

Victory in Europe!

An Orthodox Seminary Opens in Paris



On 1 September 2009 a Russian Orthodox seminary is at last to open on the outskirts of Paris. Approved by the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church on 15 April 2008, as announced on this website in April last year (see: <http://orthodoxengland.org.uk/semparis.htm>), the seminary opens at Epinay-sous-Senart just outside Paris. It is being established in the buildings of a former Roman Catholic monastery, taken over by the Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church based in France.

Our vision for such a seminary goes back thirty years to 1979, when we first became conscious of what had sorely been lacking in Western Europe for so long (see our recent interview at: <http://rocorstudies.org/?part=articles&aid=10869>). However, it was only in 1989 that we publicly called for the establishment of a Metropolia in Western European (see: <http://orthodoxengland.org.uk/oewesteu.htm>), which would require a seminary. Our specific call for a seminary for Western Europe was renewed in our 2006 call for a 'Metropolitan Orthodox Seminary' in Europe (see: <http://orthodoxengland.org.uk/2wardom.htm>).

The seminary building, constructed in the 17th century and surrounded by a large park is situated at No 4, rue Sainte-Genevieve in the town centre of Epinay. It is ten minutes walk from the RER line D railway station which goes to the centre of Paris in thirty minutes. The Orthodox seminary chapel inside is dedicated to St Martin and St Genevieve of Paris and services are open to all. Guests and pilgrims are welcome. Details can be obtained from rectorat@seminaria.fr.

It is notable that the seminary has been set up near Paris, the historic centre of Russian Orthodox emigration and culture in Western Europe. It is even more notable that this announcement comes on the day after the 43rd anniversary of the repose of St John of Shanghai and Western Europe. This is the day before his official feast-day, which by the canonisation decree of 1994 of the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia is always commemorated on the Saturday following the anniversary of his repose.

Our heartiest congratulations go to Archbishop Innokenty and all those who have worked so hard with him for the opening of this long-prayed-for, Godsent seminary.

Archpriest Andrew Phillips