

ORTHODOX ENGLAND

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The Passion of St Alban the Martyr

Children of Light

*Lienz: Sixty-five years
of an unexpiated crime*

Ireland's Glory

God's Time or Government Time?

The Himalayas Glorify Christ

and much more . . .

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Editorial: THE LORD'S PRAYER IN THE PAST AND PRESENT OF MANKIND

1. Our Father

MANY thousands of years ago, after the Fall of Adam and Eve, the great struggle of mankind was to recognise that God is our Father. Most of creation, both fallen invisible creation, the fallen spirits or demons, and fallen visible creation, mankind, rejected God as Father. Only Noah and his family called on 'Our Father' and so were saved through the Ark of baptism.

Today, with resurgent paganism in all the Western countries, the name of 'Our Father' is no longer recognised. Falling back into heathen belief, contemporary society says that there is no God the Father. There is only the authority of man-created, and so corrupt, power, money, science, celebrity, all the forces of death, but not God the Father. Thus, contemporary society identifies itself with the fallen spirits who reject and hate God the Father and assume power for themselves. But obedience to their demonic power leads to self-destruction, as we saw in the genocides of the atheistic twentieth century.

2. Which art in heaven

For millennia fallen mankind struggled to know where God is. Some sought him on earth, in the oceans, the rivers and the mountains, others in the sky, the sun, the moon and the stars. Only the purest hearts, like those of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, recognised that in fact God dwells in heaven, the transcendent universe far beyond the visible world of earth and space, yet also close and present in our souls, though unimaginable to the fallen and grace-deprived human mind.

Today, few have any concept of heaven. Most imagine that heaven means the cosmos. But this is part of the idolatry of pantheism, so beloved of ecologists, who worship only their created mother earth, not their Creator and Father.

3. Hallowed be Thy name

For millennia after the Fall, only a few hallowed, that is, kept sacred, the name of God. Most in their foolishness hallowed the sun and the moon, stars and comets, rivers and seas, trees and stones, where demons dwelt. But mankind was

taught to hallow the name of God by the revelation of Moses in the Ten Commandments

In the last century the Ten Commandments were cast out of Western society by the new paganism which says that everything is permissible. By rejecting the first among the Ten Commandments, which concern the honouring of God, the last, which concern the honouring of repentant man, have also been rejected.

4. Thy Kingdom come

Until the time of Christ, the spiritually pure yearned for the coming of the Kingdom of God. This can clearly be seen in the psalms of the Prophet King David and in the proclamations of all the other holy Prophets. But even the highest philosophers of this world, Buddha and Plato, Confucius and Socrates, Hindu and Muslim sages, sensed that some heavenly revelation was required for humanity to recognise the greatest Truth, the Highest Wisdom. And none of these could draw even remotely near to Him, Whose name is Incarnation and Resurrection.

Today, the kingdom which is being ushered onto earth is not 'Thy Kingdom', but the 'their kingdom', that of the alien demons. Thus, men on earth are beginning to keep the laws of hell under the illusion that they are 'free'.

5. Thy will be done

Two thousand years ago, with the coming of Christ, mankind was taught to conform his will to the will of God. Only in this way could spiritual freedom and inner peace come.

Today, under the mask of the illusions of 'freedom and democracy', mankind is taught that there is no higher wisdom than man's selfish, individualistic and self-destructive will, enslaved to the laws of evil.

6. On earth, as it is in heaven

Two thousand years ago, with the coming of Christ 'on earth, as in heaven', we were taught that the earthly is merely the pale reflection of the heavenly. If we wish, the earth can become

heavenly. The existence of evil on earth is the result only of mankind's refusal of the heavenly.

Today, with the neo-pagan denial of anything which is beyond the doors of man's feeble sensual perception, mankind has imprisoned itself within the three-dimensional world. But in the vicious circle of this world, the circle of despair and death without end, there is no fourth dimension which brings freedom.

7. Give us this day our daily bread

Two thousand years ago Christ taught us that our daily bread, the bread of our inner being ('ton arton ton epiousion'), is in the seeking of the spiritual, and that we cannot live 'by (material) bread alone'. This teaching of the Saviour culminates in the Eucharist, the partaking of the Heavenly Bread and Wine, the Body and Blood of Christ.

Today's daily bread is in the unlimited consumption of material 'bread', material objects fashioned from limited resources, the result of which is the present economic and ecological crisis, the judgement of the planet.

8. And forgive us our trespasses

For two thousand years, since the crucifixion of Christ, the crucifixion which is repeated in every human sin, mankind has been taught to ask for forgiveness.

Today, society proclaims that it does not need forgiveness, it is right, for it has superior knowledge, modern technology. Only the inferior wrong and the primitive weak require forgiveness. 'We have done nothing wrong' is the cry of the society which daily denies God, commits genocide and destroys the God-given Earth.

9. As we forgive them that trespass against us

Humanity was taught by the resurrection of Christ to forgive others. For two thousand years, we have been taught that if we do not forgive others, then our souls will not rise again, but will dwell in the hell of the bitterness inside them.

Today, society says that we do not forgive others, even those who have done nothing against us. We punish and exploit others, especially the innocent, who are too weak to defend themselves.

10. And lead us not into temptation

After two millennia, the greatest prayer that we can have is to ask to be led away from temptation. This is because modern society is a society which is based on temptation. Since modern society is based on mortal, material values, we are surrounded by temptations, which flash at us from every street corner and every electronic screen.

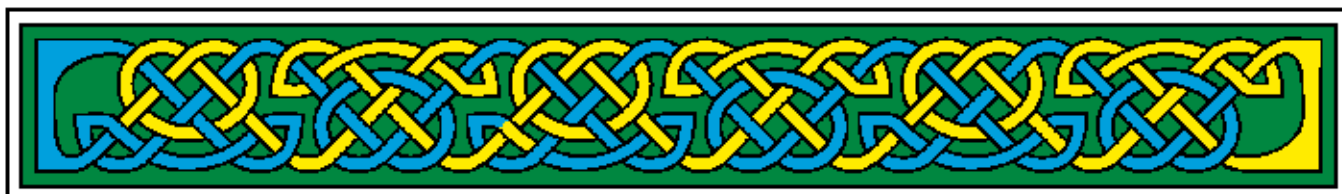
11. But deliver us from the evil one.

As we advance towards the coming of Antichrist, we pray to be delivered from the evil one. We hope to delay his coming until the fullness of time, when the angels will come to reap the greatest harvest possible, separating the chaff from the grain. The world, however, actively seeks the coming of Antichrist. All modern 'progress' is aimed at preparing the way for his total global rule and the elimination of all spiritual presence on earth.

12. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen

This exclamation, made by the priest, is the twelfth exclamation. Twelve is the number of fullness, for this is the cry of the fullness of time, of eternity. This is where all illusions are stripped away and all kingdom and power and glory are revealed in reality to belong not to created and fallen man, but to the Eternal Creator, Our Father, Which art in heaven, Whose name is hallowed, Whose Kingdom is come, Whose will is done, on earth as it is in heaven, Whose daily bread is given, Who forgives us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us, Who leads us not into temptation and delivers us from the evil one. Amen.

Fr Andrew



From The Righteous: Abbot Ælfric of Eynsham

22 JUNE: THE PASSION OF ST ALBAN THE MARTYR.

TWO hundred and eighty-six years after the Incarnation of Christ, a heathen called Diocletian was chosen to be Emperor of the whole world, even though he was a destroyer of men¹. He reigned for twenty years as a cruel murderer, killing and ordering the killing of all the Christians he could find. He burned churches and robbed the innocent. For a whole decade this impious persecution constantly spread all over the world, until it also reached even England², martyring many who believed in Christ. One of these was the noble martyr Alban, who was also martyred in the persecution for Christ's faith, as we relate below.

In those days the murderous persecution reached England from the wicked Emperor, and everywhere the murderers seized Christians with exceeding fury. However, a priest escaped and ran secretly to Alban's house, wishing to hide there from his fierce persecutors. Although he was not baptised, Alban took him in. As the priest loved God, he began singing the services, fasting strictly and praising his Lord day and night. At the same time he taught the honourable Alban the true faith, until he came to believe in the true God and, renouncing heathenism, became a true Christian and truly Orthodox.

The priest stayed with the honourable man, until the magistrate who was persecuting the Christians discovered him there. Extremely angry, the magistrate ordered him to be brought before him at once. The messengers went to Alban's house, but Alban went out unto the persecutors dressed in the priest's cloak, as if he were the priest, not wanting to betray him to the wicked persecutors. He was bound at once and straightaway taken to the impious judge, who was making devilish sacrifices to his gods with all his colleagues.

As soon as he saw the steadfast martyr, the judge was devilishly enraged because he had taken in the fugitive priest and given himself up to be killed in his place. He ordered him to be led to the heathen sacrifice, saying that Alban would receive the severe punishment which he would have given the priest if he had captured him, unless Alban at once submitted to the shameful gods.

Alban was not frightened by his devilish threats, because he was girded about with Divine arms to



Icon of St Alban by Leon Liddament of the Brotherhood of St Seraphim, Walsingham

fight the spiritual fight. He replied that he would not obey the judge's orders, nor bow to his idolatry. Immediately the judge asked him: 'What is your family and what is your position in society'? Alban answered the wicked man in these words: 'What does my family matter to you? If you want to hear the truth, I will tell you now that I am a Christian and I will always worship Christ'.

The judge said to him: 'Tell me your name at once, I am asking'. The champion of God answered the murderer: 'I am called Alban and I believe in the Saviour, Who is the true God and Who made all that is created. I pray to Him and I will always worship Him'. The murderer answered the glorious man: 'If you want to have the happiness of everlasting life, then do not delay, sacrifice to the great gods in complete submission'. Alban answered him: 'Your sacrifices to the gods are offerings to devils and can neither help you, nor profit your cause. As your reward you will receive everlasting punishments in the broad expanses of hell'.

The judge was devilishly enraged and ordered the holy martyr to be flogged, imagining that he could bend the steadfastness of his mind to his own forms of worship by means of stripes. However, the blessed man was strengthened by God and endured the flogging extremely patiently, thanking God for it with a glad mind. The judge saw that he could neither overcome the holy man through harsh tortures, nor turn him from Christ. So he ordered his men to behead him for the Saviour's sake.

The heathen did as the judge ordered and led the saint to his beheading. However, they were delayed for a long while at a bridge, standing there until the evening because of a great crowd of men and of women who had been stirred up and came to accompany the martyr. So it came about that the unbelieving judge sat in the town until the evening, without any servants or food, fasting against his will.

As Alban could not cross the bridge but wished to hasten death, he went to the stream, looked up to heaven and prayed to the Saviour. At once the river dried up in front of him, making a broad path for him as he had asked God. The executioner who was to kill him was moved by the miracle and threw down his sword. He ran quickly and as soon as they had crossed the river, he fell at Alban's feet with complete faith, wishing to die with him rather than to kill him. He was united to the holy man, whom he was to have beheaded, with firm faith.

The sword lay there shining before all of them, but none of them was prepared to kill Alban. Near the holy man there was a pleasant, beautiful sloping hill, adorned with flowers. Alban went there quickly and straightway asked God in prayer to give him water on the hill. God did so and a well sprang up Alban's feet. As the stream ran down the slope of the hill, people could understand his power with God. Alban was beheaded on the hill for the sake of the Saviour and departed to his Lord by a victorious martyrdom and in the true faith.

His executioner did not live long, for his eyes burst out of his head and fell to the ground with Alban's head, so that he might understand whom he had martyred. Then they beheaded the faithful soldier who had refused to behead the holy man. He lay beside Alban, believing in God, baptised in

his own blood³, and departed to Heaven. Afterwards the executioners went to their master and related the wonderful signs which Alban had worked and how his executioner had been blinded. He told them to stop the persecution and spoke respectfully of the holy martyrs, whom he had not been able to turn from God's faith by terrible torments.

In the same persecution all over England, Aaron and Julius and many others, men and women, were also martyred in tortures for Christ's faith and departed victoriously to the true life. When the persecution stopped, the Christians came out of the woods and the wastes where they had been hiding. They went among people and restored Christianity, repairing churches that had been completely ruined, living there in peace with true faith. They also built a worthy church to St Alban at his burial place. Miracles often happened there to the praise of the Saviour, Who always lives in eternity.

All this happened before the strife which came through Hengest and Horsa⁴ who defeated the Britons. Then Christianity was again dishonoured until Augustine⁵ re-established it, as instructed by St Gregory the Orthodox Pope⁶.

Glory and praise be to the Creator, Who loves mankind and delivered our fathers from their enemies and turned them to baptism through His preachers. Amen.

1. In fact Diocletian reigned as Roman Emperor (not as 'Emperor of the whole world') from 20 November 284 to 1 May 305. His persecution began in 303 and continued for over ten years. However, in 305 Diocletian abdicated and in 311 he may have ended his life in suicide. Modern scholars, as is their wont, argue about the date of St Alban's martyrdom, some dating it to earlier persecutions in 209 or 254. 305 is the traditional date. Abbot Ælfric's above life, translated for the first time into modern English, is essentially that of St Bede.
2. England is of course an anachronism, since England only came into existence after the English had settled in Britain in the sixth century.
3. Many martyrs were baptised not by water but by their own blood, both in the early centuries and in the Soviet persecution in the twentieth century.
4. Hengest and Horsa led the systematic arrival of Germanic tribes to Britain in AD 449.
5. St Augustine arrived in Kent in AD 597.
6. The Old English word for Orthodox is 'geleafull', literally 'faithful'.



CHILDREN OF LIGHT

10. Church and Tradition

THE Orthodox Church, the Church of the Apostles, the reconciliation of East and West, the Way of Mary and the Way of Martha, loving God and loving our neighbour as ourselves, the way of caring for the whole man, body, mind and soul, the Universal Church, the Body of Christ, the Church of the Holy Spirit, entrusted to us, according to Christ's promise. Such is the Orthodox belief. But how do we justify our belief in the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church?

Our Church is the One Church, the Church that Christ promised to us even before his Ascension. Of course, within our Church, the Body of Christ Incarnate, there are two aspects, the inner, mystical tradition and also the outer, lay tradition. The Orthodox Church can also be called a lay Church. For its lay members do much 'social' work for the Church and many of them are lay theologians. On the other hand, the ancient monastic traditions and 'spirituality' are always present to balance the Way of Martha with the Way of Mary. The very word 'Orthodox' has two meanings – the right way of believing and the right way of glorifying. Believing represents the inner tradition, glorifying (worship) represents the outer tradition. These two aspects are perhaps best illustrated by an example, one of many possible examples taken from Church history.

Some five hundred years ago a Russian monk, St Nilus of Sora, rejected the possibility of monastic ownership of land. On the other hand, another monk, St Joseph, Abbot of Volokolamsk, defended monastic landholding. From that point onwards a dispute began. St Nil's supporters became known as Non-Possessors and Joseph's the Possessors. The debate illustrates the traditions of Martha (the Possessors) and of Mary (the Non-Possessors). The Church had to look after the sick and the poor – to do this the Church needed money and land. But the Church also had to lead a life of prayer, to live in poverty, not to become entangled in the secular problems of land ownership.

St Joseph and St Nilus represent together right worship and right faith, the outward and the inward, Martha and Mary. Both of course were right and both were canonised by the Church. The two were not in opposition, but overlapped and complemented one another. Thus we see both sides of Orthodox life – Mary and Martha, East and

West. There are many other examples of this, in England with St Cuthbert and St Wilfrid, in Greece under the Turks or in nineteenth century Russia. These two aspects represent Church life, the two natures, human and divine, of Christ, that we are in the world, but not of it, Incarnate, but also spiritual.

In his epistles the Apostle Paul often made an analogy between the Church, the Body of Christ, and the human body. This was very apt and it is an analogy which Orthodox feel keenly nowadays also: *For as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many.* (1 Cor. 12, 12–14).

The Apostle's analogy is no less true of the Church now than it was in the past. The Church is One; there are many different tendencies within it, but it is impossible for there ever to be a schism in the Church, for that would amount to saying that there could be a schism in the Holy Spirit. Our Church preserves its Oneness or Unity with the power of the Holy Spirit. There can only be a falling away from the Church.

The structure of the Church has remained fundamentally unchanged since Apostolic times. It is both episcopal and conciliar. Our Church is held together not by a human-being, like Roman Catholicism, not even by a hierarchy, but by the Holy Spirit, from Whom proceeds our catholicity. The catholicity of the Church, its togetherness, is its conciliar nature. This sense of being together, being with something much greater than any individual, even with saints, comes from the Holy Spirit, Who holds the Church together.

In the Church we are guided by the Holy Spirit. *Howbeit, when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come* (Jn. 16, 13).

We believe that the New Testament was written under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. To say otherwise (as some who state that they cannot accept certain of the teachings of the New Testament assert) would seem like heresy to us; would God lie to us? The Orthodox take the same

attitude to the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament from the Hebrew. Our belief in the power of the Holy Spirit is also seen in the Orthodox theology of the Icon. To state, as many outsiders to Orthodoxy state, that icons are merely pieces of wood and paint would for an Orthodox be to deny that the Holy Spirit has the power to enter into the material – to imply that the Word never became flesh. In the same way Orthodoxy sees mankind as God's icon, which is why the Church (unlike the State hiding behind it) has never persecuted and tortured those of other faiths, has never had an Inquisition of the Roman Catholic type. Orthodox Christianity is a religion of freedom.

Orthodox sincerely believe that our Church is the Church of the Holy Spirit. For the Church is held together and guided by the Holy Spirit. This accounts for what Non-Orthodox have often felt to be the essential otherworldliness of Orthodox worship. The Church is in the world, but not of the world. The otherworldliness of Orthodox worship is symbolised in the outward or ritual aspect of its worship. Our inner faith is externalised in the Liturgy, in ritual and in icons. The fullness of inner Christian belief, as handed down from the Apostles for the last 1900 years is represented in the beauty of *Orthodox* worship, that is, in the 'right way of glorification', an externalisation of the 'right way of believing'.

Of course, there exists a danger that if Faith is lost, the ritual becomes meaningless and the icon becomes an idol. Indeed, at various times in history, this has happened. However, practising Orthodox have always been aware of the meaningless of worship without Faith. Genuine Orthodox have not fallen into the error of regarding our Faith as a mere aesthetic force, instead of as a spiritual and therefore moral force, which is worshipped in beautiful forms, in ritual and in icon. The idea of 'glorifying in the right way' is to represent the spiritual beauty of holiness; by this many have been convinced of the rightness of the inner faith of Orthodoxy.

The Church, as Orthodox believe in all humility, is also the Catholic Church, that is, 'Catholic' in the original Greek sense of the word – universal, in all places and at all times. Indeed it would be heretical for an Orthodox to deny this, for if the Church is One and its members are guided by the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit being the Spirit proceeding from the Father, it is therefore the all-embracing Spirit. The Church therefore is

'Catholic'. Of course, Orthodox do not say that it is impossible to know God outside the Orthodox Church. The Holy Spirit 'spoke by the Prophets' of the Old Testament, before the Church had been founded, through the Resurrection, at Pentecost. The Holy Spirit speaks according to God's Will. But the fullness of knowledge is only available inside the Church, outside Her there are only pale reflections.

Orthodox are by no means unaware of the good outside the Church, inasmuch as it is inspired by the Holy Spirit. Neither are Orthodox blind to the faults of individuals who only nominally follow the Church. But we could not deny that the Orthodox Church is the Church of all Christendom, we could not deny that Christ entrusted us with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, even before His Ascension, saying: *Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit* (Matt. 28, 19).

The Orthodox Church is the Church of the Apostles, the Church of the Holy Spirit. The Church has been preserved from heresy by the Tradition of the spiritual revelations given first to the Apostles, then to the martyrs, Fathers and saints over the last 1900 years – the Tradition of the Orthodox people, the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church. The ways of the Church, of the Holy Spirit, do not change. The Orthodox Creed has never been altered. We are the Church of the Seven Councils, the Church has always moved within the Tradition, within the Holy Spirit. Since the last Universal Council the Tradition has continued and we have come to an ever more lucid understanding of the Scriptures and the Fathers. The Tradition in which we move has always safeguarded us from heresy and this provides the authority of the Church through the saints, the councils, through the holy canons. The Apostolic Church has been safely preserved to this day.

The Orthodox Church faces three main problems in the modern age.

Firstly, there is that of Communism in the East. Secondly, there is that of Capitalism in the East. Both these present the Church with the grave problems of how to cope with industrialisation and the inevitable threats of secularisation which result from industrialisation. In the case of Communism there is the grave and very real danger of direct persecution by the State. In Russia, the domain of State Capitalism or Communism, between East and West, Orthodox are keenly aware of this fact, for millions have already been martyred. In the case of

Capitalism the threat for Orthodoxy is different. We can see how ordinary people are tempted away from God by Mammon. Both Communism and Capitalism are trying to create a paradise on earth. Both are failing and will fail in the future to do anything of the sort. Instead they will create hell on earth, if they have not already done so. In Russia, the meeting-place of both philosophies, this occurred long ago.

The third problem which faces us is directly connected with the other two. This is how the Church is to set about converting pagans, atheists and, ultimately, the Non-Orthodox. How are we to fight back against both Capitalism and Communism?

Orthodoxy has already been attacked by both these secular religions and both have met Orthodoxy in the same place – in the State Capitalism of the 'Communist' powers of Eastern Europe. Other Orthodox Churches, although threatened by Communism, labour on under Capitalism, sometimes a rather beneficial form of it, sometimes a very evil form of it. How is Orthodoxy to fight these evils? Can we truly be Orthodox and work for the Soviet State, supporting its blatantly imperialistic and militaristic designs? Can we truly be Orthodox and still work in the shipyards of Onassis? Is what we do in our daily lives and jobs really to the greater glory of God?

To do any of the above and remain strictly Orthodox in today's world seems impossible. To live nowadays in a Capitalist or Communist society and at the same time live as an Orthodox Christian seems impossible. Orthodox must spiritually throw off the tyrannies under which they live. Not until we have done this can we convert anyone. If we live in a world which pollutes, makes armaments, exploits and kills its enemies, then Orthodox must convert this world. This is true conversion.

It is only by Orthodox witness, by Love, in our everyday lives that we can witness to the Truth of Christianity. If we live in the same sinful ways as atheists and agnostics, how can we ever hope to *go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them all things, whatsoever Jesus Christ has commanded us* (Matt. 28, 19–20).

But what is the best way in which to lead lives of Christian witness?

11. Together in Faith and Life

How simple and yet how difficult is the answer to the question posed at the end of Chapter 10. For the answer, if not the will to bring it into operation has been with us always.

We are the Apostolic Church, let us then live closer to the Apostolic way of life. We are the 'Catholic' Church, let us then share our lives together as we share our Faith together. Let us express our inward togetherness of Faith in an outward togetherness of Life also:

And all that believed were together, and had all things in common; And they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved (Acts 2, 44–47).

And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things in common. And, with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked, for as many as were possessors of land or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need (Acts 4, 32–35).

If we believe together, believing and glorying in the right way, then we have the right way of Christian witness, the way of Love, which is our only power with which to defeat both Capitalism and Communism. Only if we live closer to the time of Christ will we overcome the false gods of Mammon and of Maoism. Industrialisation, the destruction of the natural world, will end when Christians themselves stop destroying it. We must fight against the historical forces of the period by turning to God in Faith and in Life. In Him all men and women become one; they are together. Let us show outwardly our inner togetherness, our inner light

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in

the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven. (Matt. 5, 14-16)

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another ... By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another (Jn. 13, 34-35)

That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may also be one in us (Jn. 17, 21).

For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth); Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them (Ephes. 5, 8-11).

The need is then that Orthodox Christians pray, work and worship together. If there are groups of Orthodox Christians working and praying in a spirit of togetherness, they can set an example to the rest of the world. This requires a renewal of parish structures, a renewal that can only come from monasteries, which are at the heart of the Church. It is essential that we look closely at the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles, in order to understand how Christians ought to lead their lives in order to create this sense of being together. And then we have all the Orthodox literature that has accumulate since Apostolic times, all that has been inspired by the Holy Spirit in the Tradition of the Church.

But all these worketh the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man separately as He will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ (I Cor. 12, 11-12).

That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular (I Cor. 12, 25-27).

For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them (Matt. 18, 20)

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that

ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another (Jn. 13, 34-35).

Standing between East and West, the Church, Orthodoxy, has the ability to understand both East and West and join them together. It is not a matter of forcing foreign ways on different cultures, it is not a matter of religious imperialism, it is a matter of working from the roots of individual national traditions and viewpoints, reaching out towards God within the scope of the Tradition of the Church. The different nations of the world must assimilate and absorb the Truth of Christ in His Church, adapting their past spiritual thought to their new Tradition. In this way the whole of the Orthodox World-Outlook can be enormously enriched; new facets of spiritual understanding may be revealed to the world as a whole.

12. Russia: The Way Ahead

A choice faces the world. The choice is Capitalism or Communism or Orthodox Christianity, that is, the West, the East or the good in both West and East transfigured in the Church of Christ an Orthodoxy close to that of the Apostles.

The East and the West have set up their false idols of Marx and Mammon. The two systems are even now locked together in a death-struggle throughout the world. Paradoxically, however, the two systems are also combined into one and are fighting together against Good. Together they are represented by the State Capitalist system of Russia. Nowhere is the struggle between the forces of Darkness, Soviet Capitalism-Communism, pitted against the forces of Light, Orthodox Christianity, so fierce and bloody as in Russia. The struggles against Capitalism in the West and Marxism in the East are even minor when compared with the struggles in Russia. For this is the battle of the demonic and atheist mind against the Orthodox Christian heart, the battle of violence against Love, of the devil against the Children of Light. This is the battleground of the World. Here and now is the battle between Christ and Antichrist being fought.

On the flat Eurasian plains of the North, where East meets West, the bloody battle has been fought for the last fifty-seven years and it is said that one million people have died for every one of those years. Here then is the future of the World held in the balance: the Evil and the Good in the soul of the Russian people are openly battling with one another.

Those who are physically distant from the struggle should pray and lead lives of Christian virtue. If the body is one, let at least some of our limbs be healthy, that not all our limbs should bleed at the same time. How important it is that Christians everywhere should lead better lives, so that Capitalism and Communism, Mammonism and Marxism, should be conquered in every land of the world. That is the way in which we can help Russia. This is the way in which we can help ourselves, as we sit here in our dark prison cells, waiting to catch sight, if only for a moment, of that other and better world.

The Light is faintly glowing through the heavy gloom and a voice can be heard calling and beckoning us

We know where our Path lies. God, through His Son, has given us the Spirit of Truth, let us then heed Him. Let us gather our strength in order to dedicate our lives to walking the length of this Path, fulfilling the Word of God on our way. Let us love God and love one another.

The time is rushing by, for much too long Christians have been wandering from the Path, let us return through Love, and Love alone, to the way of Christ's disciples, where the quiet joys of Christian struggle await us.

The song of our hearts is deep and broad and strong, like a mighty river rushing and flooding by.

The World is dark and bewildered. Eternal Light, shine on us

Holy Orthodoxy is bleeding, but her blood is bright and life-giving.

The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ if so be that we suffer with Him, that we be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us (Romans.8, 16-18).

Rain on rain and no end.

The pigeon-blue smoke is gusted from the thatched roofs and somewhere in the dank glade a

clearly ringing voice is echoing a lonely song. The song tells of a brother¹ who lay ill for many long years, sorely tormented by a fever of the mind and of a woman who will bear a child ...²

Mist rises up over the sodden and rotting rye and plaintively calling, a crane soars up into the cloud-hung distance; on, on into the thunder-dark expanse and over the living and the sorrowing, the broad and the windswept Earth. Ahead there stretches out the Way of Suffering and the Wind, the Cold, the Rain and the Dark.

The spring-leaves in the grieving birch-woods seemed to be saying a prayer for all those who are lonely and suffering, for the widows and the orphans, the beggars out on the roads, for those in distant lands and on distant waves ...

And as if in answer the young pines bend their swaying and supple boughs to the lapping of the floodwaters ...

The first primroses have already burst into flower across the sweet-smelling meadowlands.

The sky is shining through the greening grass and the wind is sighing and yearning in the murmuring reeds. The anxious tolling of a single bell is joyfully carried across the surging and mysteriously harmonious waves of a broad river.

A song is borne across the rolling grasslands, over the impatient waters and through the rustling forests, grown restless with waiting. It tells of a man in a crown who is crossing the length and breadth of this smelling and prophetic earth ...

Beloved Land, soon to be made fragrant and all-holy, shone through and warmed by the love of so many martyrs' blood³, there is an unknown redolence and radiant light in thy still brightening Churches; we neither ask why nor question how, but we know and feel and have Faith.

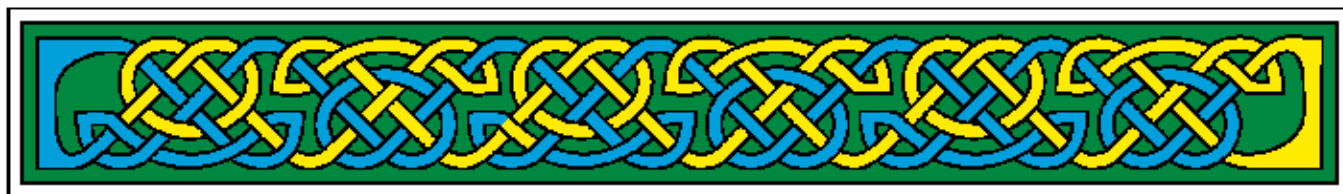
For that alone, O Lord, we humbly kneel and give thanks to Thee. Amen.

October 1973 – April 1974

1. Ivan Karamazov.

2. Revelations 12.

3. Those since 1917.



LIENZ: SIXTY-FIVE YEARS OF AN UNEXPIATED CRIME

Every nation has its dark moments. Great Britain has also had many. These include imperialistic wars, slave-trading in Africa, the 'Opium Wars' against China, the exploitation of the Indian subcontinent, the wars in Afghanistan and the Sudan, as well as the Boer War or the events of more recent times, during the Second World War, the Bengal Famine of 1943 or the bombing of German civilians, and events since. Among twentieth-century events we must include the forced repatriation and deaths of tens of thousands of Russian Orthodox in 1945.

It is now the sixty-fifth anniversary of this horrific tragedy, which was kept a closely guarded secret for the first 25 years. Ordinary British people had no idea what had been done by their government behind their backs, but in their name. The above concerns me personally, since my father, fighting in the Eighth Army, went up from the Egyptian Desert, where his best friends had died and he had been wounded, through Italy and finished the war as a staff sergeant in Austria. It was there on 18 May 1945 that he witnessed Russian Cossacks laying down their arms. Little did he know what other British troops would be ordered to do next and what was about to happen to the anti-Stalinist Russians.

As patriots, these Russians had fought for freedom from Stalin. Unfortunately, this had meant compromising themselves with Hitler, whose prisoners they were, but they never at any time fought against the Western Allies and at the end of the war liberated Prague from the Nazis. They were not Nazis; their argument was with Stalin. Though this turned out to be a tragic error, a misalliance, it was still not a reason for the Western Allies to hand them over to Stalin. Their repatriation by the British and, to a lesser extent, the American, governments is still one of the unexpiated errors of the twentieth century. In 1989, in a little act of repentance, in Salzburg as a deacon I was at last able to pray for the rest of those who had been repatriated¹. Twenty-one years on, writing from the Russian Orthodox church in one of the major military towns of England, I offer this reminder.

The following is based on part of a 1968 sermon of Archbishop Savva (Raevsky) of Sydney and Australia, reprinted in the excellent biography of him by Fr Michael Protopopov, Melbourne, 1999, pp. 1003–1011. Additional details have been added from the article by M. V. Shkarovsky in 'Vestnik Germanskoy Eparkhii' Nos 1–2 2007. Readers will find a bibliography at the end.

TODAY the Russian emigration remembers those sacrifices which were made by the freedom-loving Cossacks and Russians who, as soldiers of the Russian Liberation Army, took up the sword against the evil of this world. Today, after the Divine Liturgy, at the request of the Don Cossacks and in memory of Peter Nikolaevich Krasnov, we will serve a memorial service for those sacrificed at Lienz in Austria.

That was a horrible event, brothers and sisters, and it is difficult for me to speak of it. The repatriation of the Cossacks and soldiers of the Russian Liberation Army to the Soviets, in accordance with the decision of the Yalta Conference, is on the one hand one of the most tragic pages of the Russian emigration. On the other hand, in this event, as if on a whim, we see the brutality, heartlessness and amorality of those who, though the chief political leaders of the free world, proved to be allies of Communism and knowingly or unknowingly supported and saved it. How did this come about?

At the beginning of May 1945, World War II came to an end. The majority of Russians, among them Cossacks, who found themselves in territories occupied by the Western Allies were ordered to be put into camps, mostly in Austria and Bavaria. At the end of the war the majority of the Cossacks were either in Northern Italy or Croatia. The Cossack headquarters were run by General Timothy Ivanovich Domanov and the Cossack troops were led by General Peter Nikolaevich Krasnov. There were tens of thousands of people.

By order of the Allies this mass of soldiers, together with the elderly, women and children, were moved through the snow-laden passes of the Alps to Austria. This move was hard and difficult. Many perished. Arriving in Austria, the Cossacks were settled along the River Drau near the town of Lienz in the foothills of the Alps. This was near where, more than 150 years before, the great

Suvorov had returned from their march to Italy with his 'wonder-warriors'.

The Cossacks were put into camps in an area about twenty miles long. The Cossack headquarters and other officials were set up in Lienz. The elderly, women and children were put in a large camp at Peggetz, a mile and a half from Lienz. Others were put in different camps, where they lived in tents in the open. On 18 May the Cossacks voluntarily gave up all their arms, believing that the British were 'gentlemen' and could not possibly trick them or hand them over to Stalin's butchers. Then, deceitfully, on 28 May, some 1,500 officers, officials and physicians were sent 'to a conference' to meet the British general in the neighbouring town of Spittal. There they were handed over to the Soviets. About 20% of these were actually émigrés from after 1917 and should never have been handed over.

The repatriation of all the Cossacks to the Soviet Union was scheduled for the next day, Ascension Day, which fell on 31 May that year. After the liturgy that day, having found out about the repatriation of the officers to the Soviet Union, the clergy in the camps decided to act. For the next day they arranged that processions with banners and icons would move from all the other camps towards the large camp in Peggetz. There a platform had been erected, where two tables with white tablecloths had been placed. These were set up as the altar and table of oblation for the Divine Liturgy. Services had already been held there all day on 31 May, with a rota of priests.

From 5.00 in the morning of 1 June priests received confessions in Peggetz. Sixteen priests continued to confess throughout the liturgy, while eleven concelebrated. Those holding the banners and icons stood beside the clergy who had come from all the camps. Two choirs sang with them, the choir of the Kuban Cossacks and the diocesan choir. Several thousand faithful attended. They were surrounded by cadets and young Cossacks, who had decided to defend the elderly, women, and children.

The Liturgy began at 9.00. At about 10.00 while the choir was singing 'Our Father', British Army vehicles entered the camp. A platoon of soldiers came out armed with rifles, automatic weapons and even machine-guns. One heavy machine-gun was trained on the faithful. The service continued. Holy Communion began. At this point the order was given and the soldiers headed towards the crowd shooting into the ground at the feet of the

faithful. Several rounds were shot. Great confusion broke out. The soldiers began to beat the defenceless people, mostly about the head. People were knocked unconscious and fell bloody to the ground.

Tanks smashed into the raised platform, people died under tank tracks and the wheels of vehicles. Shots were fired at men, women and children. The last priest stood on the remains of the platform, holding a chalice and singing the hymn, 'Holy Martyrs, who have fought the good fight and received your crowns, pray to the Lord ...'. Members of the choir and clergy were bundled into lorries. Hymns were sung and the saints were prayed to. Soldiers beat the people even harder. A terrible battle began. The altar and table of oblation were knocked over.

The majority of people were forced into lorries to be handed over to the Soviets. Some escaped. Paschal hymns were sung: 'Christ is Risen', 'The Angel Cried', 'Let God Arise', as also the prayer to the Mother of God, 'Beneath Thy mercy we flee, O Virgin Mother of God'. All this was witnessed by local people beyond the railway station and from the surrounding towns. By 5.00 in the afternoon many refugees had already been handed over to Stalin's NKVD Secret Police. Many of them were machine-gunned at once. Many others had committed suicide, preferring death to being handed over to Stalin.

What happened at Lienz has been written down by witnesses and documented in a book by the leader of the Kuban Cossacks, General Naumenko, also in numerous other books, brochures, and journals². Not all the British soldiers were so brutal. The steadfastness of the Cossacks did have an influence on the conscience of some. One of the soldiers quietly told them, as they were surrounded by tanks: 'Stand fast for your rights, don't agree to be repatriated, and don't be afraid of us'. A few minutes after this was said, a girl came out of the crowd and handed the soldier a note written in English. 'Better you shoot my parents and me here', it said, 'than to be handed back to the Communists, from whom we ran away'. After reading the note, the soldier turned pale and tears appeared in his eyes.

There were terrible acts of suicide. One Cossack, Peter Mordvinkin, first shot his daughter, then his son and finally his wife and himself. I read of this before and recently a Cossack who was driving me to church told me of this as he himself had witnessed it. A woman doctor, Voskoboinikova



The famous painting of Lienz by the artist Sergei Korolkov: 'The first to commit suicide by hanging was the Cossack editor Evgenij Tarrusky. The second was General Silkin who shot himself ... The Cossacks refused to board the trucks. British soldiers armed with pistols and clubs began using their clubs, aiming at the heads of the prisoners. They first dragged the men out of the crowd and threw them into the trucks. The men jumped out. They beat them again and threw them onto the floor of the trucks. Again, they jumped out. The British then hit them with rifle butts until they lay unconscious and threw them like sacks of potatoes into the trucks'

by name, threw herself, together with her mother, sister and child, into the river. Night came. Under the cover of darkness many escaped into the mountains, even though they were being patrolled by soldiers and aeroplanes. Some managed to get through the snow and found themselves in the American zone, in Salzburg, where they escaped repatriation. In Salzburg, where I was the administrator of the Austrian Diocese for the Russian Church Outside Russia, we succeeded in not allowing one Russian to be handed over, thanks to the efforts of the Catholic Archbishop Roracher and the American General Collins, who was the administrator of the armed forces and civil government of Salzburg and surrounding areas.

Mass repatriation continued in the area until mid-June. By then some 22,500 had been handed over. These included some 3,000 old émigrés. Over 4,000 ran off into the forests and tried to hide there. At least 1,000 died at Lienz on that day (some Austrian authorities mention the figure of 13,000). Some 700 were buried at the Orthodox cemetery in Lienz and over 600 other bodies, mainly of women and children, were taken out of

the River Drau downstream. Elsewhere in Austria another 43,913 were forcibly repatriated between 28 May and 7 June alone. Repatriations continued until 1947, by which time some 2 million had been handed over to Stalin.

The rough River Drau brought forth many bodies after the Lienz siege. These bodies, together with those killed during the terrible repatriation on 1 June 1945 are buried in a communal grave near Lienz. An obelisk has been erected at the cemetery reminding everyone of that terrible tragedy which took place at Lienz, which carries all the hallmarks of the infamy and moral emptiness of our 20th century. Give rest to them, O Lord, and accept them into Thy Kingdom. Amen.

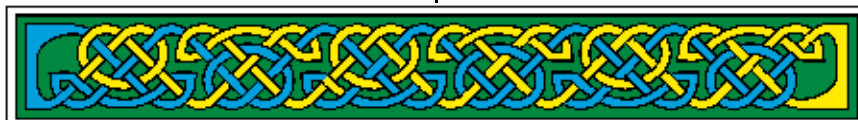
1. See 'A Pilgrimage to Austria' in *Orthodoxy Christianity and the English Tradition*, 1995 and 1997

2. See in English:

The Last Secret, Lord Nicholas Bethell, London, 1974

Victims of Yalta, Nikolai Tolstoy, originally published in London, 1977. Revised edition 1979. Published in the US as *The Secret Betrayal*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1977

The Minister and The Massacres, Nikolai Tolstoy, London, 1986



IRELAND'S GLORY

EDUCATION is not the same thing as intelligence. Indeed, the over-educated are often blind to real values. For example, many senior Nazis and Communists (Marx and Lenin) were highly educated, some of them held doctorates. The proof can be seen in the incredibly backward views of Ireland held by two highly educated Englishmen of the nineteenth century, one a Prime Minister, the other, sadly, a Church of England clergyman.

'The Irish', proclaimed Benjamin Disraeli, 'hate our order, our civilization, our enterprising industry, our pure religion (Disraeli's father had abandoned Judaism for the Church of England in a shrewd career move). This wild, reckless, indolent, uncertain and superstitious race have no sympathy with the English character. Their ideal of human felicity is an alternation of clannish broils and coarse idolatry. Their history describes an unbroken circle of bigotry and blood'.

And here is the response of Charles Kingsley to the famine-induced destitution he witnessed in Victorian Ireland: 'I am daunted by the human chimpanzees I saw along that hundred miles of horrible country. I don't believe they are our fault. I believe that there are not only many more of them than of old, but that they are happier, better and more comfortably fed and lodged under our rule than they ever were. But to see white chimpanzees is dreadful; if they were black, one would not feel it so much, but their skins, except where tanned by exposure, are as white as ours'.

We are left speechless by the Protestant bigotry, racist ignorance and blind hypocrisy of these people, responsible for mass murder and yet still justifying themselves. Little wonder that the same people also happily allowed the Turks to massacre the native Christian peoples of the Balkans and themselves freely massacred in India and Africa, North America and Australasia. Their attitude to all Non-White Protestants was at least consistent. Sadly, many historians who wrote and write the history books and newspapers in this country were and often still are of the same ilk as Disraeli and Kingsley. Everyone who disagrees with them is 'primitive'.

Orthodox Christianity came to Ireland from the east. Sometimes it was only as far east as post-Roman Britain, with St Patrick. But he was inspired from Gaul. And the Gauls were inspired from the

east. Ascetics came from Egypt, Palestine, Syria, and Armenia. The Ulster monastery of Bangor for example claimed in its litanies to be '*ex Ægypto transducta*' 'translated from Egypt'. Similarly, the convention of using red dots to adorn manuscript initials had come to Ireland via Egyptian monks.

The missionary impulse of Ireland really began with St Columba, who in 563 sailed to found Iona and baptize Scotland, and from there his disciples went to Lindisfarne to baptize all northern England. From here it was only one more step to mainland Europe and elsewhere. In fact, St Columba became the model for all who would win the ultimate victory. Monks set off in every direction, bent on glorious and heroic exile for the sake of Christ. Some went north, like St Columba. Others went north-west, like St Brendan the Navigator, visiting Iceland, Greenland and North America. Some set out in boats without oars, putting their destination completely in the hands of God. Many of the exiles found their way to Europe, where they were more than a match for the barbarians they met. They, whom the Romans had never conquered, fearlessly brought the Faith back to ancient homes.

One of these pilgrims was St Columban, twenty years or so younger than St Columba, born in the province of Leinster in about the year 540, and then a monk at Bangor for twenty-five years. About 590 he departed with twelve companions for Gaul, where he founded three forest monasteries among the barbarous Burgundians, at Annegray, Fontaines and Luxeuil, one of the most important foundations of the age. Such astounding activity could only mean that St Columban was having similar success to St Columba in bringing the Faith to the native peoples of Europe, as the centralizing Romans had never managed.

Later, in double exile (from Burgundian Gaul as well as from Ireland), St Columban meant to make his way to northern Italy to convert the Lombards. But while journeying across the Alps, he was forced to stop at Arbon, near Lake Constance. This was because St Gall, his expert in Germanic languages, had fallen ill and could not go further. After debate, St Columban left St Gall behind and with his remaining companions headed for the plain of Lombardy, where at Bobbio they built the first Italo-Irish monastery. In 612, vigorous Columbanus, now in his early seventies, took part in the construction, happily carrying wooden beams on his shoulders.



The most important centres of Irish-Christian influence

At his repose in 615 St Columban left behind a body of letters and sermons, instructions for the brethren; poems and the even larger legacy of his continental monasteries, engaged in reintroducing theology to the European mainland. At this great distance in time, we can no longer be exactly sure how many monasteries were founded in St Columban's name during his lifetime and after his repose. But the number, stretching across vast territories that would become in time the countries of France, Germany, Switzerland and Italy, cannot be fewer than sixty and may be more than a hundred. He had been in Europe for just twenty-five years.

One monastery about which we have information is that of Saint Gall in the Alps, founded by the monk St Columban had left behind and who went on to become the central figure in the founding of the Swiss Church. Finding himself alone after St Columban, among wolves, bears, and illiterate Allemans, St Gall went out visiting his

neighbours, instructing them in faith and letters. We possess only one work from his hand, a sermon of such honesty, simplicity and generosity that we can still grasp what touched the Allemans.

In 615, as St Columban lay on his death-bed, there came a knock at St Gall's door: brethren from Bobbio had arrived with St Columban's staff, the implicit acknowledgement that St Gall was the greatest of all his spiritual sons. In 616, St Gall, whose labours were becoming well known, refused the offer to become Bishop of Constance and in 627 the invitation to return to flourishing Luxeuil as its Abbot. He stuck to his task and by his repose in 645 all of the Allemans had received the Gospel.

There is much we do not know about these Irish exiles. Their clay and wattle buildings have long since disappeared and even most of their precious books have perished. But what is certain is that these 'green martyrs', fanned out across Europe, founding monasteries that would become in time

the cities of Auxerre, Laon, Luxeuil, Liege Trier, Wuerzburg, Regensburg, Rheinau, Reichenau, Salzburg, Vienna, Saint Gall, Bobbio, Fiesole and Lucca, to name but a few. St Fursey the Visionary went from Ireland to East Anglia, then to Lagny, just east of Paris, then to Peronne, which would be known in time as '*Peronna Scottorum*', 'Peronne of the Irish', and the city of St Fursey. Sts Caidoc and Fricor advanced on Picardy. St Virgil the Geometer became Archbishop of Salzburg. St Donatus was chosen in a popular election to be Bishop of Fiesole, where he ruled for nearly fifty years. Saint Cathal, widely venerated to this day in southern Italy as San Cataldo, was surprised on his way back from pilgrimage in the Holy Land to find himself elected Bishop of Taranto, a city on the arch of Italy's boot.

Women exiles went forth as well and though we know even less about them than we know about the men, the churches dedicated to St Brigid in France, Germany, Austria, and Italy offer some evidence of their presence. More than half of all the Scriptural commentaries in Western Europe between 650 and 850 were written by the Irish. Before the end of the eighth century, the exiles had

reached Modra in Moravia, where an old church has been dug up, looking just like the little church at Glendalough, and there are traces of the white martyrs as far as Kiev. Suffice it to say that as late as 870 Heiric of Auxerre can still exclaim in his *Life of St Germanus*: 'Almost all of Ireland, scorning the sea, is migrating to our shores'.

Ireland was at one point the only place which continued Orthodox civilisation in Western Europe. For over a hundred years between about 500 and 600, Christianity survived in Western Europe clinging to places like Skellig Michael off the westernmost coasts of Ireland, whose greatest export was its saints. And for two centuries afterwards, until about 800 Ireland's star still shone brightly in the West.

At a time when in contemporary Ireland, Roman Catholicism has been almost totally undermined by the paedophile scandal, it is time for Ireland to start again, to look back beyond the time when the invading Anglo-Normans brought Roman Catholicism to its shores in the twelfth century, to the time of its roots, to its glory.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS



What is nobility? We all know that some 'nobles' in history were ignoble, yet we talk about a noble gesture or noble behaviour on the part of all sorts of people.

S. P., Felixstowe

Nobility, like 'class' or 'good taste', has its origin in moral values, at the root of which are spiritual values. This explains why the nouveau riche often have no taste or 'class', and also why being descended from a noble family does not necessarily mean noble behaviour. Anyone, whatever their origins, can be noble or behave nobly. It is a question of values.



Is the name Isabelle Orthodox?

E. I., Ipswich

Yes. It is the Spanish form of Elizabeth.



I am studying the philosophy of religion for A-level. I am very confused about the issue of freewill, predestination and fate. How do we understand these concepts as Orthodox Christians and how do our concepts of God's will and providence fit in?

S. V., London

God's will is our path in life that is traced out by God for each one of us. It is *God's plan* for us. This is the path according to which we can best and most happily live, that is, live with a sense of *self-fulfilment*. This means to fulfil the sinless self that God originally made. We are called to love and respect this sinless self, for it is God's creation ('Love your neighbour as your self'). However, we do not attempt to fulfil and esteem the fallen self. This is the definition of selfishness.

God's will is different for each of us, since we are each different and we each have different tasks to accomplish in life. In following *God's will*, we fulfil our *destiny*. However, we have to be careful to discern *God's will* for us. Of course, some people misuse these terms in order to justify their irresponsibility, laziness, passivity and excuse even terrible sins, saying, 'it was God's will', or, 'it was my *destiny*'. In reality, it is our greatest task to discover what *God's will* is for us, so fulfilling our *destiny*. In order to fulfil our *destiny*, or find *self-fulfilment*, we must take into account the place where we born, where we are now, our nationalities, our backgrounds, our families, our abilities and our faults.

We also have to make a distinction between *destiny* in the Christian sense and *destiny* in the pagan sense. Christian *destiny*, as we have said, is the fulfilment of *God's will*. In the pagan sense, *destiny* means *fate* or *fatalism*, which mean the workings of blind or random *chance* or *luck*. In reality, random *chance*, *luck* or *fate* do not exist. They mean doing the will of the demons, for where God is not, there the demons have power. For example, it is random '*chance*' which has produced the most unscientific theory of atheistic science – the fantasy that the whole universe, all of creation, is due to blind *chance*. In other words, all those clever people who believe in such a fantastic theory are the plaything of the demons. Christians do not believe in *chance* or *luck*, just as we do not believe in *coincidences*.

If we live our *destiny* as Christians, then we have a *sense of duty*, for our Christian *destiny* entails the *nobility* of *self-sacrifice*, acting according to our spiritual and moral *principles*, or *conscience*, which is the voice of God in us. Here we should distinguish between our sense of *divine duty* and our sense of *human duty*. The two may by no means be the same. In mistaking one for the other in delusion, some err grievously.

We should understand that doing God's will does not mean that we lose our *freedom* or *freewill*. The only way in which we can preserve our *freedom* is by using our *freewill* to do *God's will*. Only *God's will* guarantees our inner *freedom*, that is, our *freedom* from the necessity or determination in this world to commit sin.

However, if we do not use our *freedom* to do *God's will*, that is, to fulfil our *destiny*, on repentance even the evil that we have done and errors that we have committed as a result can become useful to us, because of *Providence*.

Providence is defined as God's loving care and foresight for us, who live in this world which lies in sin. Every mistake can therefore become *providential*, or spiritually edifying and useful for us. Through repentance mistakes can thus still aid us to do *God's will*, ultimately fulfilling our *destiny*, *God's plan* for us, despite our errings. What Christians call *Providence* is often called by this world '*coincidence*'.

The words *predestination* and *predetermination* are not normally used by Christians, because they exclude the *freedom* granted to us by God to do or not do *God's will*. However, they can be used in their eternal sense. This sense is that since God lives beyond creation and therefore beyond His creation of time, that is, in eternity, He foreknows everything about us. In other words, He knows what we do before we do it. But there is here no sense of obligation. Christian *predestination* and *predetermination* can only mean *foreknowledge*, eternal knowledge. Such *foreknowledge* in no way deprives us of our *freewill*.



What can be done about obesity, which is increasing all the time in the Western world?

T. L., Devon

I think the only way to lose weight is to fast, that is, not to eat. When you do have to eat, eat fasting food. If you still feel hungry, drink water. This epidemic of obesity began when Protestantism dropped frugality and Catholicism dropped fasting in the 1960s. The sad results are before us a generation or so later. I am no expert, but I think that exercise is of little help, it turns fat into muscle, which weighs even more. Exercise also increases the appetite, so that you tend to eat to replace what has been lost.



If married couples need to complement each other, why do we simply not marry the opposite of ourselves? After all, it is said that opposites attract?

A. P., Felixstowe

I would say that married couples complement each other when their qualities match and their faults are opposed, in other words, when their faults make up for or cover each other. In this sense, 'opposites attract'. For example, we can take a couple who both have the same quality, say, they are both tidy. However, on the negative side, one is spendthrift and the other stingy. But $+1 + -1 = 0$. In other words, they find harmony in their mutual

quality of tidiness and as for their faults, they cancel each other out through both making compromises. This is complementarity.

Married couples oppose each other when their qualities are opposite and their faults match. In this case, 'opposites repel'. For example, we can take a couple who are both spendthrifts (= a double negative of financial disaster). On the positive side, however, one is punctual and the other is generous (= a potential conflict of interests and a source of arguments). This is opposition.



Can King Edward the Confessor be considered an Orthodox saint?

P. J., London

I may be wrong, but I don't think he was a saint. There are a number of arguments against:

1. He died in 1066, after 1054.
2. Much more important, he was canonised by the Pope in distant Rome and on political grounds in 1163, nearly one hundred years after his death. If he had been a saint, surely he would have been popularly venerated and locally canonised soon after his death?
3. It was due to his promise, made without consulting anyone else of importance, that William the Bastard invaded England. We should recall that Edward was himself half-Norman and brought up in Normandy. There are some therefore who consider Edward a traitor, not a saint.
4. When the expert on Edward and the writer of his biography, the late Prof Frank Barlow, was asked what he thought of Edward's sanctity, he replied: 'He was as much a saint as Sir Frank Stenton (the great Oxford scholar of pre-Norman England) is a knight'. In other words, he considered that just as Frank Stenton did not wear armour and ride a battle-horse, but had been knighted, so Edward was not a saint, except in name. He was a political figure, used by the Anglo-Norman to obtain local legitimacy.
5. Finally, when St John of Shanghai visited Westminster Abbey in the 1950s, he commented: 'There is nothing here'. Surely, if he had felt that the relics of a saint were there, he would have gone and venerated them.



When will bishops who told lies during the Soviet period be punished?

J. A., Surrey

The episcopate of both parts of the Russian Church offered words of repentance for their errors in the past, some more than once. Some people will say that that is not enough or that it was not sincere. Who are we to judge? As we can see from the behaviour of Western hostages in Iran and captured US soldiers in Afghanistan, prisoners will say anything. That is what the Russian episcopate did when it was under Communist captivity. If you were the bishop and priests of your diocese and their families had guns in their backs, which would be fired if you did not sign some ridiculous pro-Soviet manifesto, what would you do? I think there are cases where telling lies is better than being self-righteous and letting someone else pay the cost. You can tell a lie and save someone else's skin in such situations. It can be the lesser evil.

There are also the cases of those Catholic bishops and priests in Poland, Slovakia and Hungary who actually spied on and denounced their parishioners on the orders of their Communist secret services. However, it is true that a few Russians also did this.



What is happiness?

D. S., Felixstowe

I would say: The ability to content yourself that everything is God's will.



If Western people are going to be Orthodox, why not just return to the situation of the Church in Western Europe before 1054?

P. T., Dorset

The problem here is that we cannot turn the clock back. We do not have the situation of 1,000 years ago. The culture and mentalities are different. For instance, we do not know what the singing in the churches sounded like then. And, even if we did, would it be to modern tastes?

The fact is that the Church in the West a thousand years ago was relatively primitive. By using that word, I mean that a thousand years ago the Church had not received all the spiritual understanding that we have received since then, for example, that expressed in the theology of St Gregory Palamas. Another example of this primitiveness is the fact that the iconography and architecture were fairly crude and provincial. The fact is that the Church in the West had not yet received the decisions of the Seventh Council. We cannot reject a thousand years of spiritual progress,

of spiritual revelation, of the Holy Spirit, because we have a purist attitude towards history.

Furthermore, a thousand years ago in the West, certain deformations, which developed markedly later, were creeping back. Having just overcome much of paganism and barbarianism, some in the West were effectively re-introducing it and justifying it out of ignorance. For example, from about 960 on statues of saints were appearing (statues coming from pagan Roman culture); priests and monks were beginning to shave, as the pagans had done in Rome; in Germany some prince-bishops were again behaving like barbarian war-leaders and taking their troops into battle. And, more seriously, what are the papal claims and the *filioque*, if not the revival of the pagan ideology that justified the absolute power of the pagan Roman emperors?

All of these customs were revived from pagan Rome or else from the customs of heathen Teutonic tribes. It is true that this was happening amid the practice of Orthodoxy. But it means that even if we could turn the clock back a thousand years ago, we would have to accept only what was Orthodox in that age. Why not accept more simply the Orthodoxy that we have, twenty-first century, ready-made, but using our local Western languages and venerating the saints from the first millennium?



How would you define the two words 'Art' and 'Civilisation' from an Orthodox viewpoint?

A. P., Felixstowe

These are difficult questions, but here are two attempts. Art 'Any artificial or manmade activity or object which inspires the soul to love God and love our neighbours as ourselves'. For civilization, I rather like what the late Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother said: 'Civilization is what values honour, gaiety, courtesy, love of home and country, lack of self-pity and a religious sense of the fitness of things'. But perhaps on a more Orthodox level, we could say: 'An earthly kingdom where the values of the Kingdom of Heaven are given priority'.



Is tourism Orthodox?

I. L., London

Only inasmuch as it is a pilgrimage, that is, a search for the truth inside oneself, aided by the external stimulus of travel.



How do you define purism?

A. M., Suffolk

Purism is a lack of discernment. For example, someone who says 'I cannot worship there, they do not use olive oil in their lamps, they do not use beeswax candles, they have mounted and not painted icons, their church does not face east, they use electricity etc. And a lack of discernment is better known as foolishness.



What do we as Orthodox make of King Arthur?

R. T., California

First of all, 'King Arthur' did not exist. There was only a Romanised Celtic war leader ('*dux Artorius*' of the historian Nennius) or commander, who in the sub-Roman sixth century fought successfully against invading Germanic pagans. The rest of the story, the Round Table, Camelot, Lancelot and Guinevere, the knights (bloodthirsty men on horseback), the castles, the romance, is all myth. The myth was invented and propagated (for it was propaganda) in the twelfth century, at the orders of the descendants of the Norman invaders of the British Isles.

Wishing to justify their banditry and pillage through legend, they needed to reject the English heroes King Alfred and St Edmund, and find a rival for Charlemagne, the German hero of the Normans, and so they lighted on 'Arthur'. The ideology was further elaborated by the 'Holy Grail', (Norman French for 'true blood' - '*sang reel*'). This came about because the twelfth century was the age when Roman Catholicism finally deprived its members of the wine which they had been told was the Blood of Christ, and instead of bread, the Body of Christ, they were given a wafer. Thus, this whole story is un-Orthodox and in many respects anti-Orthodox.

On the other hand, there could be Orthodoxy in the reality that Romanised Celts did fight against pagan invaders. The problem here is that we simply do not know whether this was a purely ethnic combat between two pagan tribes, Celts and Germans, or whether the Celts were actually fighting for a degree of Orthodox Christianity against paganism. This doubt comes from the fact that we do not know how Christianized the Celts led by Arthur or others actually were. It must be said that the contemporary chronicler St Gildas, and later the chronicler Nennius, give us the impression that the Celts were almost totally un-

Christianized, and actually the fight was only ethnic and not for spiritual values.



Christianity, including Orthodoxy, lays claim to being universal and yet Christians, especially Orthodox, criticise globalisation, so what is the difference between universalism and globalisation?

G. P., London

Orthodox universality is modelled on the Holy Trinity – unity in diversity. It is something that begins spiritually and grows organically and creatively, from the roots up. Globalization is artificially planned top-down and destroys, making everyone the same.



Why does the Orthodox Church use a different calendar from the one we use in everyday life?

M. G., Colchester

The Orthodox Church continues to use the calendar used by the apostles and confirmed at the First Universal Council in the fourth century. We do not use the secular calendar, introduced relatively recently and which already runs thirteen days ahead of the Church calendar. Our faithfulness to the Church calendar signifies our faithfulness to the Apostles and our resistance to conformity to the fashions of this world, which are literally out of sync with the Church.



Can you explain the form of the cross that is often used in Orthodox Churches?

M. G., Colchester

Many simplified forms of the cross are used in the Orthodox Church. The one which you may not be familiar with is the one which has not been simplified. This is the historical form of the cross and is called the three-bar cross. As you may know, Christ was nailed to the cross and a name-board was nailed over His head, where the words 'Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews' were written in three languages. This explains the top bar, as is described in the Scriptures. The explanation for the bottom bar is as follows.

When a body is nailed to a cross, the weight of the body naturally pulls the body down, the result is that the wrists are torn through and the body falls off the cross. In order to support the weight of the body, the Romans therefore used a footboard, that is the bottom bar. Now when the thief on Christ's right-hand side repented – as you may recall at first

he had mocked Him like the thief on the left – Christ turned to him and said, 'This day thou shalt be with me in paradise'. It was at this moment as He turned, as is recorded by the early traditions of the Church, that the footboard slipped up to Christ's right. The fact that this bottom bar turns up to the right is a symbol for us today of the essence of Christianity – the vital need for human repentance and therefore Divine forgiveness.



What is the Orthodox position on the nature/nurture debate?

E. L., Colchester

Clearly our behaviour and our choices are influenced both by our genetic inheritance ('nature') and by the way in which we are brought up ('nurture').

However, this debate overlooks the most important component – our freewill, our human freedom. As Christians, we do not believe in a Tolstoyan-style determinism. For example, imagine that we have been born with an inclination towards homosexual behaviour, through an accident (= ancestral sin) of gene or chromosome. This does not mean that we are obliged to practise homosexuality. In the same way, someone born with a great genetic weakness towards the other sex, is not obliged to enslave himself or herself to a life of fornication and adultery. Similarly, if a mother has had the misfortune to bring up her son as a daughter (the 'Oscar Wilde syndrome'), he is not obliged to practise homosexuality despite having the burden of such an abusive mother. Similarly, a child of adulterous parents is not obliged to live according to their sin. Neither our genetic make-up, nor our upbringing, makes anything inevitable. This triumph over both genes and temptations which could have occurred in her upbringing is, after all, the glory of the Mother of God. She resisted sin, remaining 'all-pure'. We are called to be in control of our genes.

It is our freedom that counts, both nature and nurture only imply tendencies, potential patterns of behaviour, not an inevitable 'fate'. And our freedom is fortified by prayer, by a Church (or 'spiritual') life. Orthodox Christian life is about freedom, not about enslavement, about the Church, not about contemporary humanist and secular values, which inherently justify sinful, making out that sin is 'natural'. As Orthodox Christians we believe in the Fall, that fallen and sinful human nature needs restoration, not justification. We must resist sinful genetic

tendencies, environmental conditioning and social manipulation. Through prayer and work we must be in control of both our genes and our upbringing, able to switch them on and off.

In conclusion, our genes also transmit a potential pattern for sin, but we are called on to use our freewill to suppress genes, leaving the bad ones dormant, transforming our genetic inheritance for the kingdom of heaven, not for the realm of hell.



What is the most difficult thing for Western people to learn in becoming Orthodox?

B. Z., Moscow

Without doubt it is humility.

Western people are brought up from childhood with an innate pride 'I am Western, therefore I am superior to other people', 'the world belongs to me'. They consider themselves to be the world's ruling class. This is why so many Western people say, 'I cannot become Orthodox, because it means abandoning my own culture'. When they say 'culture', what they mean is pride. Some Western people always want to be the boss, in command, giving orders, they cannot accept being in submission to other nationalities with other languages and customs. This innate cultural pride and arrogance, the culture of domination which goes back nearly a thousand years, means that until Western people see how small they are in reality, they cannot become Orthodox, that is, Christians.



Would you call yourself 'Russian' Orthodox, even when you are mainly English by blood? And what is your solution to the language question inside parishes – Slavonic or English?

P. B., California

Sometimes I call myself Orthodox, sometimes Russian Orthodox, sometimes English Orthodox, sometimes Orthodox Christian. It all depends who I am with. I find Russian Orthodox is a good term to use in public auditoria because then people know what you are talking about (Orthodox =

Jewish, English Orthodox = weird sect, Eastern Orthodox = exotic and odd, probably not even Christian, Orthodox Christian = traditional Protestant). Once you say Russian Orthodox, you get a hearing, because the Russian Orthodox Church is 150 million strong, because we were persecuted (in Russia by Communists, in the West by nearly everyone). You only have to explain that just as Roman Catholic does not mean that you live in Rome, Russian Orthodox does not mean Russian. One third of Russian Orthodox live and were born outside Russia. Inside Russia there are 104 different nationalities, the distance from western Russia to eastern Russia being the same as that between Poland and California.

Language is a trap, which is completely unnecessary. I remember the time wasted on language battles in parishes in Europe in the 70s and 80s. The devil wants anything except prayer and the services. People come to church to pray, that is, to feel an atmosphere conducive to prayer and to feel welcome. If the right atmosphere is there, a Russian can come to church and feel at home, even if the whole service is in English. If you can include a litany in Greek, Slavonic, Romanian etc, so much the better. People feel the attitude. In other words, it's not what you do, it's the spirit in which you do it, that counts.



Can Orthodox priests remarry according to the canons?

D. V., New York

Canon XXVI of the Holy Apostles and Canon VI of the Quinisext or Sixth Council) say specifically that only readers may marry after ordination. Specifically subdeacons, deacons and priests may not marry after ordination – by implication that excludes remarriage of these widowed clergy. St Ambrose of Milan wrote in the fourth century: "If any man be without reproach is the husband of one wife" (1 Tim. 3, 2). So then he who is the blameless husband of one wife comes within the rule for undertaking the priesthood; however, he who has married again is not guilty of pollution, but is disqualified from the priestly calling' (Letter LXIII, 63).



A Little-Known Local Saint ST WERSTAN OF MALVERN, HERMIT AND MARTYR

ST WERSTAN (11th C.) is one of those many obscure, local saints of England of whom we know very little. Thus he resembles St Beornwald of Bampton in Oxfordshire (21 December), St Blida of Martham in Norfolk (10th C.), St Cett of Oundle, St Cuthfleda of Leominster (c. 1000), St Edburgh of Repton (8th C.), St Felgild of Farnham (c. 725), St Hwætbert of Wearmouth († 747), St Mindred of Exning in Suffolk (8th C?), St Osanna of Howden in Yorkshire (8th C?), St Wendreda of March in Cambridgeshire (7th C?) and St Withburgh of Ripon. As regards St Werstan, we neither know when precisely he lived, nor when he was feasted. Why such disrespect for the saints, which is so strange to the Orthodox consciousness?

Firstly, it must be said that like many other saints St Werstan was only ever venerated locally. So, even in early English times, he would not have been known outside a very small area. However, secondly, and above all, his veneration was suppressed twice, at the Norman Reformation in the eleventh century and again at the Second Reformation in the sixteenth century. As ever, continuity with the country's Orthodox heritage of the first millennium, living tradition and piety, was lost.

Nevertheless, despite the discontinuity of Orthodox Christianity in this country, we can still say something about St Werstan, if only thanks mainly to contemporary research. Although stained glass in Malvern Priory, dating from about 1460 and witnessing to his local importance, commemorates St Werstan and he is mentioned by

the antiquarian Leland in about 1540, apart from local traditions, this is all we know of the holy martyr. Let us compile his life from these sources.

It seems that Werstan became a monk at the monastery of Deerhurst in Gloucestershire (founded in c. 700) in the first half of the eleventh century. Later he left the monastery at Deerhurst and travelled fourteen miles to settle as a hermit in Malvern. At first he lived here in a cave, but then he founded a hermitage and chapel in the valley below a building later called St Ann's Well (previously St Werstan's holy well) on the eastern side of the Malvern Hills.

Here, above the later Priory, where there is at present an Italianate villa, at a spot once called 'The Hermitage', stood Werstan's chapel. This was dedicated either to the Archangel St Michael, who had granted the hermit a vision and guided him in this wild spot, or possibly to St John the Baptist. The hermitage later developed into a small monastery. Here inside the chapel, in about 1055/56, Werstan was beheaded. The hermitage probably continued its life under his successor, a monk called Aldwyn.

In c. 1085 this was renewed as a Roman Catholic monastery and became known as Malvern Priory. In Malvern today, St Werstan is considered to be the patron of local springs and wells and Malvern Water is well known. It is believed that the foundations of St Werstan's chapel and perhaps also his relics lie beneath the Italianate villa called 'Bello Sguardo'.

Holy Martyr Werstan, pray to God for us!

SEEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

Stay, traveller and shed a tear
Upon the dust that slumbers here.
And while you read this tale of me,
Think on the glass that runs for thee.

GOVERNMENT TIME OR GOD'S TIME?

Definitions: The Church calendar and the secular calendar

AT the First Universal Council of Nicea in 325 the Church adopted the Church calendar (also called the Julian or old calendar) as its theological calendar. It was never an attempt to be astronomically accurate, as it put the Creator, before whom the sun, moon and stars bow down, above the fallen creation. The Church calendar makes every year which is divisible by 4, including century years like 1600, 1700, 1800, 1900, 2000, 2100 etc, into a leap year.

The secular calendar (also called the Gregorian or new calendar) was an attempt to create an astronomically accurate calendar. It was based on the observations of Renaissance astronomers. This secular calendar makes each century year a non-leap year, unless it is divisible by 400. Thus, according to it, 1600 and 2000 were leap years, but 1700, 1800 and 1900 were not leap years and 2100 will not be a leap year.

In this way the gap between the two calendars amounts to three days every 400 years. This is because the secular calendar speeds up over the Church calendar, since it has three fewer days, that is, three fewer days called 29 February, every 400 years.

The Introduction of the secular calendar in Western Europe

This secular calendar was introduced into Roman Catholic Europe in or soon after 1582. Protestant Europe followed in and after 1700. The change was introduced into Great Britain (and its American colonies) only in 1752 under a German Protestant King, George II. At that time the gap between the two calendars was eleven days. This became twelve days in the nineteenth century and thirteen days in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In the twenty-second century the secular calendar will run fourteen days ahead of the Church calendar.

The ostensibly Protestant British government adopted this secular and Roman Catholic calendar

in 1752 in order to do business with Europe. At that time the only major European nations still using the Church calendar were Great Britain, Sweden and Russia. In order to adopt the secular calendar, the British government decreed that Wednesday 2 September 1752 would be followed by Thursday 14 September 1752 – thus making eleven days disappear.

At the same time, the supposedly Protestant British State also adopted the Roman Catholic Easter, which can fall up to five weeks ahead of the real Easter, even sometimes preceding the Jewish Passover! This was because the secular or Roman Catholic calendar attempted to fix the spring equinox (which is one of the main factors in dating Easter) astronomically.

On the other hand, the Church calendar fixes a theological or symbolic spring equinox. As well as this, the Church dating of Easter still obeys the apostolic rule, which states that Easter can never precede or coincide with the Jewish Passover. Indeed, these rules state that Easter must always begin after the Jewish Passover has finished. The rule can be summed up simply as this:

Easter falls on the first Sunday after the Jewish Passover after the first full moon after the spring equinox, as fixed by the First Universal Council of 325.

Finally, the British government also decreed that the New Year would no longer begin on 25 March, but on 1 January, in line with Continental Europe.

Consequences in Great Britain

The change in 1752 was looked upon with dismay in Great Britain. 'They've stolen 11 days out of our life, we won't have it', was the cry. The Government decree caused great confusion in country hearts, because certain festival days were believed to predict the weather for the coming year. As regards townsfolk, there was even rioting, with deaths, for how could a month's rent be paid, when the month had lasted little more than two weeks?

Indeed, country people, especially in East Anglia and the West Country, still clung to the old order. I can remember as late as the 1970s, over 200 years after the deed had been done, an old village woman in north Essex, Victoria Maud Saunders, telling me what as an Orthodox I already knew, that 'Easter is on the wrong date. I know because my grandfather told me and his grandfather told him'. At that same time I remember my father's employer, an old farmer called Tom Fairhead, telling me how he only kept 'Old Michaelmas' (11 October) and not 29 September as elsewhere.

As for the British government, even today in the 21st century, its tax year still ends on 5 April, that is the eighteenth century's 25 March – Lady Day and at that time New Year's Day. Why? Because it has always been too complicated to change it to 1 January. (Independence of outlook regarding the times and seasons also persisted with the introduction of summer time, when the government decided to put the clocks forward by one hour (during the Second World War by two hours). After the War one old Norfolk lady was noticed to have two clocks: one was kept on

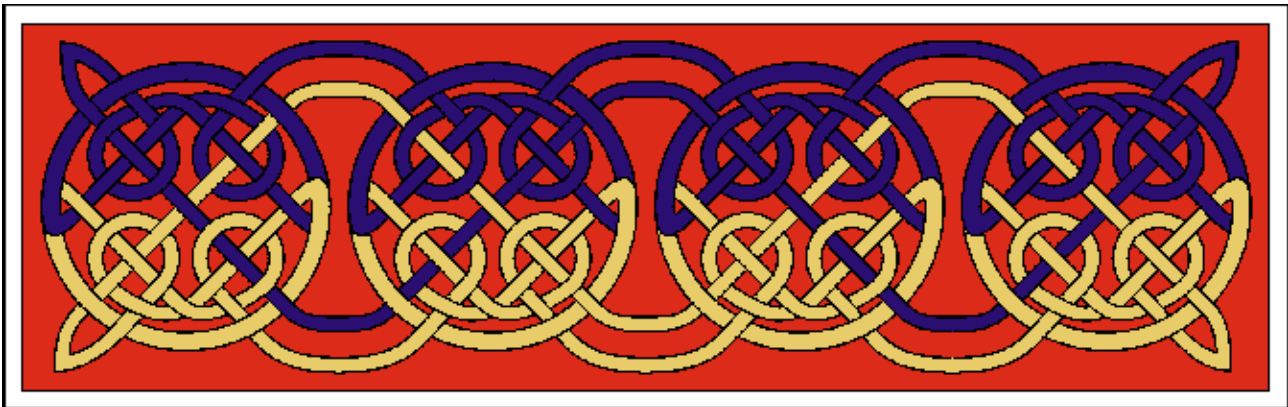
'Government time', while the other registered 'God's Time').

Thus, in the nineteenth century, Old Christmas fell on what was by then called 6 January by the new calendarists. Thus, began the tradition of a 'White Christmas'. For in England in the nineteenth century snow, rare in December, was not uncommon at some point during January. These verses survive from that time:

Old Christmas

The fire with well-dried logs supplied,
Blazed brightly in the chimney wide.
The huge hall table's oaken face,
Scrubbed till it shone the day to grace,
Bore no sign on its festive board
To part the squire and our dear Lord.

England was merry England then,
Old Christmas brought its joys again.
Christmas told the merriest tales
And brought to us all meat and ales,
And Christmas pleasures oft would cheer
A poor man's heart through half the year.



THE HIMALAYAS GLORIFY CHRIST

THE women who anointed Jesus brought an alabaster box of spikenard, a sweet-smelling ointment that was very precious. It was derived from the nard plant which in those days grew only in the Himalayas, at heights of around 15,000 feet, and thus had to be traded over great distances. Hence it was extremely expensive, as the Gospels tell us. On two of the occasions some of Jesus' disciples and notably Judas Iscariot, complained that it was wasteful, as the going wage was a penny a day (Matthew 20, 1–2), so three hundred pence was a year's wages.

BOOK REVIEW

The Book of the Year?

Shadows of Yesterday by Alvin Alexsi Currier, 2005, Light and Life Publishing Company, PO Box 26431, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55426-0421. www.light-n-life.com



THEY say that 'the more you know, the more you know how little you know'. There I was, thinking that I had begun to know something about books on the subject of Orthodoxy and along comes something previously completely unknown to me. A gem. The book of the year at least.

Called *Shadows of Yesterday*, it is subtitled 'Reflections of a lifelong search for the roots of Eastern European village life'. It is about the experiences of the author in a Romanian village in the Carpathians. In other words, it is a very down-to-earth study of Orthodox village life, a close observation of the Incarnation of Christianity in the everyday lives of real people who are living today. The fact that it is about a village in Romania is

irrelevant: it could be any Orthodox village or community.

Abundantly illustrated, the 104 pages must contain about 250-300 beautiful and clear colour photographs. Here is not the theory of Orthodoxy, but the real thing, Orthodoxy the way of life, with all its difficulties, all its 'raw' human blemishes, but real and lived. Here are the descriptions of traditional Orthodox village, still, just, surviving, despite the modern world. The chapters on village life, building a new church, a wedding or memorial towels all describe what makes the village tick – and that is the Orthodox Faith, as lived by weak human-beings, some of whom are made very strong by the grace of God.

Worth it for the photographs alone!



OPINION PAGE

From Correspondence

THERE is no way that I would contemplate returning to the church that I used to go to in ..., because the disrespect that I witnessed there was just too much. The Catholic church in ... is, I have been told on good authority, no better and, other than that, unless I am prepared to drive miles and miles every Sunday, there is nothing.

I just have to live with the result of the Church that I once so loved having let me down and failed me completely. I do, however, try very hard to remain true to the proper Catholic Faith of my childhood. The Catholic Church of today is a completely alien Church for me and I do not even feel that I want to be associated with it. A large number of its priests have been found to be corrupt



(In August one of the monks from ... was sentenced to eight years for the abuse of a former pupil of their school). The Catholic Church is certainly reaping today the seeds sown by Vatican II.

I can remember when Catholic priests saw the priesthood as something to be immensely proud of and would never have done anything to bring discredit to it. However, if you strip them of the respect that was once afforded them and also the special privileges that were once reserved strictly for those ordained to the priesthood, like the distribution of Holy Communion and the giving of blessings, by declaring that they can be performed just as well by absolutely anyone, male or female, what on earth does the Church expect? A clear case of what you sow, so shall you reap.

A MYSTERY DRIVE

by M. Taylor

WE set off from Upton early one evening on what we called a 'mystery drive'. This simply means that we drive down the first unexplored lane we come to and keep on going. We have discovered many hidden hamlets and old churches in this way, but never anything so beautiful and peaceful as Hassingham Church.

Now to Norfolk people who know their villages and the many lovely churches which stand out on the horizon wherever you look, the way to Hassingham Church will be simple. I dare say anyone who has lived within ten miles of Hassingham Church can tell you exactly how to get there. But the lanes and fields of this well-loved part of Norfolk are, to me, a maze and when I come to a familiar village I am always surprised and wonder how my friend has found her way. So I cannot tell you the way to Hassingham Church.

I only know that the little car came to rest in a hollow where four lanes met. We got out and found Hassingham St Mary's at rest on a grassy knoll above the surrounding fields and woods. The lane circled it like a protecting moat and on three sides thick, cool woods swept down to its feet. On the fourth side a great sweeping ploughed field curved down towards it, the brown ridges soaking up the soft sunshine. The gulls rise and fall over the surface like a white cloud.

We walked to the garden gate, a delightful gate, the white paint shabby and peeling off, but its decoration of delicate wrought iron perfect. We turned to close the gate behind us and paused to look round at this still and peaceful scene. The only building in sight was a lovely Norfolk farmhouse, white-walled, the red chimneys a bright contrast to the walls and the cascade of wisteria which hung over the front door.

Before us the pebbled path curved between grey, mossy headstones and tufts of flower-sprinkled grass to the great carved oak door, fastened by a thick iron handle and lock. The church is compact, built of grey stone which contrasts with the roof's thatch, and the tower is round and crowned with a delicate filigree of stone crosses like a coronet which stands out against the pale evening sky. There was utter peace and tranquillity all around.



As we walked silently towards the church door, we heard music, faint as though muted by the solid oak door. Softly it rose and fell, vibrating round us in the still air. We were surprised because no evening service was announced anywhere. 'Well', we thought, 'there must be a special service here and we must be careful not to disturb the worshippers'.

We got nearer and the music swelled out and hung about us in the quiet air. We fumbled with the great iron door handle, curious to peep into this peaceful church and, perhaps, to join in. The massive door swung open ... the music stopped. We crept in: the church was empty.

We were amazed. Where had the music come from? There were no people. There were dazzling walls, whitewashed as though hiding something, the roof blue and above the altar sprinkled with stars: round the wall tiny shining oil-lamps; but no-one. We stood very still hoping to hear the music again but it did not sound again for us and we shall never know why we were so honoured.

After we had absorbed the spirit and atmosphere of Hassingham St Mary's, we came out to the pebbled path again. We closed the gate, reached our patient car and made our way gradually to the outer world again. Not too suddenly, though, for the lanes here are very quiet. No, I cannot tell you how to get to Hassingham St Mary's Church. I only know that we skimmed between hedges red with berries and purple with blackberries and that although the sky was cloudy when we had started, Upton came out to meet us through a golden and pink sky and the breeze stirred the trees.

I hope that one day you too will find Hassingham Church.

