

As a result of Sergius' treachery, by the beginning of the Second World War, what actually had happened was the almost total annihilation of the Russian Church. When Stalin began to war against Hitler, he suddenly realized that he could use not only the patriotic slogans and army officers, but also the Church. And in 1943 he appointed Sergius Stragorodsky to the post of patriarch. At that time in the whole of Russia there were only 4 free bishops (including Sergius) and a few hundred churches. When putting together his very first synod at the behest of Stalin, Sergius could gather only 18 persons, mainly widowed priests and some Renovatist bishops.

You reproach the Church Abroad in vain for saying that Stalin appointed Sergius Stragorodsky patriarch. It is hard to believe that a priest living in the capital has no where and never read reports about the very first visit of this Russian hierarch to Stalin following decades of persecution. One of the very detailed reports was ascribed to Metropolitan Nicholas Yarushevich, a participant in this meeting.

The other 'patriarchs' who followed him were as well appointed by the atheistic government and all of them; thus, according to the 30th Apostolic canon, are illegal.

You write to our hierarchs that 'they are bringing shame to the Face of the Holy Mother Church in front of the people of this age. You arrange hearings at the US Congress; you write that Stalin founded the Russian Orthodox Church in 1943.' This is an indisputable historical fact and indeed it would be solely shameful, were it not for the glory of the Russian Church -- the countless New Martyrs and Confessors, who with their own blood

sealed their faithfulness to Christ and His Church and demonstrated their complete protest against the Sergianist treachery.

On the third page of your internet letter you inform us of an 'Hebron nun' who supposedly 'forgot herself in convulsive attack.' Your phrase about her would amaze one with its animosity even if it were written by a lay person and not a priest.

However, I agree with you in regard to a letter to the Pope by Nun Maria Stephanopoulos. It was in definite violation of the traditions of the Church Abroad. Whenever our councils of bishops or synods turned for support 'to the governments of the world' (e.g., because of the famine, caused by the Communists in the 30's) or to the heads of European religions in defense of Patriarch Tikhon, the Roman Pope was always excluded from such appeals.

You write that 'we, not you, are strengthened by the blood of New Martyrs, shed throughout Russia.' This sounds more than quite strange. It is not possible that you do not know even now that when Sergius Stragorodsky published his 'declaration' of loyalty to the godless government which sought to annihilate the Orthodox Church more than 90% of the parishes it returned to him in protest? It was the Church Abroad, and not the Moscow Patriarchate who in 1981 glorified these New Martyrs, while your Patriarchate is dragging its feet and pretends to 'glorify' the New Martyrs, who suffered for no other reason than for their refusal to accept his 'declaration' of loyalty to the Communists. It is a universally known fact that at arrests in that period the main question in the interrogation forms was one about one's relationship toward Sergius and his declaration. Is it possible that you also do not know that all the bishops who did not accept that declaration (and they were the majority), clergy and lay people -- the glory of the Russian Church -- became the New Martyrs only because they refused to follow the path of treachery of surrendering the liberty of the Church to atheists, which even to this day is faithfully observed by the successors of Sergius in the Russian patriarchal see.

I believe that in the matter of the glorification of the New Martyrs by the Moscow Patriarchate one can literally apply to her the words of Christ: 'Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchers of the prophets, and your fathers killed them' (Lk. 11: 47) and even more specifically those in the Evangelist Matthew (23: 29-32).

While visiting one of the major churches of the Moscow Patriarchate, I noticed an icon of the New Martyr Metropolitan Benjamin of Petrograd. Yet, nowhere was there an icon of Metropolitan Joseph, also of Petrograd, who was, one can say, a founder of the Catacomb Church. My question about it to a woman who was selling candles and books resulted in a very rude and abrupt answer: 'If it isn't here, it means it is not supposed to be!'

Is it possible that up to now you have not heard about the published report of V. Fourov, a Deputy president of the Council for Religious Affairs to the members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union? In it he broke down the whole episcopate (with names and titles) of the Russian Church into three groups: the first group are: Church officials who prove their loyalty not only in word and deed and not only their loyalty, but also their patriotic feelings toward the socialist social order by observing the laws on religious rites and educating their parish priests and their congregation in the same spirit... They are fully aware of the state policy of not expanding religion and the role of the Church in society and, thus they are not very anxious to expand the influence of Orthodoxy among the population (underlined by "Ch N"). This category includes Patriarch Pimen, Metropolitan: Alexis of Tallin...' and then follows a number of other names.

By the way, it was your present Patriarch who was the main persecutor of the very respected Bishop Hermogen (Golubev) who not only did not allow a single church in his diocese to be closed, but even managed to build two or three new ones!

The second group in Fourov's report consists of bishops who 'while loyal to the State, observing the laws concerning religious cults,' still seek to support the activity of 'ministers of cults' and their influence upon the religious and social life of their parishioners.

The third group consists of ruling bishops who have 'attempted in the past and presently attempt to bypass the laws about religious cults.'

As I stated above, acceptance of the prevailing demand of the militantly atheistic government over Church liberty and truth as legal, which became a sort of dogma in the Moscow Patriarchate is what we abroad call the Sergianist heresy. But this is not all.

When the heresy of Ecumenism started its spread in the West, in 1948 the Council of Bishops in Moscow in a very Orthodox and canonically based manner condemned this heresy and refused to join the Ecumenical movement since it denies the dogma of the uniqueness of Christ's Church. But in 1961, the atheists used the Church again for their political purposes. The Moscow Patriarchate was ordered to join the WCC, of which she is still a member, but under the pressure from the truly Orthodox of lower rank, they were forced to renounce public concelebrations with the Roman Catholics and other numerous Western heretics.

You speak very resolutely about the existence of only one lawful Moscow Patriarchate, but is it possible that you do not know about a multitude of Catacomb parishes scattered all over Russia and also of those, already open, who refuse to recognize the Moscow Patriarchate in their own Homeland and in no way are abroad?

Your letter to the Hierarchs Abroad, despite an assurance of your 'respect to (their) high rank and service,' unfortunately sounds as if written by a person too emotional and arrogant for a man, too harsh for a

clergyman, not very polite in manner and, besides, one who is little acquainted with the Church history of recent decades. By the way, at present in the church-owned stores there is already a large selection of very valuable publications, printed or reprinted in the homeland as well as abroad, consisting of documentational literature. However, as we know, the historical facts (even those which are indisputable) sometimes can be inexorably inconvenient. Maybe you also prefer 'not to know them'?

April 25/May 8, 2000

Anastasia Schatiloff

ECUMENIST CONCELEBRATIONS OF SERBS AND ROMAN CATHOLICS

"Vertograd-Info" in issue # 18-19 published information from the oldest Serbian newspaper "Litica" (a Christmas edition) that in the city of Sarajevo two ecumenical services of 'Orthodox' Serbs and Catholics were performed.

The first happened in the Serbian cathedral. This service was presided by the Serbian Metropolitan Nicholas of Dabar and Bosnia concelebrating with Cardinal-Archbishop Vinko Puljic. During the Liturgy two choirs sang: a Serbian Orthodox Church "Sloga" and a Catholic of St. Anne's Church. A day before, a similar service was conducted in the Catholic cathedral of Sarajevo.

The Catholic cardinal greeted Metropolitan Nicholas and the Serbian priests with him. In his sermon Metropolitan Nicholas in return greeted "people of good will" and said that their common prayer is dedicated to the progress of all people and nations. Cardinal Puljic responded with a reminder that Christ's Gospel is a common center and point of support of faith and that "everyone should contribute in his own surroundings to the unity of Christianity."

It is no wonder that this information stresses that this common concelebration of a liturgy between "Orthodox" Serbian bishop and a heretic Catholic happened for the first time!

It would be interesting to know how long some hierarchs of the ROCOR will, due to former sentimental feelings, continue their communion with Serbs? In Internet correspondence about a parish in Manchester, England, Vladimir Moss states that on April 8 Archbishop Mark concelebrated with 2 Serbian priests in the St. Edward Monastery in Brookwood (England). There are very few Serbian bishops who object to relations with heresy of Ecumenism, one is Bishop Artemije of Rashka and Prisren, but none of them is able to raise the flag of Orthodoxy and break away from their hierarchy, which at present is selling out the Orthodox Church.