



THE EASTERN ORTHODOX No 109: January 2019

**ЦЕРКОВЬ СВТ. ИОАННА ШАНХАЙСКОГО
ST JOHN'S RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
Military Road, Colchester, Essex CO1 2AN**

**His Holiness Kyrill, Patriarch of Moscow and All the Russias
Most Rev. Metropolitan Hilarion, First Hierarch of the Church Outside Russia
Rt. Rev. Bishop Irenei, Bishop of Richmond and Western Europe**

The Church of St John of Shanghai, built in 1855, is the largest Russian Orthodox church building in the British Isles and is attended by 3,000 Orthodox of 24 nationalities, with about 80 baptisms per year. It is a parish of the East of England Orthodox Church Trust (Charity No: 1081707), a part of the Russian Orthodox Church, comprising Colchester, Norwich, Bury St Edmunds, Wisbech and Ashford, and looks after faithful Orthodox in the East of England.

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Youtube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rE2T2sYTy8s>

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Расписание Богослужений / Timetable of Services

Saturday 5 January

5.30 pm: Vigil / Всенощное бдение

Sunday 6 January: Christmas Eve / Сочельник

10.00 am: Hours and Divine Liturgy / Часы и Божественная литургия.

2.00 pm: Vigil for the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ / Всенощное бдение праздника Рождества Господа нашего Иисуса Христа

Monday 7 January: Orthodox Christmas / Рождество Христово

10.00 am: Hours and Liturgy / Часы и Божественная литургия.

Saturday 12 January

5.30 pm: Vigil / Всенощное бдение

Sunday 13 January

10.00 am: Hours and Divine Liturgy / Часы и Божественная литургия. Meal in the Church Hall and Children's Nativity Play / Трапеза и детское представление Рождественской пьесы

Friday 18 January

5.30 pm: Vigil for Theophany, the Baptism of our Lord / Всенощное бдение праздника Богоявления - Крещения Господня

Saturday 19 January: Theophany / Богоявление-Крещение Господне

10.00 am: Hours and Divine Liturgy/ Часы и Божественная литургия

11.45 am: The Great Blessing of the Waters / Великое Водоосвятие

Sunday 20 January

10.00 am: Hours and Divine Liturgy / Часы и Божественная литургия.

Saturday 26 January

5.30 pm: Vigil / Всенощное бдение

Sunday 27 January

10.00 am: Hours and Divine Liturgy / Часы и Божественная литургия.

Тропарь Рождества Христова (Глас 4)

Рождество Твое, Христе Боже наш, возсия мирови свет разума, в нем бо звездам служащий звездою учахуся Тебе кланяться, Солнцу правды, и Тебе ведети с высоты востока. Господи, слава Тебе!

Christmas Troparion (Tone 4)

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, has shone forth to the world the light of reason, for in it those who worshipped the stars were taught by a star to adore Thee, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know Thee, the Orient from on high. O Lord, glory to Thee!

Тропарь Крещения Господня (Глас 1)

Во Иордане крещающуся Тебе, Господи, Троическое явися поклонение: Родителей бо глас свидетельствоваше Тебе, возлюбленнаго Тя Сына именуя: и Дух в виде голубине извествоваше словесе утверждение: явлейся, Христе Боже, и мир просвещей, слава Тебе.

Theophany Troparion (Tone 1)

When Thou, O Lord, wast baptised in the Jordan, the worship of the Trinity was revealed. For the voice of the Father bore witness to Thee, calling Thee His beloved Son: and the Spirit, in the form of a dove, confirmed the truth of this word. Thou hast appeared, O Christ God, and enlightened the world, glory to Thee!

**Dates for Your Diary / Важные Даты на
Следующий Год**

**Easter: Sunday 28 April / Пасха: Воскресенье 28
апреля**

Patronal Feast: Saturday 29 June

Престольный праздник: Суббота 29 июня

Baptisms in December

2 December: Sofia Stefania

8 December: David Shotton
22 December: Michael Boyle
27 December: Lucas Andrei Glod
28 December: Ianis Andrei Manea
28 December: Rebeca Maria Manea

Church News

On 2 December we held our thanksgiving service for ten years of our Church. In that time we have had 380 baptisms (with 80 in the last twelve months), 44 weddings (we have licensed premises) and 2 funerals.

At 9.00 that morning Sergei Smantana brought us the new Golgotha from Moldova which I had seen in Kishiniov in September. Sergei generously donated it to us, refusing all payment. I had made the old one in our garage. We have donated this old one to our sister parish in Norwich. Sergei has also very kindly been donating beeswax candles for the last two months. Thank you very much!

HOMILY ON NEW YEAR'S EVE

St. Innocent (Borisov)



Photo: doofy.org

This evening, brothers and sisters, is the final boundary of the past year: Tomorrow we will wake up in a new year. But will we wake up? Will we all wake up? We do not know this for certain—even less do we know what awaits each of us in the coming year. Will [happiness](#) go on for those who have nothing left to look for other than the continuation of their joys? Will the tears dry for those who have nothing left to desire other than an end to their [sufferings](#)? Will the earth bring forth the fruit of the hardworking farmer, or will he bury his seeds without return into the bowels of the earth? Will the peoples of the earth be at peace, or will a new whirlwind of war stir the face of the earth? Will there be good weather, or will some angel of death come and decimate the cities and countryside? All of this, both the great and the small, for entire peoples, and for you and me, dear listener, is cloaked with an impenetrable curtain and sealed with seven seals.

Why is it sealed? Why can't man know the future as plainly as the present and the past? The example of many holy men, who possessed the gift of clairvoyance and saw the most distant and happenstance future, points to the contrary. Man could have the ability to see the future, but in his current state he cannot have it without harm to himself. That is why he is deprived of it for a time.

In fact, brothers and sisters, what joy would it bring to the father of a family, surrounded by his cheerful children, to see that the object of his love is doomed this next year to the grave? What consolation would it bring to a preacher of God's word to know ahead of time that all of his words would have no effect upon the hearts of his listeners? What use would it be for a

scientist to foresee that he will not finish the great discovery he had begun? Clearly, in all of these and similar cases it would be much better not to know the future.

“But,” you say, “it would be useful for people’s morality to know the future, and it would save them from passions and sins, not allowing the end of their lives to leave their memory.” But for this goal we need to know from the future what is already revealed to us, what we have known for a long time. We especially need to know that we will die. And what is better known than that? We only don’t know when we will die; but this should produce an even greater saving fear and bridle our passions. We also need to know what will happen to us after death—and who can say that this is unknown? Paradise, hell, and the rewards are revealed in the Gospels for each and all. We only don’t know those things that are just objects of our curiosity—for example, when the [world will end](#), precisely where the judgment will be, or how the righteous will live. But knowing these things would not add a bit to our salvation, and therefore it is not given to us to know them.

But just look at what everyone is given to know in exchange! The whole present is given to us to know. Obviously this is more important than both the past and the future, for both the one and the other depend upon it. And here is what is most important in time, what the Lord of time has given to each of us: Do as you wish, do with what you have as you please: Fulfill the law or heed your passions, recognize the Creator over you or reject His Providence, go to heaven or to hell—it’s all as you will it, it all depends on you, all given over to you. Here God’s omnipotence remains as if without effect and does not hinder you in the least. God’s love calls us constantly to Himself, acts in our reason and conscience, teaches us through external events in life, instructs us through the voice of the prophets and apostles. But our freedom remains inviolable; every minute we can turn where we wish—to the Heavenly Father, or to the enemy of our salvation. And what is even more important is that by making good use of the present we can have a good effect on the future, for we shall reap what we’ve sown. This even influences the past, for if we spend the present well, we can smooth out a bad past.

Let us come to know, brothers and sisters, God’s mercy toward us and our own advantage; let us abandon attempts to see into the future and torment ourselves with guessing—we shall make use of what has been given to us, using the present time as we should. As a reward for this we will peacefully go to meet any future. Should it bring us unhappiness in spite of our virtue and clean conscience, we will bear it indifferently and turn it to the eternal good for our souls. Should the angel of death himself come after us, he will find us with the burning lamp of faith and love. Amen.

*[St. Innocent \(Borisov\), Archbishop of Cherson and Taurida](#)
Translation by Nun Cornelia (Rees)*

[Pravoslavie.ru](#)

12/31/2018

MODERN MOSCOW MIRACLES OF ST
SPIRIDON



Natalia L.

“Sts. Spiridon and Nicholas are especially large stars in the divine heavens”

Along our path to the Lord we are strengthened more than anything else by our faith in the saints! Had there not been this endless stream of luminaries of our faith, there would not have been Orthodoxy. They are all different, like stars in the sky—large and small, but all just as miracle-working! And Sts. Spiridon and Nicholas are especially large stars in the divine heavens.

I had an especially warm relationship towards Father Spiridon right away, because he was a great defender of the Orthodox faith. He showed the Catholics and the Turks the road out of Greece.

He has helped me several times. Here are two incidents. About four years ago I was having a medical problem in female matters. I didn't go to any doctors—I just don't like to; I simply endured it. One day I began to read the Akathist to St. Spiridon of Tremethius (as a newcomer to Orthodoxy I knew that one should read them). Suddenly I felt a ray come from the icon to just below my stomach and clean something out there. My heart stopped and I understood that something miraculous was happening. I continued reading and soon the ray left. After that my health problem disappeared forever.

The second time I ran to read the Akathist to St. Spiridon was when my twenty-three-year-old daughter was trying to get to the airport in Athens. That day a protest had broken out near the hotel (something like Maidan only against the European Union). Everything was barricaded everywhere. My daughter called me in a panic: “Mama, the plane is schedule to take off soon and we can't get to the airport! What should we do?” I ran to read the Akathist to Father Spiridon—after all, Greece is his “jurisdiction”. Well, and you can guess what happened next—it all went smoothly! The hotel owner himself drove them to the airport, shouting at the protesters along the way, and on time for the flight at that. But the flight was cancelled till the next day and my daughter and her friend were given a plush room. Father Spiridon gave them another wonderful day in Greece!

Nina

“We lived six years in a rented apartment, and we really wanted our own home”

I met this kind saint in an unusual way. I came to a new church (I used to go to another one), and saw an icon in the corner. It was unfamiliar and outwardly old, darkened. A saint looked at me from the icon, and I couldn't read his name. But I felt some kind of warmth and love from him. I wanted to stand next to him, to pray or at least look; after all, I didn't know whom I was praying to. I asked a lady in the church. She said something to the effect of: “Oh, that's a wonderful saint, Spiridon of Tremethius. Read his life.” I asked the saint's name again so that I wouldn't forget. I read the saint's Life, which really touched me and seemed authentically remarkable.

Well, for a long time I was unable to solve my living problem. My husband and I lived for six years in a rented apartment, and now we had a child and really wanted our own home. But I was ashamed to ask God, because He was already taking care of us in more ways than we asked. We had money for the apartment; it was a one-room apartment but very spacious and in a new building, next to my parents and in a good neighborhood. For six years the owner had not raised the rent once and fact never bothered us, never gouged us for pay. We were well fed, had nothing to complain of, only to be thankful for.

Then I learned that people pray to St. Spiridon of Tremethius also about everyday life things, and that he helps. His gaze from the icon, and the circumstances seemed to me to be no coincidence, and I decided to ask the saint to help us, if it pleases God, to solve our problem with living space by God's mercy. I also asked that it be near a church.

Once we went to the suburbs and stopped into a church. I wanted to buy something to remember it by. I looked, and next to me lay a small laminated icon of the saint! I asked my husband to buy it for me and was overjoyed. Now I could pray to him at home, and in general I get a warm feeling just looking at that icon.

Very soon our living problem was solved—not only solved, but like always, beyond what we asked! Two wonderful churches within walking distance, a park, infrastructure, and a remodeled apartment that was just what we wanted, even better.

Moreover our landlord started talking about moving us out, but the situation went on longer than expected, and we were able to move to the new apartment without having to live in an interim rental. Just too many coincidences. Wondrous is God in His saints! It seems to me that it wasn't I who found his icon, but the saint who called me.

Glory be to God! Praise to the Most Pure Mother of God! Thanks and a low bow to St. Spiridon of Tremethus and all the saints and angels of God!

Oleg Kovalkov

“The saint worked a miracle and strengthened my faith”

St. Spiridon helped me many times, including in business. When his holy right arm and slippers were brought to Moscow, I went to pray to the saint for help. The saint helped me, and my business was sorted out. But the second time the saint helped me in that he showed me a miracle, by which he strengthened my faith and increased the love and gratitude in my soul.



The Line for the relics of St. Spiridon at the Christ the Savior Cathedral, Moscow, 2007

Here is what happened. After speedy help from St. Spiridon I decided to go to Corfu to venerate his holy relics. I planned a trip for the summer. According to my tradition, I always went to Mt. Athos for my birthday. I prayed there for a few days, received Communion on my birthday, and left. The next day I had a plane to Corfu. At 5:00 a.m. I took a taxi to the airport. The taxi driver said to me, “You are lucky that you’re going to the airport now, because in literally one hour, at six o’clock, there is going to be a taxi-drivers’ strike all over Greece.” I had a suitcase and a huge dish that I had brought in Vatopedi Monastery to give to St. Spiridon. How was I going to get from the airport in Corfu to my hotel, and then to the city to see St. Spiridon? It was a problem. But the main thing was not to worry. The Lord will work it all out!

I arrived in Corfu. I left the airport weighed down with my things. First: There was no strike, there was a heap of taxis, everyone was working, no strikes. I peacefully got to my hotel, changed my clothes, took my gifts, and went to the city to St. Spiridon.

I bought an icon of St. Spiridon in the church, and a local priest asked me, “How long are you going to be in Corfu?” When he heard that I would be there a week, he offered, “Let’s place your icon in the reliquary with the relics for a week. Then you can come a get it.” So that’s what I did. I returned to the hotel that evening and heard on the news that the taxi drivers had begun a strike all over Greece at six o’clock that morning.

The next day the taxi drivers on the island of Corfu also began to strike. It was impossible to go anywhere from the hotel, and I just lay on the beach all week. I never heard the official

reason why the taxi drivers waited a day on Corfu before striking, but I guessed it. St. Spiridon is a great saint of God.

Incidentally the taxi drivers' strike ended about a week later—exactly when I had to go to the city to get my icon that had been left in the saint's reliquary. Then I had to get to the airport. At St. Spiridon's prayers my pilgrimage went easily and unforced, although passions were boiling all around!

Ever since then I always love to fly to Corfu to visit St. Spiridon. I know that he loves guests. He will always meet them and send them off!

Not long ago he appeared to me in a dream. He suggested an idea to me that I would never have thought of myself. It was such an unexpected idea that I doubted its veracity for a month, until I received a confirmation of it from a separate source.

That is how St. Spiridon takes care of us, remembers us, and helps us. And we love him! We pray to him to be our intercessor before God! Glory to thee, St. Spiridon of Tremethius, glory to thee!

Translation by OrthoChristian.com

Pravoslavie.ru

12/25/2018

PUZZLING POINTS IN THE LIFE OF ST. NICHOLAS

[Andrei Zaitzev](#)

Any Christian can tell you about [St. Nicholas](#). Almost everyone knows that he helps travellers, helps poor maidens get married, and brings us Christmas presents under the name of Santa Claus. Many recall how he slapped Arius in the face at the First Ecumenical Council of 325, and there are so many folk legends and fairy tales connected with the name of St. Nicholas that they could fill a heavy volume in various languages.



Meanwhile the Life of St. Nicholas makes us look at this famous Christian saint in a completely new way. The most well known text dedicated to the saint was that of Simeon Metaphrastes. Written in the tenth century, almost 700 years after the saint's repose, it is a compilation from the Lives of two St. Nicholases. The first lived at the end of the third to the first half of the fourth centuries, and the second, Nicholas of Pinar, lived in the sixth century and died on December 10, 564. The familiar Life of St. Nicholas of Myra in Lycia, which we can find in the compilation by St. Dimitry of Rostov, names his parents as Theophan and Nonna. In fact, those were the names of the parents of St. Nicholas of Pinar, about whom Archimandrite Antonin (Kapustin) wrote back in the nineteenth century. From the Life of the St. Nicholas who lived in the sixth century, the story of how the young priest journeyed to Palestine to venerate the holy places got into the life of the other St. Nicholas. The older St. Nicholas died no later than 337. Already as a bishop he suffered from the persecutions of Diocletian that had begun in 305, while St. Helen, the mother of Constantine the Great, discovered the Honorable and Life-Giving Cross of the Lord no earlier than 326.

The combining of two saints with the same name but living at different times has happened more than once in the history of Christianity. Before the twentieth century, researchers often united the images of two righteous ones into one, and as a result the more famous saint would "swallow up" his lesser-known colleague. That is precisely what happened in St. Nicholas's case. Only at the beginning of twenty-first century did a group of Russian scholars publish a

Life of the Archbishop of Myra in Lycia, corrected according to the ancient manuscripts. As a result, we can learn much that is new about the life of Russia's most well known and beloved saint. In the twentieth century, research on the saint's relics was also conducted, which confirmed the authenticity of the Life of St. Nicholas even in those areas that are traditionally considered as hagiographic topoi (texts common to all hagiographical literature).

The ancient story of the saint begins with the traditional Life formula of the "fasting infant": *"From the first days of his life, the infant's behavior was not ordinary: When nursing Nicholas sucked milk only from his mother's right breast, and on Wednesdays and Fridays he ate only once a day, and at that in the evening, just before the ninth hour. This sign foreshadowed Nicholas's whole manner of life. Thus, from his very infancy to his very death the saint spent Wednesday and Friday in strict fasting and temperance."* Usually comments on such fragments talk about the tradition of imitating the ancient ascetics, and this explanation is not without some basis in fact. Byzantine and ancient Russian hagiographers oriented themselves when composing the Life on famous stories of righteous ones on a series of rhetorical devices, which all together formed the canon of saints Lives. In Byzantium the canon of the monastic saint's Life (bios) came together by the sixth century, and the graduation exam for many rhetors became the description of a large biography of a saint. Despite the fact that St. Nicholas lived in the fourth century, the first hagiographic compositions dedicated to him appeared several centuries later (not earlier than the seventh century), when the genre of saints' Lives had been finally formed, so that hagiographers could make full use of the saints' Lives topoi, taken from more ancient texts.

Nevertheless, in the case of St. Nicholas, the anthropological research of his relics conducted at the opening of his tomb in Bari by Professor Luigi Martino in 1953 – 1957 showed that the saint ate only plant foods.

Along with this, in the corrected Life of the saint we can also find true topoi, which describe the ideal behavior of a child in Byzantium: *"Never were there noticed in Nicholas any habits customary to youth. The righteous child was like an elder—all respected him and were amazed at him. When an old man displays youthful diversions, he is a laughing stock to all. But if a youth has the moral behavior of an elder, he inspires respect from all. The light-mindedness of youth is inappropriate in old age, but the wisdom of an elder is worthy of honor and excellent in a youth."*

The consecration of St. Nicholas

In one of his articles included in the book, *Poetry of Byzantine Literature*, Sergei Averintsev accurately discerned that Byzantium saw the ideal child as a "little, prudent old man." Ancient Russian authors inherited this point of view, and as a result St. Theodosius of

the Kiev Caves and many other saints started disdaining childish games and behaving like soft-spoken elders made wise by experience. Naturally it is impossible to prove the historical accuracy of such information. Only in the Lives of two great nineteenth century saints—St. Seraphim of Sarov and Ambrose of Optina—can we find stories of their liveliness and childhood spontaneity; as for the righteous who lived earlier, we can only guess as to the true stories of their childhood.

But let us return to St. Nicholas. The authors of the corrected Life of the saint refute the idea spread during the nineteenth to early twentieth centuries that we can know practically nothing about the saint's real life. A new hagiographic text on Russia's favorite saint gives rather a positive answer to the question of whether or not St. Nicholas participated in the First Ecumenical Council that took place in 325 in Nicaea. Already in the middle of the last century, the famous Church historian Anton Kartashev said that it was unlikely that a modest archbishop of Myra in Lycia could have been present at the council, and even more unlikely that he could have dared to slap the Constantinople priest Arius in the face. Studies of ancient manuscripts telling of St. Nicholas now no longer give any basis for such categorical answers. The authors of the text of the Life and commentary to it, A. V. Bugaevsky and Archimandrite Vladimir Zorin, discuss the reason why complete list of participants in the First Ecumenical Council are not extant: *"According to Church tradition, 318 hierarchs were present at the First Ecumenical Council. In the various lists of participants in the Council that have come down to us, written in Greek, Coptic, Syrian, Arabic, and other languages, there are 220 names. However according to reliable testimony by participants in the Council, there were in fact significantly more hierarchs present. St. Athanasius the Great, Pope Julius and Lucifer of Cagliari speak of 300 delegates. Emperor Constantine names more than 300. Over the working time of the Council, the composition and number of its participants changed. Some bishops left due to urgent matters in their dioceses while others to the contrary were arriving (A. V. Kartashev, The Ecumenical Councils (Moscow, 1994), 31 - 32). Possibly this is why there isn't a full list of bishops present at all the meetings. It is not possible to specify the list of Council participants also due to its protocols. The Emperor forbade making them, because he was tired of the endless arguments of the African Donatists over every letter of the record. Constantine proposed that only the exact, formulated, final decisions of the Council be recorded. St. Nicholas's name is not on the majority of the lists (which, as we can see, can be easily explained by their incompleteness), but it is present in two Greek lists of the participants in the Nicene Council, one of which was compiled in around the year 500 by the Church historian Theodoros the Reader."*

In other words, in no later than the sixth century was the tradition that St. Nicholas was at the Council so widespread that it ended up in several lists of its participants. Of course this does not automatically mean that St. Nicholas was at the First Ecumenical Council, but neither does new testimony allow us to categorically refute his presence. Furthermore, by 325, the name of the archbishop of Myra in Lycia might have been so well known, if only because he was a confessor who suffered during the last cruel persecutions against Christians. The status of a sufferer for the faith at the beginning of the fourth century was so high that according to testimony from the church historian and contemporary of the First Ecumenical Council Eusebius Pamphylos, Constantine the Great personally greeted the confessors at the Council and kissed their mutilated members. Although from the Life of St. Nicholas we know that the saint was never subjected to cruel tortures, the above-mentioned anthropological study of his relics show that imprisonment left its mark on the saint: *“Anatomical-anthropological studies of St. Nicholas’s chest bones and spine show that the saint suffered from arthritis of the spine and, possibly, ankylosis (immobility of the joints as a result of fusion of the joint surfaces). Radiological research on the skull showed an inner thickening of the cranium that was very widespread and clearly manifested. Prof. L. Martino supposes that these mutations in the bones can be explained by the influences of prolonged exposure to cold and dampness, to which the saint was subjected during his long years of languishing in prisons, where he was incarcerated at the age of about fifty.”* In the Life itself can found direct references to the fact that in his later years, St. Nicholas could not walk quickly.

This is only a small portion of the puzzles, to which we can find answers through attentive reading of the corrected Life of this saint who is so famous in Russia, whose icon can be found in every home and automobile.

[Andrei Zaitzev](#)

Translation by Nun Cornelia (Rees)

GHOSTBUSTING

[Archpriest Andrew Phillips](#)



As the years roll by I become ever more grateful to the bishop who ordained me, the ever-memorable Archbishop Antony of Geneva (+ 1993). Indeed, I can say that mystically speaking we have become closer than we were in life, even though we had first met in the early 80s. You see, with time you become ever more conscious of your debt of [gratitude](#). The following happened this summer.

It happens to every priest from time to time. That is, ghostbusting. The last time it was in a flat in Ipswich, where the previous occupant had committed suicide. Some strange things happened and a bloodstain would not go away. Painted over, it kept reappearing. It needed a priest to resolve the problem.

This time it was in a care home for the elderly in the town of X in the county of Norfolk. I was called up by the manager who explained the situation. An elderly resident had died. Within two days doors had started slamming shut by invisible hands, just as people were about to go through them. Windows opened and closed in the same way, at any time of day or night. Things moved from one room to another mysteriously. An electric kettle would be switched on by invisible hands and boiled dry.

One morning residents had come down to the dining room and had found all the tables and chairs overturned. Worst of all the room the woman who had passed away had lived in for several years was incredibly cold, even though it was a hot summer. Carers were too frightened to enter it and none could stand the cold for more than a few seconds. There was no question of renting it out to a new resident. The manager, a Ukrainian, faced an ultimatum;

either she solved the problem or else the staff would leave the home with its 24 residents, forcing it to close.



The activities had focused especially on one young woman. I asked her to wear a [cross](#), which she was happy to do, though she was not Orthodox and did not believe in anything really. I took a list of the names of the carers and the residents and prayed for them, paying special attention to the resident who had died, whose life I enquired about and whose photo I was shown. She had been a Protestant and so had had nobody to pray for her. Then I blessed the whole home with [holy water](#) after a short service, prepared to return if necessary, praying for the repose of the soul of the elderly woman.

The next day they phoned me from the home. Everything had returned to normal.

These things happen. Those who are thinking that one day they could be ordained to the priesthood should know this. But if I had not been ordained, nothing could have been happened through me. This is why I pray for the bishop who ordained me and why I am grateful to him.

Archpriest Andrew Phillips

Orthodox England

12/17/2018