

## NEWSLETTER # 12

Department of Public and Foreign Relations  
Synod of bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside  
of Russia

August 1977

### Theological Education in the USSR

"The Orthodox Bulletin" of Paris, informs us of the standing of theological education in the Moscow Patriarchate. It has functioning: three Seminaries and two Ecclesiastical Academics. During thirty years of existence, the Seminaries issued 540 diplomas and the Academics issued 382. The total amount of students in Leningrad at present is 225 (24 of them from abroad). In Moscow, there are 320 students, of this amount 220 are seminarians and another 100 attend the Ecclesiastical Academy. There are also correspondence courses existing for persons ordained without adequate theological education; 700 people participate in these courses.

The major obstacle for proper theological education is the fact that there are no theological works published in the USSR and obtaining them from Western sources can be difficult, besides which, the Seminaries and Academics lack copying machines.

### THE SERBIAN CHURCH

The official publication of the Serbian Church "The Path of Orthodoxy", informs us that at the last meeting of the Holy Council of Bishops in Belgrade, Bishop Savva, the Primate of the Serbian Church in America, was elected to the vacant See of Shumadija and the Protosingelos Milutin Stojanovich to the See of Timok. A successor to Bishop Savva's position will be elected during the next Bishop's Council scheduled for Spring of next year.

The Bishop's Council has ruled to establish an Ecclesiastical Academy in Sarajevo, which would exist along with the already operational Theological Faculty of Belgrade University. The establishment of a Monastic School is planned for the nearest future, if there will be enough candidates.

"The Path of Orthodoxy" also gives some statistical information about the Serbian Church. It should be noted, that similar information is unobtainable from the Moscow Patriarchate.

The Serbian Church has 3,502 churches (292 more than the amount listed in 1968). In comparison to this figure one can notice the shortage of priests - only 1,412 (374 more than in 1968). There are also 487 retired priests, about 246 monks (48 less than in 1968). There are a total of 700 Nuns, 44 more than in 1968. There are also 165 operational monasteries, 13 more than in 1968.

The approximate total of theological students is 485. Again, when we note the comparison between the multimillion Orthodox population in the USSR with tiny Serbia, we find only 60 students of Theology more in the Soviet Union. The Communist government certainly oppresses the Church and its believers but definitely not to the same extent as Moscow. The

Church is able to publish various service books and theological literature is sharply growing. One can even encounter a criticism of Atheism of major importance are the recently beautifully published Lives of the Saints in twelve volumes, written and compiled by Dr. Archimandrite Justin Popovich. Ten of the set are already published. He himself is confined to forced seclusion and was just recently attacked in the communist press.

It should be noted that at the conclusion of this article, immediately following the Canonization of St. John of Kronstadt by the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, his name was included in the Dyptichs of the Serbian Church and in a magazine entitled "The Orthodox Missionary", articles and notes were published about him.

The Serbian Hierarchy has suffered quite a lot of hardships at the hands of the Yugoslavian Government which favored Autocephaly for the Macedonian Church, not recognized by the Serbian Church. The Serbian Church also refused to recognize the Autocephaly of the American Metropolia, which despite much pressure from Moscow, places her in a unique position from all Orthodox Churches in Communist Countries which have made such a ruling.

#### Constantinopolitan Patriarchate Seeks Union with Protestants

A Protestant Bulletin has published information that the Lutheran World Federation announced that the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate has requested that all Orthodox Churches form at least a twenty member Commission in order to prepare for a dialogue with the heterodox.

The Orthodox Preparatory Commission is expected to study results of previous Lutheran-Orthodox relations since the 16th Century and also the results of various contacts and negotiations with Protestants.

#### Newspaper Regrets Sacrilegious Act

The Office of our Public and Foreign Relations Department received a letter signed by A.D. Horne, the Outlook Editor of the Washington Post Newspaper, as a reply to a protest sent in the name of the Synod of Bishops in reference to a sacrilegious cartoon prepared by Vint Lawrence, depicting the most venerated icon of the Holy Virgin of Vladimir.

The text of the letter is as follows:

"Dear Archpriest Grabbe:

Your letter of August 1 has been forwarded to me for reply as the editor in charge of the section in which the Vint Lawrence cartoon appeared.

We are concerned and distressed that you thought the political cartoon insulting and offensive. Such was not the intent or purpose.

Far from wishing to offend any religious sensibilities, the purpose of the cartoon was to caricature the presumption of Brezhnev, who that week made himself president, in trying to supplant by political means the force and power of religion in the lives of the people. The cartoon was clearly intended as criticism of the communists. Discussing the cartoon among our editors, we concluded that this purpose was eminently manifest and would be clearly understood.

We apologize for any offense that was inadvertently caused and repeat that was not what anyone here had in mind.

Sincerely,

A.D. Horne  
Outlook Editor"

In his reply, dated August 17th, Archpriest George Grabbe stressed that "your letter of August 8th would be satisfying to all of us if it would be published in your Newspaper. Otherwise, the resentment will continue to exist.

Too many people feel that their Faith has been insulted and are deeply offended. A public offense needs a public apology and we still continue to expect it."

#### National Council of Churches and Politics

The American National Council of Churches continues to foster leftist and pro-communist politics. It advertises the plan to surrender the Panama Canal and take it away from American jurisdiction, in spite of numerous protests made by many patriots. The American liberals consider it to be in very poor taste if any government incarcerates leftist terrorists, but when dictator Allende ordered Panama's Torrijo to adhere to police measures against the rightists, then that seems to be in order.

#### World Council of Churches Gets its own Bank

The World Council of Churches has established its own bank. The bank was approved by the U.S.A. Securities and Exchange Commission and already has \$1.1 million of operating capital but still expects to get some investments from different American Foundations.

It is expected that from these funds the World Council of Churches will be able to support, as in previous times, Communist guerillas in Africa and other countries.

The Ecumenical Press Service reports in its August 11th issue, that 134 members of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches in its meeting on July 28th to August 6th approved the text of a letter which is to be announced during the worship of various local member churches.

The letter, which is addressed to the Christians of the World, appeals to them to unite in prayer and confession of Jesus Christ.

It came as a result of a series of debates on the themes "The Confessing Community" and "One Baptism, One Eucharist and a Mutually Recognized Ministry".

While discussing the latter theme, Dr. Lukas Vischer, Director of the World Council of Churches Commission on Faith and Order, declared that the "unity sought by the World Council is more than a permanent dialogue, more than co-existence". While further explaining his position he said that "the very nature of the Church is betrayed when division, especially division at the Lord's table, is accepted in the church as inevitable.... Clearly, it is not necessary or even desirable that the churches should

sacrifice their individuality on the altar of some uniformity devised in ecumenical discussions, but they must draw sufficiently close to one another in doctrine and practice to be able to constitute a real fellowship".

It is expected that the Sixth Assembly, which is in the process of preparation will carefully revise the agreements already made on baptism, the eucharist and ministry. Meanwhile, the churches are expected to pray for each other and as a precondition to a life of togetherness, which is projected by ecumenists.

### New Distortion of Holy Scripture

As it was mentioned in our previous Newsletter, the falsification of the Holy Bible is being forced at an alarming speed. Unfortunately, the Russian people in the Soviet Union, who are thirsty for Holy Scripture, will be the ones who will suffer most.

"The National Courier" in its issue of August 19th, relates that some one by the name of Kenneth Taylor, organized a Publishing Company called "Living Bibles International", which undertook a task to put out Bibles in 100 spoken languages. A major effort is being made to flood these "bibles" to countries which are now under the Communist yoke. The report said that the Russian edition is nearly complete and will be sent to the USSR with the help of smugglers at the amount of 50 thousand to begin with. Nearly completed also are Bulgarian, Rumanian, Polish and Czechoslovakian "living bibles".

This Publisher, Tyndale House, was established in 1972 and originally published its first bible in Spanish and then in the English language.

Despite the fact that sales were unsatisfactory, the project will be carried out according to plan, since 40% of the \$1.8 million budget was already covered by charitable donations. One cannot help but wonder who the sources of these donations are?

The staff of this Publishing House has a limited knowledge of Greek and Hebrew and therefore, the new "Living Bible" is composed from some dozen other translations and then paraphrased.

The danger which this presents to the Russian people, as well as other nationalities under the Communist regime, who are eager to get hold of true Holy Bibles and who will get the falsificate instead, really does not have to be explained.

### Third Vatican Council

"The Evangelical Newsletter" from July 1rst, reported that 70 widely known scholars from different countries assembled in Notre Dame, one of the largest and most influential Catholic Universities, in order to discuss and propose reforms in the field of doctrine and canon law. At the same time some proposals were offered for a future possible Vatican III Council.

It was recommended to members to review and study the questions concerning the Pope's authority, ordination of women, full acceptance of divorced Catholics, optional celibacy and also communion with the Protestants, to mention only the most important points of the agenda.

In this manner, the notable Catholic scholars question the most vital principals of the Roman Catholic Faith.

### Forced Modernization in the Midst of American Catholics

A Catholic priest, Robert Fox, one of the regular correspondents of the "National Catholic Register", a moderately conservative newspaper, in his article published on August 21st, expresses much concern over permission granted by the Pope for American Catholics to receive communion in their hand.

In this article, "Will Communion in Hand be Forced Upon People", Rev. Fox relates that in spite of the fact that American Newspapers and Magazines were writing that in all European Countries Catholics receive communion in their hand, this is not true. He himself just returned from leading a pilgrimage of 100 young people and nowhere did he see this happen.

An Irish Bishop, when questioned about it answered: "If anyone approaches with a hand extended, we don't see it". In Mexico, where it supposedly became a general practice, it happened to be false. In Rome, during the Mass served by Pope Paul during the ceremonies of Newman's Canonization, it was announced in seven different languages that communion would not be distributed in the hand.

Rev. Fox bitterly remarks, that he can see no advantage to the new practice and even less how it is supposed to strengthen respect for the Sacrament of the Eucharist. He noted that only in one place in Europe did he see the new practice in use, namely in Lourdes, but over there he returned to the church for some forgotten article and found a host laying on the floor at the foot of the altar.

One American Missionary complained to him that he saw two boys with a host in their hands, who were piercing it with a needle in order to see "if we can make Jesus cry".

Lamenting this innovation, Fr. Fox writes that "backers of communion in hand.... used every means, especially disobedience, to keep pressuring our bishops who finally gave in. Since they got by on this one, what will be attempted next if disobedience is a reason for granting permission to change Church Law. Incorrect information was given to our bishops, I believe, but they had an obligation to research the report. Some seminarians have shared with me some shocking reports of disrespect for the Holy Eucharist...or lack of respect in the seminary".

The author concludes his sad article with a statement that there are many and important reasons to oppose this reform and none to back it up. He just hopes that "Catholic pastors and people will see that in no way is the option forced upon our people".

### A Schism Within the Episcopalians

The introduction of modernist reforms nowhere passed without creating a major separation. The main reason for schism in the Episcopalian Church at present, is the cause of women's ordination. As per the N.Y. Times, on August 24th, in the Diocese of Los Angeles, six rectors with their parishioners split from the Episcopal Church. It was announced that they

were suspended and the Diocese is suing the parishes for their property. The separated priests have formed two Dioceses, one in the name of the Holy Trinity and the other in San Francisco. The Schism and law suits created aggravation for both parties. The Los Angeles parishes were joined by several coming from Nevada, Colorado, Arkansas and Connecticut. The priests in Connecticut declared that they are against not only women's ordination but also other manifestations of modernism, such as changes in dogmatical teachings and lax feelings toward the sin of sodomy. Yet, in official circles, Episcopalians believe that not many parishes will follow the movement.

Still, by the same token, "The Evangelical Newsletter" of July 1st reported that some 30 parishes and 16 independent priests left the Anglicans as a manifestation of their protestations.

An Episcopal magazine "The Living Church" on August 21st relates that various separated groups, after months of negotiations, came to agreement to establish new churches, which are provisionally called the Anglican Church of North America.

A newly organized Episcopal body "The Fellowship of Concerned Churchmen" was created from 15 united Episcopal organizations which has called for a special meeting on September 14th thru 16th for establishment of their new church in America.

Some Episcopalian clerics seek refuge with the Syrians or with the OCA (Metropolia), a very few with the Roman Catholics, because as it was stated by some clerics, who were just a short while ago accepted by the OCA (Metropolia): they seem to be going through the same thing as the Episcopal Church".

One could think it very doubtful that the clerics who left the Episcopalians for the OCA (Metropolia) because of these reasons, have hardly had sufficient time nor possibilities to truly accept Orthodoxy.

#### The First Ecumenical Congress of Pentecostals

On July 20th through the 24th, in Kansas City, there was a first Ecumenical Pentecostal Congress, which drew no less than 50 thousand participants of whom some 48% were Roman Catholics. It also cost a bit over one million dollars. Catholics were led by the Belgian Cardinal Suenens, who came just for this occasion to the U.S.A. with a few American Catholic Bishops.

A writer, Jamie Buckingham, who was one of the speakers, stressed that "we cannot have unity based on doctrine - doctrine will always separate the body of Christ. We can't base it on tradition; we don't have a common tradition. The only way we can have unity is to have it around Jesus Christ."

Another speaker, a pentecostal and devout ecumenist, said that "unless it is ecumenical, it will never be charismatic. It will lose its charismatic power as soon as it loses its ecumenicity."

Cardinal Suenens, while speaking about the "separated brothers" and discussing the ways for unity said, that Catholics do not have in mind a unity in terms of absorption into one church.

"Ecumenism" he said, "doesn't mean you take the lowest common denominator, it does not mean uniformity. We must have communion on essential points of faith, belief in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Nicene Creed. We have to have a common faith but a large opening for different liturgies. Each person has to retain his own tradition".

Catholic Bishop McKinney, who participated in this Congress, gratefully mentioned that it was the Pentecostals, who some ten years ago taught the Catholics how to pray for baptism of the Holy Spirit.

The next large International Congress of Charismatics is scheduled for the summer of next year in Dublin, Ireland, one of the countries which has always been considered to be very strongly Roman Catholic.

#### A Reconciliation Prayer Meeting Between Catholics and Jews

At the same time, as per information of the "National Courier" of August 19th a Pentecostal gathering was held in Kansas City by Messianic Jews and Roman Catholics.

The President of this Conference, Mr. David Stern, declared that "our purpose is to heal the greatest schism in the world - the Jews and the Church".

During the same meeting there happened to be a reconciliation of different leaders of Jewish Messianic movements, who hoped to settle some controversies.

The Judeo-Christian symposium, which was arranged in a theatre, unexpectedly turned into a very emotional affair. Weeping and praying Catholics prostrated themselves on the floor, while Jews present sought out Catholic clergy and nuns in order to ask their pardon for resentment they had toward the church.

The Director of the B'nai Yeshua organization, Mike Evans, wept and pleaded with the audience to reconcile with one another. When he spotted Mr. Moishe Rosen, a leader of the Jewish group "Jews for Jesus" in the crowd, he requested permission to wash his feet. Suddenly, almost all present removed their shoes because they thought themselves on holy ground.

Although the correspondent mentions that the foot washing was spontaneous, water and basins appeared from nowhere.

At the end of prayers, the Jewish leaders stated that this was one of the "most unusual, and perhaps historic symposiums". One should say that it is hardly possible to disagree.

#### Donations received by the Dept. of Foreign Relations & greatly appreciated:

Rev. V. Zheromsky, Rev. C. Zanevsky, N. Gavalas, B. Gavalas, O. Illyn, G. Petrovsky and L. Zimmermann.