

ПАНТЕЛЕИМОНСКИЙ ЛИСТОК

A Newsletter for the Russian Orthodox Parish of Saint Panteleimon, Gosford

~ Number 31, 1 August 2004 ~

Преподобнаго Серафима, Саровскаго чудотворца



Saint Seraphim, the Wonderworker of Sarov

Saint Seraphim was born near the city of Kursk in Russia in 1759. His father and mother, who were good Christians, gave him the name Prokhor (Прохоръ). His father died when Prokhor was only three years old. When he was seven, a great miracle happened. Prokhor was playing at the top of a bell-tower on a church that was being built, and fell to the ground. But God saved him from harm. Not even one of his bones was broken!

When he was around ten years old, Prokhor became very ill. He had a dream in which the Mother of God appeared to him and told him that he would be restored to health. A few days later, the Kursk-Root Icon of the Mother of God was brought to his village. Praying before it with his mother, he was healed of his sickness.

When Prokhor grew up, he wanted most of all to live in a monastery and serve God. Understanding his desire to serve God, his mother blessed him with a cross that he wore

for the rest of his life. He went first to the old Christian city of Kiev. A holy monk there told him to go to the monastery of Sarov, and it was there that he stayed.

Prokor was nineteen years of age when he began to live in the monastery. He was given different obediences: baking bread and prosphora, woodwork, making little wooden crosses, and making wooden toys for children.

For several years, Prokhor simply lived at the monastery and shared in the work and prayers of the monks. Having learned patience and steadfastness in this way, he then became a monk (монахъ). To become a monk, there is actually a special church service performed, in which the young man promises to live obediently in the monastery all his life, to not eat meat, get married or try and become rich, and in which he is given a new name. Prokhor's new name was Seraphim (Серафимъ).

As the years went by, the monk Seraphim became a deacon and then a priest. When he was a deacon, our Lord Jesus Christ himself appeared to him in church. Another time, when he was sick, the Mother of God and the Holy Apostles Peter and John appeared to him. During his life, the Mother of God appeared to Saint Seraphim 12 times.

After a few years, Saint Seraphim was allowed to live by himself in the forest close to the monastery, where he could concentrate more on his prayers. He prayed and read holy books most of the day, and spent a little time growing vegetables and keeping bees. All the forest animals would come to his hut. A huge bear even came, and allowed Saint Seraphim to hand feed him bread!

Once the bear came when Saint Seraphim had some visitors. They were of course terrified. Saint Seraphim scolded the bear and told him to not scare the people, and asked him to bring a treat for the guests. About two hours later, the bear came back with a honeycomb for Saint Seraphim and his visitors to eat!

One day some thieves went to Saint Seraphim's hut, thinking that he would have much gold hidden there. They beat him terribly and searched his hut, but found nothing. After that, Saint Seraphim could not stand up straight again. But when soldiers caught the thieves, Saint Seraphim asked that they be forgiven.

Every day of the year, Saint Seraphim would say "Христосъ Воскресе!" ("Christ is Risen!") This is because he was full of happiness that our Lord Jesus Christ had set us free from sin and death. His face was always shining with joy. He was full of love for everyone.

Saint Seraphim especially liked to pray in front of two icons. One was the Icon of our Lord Jesus Christ "Not made by Hands" («Нерукотвореннаго») and the other was the "Tender Feeling" («Умиление») Icon of the Mother of God.

Once, Saint Seraphim knelt on a rock to pray for 1000 nights and days. In many icons, he is shown kneeling on this rock and praying with his hands lifted up. He prayed, "God have mercy on me, a sinner!"

Saint Seraphim lived a good and holy life. People came in thousands from all over Russia to see him. God allowed him to see into the future, and Saint Seraphim often warned people about the terrible things that would happen in the Russian Revolution in 1917.

Saint Seraphim died on January 15th, 1833, whilst praying in front of his icons. There were many miracles after he died. In 1903, he was officially recognized as a saint. 350 000 people came to the special church service on that day, including the Tsar, Nicholas II, and all his family. It was through the prayers of Saint Seraphim that Tsar Nicholas' long-awaited son, Alexei, was born, just over a year later.

We remember Saint Seraphim on two days of the year: the day that he died, January 15th (January 2nd on the Church calendar), and the date that he was declared a saint, August 1st (July 19th). August 1st 2003 was the 100th anniversary of Saint Seraphim's official recognition as a saint. The whole Russian Orthodox Church celebrated this anniversary with great joy, holding special services to Saint Seraphim and asking for his prayers. Today, here in Gosford, we will have a short moleben at the end of the service, asking for Saint Seraphim's holy prayers for our parishioners and all present.

APPEAL TO ARCHPASTORS, PASTORS AND LAYMEN OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH ABROAD

This appeal has been posted on the official website of the Synod of Bishops. The Parish Council is to meet in the coming week and will discuss the response of our parish to the appeal. It would be wonderful if our small parish, one of the newest of the Russian Church Abroad, could respond generously to the Synod's appeal - Fr James.

On the site of the murder of the Royal Family in Yekaterinburg today there stands the Church on the Blood. The main altar is consecrated to All Saints who have shone forth in the Russian Land, while another altar, where the Anointed of God martyrically shed his blood along with His Most August family and their faithful servants, was solemnly consecrated to them.

Nine hundred and thirty years after the Baptism of Rus', the Russian land was stained with the blood of the New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia--with a new baptism.

Today, three generations later, this podvig calls upon all of the Russian people to a renewal of their moral-Christian way of life.

Their faithfulness to Christ is being tested. The faithful in Russia have found the strength to raise on the site of the murder of the Royal Family a church, magnificent and majestic in its size and beauty.

In the bell tower of the Church on the Blood there must still be hung a large bell, weighing many tons. This bell, the "Blagovest," has already been destined, in the hearts and desires of many in contemporary Russia, to be the bell of all the Church Abroad.

In view of this, the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Church Abroad appeals to everyone to contribute generously for the manufacturing of this bell, that it may be as large as possible.

The bell foundry already is waiting to begin this work. The size of the bell will correspond to the amount of the donations. For a suitable size, more than US\$50,000 will be needed.

For your generosity and participation in this God-pleasing work we call on the blessing of God for all contributors and express our sincere gratitude!

Metropolitan Laurus
6/19 July, 2004

Contributions should be sent to: Synod of Bishops, 75 East 93rd Street, New York, NY 10128,
earmarked for "Bell for Russia Fund."

ВОЗЗВАНИЕ АРХИПАСТЫРЯМ, ПАСТЫРЯМ И МИРЯНАМ РУССКОЙ ПРАВОСЛАВНОЙ ЦЕРКВИ ЗАГРАНИЦЕЙ

На месте убиения Царской Семьи в Екатеринбурге, возвышается сегодня "Храм на Крови". Главный престол посвящен в честь Всех Святых в Земли Российстей Просиявших, а другой придел, где мученически пролил кровь помазанник Божий со всей августейшей семьей и верными им слугами, был торжественно освящен в праздник Царственных Мучеников, в 2003 году, и посвящен им.

930 лет после Крещения Руси, русская земля обагрилась кровью Новомучеников и Исповедников Российских — новым крещением.

Сегодня, три поколения спустя, этот подвиг призывает весь Русский народ к обновлению своего нравственно-христианского жизненного пути.

Испытывается его верность Христу. Верующие в России нашли силы, чтоб воздвигнуть на месте убиения Царской Семьи, великолепный и величественный по своим размерам и красоте - храм.

На колокольни этого "Храма на Крови" остается поместить большой колокол. Этот многотонный Благовест, уже давно в сердцах и надеждах многих в современной России, предназначается как колокол всего Зарубежья.

В связи с этим, Синод Русской Православной Церкви Заграницей призывает всех к посильной жертве на сооружение этого великого по возможности колокола. Уже давно литейщик ждет возможности приступить к этому сооружению.

Размер колокола будет соответствовать пожертвованиям. Для достойного размера понадобится свыше 50-ти тысяч американских долларов.

За щедрость и участие в этом богоугодном деле, мы призываем на всех жертвователей Божие благословение и выражаем искреннюю благодарность!

Митрополит Лавр
6/19 июля 2004 г.

Пожертвования следует посылать на Synod of Bishops, 75 East 93rd Street, New York, NY 10128, с
заметкой - "Bell for Russia Fund"

СООБЩЕНИЕ АРХИМАНДРИТА ЛУКИ (МУРЬЯНКИ) О Поездке на первую встречу комиссии по переговорам между Русской Зарубежной Церковью и Московской Патриархией

Составлено по поручению митрополита Лавра

В июне 2004 г. в Мюнхене состоялась предварительная встреча комиссии Русской Зарубежной Церкви. В течение трех дней мы обсуждали и согласовывали нашу позицию. Архиепископ Марк выразил желание, чтобы мы приехали в Москву, упорядочив наши взгляды по важным церковным темам, сформулированным в мандате, врученном нашей комиссии священноначалием нашей Церкви, например, об отношении государства и Церкви, экуменизма, российских приходов РПЦЗ. Это и было достигнуто в Мюнхене. Хотя обсуждения были непростыми, но благодаря им мы сформулировали общую позицию для дальнейших переговоров.

В понедельник 8/21 июня мы прибыли в Москву и вскоре приступили к работе. Переговоры проходили в здании Отдела Внешних Церковных Связей в Даниловском монастыре. Митрополит Кирилл Смоленский открыл заседания комиссий словом, но в дальнейших переговорах не участвовал. Мы вручили членам комиссии Московской Патриархии проект наших документов и приступили к обсуждению мандата.

Хочу поделиться своими личными впечатлениями о работе комиссий.

Абсолютно не было никаких попыток сгладить или затемнить сложные вопросы отношений Русской Зарубежной Церкви и Московской Патриархии, в частности, вопросы сергианства, экуменизма и другие животрепещущие вопросы.

Комиссия Московской Патриархии выразила откровенно свою позицию по указанным вопросам, и в главных чертах мы зачастую приходили к общему мнению. Однако, были трудные аспекты, которые нуждаются во взаимном понимании и с нашей, и с их стороны. Во время прошедших переговоров мы, разумеется, не исчерпали все трудные темы. Нужно принять к сведению жизненный опыт наших Церквей. Например, членство Московской Патриархии во Всемирном Совете Церквей сейчас не вызвано желанием продвигать лжеучение экуменизма, но диктуется желанием защищать интересы Русской Православной Церкви. Поскольку наша Зарубежная Церковь не имеет общения с Поместными Церквами, то нам трудно оценить те постоянные проблемы, которые возникают в области межцерковных отношений. Хотя мы и поняли трудность такого положения Московской Патриархии, мы все же высказали свое мнение о том, как нужно отстаивать Православие и на какие жертвы нужно идти ради него.

Естественно, как и можно было ожидать, в переговорах возникли несогласия, потребовавшие долгих обсуждений и обмена мнениями. Там, где мы очевидно оказались в тупике, мы согласились оставить вопросы для будущих переговоров, но не для того, чтобы их совершенно загладить, а чтобы не повредить текущему диалогу. Всегда чувствовалось как бы присутствие на переговорах нашей паствы, чаяния которой мы старались учитывать. От членов нашей комиссии можно было часто услышать слова: "Это беспокоит нашу паству..."; "Наша паства думает так-то...". Открыто

говорилось о тревожном состоянии части нашей паствы в связи с переговорами. Даже члены комиссии Московской Патриархии выражали полное понимание нашей сложной позиции, болезненность обсуждаемых вопросов, и советовали не спешить. Лично я заметил, что члены комиссии Московской Патриархии готовы прислушиваться к нам и воспринимать опыт Зарубежной Церкви.

Общая атмосфера переговоров и в Германии и в Москве — атмосфера серьезности и трезвости. Никогда не наблюдалось желания поспешно решить вопросы, ради выгоды. Наше задание непростое, ибо в таких переговорах важна ясность и точность заключений и формулировок. Работа была напряженной, она была исполнена как наше послушание, с чувством ответственности перед Богом и паствой. Нас встретили гостеприимно, но мы собрались не для отдыха, а приехали для работы, что неоднократно подчеркивал владыка Марк. Следующая совместная встреча комиссий намечена на осень текущего года.

В заключении я хочу сказать несколько слов о том, что после окончания работы комиссий, я посетил православные святыни, главным образом под Москвой. Моя последняя поездка в Россию была 32 года тому назад и, безусловно, я увидел большую разницу. Я не хочу говорить о внешнем расцвете и возрождении храмов и монастырей, скажу кратко — я был глубоко тронут... Кроме того, мне удалось пообщаться с самыми разными представителями светской и православной общественности в России: от профессоров МГУ, официальных церковных представителей — до монашества, членов Зарубежных приходов, и катакомбников, живущих в Российской глубинке. Если Богу угодно, хотелось бы вновь скорее вернуться на паломничество в наше многострадальное Отечество.

Архимандрит Лука

Джорданвилль, 2/15 июля 2004 г.

**REPORT BY ARCHIMANDRITE LUKE (MURIANKA) ON THE
FIRST MEETING OF THE NEGOTIATING COMMITTEES OF THE
RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OUTSIDE OF RUSSIA AND THE MOSCOW
PATRIARCHATE**

Written at the request of Metropolitan Laurus.

In June, 2004, a preliminary meeting of the Committee of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia was held in Munich. Over the course of three days, we discussed and agreed upon our position. Archbishop Mark expressed the wish that we arrive in Moscow having coordinated our views on important church matters which were formulated in the mandate imparted to our Committee by the hierarchy of our Church; for example, on the relationship of the state and the Church, ecumenism, the ROCOR churches in Russia. This was achieved in Munich. Although the discussions were not easy, but thanks to them we formulated a common position for further discussions.

On Monday, June 8/21, we arrived in Moscow and soon began our work. The discussions were held in the building of the Office of External Church Affairs in Danilov Monastery. Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk opened the meetings with an address, but did not participate in further discussions. We handed the members of the Moscow Patriarchate's Committee an outline of our documents and commenced discussing the mandate.

I wish to share my personal impressions of the Committees' work.

There were absolutely no attempts made to smooth over or black out the complicated matters of the relationship between the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia and the Moscow Patriarchate, including Sergianism, ecumenism and other vital, burning questions.

The Committee of the Moscow Patriarchate frankly expressed its position on the matters in question, and in a general sense we often reached a common opinion. Still, there were difficult areas that need mutual understanding both on our part and on theirs. Of course, we did not cover all the difficult topics during these negotiations. It is necessary to take into consideration the life experience of our Churches. For example, the membership of the Moscow Patriarchate in the World Council of Churches is not at the present time caused by the desire to promote the false teaching of ecumenism, but is dictated by the desire to protect the interests of the Russian Orthodox Church. Since our Church Abroad has no communion with the Local Churches, it is difficult for us to understand those constant problems that exist in the area of inter-Church relations. Although we understood the difficulties of the positions of the Moscow Patriarchate, we still expressed our opinion on how Orthodoxy should be defended and what sacrifices must be made to achieve that goal.

Naturally, as one might expect, there were disagreements that arose during the discussions, which demand a great deal of consideration and the exchange of opinion. In those areas where we appeared to reach a dead end, we agreed to leave those questions for future discussions, but not to obscure or ignore them, but in order not to harm the existing dialog. We always felt the virtual presence of our flock, whose expectations we tried to take into consideration. One often heard from the members of our delegation: "This disturbs our flock", or "Our flock thinks that". The sense of alarm felt by a portion of our flock with regard to these negotiations was openly discussed. Even members of the Moscow Patriarchate's Committee expressed their complete understanding of our complicated position, the sensitivity of the topics discussed, and offered advice not to hurry into anything. I personally noted that the members of the Moscow Patriarchate's Committee were prepared to listen to us and to learn from the experience of the Church Abroad.

The general atmosphere of the discussions in Germany and Moscow was that of seriousness and sobriety. Never was there felt a desire to hastily resolve problems for gain. Our goal is difficult, for in such negotiations, clarity and precision in conclusions drawn and terminology used is necessary. The work was intense; it was performed as an obedience, with a sense of responsibility before God and our flock. We were greeted hospitably, but we did not gather for a vacation, but for work, which was more than once emphasized by Vladyka Mark. The next joint session of the Committees is scheduled for the fall of this year.

In conclusion, I wish to say a few words about the fact that after the work of the Committees, I visited Orthodox holy sites, mainly around Moscow. My last visit to Russia was 32 years ago, and, without a doubt, I saw a great change. I do not wish to speak of the external flourishing and renaissance of churches and monasteries, but must state briefly—I was deeply moved. Besides, I also was able to have contact with the widest range of representatives of lay and Orthodox society in Russia: from professors of Moscow State University, official church representatives, to monastics, members of the Church Abroad, Catacomb Christians living in remote parts of Russia. If it is God's will, I wish once again to return soon for a pilgrimage to our much-suffering Fatherland.

Archimandrite Luke

Jordanville, July 2/15, 2004

PUSSY WILLOWS AVAILABLE FOR PLANTING

As mentioned in the last issue of the Listok, Father James and Matushka Marie have approximately 40 small pussy willow plants (вербы) available for planting. If you would like one to plant, or if you would like more information, Matushka Marie is the best person to speak to. If you don't see her at church, call at home on 4342-0015.

PARISH NEWS: OPEN WEEKEND AT LOCAL ICONOGRAPHER'S HOME

In the last issue, we indicated that the weekend of July 24th & 25th was to be an open weekend at the Berkeley Vale home of Michael Galovic, a prominent and gifted Serbian iconographer, a long-term friend of our parish and worshipper at our services. Michael's beautiful new icon studio, a "yurt" style building at the rear of the house, was open to visitors, and many of Michael's icons and other art works were on display. Hieromonk John blessed the new studio on the Saturday afternoon, with Father James reading and otherwise assisting. Father John said a few words of congratulations afterwards, reflecting on iconography in general and Michael's work in particular. We congratulate Michael on the completion of his new studio!

FUNDRAISING RAFFLE

As was mentioned in the last two newsletters, Head Sister Olga Petroff has organized a fundraising raffle to be drawn on Sunday August 15th, the date on which Vladika Hilarion will be visiting us to celebrate our feast day of Saint Panteleimon. There are 12 beautiful Russian-themed prizes. Special tickets have been printed, which means that the tickets are suitable for sale at work and to friends outside the parish, as well as to visitors on the feast-day. Tickets are \$2.00 each and available in books of 10. Please talk to Olga, or call her on 4342-4241, should you be able to help, either by selling or purchasing tickets. With the feast-day now only two weeks away, it is important that we sell as many as we can!

Father James tries to prepare this newsletter to coincide with each Sunday service at Gosford. You can call him about it at home on 4342-0015, on his mobile on 0428-639156 or email him at the following address: rev.james.carles@rocor.org.au.