



CHURCH NEWS

An Independent Publication of Orthodox Opinion

July, 2002
Vol. 13, No 8 (# 109)

Supported by the voluntary contributions of its readers.
Republication is permitted upon acknowledgment of source.

We apologize for the lateness of this issue
due to the loss via "electrocution" of the translator's computer.

Because the editor in chief is abroad during August,
our next issue will come out at the end of September.

CONTENTS:

DECLARATION OF THE METROPOLITAN OF SUZDAL AND VLADIMIR, VALENTINE,
CONCERNING THE VOLUNTARY GIVING UP OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL AND SECULAR AWARDS
A MURKY STORY
ABOUT A FEMALE "PRIESTHOOD" IN CONTEMPORARY "ORTHODOXY"
FROM THE LIFE OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OUTSIDE OF RUSSIA (METR. LAURUS)
ABOUT SEPARATIONS AND HOW TO OVERCOME THEM
FROM THE UNPUBLISHED WORKS
ABOUT THE SHAKEUP IN ROMAN-CATHOLICISM
A REVIEW OF THE SHROUD OF TURIN

CHURCH NEWS
639 Center St.
Oradell, NJ 07649
Tel./Fax (201) 967-7684

**DECLARATION OF THE METROPOLITAN OF SUZDAL AND VLADIMIR, VALENTINE,
FIRST HIERARCH OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX AUTONOMOUS CHURCH
CONCERNING THE VOLUNTARY GIVING UP OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL AND SECULAR AWARDS
AND HONORARY TITLES**

For more than a year a severe and cynical persecution has gone on of our Russian Orthodox (Autonomous) Church, of which the Lord decreed me to be the First Hierarchy during these extremely difficult times. To tell the truth, these persecutions have not ceased even for a moment since the very seizure of power over our much suffering Homeland by the theomachist Bolsheviks. They have spilled a sea of blood, exterminated the most worthy arch-pastors, pastors and lay people of Russia; they have driven our Mother Church into the catacombs, and presented to the people their false substitute, the "Sergianist" Moscow Patriarchate. With the OMON [specially appointed militia] truncheons they have chased our faithful pastors and children out of the few open churches which we managed to obtain as a result of "perestroika" and the collapse of the Soviet government. At every service our Church confesses herself to be persecuted, while praying for the deliverance of Russia and her people "from the bitter torment of the godless authority". Therefore it would be strange if we were to complain about the persecutions: "As they have persecuted Me, so they will persecute you also", said the Lord Jesus Christ Himself to His disciples.

However, the bacchanalia which has developed around our Church does introduce something new into the age long experience of persecutions to which the True Faith has always been subjected. The innovation of our present persecutors consists of a truly satanic cynicism and the lies that surround these persecutions. If the persecutors of our forefathers of blessed memory — the New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia and the True Orthodox Christians of the catacombs — plainly stated that they persecuted them because they confessed the Lord Jesus Christ, rejected godless materialism and did not recognize the theomachist Soviet government, then our present persecutors do not make the pretense to us of an actual ideological world view. They present us with accusations of a "moral" sort, something that to speak of or even think about is a serious sin for a Christian. These savage perversions that were invented by our persecutors and of which they accuse (not me alone, but practically all the children of our Church!) according to the words of the Apostle Paul, belong to the most shameful ones, about which "it is not proper even to speak".

Well, with sadness I must note that campaigns of this type are the norm for the information technology of "brain washing" trusting people to discredit people and organizations displeasing [to the authorities]. In our world filled with evil, all of this is worked out, even to the smallest details, and is being used successfully not only in the West, but also in Russia.

Sinful human nature has a sad characteristic — people, especially those who are distant from the Church, are the most susceptible to gossip and rumors, especially of the "shameful" kind. Our present slanderers who have decided to destroy the True Church of Christ in the Russian Land took that into consideration, and therefore mixed her holy and divine name with the most fetid satanic filth, with the most disgusting vice. By the way, the pagans of the Roman Empire, the ideological predecessors of the contemporary persecutors, acted in the same manner. They would incite simple people against Christians by spreading rumors that Christians supposedly secretly gathered at cemeteries at night, where they sacrificed babies and drank their blood.

The great majority of Suzdalites with whom I have lived side by side for 30 years now, until very recently simply refused to listen to the outrageous lies and slander against me (and against them also) that were spread by this "yellow journalism". That is why many were so shocked when, based upon irresponsible slander, an entire real criminal case was initiated and court hearings against me began. After attending several sessions of this process, mildly describing it, with a clear conscience, I can testify: in the criminal case there is not a single piece of evidence of my participation in those vile crimes of which I am being accused. And from whence could they come, since nothing of that sort was ever in my life, which my fellow-countrymen know perfectly well?

Presently, many have realized the main reason for the open persecution of our Church. It is the aspiration of the Moscow Patriarchate to become the only "Orthodox" confession in Russia and to liquidate her religious opponents. Previously, under the Soviet regime, the theomachist government would drive people into its own "Soviet churches" — of the Moscow Patriarchate, while closing the churches of the "Tikhonites", "Josephites" and of others who disagreed with the apostasy of Metropolitan Sergius. Now the opposite happens: now the Moscow Patriarchate demands that the state annihilate all those who disagree with her, and the first in line is the liquidation of our Russian Orthodox Church. It is precisely the Moscow Patriarchate that started this filthy campaign, and Suzdal's local authorities and Vladimir's regional authorities and law-enforcement agencies are acting directly under its influence. The priest of the Moscow Patriarchate, Andrew Osetrov, in particular has made a slanderous film, and has organized a false publication, slandering others and me in the newspaper "Prizyv".

Another priest of the Moscow Patriarchate, Dimitry Liotka, according to information from "The Express Gazette", has invited from Moscow the extremist organization "Nashe Delo" ("Our Deed") to Suzdal whose members have established control over the city. These people constrain the conscience of teenage "victims", forcing them with threats to bear witness to something that did not happen. Many of our church officers have been beaten up or were threatened. The hit groups made an effort to burn down the chapel belonging to the Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church in the Znamensky cemetery, to start a fire in the bishop's quarters where Archbishop Theodore (Gineyevsky) and three invalids live on

Slobodskaya Street, Number 1, and just a while ago they burnt down the property belonging to the family of one of our clergymen, because he refused to obey their demand to join the Moscow Patriarchate.

The convent of the Placing the Sash of the Holy Virgin on Vasilievskaya Street, Number 4, was set afire and moreover, the fire was set in one of the cells, located directly under the bishop's quarters.

Deception, violence, threats, beating up the innocent, slander and lies, are the main weapons of the Moscow Patriarchate and her collaborators.

According to the words of the Fascist ideologist Goebbels, if one constantly lies, sooner or later, even the most outrageous lie will be believed. To our great sadness, unfortunately it seems this happens to be true in our fairy-tale-museum of venerable old Suzdal [a city nearly millennium old, "Ch. N."]. It seems that the unusual for our city and absolutely unprecedented massive propaganda, which has lasted now without interruption for more than a year, has started to bring forth its toxic fruits. Many residents – simple Russian people – are defenseless before such impudent pressure on the part of the "black" *piar* (a public relations organization) especially after the "Suzdal-Vladimir *piars*" began to "reveal their teeth" – bringing to the city armored cars, driving them around Suzdal and openly hunting and beating up clergy and laity of the ROAC.

The mayor of the city, A Y. Ryzhev, including the law-enforcement agencies, either take no action whatsoever, or, something worse – simply protect these fighting groups. All our petitions and reports to the militia, to the regional municipal procurator, the city's administration and the City's deputy Council, even to MVD (Ministry of Internal Affairs) with requests to stop this lawlessness and restore order, remain unanswered. There remains no worldly defense for us in Suzdal – the spiritual center of our Church. That we are still alive and that we serve in our churches is by the exclusive mercy of God, a true miracle. Perhaps for a short while the Lord extends to us the opportunity to gather strength, that with dignity we can make the forthcoming path toward suffering for His Name.

Preparing myself to enter this blessed arena I have made a difficult but important decision: **To renounce all the ecclesiastical and governmental awards received by me over more than forty years and also the title of honorable citizen of Suzdal. By renouncing the ecclesial decorations, I want to testify to my final and irreversible separation from the "Sergianists" and the heretical Moscow Patriarchate – our main persecutor – as well as with "World Orthodoxy" which supports the Moscow Patriarchate and is more and more involved in the global heresy of ecumenism. By returning my government's awards, I unmask the hypocrisy of the Soviet government, which just recently "favored" me, and now so openly supports my being discredited and the annihilation of my own Mother Church. When renouncing the title of honorable citizen of Suzdal, which under the present conditions of unprecedented persecutions sounds like an open mockery of me and my flock, I want to declare that I have nothing in common with the contemporary criminal city authorities. This regime, which within only a few months has converted Suzdal from being a pearl in the Golden Ring of Russia, into a infamous center to the world of criminal chaos, where in broad daylight fighting groups drive through the city, seize and beat up clergymen and ordinary residents only because of their religious allegiance to another Church. As a bishop of this city, which is holy for me, I renounce and do not want to have anything to do with this disgrace, for which the city's administration is fully responsible.**

My beloved in the Lord fathers, brothers, sisters and God-beloved flock of the Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church, my genuine children in Christ Jesus!

My heart aches foreseeing what a heavy cross is prepared for those of you who until the bitter end will not renounce the True Orthodox Church. While there is still time, go to the church as often as you can, receive the holy ministration of Christ's Mystery, make every effort to obtain the gift of ceaseless prayer, read the lives of the holy martyrs, -- the ancient ones as well as the contemporary who suffered in the twentieth century. Only through these means of grace will you be able to strengthen yourselves and with dignity get through the forthcoming trials. If you will stay constant with the Lord, His grace will work within you and even during the moments of great sufferings, you will experience ineffable Paschal joy, which was felt by the hosts of martyrs for Christ. The world does not understand it, but a true Christian knows that to suffer for Christ is the most blissful fate and it is not given by the Lord to everybody to experience it in his lifetime. Therefore, no matter how absurd it will look to our persecutors, from the bottom of our hearts let us thank the Lord for sending us this period of persecution, for the hope of obtaining confessors' crowns and in this way inherit the Heavenly Kingdom, where nothing can separate us from the love of God.

+ Valentin, Metropolitan of Suzdal and Vladimir, First Hierarchy of the ROAC

July 2nd, 2002

In connection with the fire set on July 2nd, Metropolitan Valentin filed a complaint #122/10 to the office of the public prosecutor in Suzdal of the Vladimir region the following "Declaration to initiate proceedings of a criminal case":

Today, on July 1st, the building legally belonging to me in Suzdal, Vasilievskaya St. 4, was set on fire. As a result of this fire practically the whole first floor with all the property inside, has been destroyed. At present it is difficult to evaluate the sum of the loss; but definitely, it exceeds the amount allowed by the criminal law to the destruction of private property.

I believe that in the actions of setting up the fire there are indications of a crime provided by the paragraph 167 of UK RF. I also believe that the following persons have participated in this crime: Andrew Osetrov, Dmitry Krasovsky (former clergymen of the ROAC) as well as the members of the so-called organization "Nashe Delo" who reside within the Suzdal

territory for a number of months and who constantly threaten the clergy of the ROAC. Based upon the above, I REQUEST:

1. To open a criminal case as per paragraph 167 UK RF,
2. To investigate the participation in this crime of the above mentioned persons,
3. To take measures on part of the public prosecution office in order to prevent such acts in the future.

Metr. Valentine has already begun the restoration of burned out first floor of the house and the monastic church located there.

According to the bulletin Vertograd.Razsylka # 276, in his sermon of the Holy Ghost Day, Metropolitan Valentin informed the flock that originally the hearing of his case was scheduled to occur on June 24th but "due to obvious reasons," the hearing was transferred to the town of Kameshkovo (some 40 km distant from Suzdal)! Probably to make sure that as few as possible residents from Suzdal would be around the courthouse.

Vladyka also reported that in his absence the City Council has been discussing the possibility of revoking his title of the "honorable citizen of Suzdal". "And why do they want to deprive me of this," asked Vladyka. "For my spending 30 years to revive Suzdal, for restoring churches, for helping schools and kindergartens, for helping the needy? For the revival of the church life? For making Suzdal internationally known as a pearl of the Golden Ring, one of the sacred places of Russia? Or for writing a book about Suzdal and its holy places? They want to deprive me also of the status of membership in the City Council. Well, I say to you I do not need it. It was the people of Suzdal who elected me to carry this cross of serving them. I am not a politician; let politicians be busy with politics, the shoemakers – with making shoes and the cooks with cooking borscht. I stand for the principle that every one is to do his own job. I am a hierarch and an arch-pastor. If I will be deprived of the position of deputy in the City Council, I will have more strength and time, more means to devote to you, my flock. In comparison with eternity – all these status symbols and rewards are nothing. I am ready and willing to return to them everything that they have awarded to me. All the awards, the one I received from the Moscow Patriarchate and the Soviet government – 23 decorations from the Moscow and foreign Patriarchs – I am ready to give them all back – let them take back what is theirs".

Vladyka also reported that "a while ago the representatives of the Vladimir diocese of the MP approached him and promised to make him a ruling vicar if only he would "come back". However, the Metropolitan again affirmed that his choice of the Church was made once and forever and he will never return to the MP.

When returning to the matter of the court litigation, Vladyka said: "Those who went through the yellow press pf 'Prizyv', are no longer afraid of hell. After all they have accused me of being a killer, homosexual, pedophile, thief, Satanist, drunkard and drug addict... They have found the organization 'Nashe Delo' – they are fascists, it is enough just to enter their sight in order to find out that they are calling for overthrow of the government. They terrorize the kids, intimidate and threaten... They understand that acquittal means to give me a mandate to start litigation against the public prosecutor, against the mayor, against 'Prizyv', against the militia for lies and slander. They do understand it and are afraid. But I am afraid of nothing but sin".

Vladyka appealed to his flock to "stand firm in the Truth and be faithful to the Russian Orthodox Church" and reminded it that it has a whole Council of Bishops and even if the persecutors will gain a sort of 'victory' the flock will not remain without pastors.

As reported by Vertograd: "In conclusion, Vladyka Metropolitan noted that Mayor Ryzhov, Governor Vinogradov and "all the enemies of the True Orthodox Church" may not participate in the sacraments and common prayers, to visit the temples of the Church and be called Christians. As the main organizers of the present persecutions he named Osetrov, Krasovsky and Morozova, who are openly protected by the MP".

A MURKY STORY

A while ago we received by fax a declaration by Metropolitan Anthony (Bloom) of Sourozh, who for a number of years has presided over the diocese of the Moscow Patriarchate in England. In his address to the London flock, Metropolitan Anthony Bloom noted the unexpected appointment of Bishop Hilarion (Alfeyev) to the see of England has created within the parish a lot of disagreements. It was expected originally that the future Bishop Hilarion would be lecturing at Cambridge University. Then followed the decision of Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk that Hilarion should be appointed a bishop in England. This has immediately resulted in disagreements, because in England there was already Bishop Anatoly, who unexpectedly was put to retirement. Besides, the newly appointed bishop received the title of retired Bishop Anatoly. At the same time it became known that Bishop Hilarion is expected to take place of aged Metropolitan Anthony when he retires and who is 88 years old.

Metropolitan Anthony complains that "he is a junior bishop in our Diocese, he knows very little about the diocese, and it has hurt a puzzled many people". He also complains that the newly appointed Moscow bishop constantly uses the term "rule" and does not understand that the ecclesiastical ministry means to "serve" for the unity of the parish.

It is interesting to note, that Metropolitan Anthony stresses that he has known Bishop Hilarion for many years and that he is his spiritual son.

At the same time, quite unexpectedly we have received a few issues of the "Vestnik" ("The Herald") of the German Diocese of the ROCOR (L). The second issue for year 2002 reports that "Archbishop Mark has on invitation of

Metropolitan Anthony (Bloom) the ruling bishop of the Moscow Patriarchate in Great Britain visited him in his residence. Present was also the new bishop in England Hilarion. Metropolitan Anthony wanted with both Priest Vadim Zakrevsky (ministering to a ROCOR parish in Dublin, Ireland, "Ch. N.") and a Moscow Patriarchate (priest of a parish in Dublin) present to settle the disagreements that exist between the two parishes.

According to "Vestnik," in the evening Archbishop Mark led the meeting again and later served a moleben with Acatlist in the packed Dormition church in London.

"At the evening meal among the guests of Vladyka was George, Archbishop of Thyatera and Great Britain, who together with some parishioners was received in the parish building. The hierarchs talked about various ecclesiastical and religious problems. Archbishop George "has again affirmed his blessing for Fr. Vadim to serve in the Greek church in Dublin". Only after midnight did the hierarchs part in the traditional friendly agreement".

"Vestnik" does not disclose a reason for "disagreements" between the parishes of ROCOR and the MP! However, there arises a question: why does a priest of the Church Abroad get a blessing to serve in a New Calendarist church, because since 1956 the Church Abroad had no communion whatsoever with the New Calendarists"

ABOUT A FEMALE "PRIESTHOOD" IN CONTEMPORARY "ORTHODOXY"

An Internet bulletin "Religion in Russia/Problems" on June 13th has published an interesting article by Inna Ryzhkov, entitled "A Woman in the Church".

The author of this article reports "that of the problem in the Orthodox Church regarding the female priesthood one can find out only from the foremost Western brochures". Since the majority of people of various nationalities, belonging to the Orthodox faith long ago, due to many reasons (especially after the downfall of the Russian Empire) live among the variety of heterodox of many different religions – the heretical ideas of these surroundings imperceptibly sneak in into the midst of the Orthodox. Unfortunately, many among them can be considered Orthodox in name only.

The subject of the "female priesthood" was raised in the West some 30 years ago. In particular, this was the action of a French woman Elizabeth Ber-Sigel, who has published on this subject a number of books and just a while ago, one more. It is not surprising that a Western feminist is occupied with such matters and is publishing books of this sort. However, we are much surprised by something different: according to this article of Inna Ryzhkov "the forward to this latest scientific work [of the above mentioned French woman] was written by Metropolitan Anthony (Bloom), who noted that the Russian Orthodox Church [of the MP] should pay attention to this new phenomenon and to consider it in a friendly manner"!

Then it is reported that the contemporary modernist, the hierarch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate Archbishop Kallistos Ware has already admitted that over the last 20 years he has changed his mind about the female priesthood from sharply negative to the "moderately attentive".

This present bishop, while still a neophyte, at one time was a spiritual son of Fr. George Grabbe, the rector of the Synod Cathedral in NYC. The then Timothy Ware has published an excellent book on Orthodox Church, but with every new edition the book has become more and more ecumenical, so that recommending it to people interested in Orthodoxy was not only useless, but even dangerous. About two years ago the very same Archbishop Kallistos made an announcement in the press, that in view of new scientific discoveries a major part of the Bible is to be considered nothing but myth!

In her article, Inna Ryzhkov refers to New Martyr Grand Duchess Elisabeth, who established in Moscow a sort of monastic convent. She indeed approached the Holy Synod with a request to restore the institution of deaconesses. However, the opinion of the author that were it not for "the October Revolution" -- this idea might have been accepted -- does not correspond to the facts. The Holy Synod held a hearing about it in, but the petition was denied on the ground that the office of deaconess had ceased to exist for so many centuries that their service was no longer needed. Although the bishop ordained the deaconesses, their main duty was to assist priests at baptisms of women (anointing them with the chrism and holy oil) and to participate in the charitable work of communities.

To satisfy the feminists' aspirations the newspaper "National Catholic Reporter" in several issues has published an "open letter to Rev. Ludmila Javorova" (of Czech nationality) signed by The Womens' Ordination Conference, a voice for Women in the Church".

Javorova was "ordained" on December 28th, 1970 by the Catholic Bishop Felix Maria Davidek and served her first mass "together with Felix and Leo, Mary the Mother of Jesus, and all the angels and saints of God".

Certainly, the Vatican knows about this "ordination" but has been silent. According to Catholic beliefs "once a priest – always a priest". Catholics may suspend their priests, but to defrock them as happens in the Orthodox Church is impossible!

FROM THE LIFE OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OUTSIDE OF RUSSIA (METR. LAURUS)

Official information published by the ROCOR office through the Internet reports that "Due to the mercy of God, two clergymen out of the seven who went into schism, the Archpriest Michel and Priest Quentin de Castelbajac, have returned to the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia through the act of repentance... The return of these two priests of the Western-European diocese is a great joy for those who are upset by the schism within the Russian Church, but also a big blow for those who went into schism".

Undoubtedly, the key factor in the controversial actions of these two clergy was nothing but the matter of relations with the Greek Cyprian hierarchy. Fathers de Castebaljac left the jurisdiction of Metropolitan Laurus and following Bishop Barnabas joined Metropolitan Vitaly. However, when Metropolitan Vitaly was persuaded (probably by the Archpriest Victor Melehov recently accepted by him) to cut off relations with the Cyprianites, with whom he entered into communion in 1994 under the pressure from Archbishop Mark – the father and son de Castebaljac preferred rather to be in the openly pro-Moscow Metropolitan Laurus (who have not cut off relations with the Cyprianites) than with the group under Metropolitan Vitaly! Alas, for making such an important decision, they had sufficiently serious personal reasons: the daughter of Fr. Michel de Castelbajac is a nun in a Cyprianite convent!

The group of Cyprian can be characterized as “crafty Orthodox”. On one hand, the Cyprianites very convincingly preach that they are the Greek Old Calendarists; however, on the other hand, while calling the New Calendarists an “ailing church” they accept their mysteries and are waiting for a new “ecumenical council” which will either justify or condemn them. They craftily fail to mention that in our times there does not exist a New Calendarist church that would not be also ecumenist and ignore the fact that even if there were to be an “eighth ecumenical council” – it would be completely ecumenist.

According to the same Synodal information, as a result of the return of Fr. Quentin (who was a rector of a parish in Lyons) into the jurisdiction of Metropolitan Laurus a schism developed in the parish. “The majority of registered members of the parish (51 for and 35 against) voted to remain with ‘Bishop’ Barnabas and in schism”. So Fr. Quentin will suffer for his dubious “adherence to principles,” for he will have to vacate the parish building in which he has resided for a number of years. He has 4 small children.

In general, if one checks the roster of the parish addresses of the ROCOR for year 2002, in France there were 11 parishes and 1 convent. At present, in 6 of them, in place of the name of rector one reads “vacancy”.

ABOUT SEPARATIONS AND HOW TO OVERCOME THEM

An Internet bulletin “Religion in Russia/Problems” on June 11th published an extensive article (of 9 pages) by Alexander Zhouravsky entitled “The ecclesiastical-political aspect of separations and perspectives for overcoming them *regarding the relations of the Moscow Patriarchate and the Church Abroad*”.

Considering the manner of how the matter of a possible union of the ROCOR (L) and the Moscow Patriarchate is stated – one can assume the author discusses it from the point of view of the latter.

Even in the first paragraph the author says, “In this sense, the dialogue of the two parts of the Russian Church becomes not only actual and possible, but also necessary and unavoidable. The question is only on which basis this dialogue should develop, that is, what are the initial conditions, to which extent it can be with equal rights, as well as what are the expected and desirable results of this process”. (Emphasis by “Ch. N”)

In the fourth paragraph it is reported that: “At the same time, over the last two years events transpired which have considerably changed the position of the participants in the dialogue. After the Council of Bishops of 2000, and the retirement of Metropolitan Vitaly (Oustinoff), there came to power to rule the ROCOR those who are oriented toward dialogue with the Moscow Patriarchate. On November 13-16 in the suburbs of Budapest in the residence (now regretfully departed) Bishop Daniel of Budima (Serbian Patriarchate) on the initiative of the ROCOR there was held an ecclesiastical-scientific conference in which not only the clergy of the ROCOR participated, but also clergy of the Moscow Patriarchate.”

Participants from the ROCOR (L) clergy: Archpriests Victor Potapov, Alexander Lebedev, Nicholas Artemov. On the MP side were Archimandrite Tikhon Shevkunov, who is rumored to be the confessor of the President Putin, Archpriest Valentin Asmus and Hieromonk Evfimy Logvinov.

The report about this conference was published in the “Herald” of the German Diocese and it should be carefully analyzed.

On the second page the author could not restrain himself from slandering the ROCOR, telling readers that the “political engagement of the ecclesiastical opponents continued up until the fall of the USSR, since the MP was forced to defend the social justice of Soviet developments before the Christian world; and the ROCOR – after leaving Munich for Jordanville and the condemnation of fascism with which some of the hierarchs of the ROCOR collaborated – was forced to “take into consideration” the particularities of the American model of democracy and freedom of conscience”.

Every word in this paragraph is a blatant lie. The Moscow Patriarchate in no way defended the unpopular in the West Communist social principles, but at every conference lied before the whole world that now the Church in Russia enjoyed total freedom, while, at the end of the Second World War in the whole of Russia there were only about 3,000 open churches.

The Synod of Bishops of the ROCOR never moved to Jordanville. Metropolitan Anastassy went there for the first time in 1950 to consecrate the newly built church. And a temporary residence of the Metropolitan was in a resort in Mahopac (about 60 miles from New York) that was given to the Church as a gift by Prince S. Belosselsky-Belozersky.

That “some of the hierarchs of the Church Abroad collaborated with” fascism never existed in Germany: the National Socialist Party was in power. Mr. Zhouravsky has confused the histories of Italy and Germany. Nor does he mention a single hierarch who supposedly “collaborated” with the Italian-style Fascists in Germany.

The author of this article makes numerous analyses of various political and ecclesiastical points of view and in the end, comes to the conclusion that "In order to completely heal the separation it is necessary to overcome the mental discomfort which arises from the relations of the parties. It will end only after in both parts the active participants from the era of the opposition of both world systems were to change. The justification for this thesis is affirmed by fact of how the official position of the ROCOR has changed [regarding dialogue with the MP] after the retirement of Metropolitan Vitaly. In this situation time is the best physician".

Then the author continues his analysis for nearly a whole page discussing the origin of the Catacomb Church and numerous "True Orthodox" groups and he obviously, either sincerely or deliberately, does not understand their "sub-culture" which was formed namely under Soviet conditions of not simply persecutions, but intensive persecution of the illegal forms of religion [?!] to which catacomb members have definitely belonged; which were conscious 'anti-Soviets', that is, from the point of view of the Soviet law – political criminals".

After discussing in detail many catacomb and other groups related to them, A. Zhouravsky, definitely does not omit mention of also the Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church, as a negative entity in his eyes.

Towards the end the author believes that "despite the external and internal problems of the ROC MP and ROCOR – there are serious grounds for dialogue. For the ROCOR this is partly a matter of survival. The absence of canonical communion with majority of the Orthodox Local Churches, the reduction in the number of parishioners of the parishes Abroad, the political activity of the Russian parishes of ROCOR, the schism of 2001 headed by Bishop Barnabas of Cannes and the aged Metropolitan Vitaly, the final separation with the ROAC and ROTC and other newly emerged 'catacomb members' – all this makes the theme of the dialogue of ROCOR with the ROC of the Moscow Patriarchate and actuality".

It is interesting that only two paragraphs above the very same author admits the existence of the Catacomb Church from very early times and he even mentions that many among them still have not surfaced and many of them still have no internal passports!

The persecution of the Russian Church in Suzdal by the MP, which secured governmental support, justifies the precautions of the former catacomb members not to hurry with emerging into the open.

In his final chapter of this article, Mr. Zhouravsky offers to the MP "First of all... to renounce the idea of talking with the ROCOR from a position of power. It should not be forgotten that the ROCOR is not only a hierarchy, but also a flock, the Russian Diaspora, the émigrés of various waves of emigration, our fellow countrymen. At the same time, among the adherents of the ROCOR there are many foreigners, and consequently, the process of reunion gains a geo-political aspect. The Russian cultural influence in Europe and America at the time of the restoration of canonical communion between the ROC and the ROCOR will only increase. The position of Russian Orthodoxy will be strengthened in the Orthodox world. ...It is a necessity to minimize the painfulness of the negotiating process... There is also the necessity to act in an informal manner among the members of the ROC and the ROCOR. One should not try to hasten this process, but also not to artificially put the brakes on it. It is necessary to promote the development of common social initiatives among the lay people of both jurisdictions" and in order to achieve this, the author proposes the MP create a special committee for discussing the relationship with the MP, which long, long ago was discussed and published by the ROCOR's Councils of Bishops. He also offers to "discuss the possibility and conditions of a meeting between His Holiness Patriarch Alexis and Metropolitan Laurus. It is strange indeed, that the meeting of the Patriarch with the Roman Pope is constantly discussed, but a possibility of a meeting between the Patriarch and the First Hierarch of the ROCOR is considered to be impossible", complains this member of the Moscow Patriarchate.

Considering this plan of the Moscow Patriarchate, it is impossible not to recall the last will and testament of Metropolitan Anastassy in which, speaking of the Moscow Patriarchate, he declared that the Church Abroad "watching for her purity, should not have any canonical, prayerful and even ordinary social relations"?

FROM THE UNPUBLISHED WORKS

(A letter of Protopresbyter George Grabbe to Bp. Anthony of Melbourne, later of San Francisco)

Your Grace, dear Vladyka!

I write to you under the fresh influence of the conversation with the Metropolitan (Anastassy, "Ch. N.") regarding the telegram signed also by you. Vladyka Metropolitan decided to respond to it with a short telegram, but he was very sad that a hierarch wants the Synod to no longer do its duty as is verified by your and Vladyka Philaret's signature. But keeping in mind your usual friendly disposition toward me, I want to inform you of the actual situation because our Church is in a very dangerous situation and a hierarch must know it.

I have always honored Vladyka John, but now I do not understand him. He has fallen into the hands of destructive elements and is a tool for the destruction of our Church. I enclose a copy of the end of a characteristic article, which rudely expressed the tendencies of his circle. You know, I hope, that I am not prone to panic and therefore I hope that you will pay attention to my warnings.

Using the illness and weakness of Vladyka Tikhon, a group of crooks gathered around him who was stealing from the Church. Vladyka Anthony [of Los Angeles, "Ch. N."] started to open up this abscess and then he was attacked by all these dark elements. He became an object of slander and hunted by people who wanted to grab power from the hands of the bishops. This is typical: their lawyer — a former lawyer of Bolsheviks, renown for his inclination toward them, an initiator

and president of the meeting "in defense" of Archbishop John [of San Francisco, "Ch. N.,"], a certain Korestelev, a former associate of the Torgpred [a trade group] who on his own initiative went to the USSR to serve a military tour of duty, a young man, one of organizers of a sort of 'militant association' meant to terrorize the opponents of the former Parish Council and who served as a subdeacon of the Soviet bishop who recently came to San Francisco.

But the main thing is their propaganda against the very existence of the organizational center of our Church – the Synod. Here, due to his distractedness, one of the skirmishers became Vladyka Averky [Taushev, "Ch. N.,"], who hates everything "Anthonite" [Metropolitan Anthony Khrapovitzky, "Ch. N.,"]. His Grace Bishop Nectary took upon himself the active role of disinformant, who just recently warned us that those, whom at present he supports, were dangerous and dishonest people, who may create a catastrophe for the cathedral and the late Bishop Tikhon. Vladyka Nectary all the time informed us that Vladyka John supposedly was bringing everything into order and all that was necessary was to support him, while the situation was all the time getting more serious. This came to the present state not because the Synod interfered, but because Vladyka John did not accept the directions of the Synod, made according to the resolution of the Council. The main thing is that Vladyka John made himself dependent on non-religious crooks and in order to keep them happy began to pressure the honest church going people.

Pay attention to the Society of Lay People and the propaganda of Narciss Markelov. Vladyka John did not condemn this tendency so dangerous for the Church. To use a political parallel – the Society of Lay People is a Council of Soldiers and Workers Representatives. From San Francisco there comes a revolution against the very basics of the Church and, most certainly, it is directed in the first place against the Synod as the administrative agency. If the Bishops will not understand it, and will not stand up in defense of canonical principles, the revolution will spread everywhere and then it will be too late to stop it.

Vladyka Metropolitan sees it and is worried, but because of his age, he lacks the energy for the serious defense of the Synod and his own status. Do not forget that not a single resolution of the Synod is made without his participation and his approval. On his own initiative he has now sent Vladyka Vitaly to San Francisco. The struggle with the Synod, into which you were involved with the last telegram – is the struggle against the authority of the president. Vladyka Metropolitan was very saddened by this. He asked me: "But how could such a telegram be signed by the junior bishops?" He was especially surprised that Bishop Philaret, whom he considers in every respect so far to be not sufficiently knowledgeable of the situation of the life of our Church abroad, has signed it.

Alas, Vladyko, at present the matter is much more widespread than only the parish in San Francisco. At issue is the whole system. Our power was in existence of the center. Therefore, the Evlogians always strove to annihilate it. The tendency was to let the center have only the passive role of a powerless leadership, which could not actively oppose any kind of evil, coming from Paris. Now they strive not for this alone, but also to bring to power a mob that is guided by the dark powers.

Believe me, Vladyko, that in this matter I have absolutely no personal interest or attachments. I have always respected Vladyka John and for quite some time have had friendly relations with Vladyka Anthony [of Los Angeles, "Ch. N.,"] But I believe that, for the benefit of the Church, no one of them should be appointed as the ruling bishop for San Francisco. There must be some third person, which is in no way connected with the arguing groups. It will be very difficult for any one to straighten out the life over there, but for the above-mentioned hierarchs it is absolutely impossible.

But the main thing is the basics of church leadership and not to permit the revolutionary movement of the Society of Lay People to develop. If the hierarchs will not be of the same mind in this matter and will not force Vladyka John to stop supporting this uncanonical group, than sooner or later all of them will experience the consequences themselves and we will have the total destruction of the church life on all levels.

Asking for your holy prayers and blessing, I remain your Grace's devote servant.

June 7/20th, 1963

Protopresbyter George Grabbe

A footnote of the Ch. N. Editor: The main principle of the Society of Lay People was the affirmation that not a single resolution of the Council of Bishops of the Synod could be recognized as valid and having legal force unless it was approved by the laity!

In support for their revolutionary ideas the Society of Lay People established a whole number of publications in which all the hierarchs were very rudely abused who did not sympathize with the revolutionists, and the First Hierarchy of the Church Abroad, Metropolitan Philaret and the Secretary to the Synod of Bishops, Protopresbyter George Grabbe were called atheists who "for the benefit of the Church" should be immediately removed from their positions.

ABOUT THE SHAKEUP IN ROMAN-CATHOLICISM

A sexual scandal that developed about a year ago within the Roman Catholic Church has shaken up not only mainly North America, but also some countries in Europe.

The press gives us more and more information about a multitude of unexpectedly "retiring" priests (more than 2,000 are under investigation), also several bishops and enormous embezzlement of funds by diocesan administrations, used to settle out of court cases of pedophilia and homosexuality.

Being concerned by the size of this scandal, the Pope called the entire American episcopate to the Vatican for a conference. The conference occurred at the end of April. Soon after the Vatican conference the American bishops

gathered for their own conference in Dallas (Texas) at which it was affirmed that sexual offenses would not be tolerated in the future. However, these regulations in no way pacified the lay people. Quite reasonably they started to complain that not a word was said at the Vatican meeting, as well as in America, about the guilt of the bishops themselves, who, upon receiving information about the crimes on part of their clergy, would only transfer them from one parish to another and even recommend them to their fellow bishops in another dioceses.

At the same time, the faithful are extremely upset about the embezzlement by diocesan authorities of millions of dollars, which were donated by them and used to hush up the scandals. They more loudly and loudly demand control over church finances.

There is a question about what to do with already defamed priests. The episcopate has offered to use them in ministry in old age homes and hospitals, but to send those who are especially dangerous and with no hope for improvement into monasteries.

"The Catholic National Reporter" on July 5th quoted the words of a Trappist abbot of a monastery who said, "It certainly makes me wonder what kind of theology or religious life the bishops are operating out of. It seems, like many people, they're just clueless about what monastic life is".

Another abbot of a Benedictine monastery in Illinois said: "It is out of the question".

As a result of these temptations, many Catholics have lost respect and trust for the clergy and a substantial number of people are leaving their Church.

A REVIEW OF THE SHROUD OF TURIN

A newspaper "The Christian News" on June 17th published a report by Joe Nickell, senior research member of Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal, who has recently made a new research of the "Shroud of Turin". He came to the conclusion that the Shroud contradicts the account of documentary and forensic findings and disproves the cloth's authenticity.

First, the Shroud contradicts the evangelical account of St. John. The Greek text states that the Savior was wrapped in *othonia*: strips of linen, not a single large linen sheet.

Besides, the Gospel relates that large amounts of aloes and myrrh were used at the burial of the Savior, but no trace of either has been found on the Shroud.

It so happens that history knows of some 40 alleged shrouds. The earliest document is a bishop's report to Pope Clement VII, dated 1389. The report states that the cloth had been created as part of a faith-healing scheme, "the truth being attested by artist who had painted it".

Samples of what was claimed to be blood, failed the battery tests. In 1970 and 1973 it was established that the "blood" of the Shroud was red ocher and vermilion tempera paint.

Although it is very strange, one can see copies of this "Shroud" in several churches in Moscow!