



THE EASTERN ORTHODOX No 96: November 2017

**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, Administrator of our Diocese of Great Britain and Ireland**

A Parish of the Church Outside Russia, part of the East of England Orthodox Church, (Charity No: 1081707), comprising Colchester, Norwich, Bury St Edmunds and Wisbech, devoted to the care of all those of the Orthodox Christian Tradition in Eastern England.

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The Church of St John of Shanghai, built in 1855, is the largest Russian Orthodox church building in Great Britain. It is regularly attended by 500 parishioners of 25 nationalities as well as by 2,500 others who come to services, which include 60-80 baptisms a year. Services are celebrated according to the Orthodox calendar in English, Slavonic and Romanian.

Расписание Богослужений / Timetable of Services

Saturday 4 November

5.30 pm: Vigil / Всенощное бдение

Sunday 5 November

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

Saturday 11 November

No Vigil because of Liturgy in Norwich/ Всенощное бдения нет, литургия в Нориче

Sunday 12 November

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

Saturday 18 November

5.30 pm: Vigil / Всенощное бдение

Sunday 19 November

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

Saturday 25 November

5.30 pm: Vigil / Всенощное бдение

Sunday 26 November

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

Tuesday 28 November

Beginning of the Advent Fast/ Начало Рождественского Поста

Baptisms in October

7 October: Christian Mihai

7 October: Andrei Stan

13 October: Adrian Sandu

21 October: David Simiuc

21 October: Alexei Long

26 October: Nikita Backams

26 October: Xenia Kharabet

26 October: Aleksandr Blanco-Mizgulin

26 October: Veronika Blanco-Mizgulina

27 October: Panteleimon Welsh

28 October: Denis Cioina

28 October: Matvei Vasiliev

Wedding in October

29 October: Mikhail Roman and Nina Roman

Church News

The Icon with the Relic of the Belt of the Mother of God

This extremely rare icon came to us on Saturday 14 and Sunday 15 October and visited the Norwich parish on 16 October. Some 80 people came on Saturday evening for the Vigil Service and over 200 on Sunday. We still have a few ribbons that were placed around and beneath the Icon. We sincerely thank Lydia Barakat for her help with transporting the Icon.

Change of Name for Newsletter

With issue No 96, St John's News has at last received a slightly more original name. This is 'The Eastern Orthodox', which refers to our location in the East of England and our Faith. It also reflects the expansion of our parishes and communities from Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk.

Можно ли причащаться и ходить в храм во время месячных?

«Удивило, что нельзя причащаться во время месячных! Может быть, и в храм нельзя ходить?»

Архиерейское Совещание 2-3 февраля 2015 года закрепило общепринятую практику, когда женщина должна воздержаться от причащения в дни очищения: “Каноны запрещают причащаться в состоянии женской нечистоты (2-е правило святого Дионисия Александрийского, 7-е правило Тимофея Александрийского). Исключение может быть сделано в случае смертной опасности, а также когда кровотечение продолжается длительное время в связи с хроническим или острым заболеванием”.

Кроме того, вряд ли кто ведет такой духовный образ жизни, чтобы воздержание от причастия на несколько дней могло бы повредить душе. Наоборот, воздержание по благоговению к святыне Святых Даров приуготовит благочестивую женщину к причастию больше, чем, если она пожелает причащаться в те дни, когда большинство христианок не дерзают приступать к Святыне.

В храм ходить в дни месячного очищения разрешается. Хотя стоит помнить, что в истории Церкви было время, когда женщины во время месячных в храм не заходили. Отголоском этого осталась традиция чтения на 40 день молитвы над роженицей. Из текста молитвы понятно, что до исполнения срока послеродового очищения женщина в храм не должна была входить. Сейчас этот обычай не соблюдается, однако Церковь в лице своих иерархов призывает воздерживаться в дни очищения от Причащения, если только это не связано с продолжительной болезнью.

Вообще же в традиции Церкви принято, что в храме, где совершается Бескровная Жертва, всякое пролитие крови недопустимо. Любая кровоточащая рана, если она не представляет угрозу жизни и не является результатом продолжительной болезни, также служит препятствием для причащения. Так что дело не в женщине, а в благоговении перед Бескровной Жертвой Спасителя, недопустимости пролития крови в храме.

Патриарх Сербский Павел пишет: "Месячное очищение женщины не делает ее ритуально, молитвенно нечистой. Эта нечистота только физическая, телесная, равно как и выделения из других органов. Кроме того, поскольку современные гигиенические средства могут эффективно воспрепятствовать тому, чтобы случайным истечением крови сделать храм нечистым мы считаем, что и с этой стороны нет сомнения, что женщина во время месячного очищения, с необходимой осторожностью и предприняв гигиенические меры, может приходить в церковь, целовать иконы, принимать антидор и освященную воду, равно как и участвовать в пении. Причаститься в этом состоянии или некрещеная - креститься, она бы не могла. Но в смертельной болезни может и причаститься, и креститься".

What to do about Hallowe'en?

Forty years ago Hallowe'en had not been heard of in this country, apart from among people who had visited the USA at that time of year. It seems to have appeared here in the 1980s as part of Americanization. In origin it is both commercial and satanic. There was no such thing as dressing up in witches' costumes or going around the streets annoying people. There are two solutions. Either it can be ignored or else it can be made into an event for a Christian family.

If you cannot ignore Hallowe'en, then why not rent or download a family film? For young children you could watch, as a family, cartoons like Snow White, Beauty and the Beast or Cinderella, or films like Caspar, Blackbeard's Ghost, Bedknobs and Broomsticks, or, for older children, still older films like You Can't Take it With You, or any other Capra film. Some of these films are about the supernatural, but they are presented in a non-serious, fairy-tale way. For teenagers there are also old but serious British films like A Canterbury Tale, The Halfway House or Stairway to Heaven (which is about someone who dies and goes to be judged, but must return). These films are about the supernatural. Parents can produce sweets, chocolate, fizzy drink and then the film can be discussed together.

**RUSSIAN CHURCH HAS 180 MILLION FAITHFUL;
36,000 CHURCHES; 1,000 MONASTERIES; 56
SEMINARIES - PATRIARCH KIRILL**

Bucharest, October 30, 2017

On an official visit to the Romanian Orthodox Church last week, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia spoke of the rebirth of Orthodoxy in both Russia and Romania, following the fall of communism in both countries. According to the primate, the number of faithful included in the flock of the Russian Orthodox Church worldwide has reached 180 million, reports [RIA-Novosti](#).

[Patriarch Kirill landed in Romania](#) on Thursday to take part in the celebrations for the 10th anniversary of the enthronement of Patriarch Daniel of Romania, and to transmit to the faithful of the Romanian Orthodox Church a reliquary with a piece of the relics of St. Seraphim of Sarov, who is also [greatly loved in Romania](#). His Holiness also took part in a solemn session of the Romanian Church's Holy Synod dedicated to the memory of the defenders of Orthodoxy during the atheistic years of communism in Romania. The event was attended by heads and representatives of the Orthodox Churches of Bulgaria, Georgia, Czech and Slovakia, Albania, and Serbia.

At the session, Pat. Kirill stated that the number of the faithful of the Russian Orthodox Church numbers 180 million throughout the world, adding that about 75% of Russians consider themselves Orthodox. He also noted that the Russian Orthodox Church currently has 36,000 parishes and 1,000 monasteries, in addition to 56 theological academies and seminaries, in addition to other educational institutions.

By comparison, Pat. Kirill noted that the Russian Church had only 6,000 parishes and 21 monasteries in 1988, and five theological schools.

“What is happening now is a miracle, because in the external circumstances of the Russian Orthodox Church's existence during the Soviet years it was impossible to see any basis for such rapid rebirth,” the patriarch added.

The jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church includes Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Tajikistan, Turkmenia, Uzbekistan, and Estonia, as well as parts of China, Japan, and Mongolia, and parishes scattered throughout other countries of the world.

ROCOR GATHERING DOCUMENTS TOWARDS CANONIZATION OF BR. JOSÉ MUÑOZ-CORTES

New York, October 18, 2017

The Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia is currently in the process of drafting and gathering documents for the eventual canonization of the guardian of the Montreal Iveron Icon Br. José Muñoz-Cortes. Although there are no plans for his official glorification in the near future, an eparchial commission has been created, which will then give the gathered documents to a Synodal commission for further consideration, Metropolitan Hilarion (Kapral), the First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia stated in a recent interview with [RIA-Novosti](#).

According to the metropolitan, the ROCOR Synod has, for the time being, not decided to glorify him, because it will take time to gather and study the necessary documents.

“The Synod is opposed to making a rushed decision. Even St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco was not glorified for a long time; his canonization took place more than 20 years after his repose. Many hierarchs even said then that more time should pass,” Met. Hilarion added.

The first hierarch also spoke about the celebrations that will take place in honor of the anniversary of the martyrdom of Br. José in late October at Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville, NY. It is expected that thousands from across the U.S. and Canada will attend the traditional pilgrimage to his grave behind the main monastery church. The miraculous and myrrh-streaming Hawaiian Iveron Icon of the Mother of God, which is a smaller replica of the icon that Br. José guarded until his death, will also be present for the celebration.

Met. Hilarion, who will lead the celebration said he knew Br. José well. “The Lord gave him such a wondrous obedience—to be the keeper of the myrrh-streaming Montreal Icon. For many years he took it around to Russian parishes throughout the whole world, and he fulfilled this difficult obedience with love and patience,” Met. Hilarion said.

Br. José Muñoz-Cortes, a Chilean, converted to Orthodoxy in the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia in Montreal, Canada. He was brutally murdered in Athens on the night of October 31, 1997. The icon, which was painted on Mt. Athos and which streamed myrrh almost continuously for

fifteen years disappeared without a trace, although many Orthodox believe that it returned to its home on Mt. Athos.

For a fuller biography of Br. José and a recounting of his last days, see the article "[Jose Munoz-Cortez, Guardian of the Iveron Icon of the Mother of God.](#)"

10/18/2017

ON THE CANONIZATION OF THE ROYAL MARTYRS

[Archpriest Alexander Shargunov](#)

As we continue to commemorate the centenary of the Russian revolution, which overthrew the Tsar and led to the martyrdom of millions, including the members of the royal family themselves the following year, we here take a look back at what kind of attitude the Russian people had towards the Tsar and his family in the period leading up to their glorification by the Moscow Patriarchate in 2000.

The time has come to [glorify](#) the Tsar-Martyr Nicholas and his august family. They are not yet glorified by our Church,¹ but the attitude towards this in the Church and in society is completely different than what it was a few years ago. It's a sign that despite the seeming hopelessness of the current situation, some part of the people has woken up. There are many churches, as stated in the report of the Commission for Canonization, where they are already praying before icons of the Royal Martyrs. It is a miracle which we are witnessing today: the natural demand of the Russian Orthodox people for the canonization of the Tsar-Martyr, which aligns with the will of God. The Russian people are united around the Tsar in this.

"Do you miss your tsar-batushka?" our enemies ask us, mockingly, as if it hadn't been the best of times for Russia.

Here are some conversations I heard during a procession in honor of the Tsar-Martyr:

“The significance of the canonization is huge; no words can express it,” one young man said.

“The most important thing revealed here,” another noted, “is that we are Russians, and this is our tsar. There’s both repentance and the acquiring of joy at the same time here.”

“I prayed a lot for the Tsar to be canonized,” a third added. “Then I’ll be able to perceive myself as Russian in my country. It’ll be easier for me that not abroad, but here we have acknowledged the Tsar as a saint. In this I will affirm that I live in Russia, not in some colony.”

The theme of canonization is truly, above all, the theme of awakening, reflecting on how the people’s memory was stifled, how it was held in a hypnotic state, suggesting that there was nothing, and no tsar. The most forbidden subject was the Tsar.

It was a taboo, forbidden subject. But, as they say, God sees the truth, but won’t soon tell it—and God has revealed this truth. And the more people have contact with the Tsar, the more they see his portraits, the more they read books about him, like the studies of Sokolov or General Diterikhs, the more this taboo weakens. That this truth has been opened is a good sign for Russia: It had the Tsar, and it has him now, as a Heavenly intercessor. It is a mystical act of repentance: He who was killed, who they tried to make a mockery of and hide all the truth about, is now declared a saint.

Our Tsar is a holy symbol of Russia. Every people has its historical calling and its own characteristics. There is occurring more and more now a depersonalization of peoples precisely because in every people, as in every person, only that which belongs to Christ is truly and uniquely unrepeatable: The Russian tsar differed from European monarchs, and the Russian people corresponded to this form of government. The Russian people are simplehearted, and they needed a wise and simplehearted tsar. All of this was united in the last tsar.

This is why the souls of so many people sprung up and rushed towards this mystery. Here is the testimony of a priest about his vision of the Tsarina on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the revolution: “Until the Tsar is glorified, there will be a curse over Russia,” is consonant with dozens of other letters that I constantly receive. And the reflections of the young believers during the Royal procession, which I quoted above, are not superficial patriotism, but a manifestation of a deep Orthodox consciousness.

If they had not dethroned and killed the tsar, they would not have been able to kill priests, and all the Orthodox people. He was the First Martyr in a Church of New Martyrs, although not strictly chronologically so.

But the enemies stealthily approached the Tsar and the Church. When they said we don't need our Orthodox tsar, they wanted to deprive the people even of the instinct of self-preservation. They slandered the Tsar, so the Russians would stop being Russians, and we should understand this today at least on the level of the instinct of self-preservation.

Glorifying a saint always requires two conditions: First—the [veneration](#) of the faithful, and second—posthumous miracles.

When I began to read testimonies from Radio Radonezh five years ago about miracles of the Royal Martyrs, I could not have guessed that these programs would cause such a reaction. Since then, four collections of miracles of the Royal Martyrs have been published, and a fifth is being prepared, and the stream of testimonies isn't drying up.

And finally, there is the miracle with an icon, exuding a fragrant myrrh, which began on November 7, 1998 and hasn't stopped yet.² There were 5,000 witnesses to this fragrant myrrh streaming at the procession in Moscow on the birthday of the Tsar-Martyr, May 19, 1999. The icon is taken from church to church, filling entire churches with its sweet fragrance. Every testimony to the miracles of the Royal Martyrs has the fragrance of love, but here it is given to be felt by all, by a visible image, that all would see and feel this anointing of holiness upon the Royal Passion-bearers, and that all would perhaps understand that the royal anointing of Christ remains on our sovereign, despite his being removed from the throne. As the main stumbling block for many in the question of the canonization of the Tsar-Martyr remains his forced abdication, we receive in response the witness of Heaven.

These miracles will put many to shame. What can we say after that? Should we proclaim thousands of people crazy?! For all those who resist, it is *the savour of death unto death*, as the apostle Paul says, but for us, *the savour of life unto life* (2 Cor. 2:16). The Tsar-Martyr's involvement in the fulness of the mystery of the Cross and Resurrection is that savor of which our Church and our Russia are most in need of today.

Among the multitude of miraculous signs by which the Lord has now glorified Tsar Nicholas II, we must especially highlight two great and truly prophetic miracles. They are a miracle of a Christian family, a “little Church,” on the eve of the destruction of millions of families, and a miracle of the lawful authorities on the eve of the power of “the man of lawlessness,” the antichrist.

The tsar’s governmental service corresponded to the glorious Heavenly anointing which he received from God: A ruler should love his people (the love of the Tsar, especially for simple people, as if without distinguishing between the rich and the poor, cannot but amaze), and please God in all things. None of those claiming authority now have such an understanding. During his reign, Nicholas II amazed people with the piety, humility, and simplicity which distinguished him from all other rulers. The ultimate self-sacrifice in the line of duty before Russia is expressed in the Tsar’s famous words, “If a sacrifice is needed for the salvation of Russia, I will be that sacrifice.”

The family of the Tsar is called an icon of the Orthodox family. This family impresses with the attention and love of the five children for one another—they were all connected, with their father, with their mother; they were one love, one soul. And this was not just a family withdrawn into their family happiness: They lived the whole life of Russian society, directly taking part in every need of their subjects. They were truly a royal family.

The murder of the Tsar had many long-term targets, including the destruction of the family. Trotsky wrote in the 30s, “Russia has again become bourgeois; there is again the cult of the family.” They wanted to destroy the family. The family is a tiny Church, and the destruction of the entire Church thereby takes shape.

Everything rests on the family—both morality and the state. The murder of the Royal Family was followed in society by the slogans, “Down with marriage!” “Down with shame!”—as if bursting forth and clearly manifesting the spiritual essence of this murder. The power of the state will persist for decades, but cannot but collapse in the end.

It is symbolic that they killed not just the Tsar and his family, but also all his faithful servants. The Royal Martyrs and their servants are a symbol of Russia. It was like an extermination of all of Russia, of all who were loyal to the Tsar. Then they tried to kill those whom they knew, that they wouldn’t be remembered. We should not be surprised that after the destruction of

the Orthodox monarchy there followed the rapid destruction of the characteristics of the uniqueness of the Russian people, first in the depersonalizing communist collective, and now, to a more terrible degree, the depersonalization turning the people into beasts through the legalization of the most corrupt sins as the norm.

What is happening in Russia today—the disintegration of the family, morality, and state—is a direct result of the unconscious and unrepented crime of 1918. Now, when the destruction of the family is reaching its limits, the canonization of the Tsar will be a gathering of the Russian people in one family, and the return of the prodigal son to his father.

As the remarkable theologian of our times Archimandrite Constantine (Zaitsev) wrote a few decades ago: “Now, perhaps, the most obvious signs of the splitting of Russian society into two spiritually opposed camps is how they treat the Royal Family.” And today, we would add, it is connected with the fate of Russia like never before, for the sake of which the Tsar offered himself as a sacrifice.

Someone may lament: “It’s too late to talk now about canonization,” but everything is possible for God. As the Tatar-Mongol yoke, as the Polish-Swedish invasion—when it seemed it was all over for Russia—suddenly dispersed, so today’s yoke of the “golden calf” and the invasion of lies into Russia will be scattered only by the strength of God. The canonization of the Tsar will be a historical miracle: Until recently, it was impossible to even imagine the possibility amid the universal betrayal and oblivion. At the end of the twentieth century, when the war with evil is entering a new period, we are given this invisible spiritual support from God.

Why would the canonization of the Tsar give spiritual strength to the faithful? Why would it be a miracle of miracles? Because it would mean that all the lies of the twentieth century have ceased and peeled off like rot, and the truth was revealed. The glorification of the tsar will be a victory over the dark powers of the antichrist which defeated Russia in 1917—maybe for a small portion of the people, but a victory. The canonization will drive out the demons from Russia and from the Church.

Our Tsar is an orientation and guide for the blind—he whom Russia should trust, and has trusted.

With the execution of the Tsar, grace as if withdrew from Russia. Everything went bad for Russia, and became confused. So monstrous was the crime, that our people were as if deprived of their childhood—pure, pristine, and beautiful.

As a child with open eyes and a pure heart, upon whom the evil that surrounds him presses consciously or subconsciously, cannot live a natural, carefree life, so the naturalness of our people left. It was a sin against nature.

“My grandma told me about it when I was seven,” one parishioner of our church said, sharing her impressions with me. “Grandma’s face changed when she spoke about the shooting of the Tsar, Tsarina, the children, and the servants, although she herself was a revolutionary. I felt the horror.”

This horror has passed from generation to generation. That’s why people went to the gulags from generation to generation with such slavish obedience. That’s why the people would say “Tsar-Nikolashka”³ about him who was slain, and would laugh with an unnatural laugh—they thus hid their fear. And now they have come to an even greater horror. It was an unnatural and illegal crime, and the fact that the Tsar-Martyr has returned to our memory (and why return? Why not be forgotten?) witnesses that this memory, and everything connected with it, was latently alive in people’s hearts and conscience. We spoke above about the loss of the personality of the Russian people and the Russian person. In conclusion, we will say a few words about the personality of the holy Tsar-Martyr. As it says in the *Paterikon*:

“Why aren’t you asking me anything?” the abba asked his disciple. “For me, it is enough to watch you,” he answered.

In the person of the Tsar we see the grace of Divine peace. We can be soothed, looking at his photograph. Even in exile, his peace did not change (look at the photos where he is sitting on logs or shoveling snow). Our people can, after our turmoil, return to peace. A man with a sensitive soul cannot but understand.

The face of the Tsar speaks for itself. It is comely and lucid. It is filled with the highest nobility. The Tsar preserved a childlikeness and purity. The Tsar retained timidity; he felt uncomfortable being vested with power over people. It was a Divine mark, which he preserved to the end.

No matter how someone looks at the Tsar, it’s impossible to deny that his face is always full of genuine importance. The wonderful nature of the Royal Family is captured in [photographs](#). They were not acting. There is no guile in their faces, their direct gaze, because these faces are partly iconographic in and of themselves. The icon of the Tsar in the Church

Abroad is basically just a photograph with a halo, and several photographs of the Royal Martyrs are perceived as icons. It's no coincidence that they hang together with the icons in many Orthodox homes.

Compare a portrait of the Tsar with any other statesman—not just our Chernenko, Chernomyrdin, and Chubais, but all famous Western leaders, like Churchill, Roosevelt, or de Gaulle. There is the mark from on high in the Tsar's face.

Show the face of the Tsar to a child, and it will favorably act upon his soul. With the canonization of the Tsar, a pure perception will return to the people. Children sense with their hearts—you can't deceive them. No matter what happens, the childlike soul of the Russian people yet lives. Childlikeness exists in icons, and the face of the Tsar has this in common with the face of Christ—a face that trusts God and the people.

January 24, 2000

*[Archpriest Alexander Shargunov](#)
Translated by Jesse Dominick*

[Pravoslavie.ru](#)

10/25/2017

ПОП, ГАРМОНЬ И ГОША С САШЕЙ

Беседы у русской печки

[Петр Давыдов](#)

Утро в Брейтово выдалось интересным. [Отец Анатолий](#) стоял во дворе и внимательно рассматривал теннисную ракетку, крутил в руках и вздыхал: «Хм, подойдет – не подойдет?» Вот те раз, думаю, до чего приходская жизнь дошла в Брейтовском благочинии! В теннис играть начали. И ладно бы в настольный, так ведь нет – в самый что ни на есть большой. Корт-то у них где? А играет он, интересно, в шортах и майке или в скуфье и подряснике?

Священник услышал мое удивленное кряканье: «О, смотри, что у меня есть. В самый раз для деревни. Хорошая штука, только батарейки кончились!»

Всё. «Нано-теннис» какой-то. Протоиерей держит в руках теннисную ракетку, считает, что здорово она подходит для жизни в деревне, и жалуется на отсутствие батареек. Но утро ясное, голова тоже – вчера если что и было, то только баня с чаем, поэтому болеть голове не с чего, и когнитивно диссонировать ей, головушке, не пристало.

Отец Анатолий расхохотался: «Что, не видал такого? Нужная вещь, говорю! Ты не пугайся: это мухобойка китайская. Вставляешь батарейки и мух колотишь, а они, стало быть, падают, когда на наэлектризованные струны натываются. А в ручке еще фонарик есть – тоже полезно, в наши-то вечера. В общем, все удовольствия присутствуют. Чем, спрашивается, не подарок хорошим людям? Поехали – хороших людей поздравим». – «С чем поздравим?» – «С возвращением, например. Да и вообще, давно не виделись. А сейчас ребята из Израиля вернулись – заодно и расскажут, что да как там, на [Святой земле](#). Ты, главное, подарочек не потеряй – будешь за него ответственным. А с Гошей и Сашей тебе неплохо бы познакомиться».

Деревушку Михайловское, где живут Гоша и Саша, трудно назвать деревней. Скорее, это то, что осталось от некогда крепкого села: пара-тройка жилых хиленьких домов, несколько оживающих с приходом весны дачных домиков, а дальше – унылая, беспросветная разруха. Покалеченный колодец возле идеальной по форме ели. Вдали блестит на солнце речка Сить, ей вторит купол восстановленного храма [Михаила Архангела](#) – это уже Семеновское, село покрупнее. А единственный крепкий, основательный дом здесь, в не-пушкинском Михайловском, – тот самый, где живут друзья.

Купили дом совсем недавно, тут свою роль сыграла «жилищная программа» отца Анатолия: взяли в Михайловском, прямо на берегу легендарной Сити, покореженный домишко за бесценок. Священник такие дома всем желающим предлагает: «Больно смотреть, как умирает русская деревня. У тебя руки к тому месту прилажены? – Вот и покупай дом за десять рублей, стройся, ремонтируй, живи. Так, глядишь, и народу в деревнях наших прибавится. Хоть и капля в море, но все-таки». Кончилось все тем, что купили аж два дома: один – Саниной семье, другой – Гошиной. Но восстанавливать-строить

решили по порядку: сначала строят Гошин дом, потом Санин. Или наоборот. Никто не в обиде, похоже.

Поскольку у друзей руки очень даже к тому месту прилажены, они и взялись за обустройство нового жилища. Сказали семьям в столице, что дело пахнет хорошей дачей, собрали инструменты и приехали в Михайловское. За несколько месяцев дом приосанился, а внутренней отделке позавидовали бы царские палаты, наверное: основательно, добротнo, не без творческой фантазии. Короче, настоящий русский дом. И дух в нем очень даже русский: друзья в честь встречи накрывают на стол, еда из печи, сам ее запах уже сытный. Но на одних запахах-ароматах долго не продержишься, несмотря на все славянофильство, поэтому Саша с Гошей усадили побыстрее всю честную компанию за трапезу.

В честь приезда друзей со Святой земли отец Анатолий торжественно вручил им ту самую «нано-ракетку» – восторгу и шуткам не было конца. Ракетка отправилась... под новогоднюю елку, которую Саша и Гоша категорически отказываются убирать из избы, несмотря на вообще-то позднюю весну: «Так интереснее. Да и экономнее. Зачем каждый год новую ставить – пусть эта стоит!» – это, похоже, единственная дань холостяцкой жизни. Всё остальное, повторюсь, являет собой пример бережного, а то и трепетного отношения к дому и настоящего хозяйственного взгляда на окружающую действительность.

Саша – украинец, Гоша – русский. Один с Западной Украины, другой из Москвы. А может, и наоборот. «Я их все время путаю, – говорит отец Анатолий. – Да и какая разница?» Ребята хохочут: «Как это “какая разница”? Саня несколько лет не мог русский паспорт получить – сами же, отец Анатолий, и помогали! Помните, как все на ухах стояли, пока гражданство не оформили?» Священник вздыхает: «Да уж. У нас нормальным людям сложно стать гражданами».

За столом друзья и рассказали о своей поездке на Святую землю. По делам ездили, на три аж месяца. Уехали сразу после Рождества – теперь понятно, почему елка не убрана. А ездили они для того, чтобы помочь тамошним монастырям избавиться от вредной растительности, разрушающей стены. Какая-то редкая у них специальность – древорубы. Нужно было помочь монастырским зданиям: убрать корни из стен, привести в порядок сады, кое-где и подстричь деревья, облагородить. Работали как обычно, то есть на совесть, и в монастырях, узнав, что есть такие профессионалы, становились в очередь, просили ребят поработать то в одном скиту,

то в другом. «Получилось что-то похожее на путешествие Иоанна Мосха по Палестине, – говорят. – Хоть еще один «Луг духовный» пиши! Только писатели из нас не очень. А вот с деревом работать – это пожалуйста».

Домой тянуло со страшной силой. «С родной сторонушки и ворона мила, и редкая птица долетит до середины Иордана», – под общий хохот выдал Гоша. Потом, посерьезнев, друзья сказали, что душа истосковалась по России – по этой вот глуши, по скромной Сити, по церквушке в Семеновском. Оказывается, ее они тоже помогали восстанавливать. «Жаль только, что народу в ней мало! Храм вроде бы есть, службы идут, а людей на них мало. Для кого и церковь восстанавливали...». – «Мало! – кипит отец Анатолий. – Да бывает, что и вообще никого. Зайдут на Пасху, свечку поставят – и всё! Как мы можем вернуться в Святую Русь, если храмы есть, а людей в них нет? Одними стенами да куполами православным не станешь! Это как вы корни из монастырских стен вырывали – так же надо и из наших душ корни зла выкорчевывать. Корни зла и забывчивости» – «Вот и будем в храм ходить, пока тут живем. Потом, глядишь, и семьи перевезем – прихожан побольше станет. Но все равно грустно».

Потом кто-то вспомнил веселый случай, байку – стало полегче. А потом отец Анатолий потребовал гармонь, и от грусти не осталось никакого следа.

Петр Давыдов

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