



# CHURCH NEWS

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## DECLARATION OF MOTHER OF ONE ACCUSER OF METROPOLITAN VALENTIN

To: the Presidium of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation

From: Kutsyk Galina Valerianovna  
 Res. Ivanovskaya Region  
 Gavriilo-Posadsky Housing Development  
 3, Splavnaya St.  
 Passport serial # IX-SG-#532181  
 Issued by OVD Sombor Regional Comm.  
 Lvov Region, March 16<sup>th</sup> 1982

### DECLARATION

I, G. V. Kutsyk, am the mother of Evgeny Romanovich Kutsyk and Veniamin Romanovich Kutsyk, who have stated that they were persecuted by Fr. Andrew Osetrov, Fr. Dimitry Krasovsky and Sister Sophia Morozova, with whom they lived at one time when they worked for the church in Suzdal; that they demanded my children give some testimony and demanded that they be photographed in a video against Metropolitan Valentin and promised them money to buy a house and get them jobs.

In the beginning they refused, but then afterwards quite often some young people came from "Nashe Delo" ("Our Cause"). When I became interested in why were they coming and what they wanted, my son Evgeny answered that this is his hit-guard who promised to buy him a house.

I advised my son Evgeny Kutsyk to refuse and to do nothing of the sort, but my son Evgeny Kutsyk said that if he refuses, they might "pin him down". Then they several times transported him and I again advised him not to have anything to do with them; maybe a mother's heart felt this would come to no good end, but he replied that they constantly threaten him and he is frightened for himself. I strongly advise the Supreme Court not to accept the false testimonies of my son Evgeny Kutsyk and not to include his testimony in the case, as it was given under strong pressure and threats on the part of investigator Yegorov as well as on the part of young men from "Nashe Delo".

This is my declaration and request, made without any pressure from the victim or by lawyers, to which I do testify with my handwriting. December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2002

*City of Suzdal, Vladimir region, December twenty third, year two thousand and two,  
 Galina Valerievna Kutsyk*

### INTERROGATION

Moscow

September 9<sup>th</sup> 2002

by me, legal counsel for Judicial Consultation # 71 Interregional Association of Lawyers to assist citizens and employers, Ryzhov Vladimir Vasilievich, in concordance with the paragraph 9 "on lawyer's activities and the profession of a barrister" of the Russian Federation of citizen Galina Valerievna Kutsyk registered as residing in Ivanovskaya Region, Gavriolo-Posadsky Region, 3, Splavnaya St. Profession: unemployed.

The interrogation proceeded with my approval.

1. Has your son Veniamin related to you that Metropolitan Valentin proposed that he enter into sexual relations?

Answer: This I did not hear from my son Veniamin and he did not relate that to me.

2. Have you read the minutes of the interrogation conducted by the investigator Yegorov?

Answer: I have not read the minutes.

3. Did investigator Yegorov read the text of the minutes of you interrogation vocally?

Answer: No, the investigator Yegorov has not read aloud such minutes.

4. Did investigator Yegorov write the minutes by hand or print them on a computer?

Answer: Yegorov wrote them by hand.

5. What did your son Veniamin say about why he gave testimony against Metropolitan Valentin?

Answer: He was threatened that he would be sent to a mental institution: the threats were from Yegorov.

6. Did your son Evgeny tell you of threats on the part of investigator Yegorov?

Answer: Yes, the same as with Veniamin, that he was frightened that he would be put into a mental institution.

7. Did they indicate, and if so in what form, that the representatives of "Nash Delo" put pressure on them?

Answer: Yes. They threatened my son Veniamin, the threats were in form of pressure warning them about criminal responsibility for changing testimony.

8. Did the Members of "Nashe Delo" promise material rewards for testimony against Metropolitan Valentin and in what manner?

Answer: Yes. They promised to buy my son Evgeny a house in Suzdal, find work for him as a guard and from time to time give Him monetary rewards for small expenses.

9. Did Evgeny say that he has a guard?

Answer: Yes. He did and they came to us in the Petrovsky development.

10. Did the members of "Nashe Delo" often come to pick up Evgeny, and did they take him with them and for how long?

Answer: A week before the court hearing in August, 2002, they took Evgeny and he lived with them. That is why they came and he lived with the members of "Nashe Delo" for sometimes two days, rarely three.

I can only add and plead that the court not accept the testimony of my son Evgeny, but it be compassionate because he is mentally ill and is registered with a mental hospital. I have read this and have no objections.

*Herewith I testify that the above text is a transcription from the hand-written text into print.*

**Note:** Attention should be paid in this interrogation to the fact that one of the brothers, Veniamin, despite pressure and threats on part of the "mighty," firmly rescinded his earlier testimony against Metropolitan Valentin, while his sick brother Evgeny continues to be fully in the hands of the organization "Nashe Delo", which is forcing him to continue the slander.

Also: we have a copy of the Declaration by Metropolitan Valentin to the European Court for Human Rights in Strasbourg, France.

According to information we have received, this court has sent Vladyka Metropolitan verification that his appeal was received and was also assigned a case number. This is proof that the Court intends to hear this case.

### REPEATED DESECRATION OF ST. VLADIMIR CHAPEL ON ZNAMENSKY CEMETARY IN SUZDAL

According to Internet information from Vertograd/Razsylka # 343 of January 30<sup>th</sup>, criminals have again on January 27<sup>th</sup> desecrated the chapel built by the First Hierarch of the ROAC Metropolitan Valentin in Znamensky Cemetery in Suzdal. Assistants of the defrocked A. Osetrov already have previously desecrated this chapel.

According to this report "The blasphemers this time used liquid tar to paint inscriptions offensive to the faithful children of the Russian Church which was delivered to the cemetery by truck. Is quite obvious that this is not a prank, supposedly played by children, as the Suzdal militia wants to represent it, but an act carefully prepared by adults. The indirect participation in such wild crimes by the leadership of the Suzdal administration is seen in the fact that numerous cases of desecration of sanctuaries of the ROAC, acts of violence against her clergy and lay people, and stubborn refusal to investigate these cases, puts them in unfavorable light.

As it states further "the reaction of the law enforcement authorities to multiple cases of monstrous outrage upon the Orthodox testifies that they have placed the ROAC outside of law and have deprived her of the rights guaranteed by the Constitution and the international obligations of Russia to rights and liberty".

### AN OPEN LETTER ABOUT "ELDER" JOHN KRESTIANKIN

We have received through the Internet an open letter addressed to an MP priest who recently visited Pechory, the residence of John Krestiankin widely renown in Russia as an "elder". This letter is of interest from various points of view, therefore we have decided to publish it also in our publication. The letter is entitled: "About the health of elder John Krestiankin and other three elders of the MP".

Venerable Fr. George! In 1976 I was a novice in the Dormition Pskovo-Pechorsky Monastery, to which I was invited by Fr. John Krestiankin, whose own brother I helped to bury in the spring of 1976 at the German Cemetery in Lefortovo, and so, for 26 years I have known Fr. John and Fr. Adrian Kirsanov. Besides them, there are two other elders in the MP: Fr. Naum in the Trinity-Sergius Lavra and Fr. Cyril, also renown in the Lavra.

One should not forget that Fathers John and Adrian were also tonsured in the Trinity-Sergius Lavra; they are highly moral persons, but their "Orthodoxy" is questionable and this is why:

1. You will have no problems in finding the magazine "Continent" # 97 of 1998. In it the renown Archimandrite Zinon is interviewed by the editor Vinogradov, stating that he himself saw that Fr. John and other respected "Pskovo-Pechorsky elders" receive communion with a Catholic priest in the sanctuary of the Dormition Pskov-Pechorsky Monastery. It is also stated that secretly from the people, in the Trinity-Sergius Monastery, in the church in honor of the Smolensk Icon of the Theotokos an ecumenist Catholic church is established, and that services with Catholics also are held in the Ecclesiastical Academy.
2. Information verifying concelebrations with Catholics in the "Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate" # 11 of 1978. The reasoning of the Benedictine Monk (Priest) Boniface Titel (Austria, with a degree from the Leningrad Ecclesiastical Academy, p. 18-20).
3. Here we have the "Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate" # 2, 1983 with photographs on p. 51: On May 19<sup>th</sup> His Holiness Patriarch of Ethiopia Abuna Tekle Haimanot participated in the rite of Panagia after the end of the Divine Liturgy in the Pskovo-Pechorsky Monastery". The Ethiopian Monophysite, coming out of the St. Michael Church is blessing the people with the cross; in front goes Priest-monk Pimen with the chalice; later he left the monastery in the same way as many others have done. The inscription of the left is significant: "May 6<sup>th</sup> at the invitation of the preliminary International Committee for the World Conference of 'Religious activists for the preservation of the sacred gift of life from nuclear catastrophe' which was held on May 10-14." Representatives of the Ethiopian church arrived in Moscow headed by His Holiness Patriarch Abuna Tekle Haimanot. He was accompanied by Archbishop

Gabriel Abba, Bishop Abba Garima (Volde Selentant Kirkos), Archimandrite Elias (Teke Selintant Elias Abebe), and Deacon Abebau Igzau. From the 16<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> the esteemed guests visited ancient Pskov, Pushkin Mountains, the village of Trigoroskoye where they visited A. S. Pushkin's grave in the Sviatorogsky Monastery, as well as Pskov-Pechersky Monastery in which they prayed in St. Michael Cathedral.

After the service, the guests were greeted by the Deputy Archimandrite Gabriel.

In a response, His Holiness Ethiopian Patriarch Abuna Tekle Heimanot expressed his deep gratitude to Patriarch Pimen and to the hospitable owners of the community. From the St. Michael Cathedral the guests proceeded to the monastery's refectory, where after dinner "many years" was proclaimed for the representatives of the Ethiopian Church".

Please note, honored Fr. George, that in Pskov there are many empty churches which are falling apart. Two such churches are in Isborsk in the Pechora region. Why would not the authorities hand these churches over to Suzdal's Metropolitan Valentin so that to the 1100 year jubilee of Pskov would be beautiful and nice for the public?

I will tell you why. Because Metropolitan Valentin and his flock are being persecuted for their faithfulness to Orthodoxy, namely, for faithfulness to the 85 Apostolic Canons and the so-called elders with high morals no one persecutes because these "elders" help the authorities convert Orthodox Russia to the faith of antichrist; maybe they do not want to help, but they are made to understand that if so, they will not be able to come to the caves they will be chased out into the open fields.

And regarding the illness of Fr. John: the very close spiritual daughter to Fr. Adrian, who has easy access to Fr. John's cell, related that Fr. John fell into senility and now no one may see him; he is hidden from the public. She said that even very close cell attendants of Fr. John are scandalously thrown out of his cell. This servant of God, the virgin Goustovarova, resides in Pechory, Sennaya St. #4. She also related that some of daughters of Fr. Adrian have become mentally ill. Liuda Uzelkova was taken to the mental hospital, so the others.

Recently Goustovarova was working as a podriasnik ironer close to Fr. John's cell and could see how he was going senile. I saw it too. To get close to Fr. John's cell is impossible, due to the numerous guards and many video-cameras on the roof. Honored Fr. George, please let me know your address, last name and where you serve? By the way, Fr. John is taken by wheelchair, according to Goustovarova, and this contradicts your statement that he goes for walks. It has been noticed that the Pechora neuropathologist, Dr. Axenova, often visits the monastery.

Respectfully, S. of God, George Fedotov, Pechory, Vokzalnaya St. 14-33.  
January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2003.

From another report from the same Mr. Fedotov: "On the state of health of Archimandrite John Krestiankin" of the same date, it is reported that physicians have established that Fr. John is suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

Church Tradition witnesses that no matter how old the genuine Grace-bearing elders got, they never fell into senility and retained their clarity of mind until the last moments of their life!

#### **"DIPLOMATIC" FEAT OF ARCHBISHOP MARK OF BERLIN**

According to information published over the Internet by the parish of Three Saints in Garfield, NJ on Sunday, February 9, Archbishop Mark of Berlin served an early liturgy and after that at the invitation of German President Johannes Rau went to a meeting held in the state theater. The information states that it wasn't easy for Archbishop Mark to devote a Sunday to such an activity, but he did it feeling that it is necessary to use the opportunity to represent the interests of ROCOR!

A meeting took place in the concert hall and was opened by a speech of the German President about cultural connections between Germany and Russia and then, the President of the RF Putin spoke on the same theme.

At the following reception Archbishop Mark had the opportunity to personally converse with both presidents, besides whom 2 MP bishops were also present: Longin and Theophan. With the latter Archbishop Mark had several meetings dedicated to uniting the MP and the ROCOR. Mr. Putin was glad to see these three hierarchs present.

Archbishop Mark pointed out to President Putin that such a meeting was possible only in Germany because of the insurmountable obstacles in other places. But is not it rather because very few of the faithful will find out about such a meeting there? If such a meeting were to have happened, let us say in New York, it would have created a widespread scandal. Archbishop Mark also pointed out that in the relations between the MP and the ROCOR certain difficulties exist (most certainly, Archbishop Mark had in mind only these 2 parts of the Russian Church, totally ignoring the existence of the Catacomb Church) and proposed Putin take the initiative in the matter of unification, since in this case the interests of the Church and the state are the same. Putin liked the idea and said he will think about how to accomplish it.

It is self evident that the "thoughts" of President Putin will coincide with those of the Moscow Patriarchate and this means that their pressure upon the Russian Autonomous Church will become law and will be considerably fortified.

#### **UNFORTUNATE FALL OF ATHONITE MONASTERY OF ESPHIGMENOU**

Recently the monastery of Esphigmenou has experienced a new period of persecution. In previous times during persecution of the monastery, the monks were defiant in their defense of the true Faith, being grounded upon the principles of Orthodoxy. The last attempt to evict the non-commemorating monks of Esphigmenou was in September of

1974. At that time, they draped the monastery with a black banner that read "Orthodoxy or Death." The attackers eventually dispersed and left the monks in peace until the present time.

As we have seen in the history of Orthodoxy (even in the Old Testament) when the true Faith is not upheld, God's protection does not rest upon those who do not uphold the Faith. Unhappily, it seems that we shall see this confirmed anew in the upcoming expulsion of the monks of Esphigmenou from the Holy Mountain Athos. Recently, a sorrowful turn of events occurred in the history of the monastery of Esphigmenou that saddened the other zealot monks of the Holy Mountain. The leaders of the monastery (the synaxis) elected to remain with the fallen Archbishop Chrysostom II (Kiousis) of Athens, the head of one fraction of the Greek Old Calendarists. This hierarch and his synod of bishops have fallen into the ecumenism espoused by Cyprian of Fili by electing and elevating to the episcopacy the notorious Cyprianite ecumenist, Archimandrite Paul (Stratigeas) of Astoria, NY. Paul was "consecrated" despite a history of ecumenist activities and statements of which he had never formally repented. Here is a sampling of his statements made while a member of the Greek Orthodox Old Calendarists and contrary to their confession of Faith:

1. "Bartholomew, of course... is the presiding hierarch of Orthodoxy"!
2. "At St. Markella's (a church under Paul) thousands of our Greek people attend services. But I am having a problem of conscience because they are spiritual children of Bartholomew, all of them. They belong to the Church of Bartholomew. I belong to the Church of Chrysostom who has specifically stated that we do not provide the Mysteries to those who follow the New Calendar. Yet I provide the Mysteries to the followers of the New Calendar".
3. "We need humility, repentance, and to return to the Mother Church".
4. "In my conscience I belong to the Ecumenical Patriarchate and to the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew... I identify myself with his course, and I am aware that these words shall cost me. But it doesn't concern me, because I believe in the truth".

**[These quotations were taken from an interview given to Theodore Kalmoukas of the "National Herald," which was printed in that paper's issue of Tuesday, May 24<sup>th</sup>, 1994.]**

Paul's history of ecumenism did not end in 1994. Because of Archimandrite Paul's statements and actions, the synod of Chrysostom II Kiousis hesitated to ordain him a bishop. In 1994, Chrysostom II broke communion with the ROCA because of its union with Cyprian of Fili. At that time, Paul, in his insatiable desire to be ordained to the episcopacy, joined the ROCA. When Metropolitan Vitaly hesitated to ordain him, Paul joined the Synod of Cyprian of Fili for a short time, hoping to be ordained there. At that time, he grievously insulted his former synod and president (Chrysostom II Kiousis) with the following publicly printed statements:

1. "Archbishop Chrysostom Kiousis and his... bishops proceeded with the deposition of the righteous Metropolitan Cyprian and his bishops, who never joined the new synod under Kiousis, for 'ecumenism', on grounds that, like Archbishop Peter, (an uncle of Paul, "Ch. N") they considered the New Calendarists to have grace".
2. "Because of the extremist course that is being followed by Archbishop Chrysostom Kiousis, we saw no recourse but to return to the church which gave Archbishop Peter his episcopacy and which has an ecclesiology similar to his own, that of recognizing Grace among the ailing New Calendarist and modernists."
3. "... (S) tand up firmly and in truth against the extremists (Archbishop Chrysostom and his Synod) who today wish, for personal reasons, to divide us traditionalists. They are hateful people with foul tongues and the tactics of politicians and propagandists"
4. "Archbishop Chrysostom and all his bishops... (have) adopted a baseless theology, ecclesiology".
5. "... (S) imply reflecting on the fact that Metropolitan Cyprian and his bishops... were deposed by Archbishop Chrysostom and his synod, and that for 'ecumenism', that is believing that the New Calendarists have Grace. This is not the act of competent individuals, if you will forgive me. And where incompetence rules in matters of proper order, how can one look for authoritative competence?"
6. "While the New Calendarists and Ecumenists have deviated from the correct belief... they have not wholly succumbed to heresy...."
7. "And we consider it our duty to minister to those who are... caught in the traps of Modernism and Ecumenism...." If we are condemned for this, than we are condemned with the Church Fathers and great Councils, the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, Metropolitan Cyprian and his bishops, and the Bulgarian and Romanian Old Calendarists"

**[The above quotations are taken from an interview by the editorial staff of the Russian periodical 'Pravoslavnaya Rus', which is published by the ROCA, Jordanville, New York. The article is printed in 'Orthodox Tradition' vol.8 # 1, 1996, pp. 10-17]**

He has maintained the above Cyprianite ecclesiology even to this day. The Synod of Chrysostom II Kiousis accepted him back and even endorsed him by publishing a statement in their official periodical affirming that he is "a very righteous man" and "the only hope for Orthodoxy in America" ! His "consecration" by Kiousis took place on February 26<sup>th</sup>, 1998. When Archimandrite Paul was consecrated, the monks of Esphigmenou made no protest and even received him as a lawful Orthodox bishop in their monastery. This was in direct opposition to the former abbot's initial reaction. When he (Abbot Evfimios) heard that Paul was to be ordained, he notified Chrysostom II Kiousis that if this happened, his monastery would cease commemoration the archbishop.

Their subsequent acceptance of Paul was the turning pointing the history of the monastery's position as confessing Orthodox Christians. They had accepted Ecumenism in the person of Paul and continued to commemorate Chrysostom II

Kiousus, and now it seems that they are going to suffer the consequences of their apostasy from the true Faith. The loss of their monastery and the dispersion of their monks seems immanent. May God enlighten them unto their repentance and salvation. Other zealot, non-commemorating monks of the Holy Mountain are not in communion with the Synod of Archbishop II Kiousis precisely because of his aforementioned subsequent uncanonical actions.

+ Bishop Gregory of Denver and Colorado

"The New York Times" on February 8<sup>th</sup> has devoted almost a full page to the Esphigmenou monastery.

As is known, it was demanded that the monks leave the monastery before the deadline of January 28<sup>th</sup>, however, they have categorically refused to obey and have not left.

The persecution of this monastery on part of the New Calendarists almost caused an international sensation and the Greek government is afraid of loosing the reputation of being a democratic state. Therefore, not daring to apply force, the police watches from a distance, so that no one can enter the monastery and also was ordered not to let any of the Esphigmenou monks, who might be outside the monastery borders, to return. A number of representatives of other Mt. Athos monasteries have declared that they vowed to "get rid of them by hook, crook or judicial fiat".

However, Fr. Ioannis, the chief secretary of the council of monastery representatives, said: "We don't intend to shoot them or use force against them or even give them the pleasure of making them look like martyrs" and added: "They have to understand that they cannot be the Taliban."

At the same time, the monastery's leader Fr. Methodius said, that they also have "300 bullets" and lifted his weapons — a prayer rope of 300 knots.

According to a reporter, despite the restriction of the transport of food and medicine, the monastery may survive for quite some time, up to two years. Most of the monks eat only once a day and even that is not every day. The monastery never had electricity, mirrors, warm water for washing and in general any of the conveniences of modern civilization. The roads in the monastery region also are not paved.

Meanwhile, the neighboring monasteries long ago not only have the above-mentioned conveniences, but telephones and even computers. An Esphigmenou monk Neophit rightly noted, "these things do not benefit a monastic life".

According to Internet information, whose source is the Esphigmenou Monastery, the first victim of the New Calendarist persecution was a 24 year old monk Tryphon. On February 8<sup>th</sup> he wanted to bring back the monastery's tractor, which was left 2 miles away before the police blockade that began the week before. At the police checkpoint, he was denied access to return to the monastery, so Fr. Tryphon took an alternative path along a perilous mountain precipice. In the poor weather conditions the tractor rolled off the path down the mountainside, fatally injuring Fr. Tryphon.

According to the bulletin "Ecumenical News International" of February 5<sup>th</sup>, according to a decree of Greek Emperor Constantine of 1060 women were forbidden to enter the Mt. Athos, however, we have learned that **"the council which administrates Mt. Athos agreed last summer to allow women onto the mountain as far as Zygos, a ruined monastery located just inside the border of the territory"**.

One would think that such information would create an international sensation, but we find about it after many months and at that -- only from an Ecumenist bulletin which is received by very few people!

Human rights activists are already discussing the rights of women to visit Mt. Athos on the level of the European Union. It is considered that "the prohibition was adopted thousand years ago, in the epoch of the dark Middle Ages in Europe" and "nowadays when equal rights for men and women are officially recognized, the prohibition can not be valid any more".

"Bad misfortune is the beginning," says a Russian proverb.

## SERBIAN CHURCH AND THE CATHOLICS

The newspaper of the Serbian Church in America, published in Serbian and English languages for February has reported that the Serbian "clergy" in a few days are leaving for the Vatican, where they will spend 6 days in order to improve their relations with the Roman Catholics.

Probably, not to scare their flock with such an event, the delegation is described by the newspaper as consisting of clergy, while in fact it is headed by Metropolitan Amfilohije and Bishops Irinej and Lavrentije.

The newspaper explains that the relations of Serbian Church and Catholics became worse under the rule of communist Slobodan Milosovich and that the current Pope has made improvement of relations with Orthodox a goal of his pontificate.

During May of the last year Cardinal Kasper visited Belgrade.

The Serbian delegation will be received by the Pope and numerous Vatican officials.

It seems that the efforts to improve the relations with Catholics have sufficiently disturbed the Orthodox Serbs, because the Church was forced to officially deny accusations that it had stepped on the road of servility to the Holy See.

As it is reported in the denial, the purpose for travel to Vatican is "an exchange of views, with mutual respect, about many issues about which we may even disagree". At the end of this denial there is made a "calming" declaration that supposedly "our delegation is certainly not going to Rome to just passively listen".

The memory of the Serbian hierarchy must have considerably weakened and they have forgotten that in the 1940's on order of their fanatical Catholic president Pavelich and with the knowledge of Pope Pius XII the Croat Catholics slaughtered nearly 800,000 Serbs only because they were Orthodox. The Catholics baptized Orthodox by force and those who would not consent to betray their Faith were herded into churches with the doors and windows locked and were

burned to death. At that time, even the huge shipping river Danube had to stop all navigations for several days, because of the numerous floating bodies!

## **ABOUT "THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA"**

From the circles of the "Orthodox Church in America" we have received information that "Archbishop Lazar" Puhalo and Bishop Varlaam Novokashonov have appealed to this Synod to be admitted into their hierarchy.

On may 24<sup>th</sup> of the past year the Synod in principle agreed to accept them, but at that time did not formalize their status.

Upon reviewing the presented documentation the Synod has accepted both men as retired hierarchs of the OCA.

Deacon Lev Puhalo ("Archbishop Lazarus" by the decree of the ROCOR of early 80s was defrocked for spreading his own heresy about "soul-sleep" of those deceased. We have no information on the personality of Bishop Varlaam Novakshonov. However, the acceptance of a person who was defrocked for preaching heresy demonstrates the undemanding policy of the OCA!

## **KESTON NEWS SERVICE DISCONTINUES ITS EXISTENCE**

According to information of newspaper "The Christian News" of February 24<sup>th</sup> agency Keston News Service, known world-wide for defending the rights of those persecuted for their religious convictions, on January 28<sup>th</sup> was forced to close down because of lack of funds, which were provided by donations.

The agency was established in 1970 and was very useful in cases of persecution of religion in the USSR and other countries. As the newspaper writes, "without KNS, an important tool for political pressure and valuable information will be lost"

Members of the persecuted Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church will acutely feel the closing of this agency!

## **THE EUROPEAN UNION AND GOD**

"The New York Times" on January 5<sup>th</sup> has published an article with the title "Europe Debates Where to Admit God to Union", about a conference of the European Union, which besides the matters of financial deficits has established a committee of 13 members which was to make a draft of a charter about... the relationship to God.

The committee is to study various proposals which describe the "spiritual heritage of Europe" and also "God as the source of truth". After that, the committee is to compose a draft of a text that is to become the second article of the Constitution and in which will become a declaration about the "values" of Europe.

The Roman Catholics are the most interested in these negotiations, for they want the name of God mentioned in the constitution, while Jews, Muslims and Protestants are "more muted in their opinions on the matter".

The representatives of Poland, Italy, Czechoslovakia and Germany came forward in support of the necessity of mentioning the name of God, who have offered the following text: "The Union values include those who believe in God as the source of truth, justice, good and beauty as well as of those who do not share such belief but respect those universal values arising from other sources".

The majority of the opponents of this formula believe that such a declaration might be dangerous for separating people into groups of believers and non-believers -- include delegates from France, Holland Spain and the Scandinavian nations.

In the opinion of the delegates the "matter of God" is the most controversial on this gathering.

In the article it is stated that "debates about God are unfamiliar terrain for the European Union which arose only half a century ago with the specific priority of cooperation in coal and steel production".

John Bruton, former Premier of Ireland said that he believes that "there's an embarrassment to admitting to religious beliefs in our modern culture."

Former Premier of France, Valery Giscard d'Estaing, at a meeting with the Pope, who has lobbied for mentioning God, said that in his opinion "a reference to God does not seem appropriate".

At present the convention consists of 15 members, who represent 10 states of the European Union, is expected to meet again in May of 2004 and than it will be joined by Bulgaria, Rumania and Turkey.

The charter of this organization, made in 1999 in a German version speaks of a "religious heritage" and in French of a "spiritual heritage".

There is no doubt that the formerly Christian Europe over the last half century has become clearly godless. It seems, that the opinion, once expressed by Khomiakoff, that the debates between Roman Catholics and Protestants eventually will lead them to atheism in our days looks like a prophecy.

In connection with these outrageous debates of the representative of the European Union, an unexpectedly very correct open letter came from Metropolitan Kirill of the MP Foreign Relations Department, who pointed out that "The Russian Orthodox Church expressed its opinion in a special statement on the work of the Convention and also through the Conference of European Churches, being its permanent member".

The full text of this letter is published by the parish of Three Hierarchs in Garfield, NJ.

The very same agency has also reported in their news that on February 25<sup>th</sup> the Archbishop of Athens Christodoulos has met with Giscard d'Estaing and has informed him that the Greek Church is following with keen interest the work of the Convention and believes that the questions raised by it have great importance. He said that he hopes that "the correct expressions be found which will correspond to the spiritual and cultural traditions of Europe, that is, the Christian roots of its peoples".

Archbishop Christodoulos informed d'Estaing that the Greek Church has planned for the beginning of May an international Convention on "The Principles and Values in the Creation of Europe" and has invited him to participate.

### **FLIRTATION BETWEEN CATHOLICS AND "ORTHODOX"**

Officially, between Catholics and Orthodox strained relations exist, but actually the basic disagreements in the majority of cases are not over matters of faith, but present a political game, behind which stand plainly material interests as is obvious with the Moscow Patriarchate and the Vatican.

Internet information from the parish of Three Saints in Garfield, NJ, of February 12<sup>th</sup> relates that Athens' Archbishop Christodoulos has proposed the Pope send his delegation to Greece as a return visit for his "historic" stay in Rome during March of last year. At that time the Pope said to the Greeks that "the Churches have the task to act according to the model of Good Samaritan. They must forget their common sufferings, heal the wounds, and promote that purification of memory from which will arise sincere forgiveness and fraternal collaboration".

At the same time, Fr. Joseph May, an official of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and who is in charge of the relations with the Orthodox Slavs, said: "I am convinced that we are already in a process of clarification that will continue over the next few months".

Despite wide spread information of protests from the MP because the Catholics have established several of their dioceses in Russia, May reported on the "beautiful letter" of Patriarch Alexis II congratulating the Pope with Christmas in which there is also the following sentence: "Let us take up again relations of fraternity and charity". He also said that the Pope would be delighted if he could visit Russia.

### **ROCK CONCERT OFFICIALLY SPONSORED BY THE MOSCOW PATRIARCHATE**

The Internet version of the newspaper "Kommersant-Daily" of January 16<sup>th</sup> 2003 reported that in St. Petersburg "for the first time a concert of the Russian pillars of rock took place, officially sponsored by the Russian Orthodox Church," which was named by the organizers "RoKnebu" (Rock to Heaven)!

The largest concert site in the city was selected for the performance and "the concert was for charity and collected funds to be transferred for the benefit of Orthodox churches attached to St. Petersburg's universities".

Further it was reported that the initiator of this "splendid idea" was a leader of the youth department of the St. Petersburg diocese, Artemy Skripkin. The inspirers of this were the church-scientific center of the Moscow Patriarchate "The Orthodox Encyclopedias" and the "Committee for youth of Smolny, which by the way is connected with the youth department of the St. Petersburg Diocese of the ROC".

Numerous persons participated in the concert. The "prominent publicist and TV speaker Fr. Andrew Kurayev made the opening speech. The gist of the speech was that rock music is capable of awakening elevated impulses, faith and heavenly grace in the heart" ?!

The diocese reported that 14,000 tickets were sold at the cost of 140 to 400 rubles, although present were some 7 of 8 thousand persons.

For those who see and hear rock music, it is quite obvious that it has absolutely nothing to do with faith and heavenly grace.

### **ABOUT "ORTHODOX CULTURE" IN RUSSIA**

Over the past year the Education Department of Russia has ordered that in the school curricula a course of "basics of Orthodox culture" would be introduced. This decision immediately evoked reactions for and against. It is obvious that numerous atheists in Russia were against.

Some woman, Alla Borodina, has compiled a textbook for the "basics of Orthodox culture", but very quickly this textbook was accused of being "guilty of stirring up national enmity and xenophobia".

The so-called "Pan-Russian movement for human rights" in June of last year filed a complaint to the prosecutors after the publishing company "Pokrov" printed 10,000 copies of the book, as a "guide for elementary and senior schools for general education, lyceums and high schools". The "coordinating council of the Educational Department and the Moscow Patriarchate" recommended the textbook.

The atheist defenders of human rights "complain about the clerical propaganda and violation of the secular character of the state and even... the antidemocratic principle of collective guilt of a whole nation". It turns out that in the text book on page 114 there is the question: "Why did the Jews crucify Christ and cannot accept the Kingdom of Heaven?"

An Internet publication gazeta.ru/print of January 13<sup>th</sup> reported that the "defenders of rights" have discovered in this textbook also attacks on other religions.

The general prosecutors office has received the first suit, but transferred it to the office of Ostankino. On September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2002, the regional public prosecutor refused to hear the case about the textbook, but this decision was appealed by the plaintiffs in the Meshchansky court.

The Meshchansky court has ruled the "denial was unlawful and baseless". As a result, the author of the book as well as the publisher and distributors of this book are in danger of being put in jail because a suit might be filed against them on grounds of "stirring up of differences among the nation".

The deputy of the central spiritual administration of Muslims in Russia, Mufti Farid Salaman, correctly stated, that "the efforts to correct the faith of any religion in the spirit of so-called "political correctness" is a provocation, which inevitably brings forth the response of mocking religious feelings".

The Agency of Political News of January 21<sup>st</sup> has reported the General procurator of RF Vladimir Oustinov has "received the appeal by representatives of Orthodox, Islam and Evangelical Christians who are disgusted by the persecution of the textbook.

According to another agency "Megaphone" of December 16, 2002, atheists even demanded the resignation of the Minister of Education, Vladimir Filippov, over the textbook "Orthodox Culture" because he recommended it as the preferred form of study that violates Russian constitution.

The Moscow Patriarchate believes that the textbook in no way promotes national differences, but officially will not interfere in this controversy.

It would be interesting to find out whom is the MP trying to please and, if it believes that the text book by Borodina is correct, why does it keep silent?

### **BLASPHEMOUS EXHIBIT IN MOSCOW**

The newspaper "Russkii Vestnik" ("Russian Herald") reported that on January 14<sup>th</sup> in the public Center of Andrew Sakharov there was opened an exhibit of "actual art" named "Beware, Religion".

The opening of such an exhibit Sakharov center is not surprising, since it was common knowledge that he was an atheist, although not a militant one and of Jewish origin, whose real name was Zuckermann.

It is reported that the exhibit has "drawn not trivial militant atheists, but rather militant blasphemers and anarchists". The newspaper published several photographs of this blasphemous exhibit. In one of them a young man is depicted sitting on a throne, but with no beard (a parody of the Christ icon "The Great Hierarch") holding an open book, looking like the Gospel. Next to it hangs a placard with the Coca Cola Company logo with head of the Savior and inscription "This is my blood"!

The exhibit had many blasphemous objects, for example, a Crucifix on which hung various sausages, a placard of a naked woman, supposedly crucified, blasphemous pictures of the Mother of God and a lot of purely pornographic pictures. In the hall there were run pornographic films, films with tortured and slaughtered animals and similar diabolical perversions.

On Friday, January 18<sup>th</sup> a group of 6 outraged young men started a "pogrom" against this exhibit, spraying several of the blasphemous "pictures" with paint. The police were called but arrested the defenders of the faith, while in no way touching the provocateurs.

It is characteristic to the MP that Metropolitan Kirill gave no support to the zealous Orthodox, but declared that such methods are unacceptable for believers. "We should be sympathetic toward the convictions of other people, It is intolerable to insult national feelings and stir up religious differences!" The deputy of Metropolitan Kirill, a renown archpriest of the MP, Vsevolod Chaplin, also supported his boss to a certain degree, saying that this was "unapproved violence" against the exhibit.

The defenders of the Faith deserve honor and praise, but are threatened with criminal prosecution!

### **NEW CHARTER OF GREEK ARCHDIOCESE IN AMERICA**

The Greek diocese under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate for a long time and under various pretexts has demanded autocephaly for itself. It seems that the main reason for the retirement of Archbishop Iakovos was the goal of autocephaly, which he rather openly supported. The very rich diocese of the Ecumenical Patriarchate actually supports the latter and therefore all efforts on her part to gain autocephaly (even with promises to continue supporting the Patriarchate) always resulted in refusals to approve the decisions of the diocesan council of clergy and laity conferences. The struggle for autocephaly has lasted for 8 years and this time too, the Ecumenical Patriarchate held the battlefield.

According to the newspaper of the Greek Archdiocese in the USA, "Orthodox Observer" for January, after long negotiations the Patriarch finally has approved a new charter for his diocese in America. According to its information, the Greeks have gained very little.

The Patriarchate has verified the unity of the Archdiocese, but has established 8 metropolitanates: Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Denver, Detroit, New Jersey, Pittsburgh and San Francisco. These are considered to belong to the Archdiocese, and not directly to the Patriarchate. In Greek tradition, contrary to the Russian, an archbishop ranks above metropolitans. According to the new charter, the Archbishop in America continues as Exarch of the Patriarchate.

The archbishop and the bishops, who previously were simply appointed by the Ecumenical Patriarch, according to the new agreement will be installed from 3 candidates recommended by the American Greeks and with the condition that they have served in USA at least for 5 years and are familiar with the local situations.

The Patriarchate has also agreed to pay more attention to the opinions of the congress of clergy and laity, who will present their candidates for archbishop.

In summarizing the new charter of the American Exarchate, one can say that the American Greeks gained certain privileges in the matters of self-government, but so far there is no hint of a possible autocephaly.

## **EFFORTS TO INTRODUCE YOGA INTO AMERICAN SCHOOLS**

The New York Times of February 9<sup>th</sup> reported that in the city of Aspen, Colorado, some parents and religious leaders have objected to the introduction of yoga in two Aspen schools: one public and another private, which have started yoga classes. The protesters claim that this violates the law of separation of church and state, since yoga is a religion.

The supporters of this paganism insist that it is not a religion, but that contemporary children suffer from attention deficiency and cannot concentrate for longer than a TV commercial.

12 families have declared that they will not permit their children to participate. Judging from this information, it seems that the pagans cleverly change terminology, using a more neutral one. For example, instead of the Sanskrit word "namaste" which translates as "The light in you is the light in me" – children are to use word "peace".

According to the newspaper, such programs exist already from California to Florida to Ohio. Children are told that yoga is just a combination of gymnastics and meditation. Thus they to imagine that they are... bananas. Children are told to lie on their gym mattresses, stretch out their hands overhead and lift their legs.

As the yoga instructors say, yoga consists of three main aspects: exercise, breathing and meditation. This pagan practice had its beginning in Hinduism, Buddhism and the similar. The Catholics of Aspen have protested already.

## **FROM THE UNPUBLISHED WORKS (a letter by Bishop Gregory to Archb. Anthony of San Francisco {?} June 15/28<sup>th</sup>, 1994)**

Your Eminence, dear Vladyko!

Thank you for the letter of May 31<sup>st</sup>/June 13<sup>th</sup>.

The fact that we have not demonstrated the ability to rule the regions in Russia yet so many parishes have developed there, successfully growing to more than a hundred, persuades me that we should accept them as a gift of God and to give them possibility of further growth and development, and not bind them with our conviction that only what is done by command of the Metropolitan is good. If, under the present unfavorable circumstances, they can number more than a hundred, then it is necessary not to kill them by orders from those who have no knowledge of their circumstances and to whom they are strange. God Himself has shown us where life is possible. It is necessary to reject self-delusion and to help develop what God has given, even if some are not to our taste.

We are all aware that the opening of even one parish is not a simple task. It is clear to me that if, despite our inability, the number of parishes has grown to be more than hundred, this means that there are blessed workers, who even may not be to our liking, but who are not rising up against the canons.

Will not the Lord punish the inattentiveness to the parishes (human souls)?

Will not unacceptance of the God-given ukaze of St. Patriarch Tikhon be punished by destruction of whatever we have and what has potential for growth in Russia? And we will answer before God for it. What do you think about such ideas?

I am very sorry that the circumstances are such that we are not to meet personally. If you want, you could call me by telephone. I am sending this letter to San Francisco, and not to Germany in the hope that in this way you will get it sooner.

Asking for your holy prayers I remain your brother in Christ + Bishop Gregory

## **Letter of Bishop Gregory to Archbishop Anthony of San Francisco of July 24<sup>th</sup>/August 6<sup>th</sup>, 1994**

Your Eminence, dear Vladyko!

I write this to you with much sadness because of the spread of unlawfulness in our Church.

Bishop Hilarion has returned from the Council, and before leaving for San Francisco, promised to give me the minutes. I have seen him and he told me that he is forbidden to give me information about decisions of the Council. He would not give me any explanation for such a decision of Metropolitan. I could not even get information whether my reports have been read and what was decided about them. No explanation for depriving me of the elementary rights of a bishop were given me.

It seems that the reason for all this is that I understand the significance of the Regulation of November 7/20, 1920, differently from the Metropolitan who interprets it only as a basis for our existence abroad, which is not mentioned therein. And he has no idea that the Regulation of the All-Russian Ecclesiastical Administration, presided over by the St. Patriarch Tikhon provides for the contemporary situation. Our Synod at that time had not established itself and had just arrived abroad.

Certainly I will submit a protest and will give evidence, but let it not happen again, that a report based upon the decision of the Supreme Organ of Administration of our Church, and indeed presided over by the St. Confessor will continue to be ignored because of the Metropolitan's error? And this reorganization of the Church as a whole continues, according to law, due to a whole series of his errors.

It is a great error on our part to ignore this legislative document. It is absolutely necessary to respect it and use it for instruction. Despite the fact that Metropolitan and maybe others do not like Vladyka Valentin, he has achieved very constructive work. Even if one believes that he did something wrong, we should not be overly critical in evaluating the great work of opening and annexing parishes in Russia. The main thing is we have to unite, and not create parallel organizations. The latest ordination [Bishop Evtikhy, "Ch. N."] produces exactly this and has this as its goal. By the way, it was performed in New York, but I was not even informed of it, although I live close to the Synod.

Asking for your holy prayers, I remain your loving brother in Christ + Bishop Gregory

## A NECESSARY DECLARATION

Because of the spread of rumors that Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) allegedly took with him a substantial amount of the archives of the ROCA Synod of Bishops when he was forced to retire in 1986, I categorically declare these rumors to be vicious slander against a deceased person.

Bishop Gregory took from his own office only his personal correspondence with some hierarchs and public personalities to which he had a legal right. Almost all this was handed over by me to Stanford University in California and is open to the public.

When it became known that Bishop Gregory, at Metropolitan Vitaly's demand, had to present a "petition" for retirement, I, being at that time the Synod Office Manager for 8 years, also immediately resigned my position with the Synod.

Considering it necessary to return the documents, which at that time were in our offices, as soon as possible – I loaded myself with numerous folders and went to the archive room. However I discovered that... without letting Bishop Gregory or myself know, Bishop Hilarion had **replaced the lock!** At that time we both considered this action extremely insulting. Instead of a customary transfer of matters from one administrator to another, it was suggested that all the documents and the reference books belonging to the Synod be piled up in one place and, we were told by Archbishop Laurus and Bishop Hilarion, "we will look into it later". The new administrators of the Synod of Bishops did not ask **a single question** of either Bishop Gregory or me regarding the piled up documents!

The same kind of transfer was also foreseen regarding the Synod Bookstore established by me 10 years before. Fearing that in the future accusations of stealing funds and property might be raised against me, I categorically refused to relinquish control without making a detailed inventory of the store. The acceptance note, signed by Bishop Hilarion is in my archive.

Do not the rumors being circulated come from those who allowed a literal robbery of the Synod archives by permitting unknown persons to "work" in it including even an employee of the Moscow Patriarchate archives, and are they not spread in order to cover up their own guilt in the history of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia?

At the same time via the Internet have been made for nearly 2 years statements that supposedly the Council of Bishops has never issued an anathema against the Ecumenist heresy, but that Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) supposedly endlessly manipulated Metropolitan Philaret and, without knowledge of the Council in order to please the Boston Transfiguration Monastery, introduced the text of the anathema into the Council's decisions.

It seems that this slander was started by Archbishop Lazarus (Zhurbenko) when he announced this at the Voronezh clergy conference which took place in 2001. Now the same is being repeated in Internet polemics mainly by Archpriests John Shaw and Alexander Lebedev.

In contrast to these statements, the Synod of Bishops and the Council have twice repeated this anathema even 17 years after the repose of Metropolitan Philaret and 7 years after that of Bishop Gregory.

The text, supposedly "never approved by the Bishop's Council," up to 2002 was regularly proclaimed during the Feast of Orthodoxy. However, according to an audio cassette I have received of the proclamation of the anathema by Protodeacon Eugene Burbelo, for the past two years it has been slightly altered and this could not but water down its formerly exact definition.

Former Office Manager of the Synod of Bishops, A. G. Schatiloff, (nee Countess Grabbe)  
January 25<sup>th</sup>/February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2003