

ПАНТЕЛЕИМОНСКИЙ ЛИСТОК

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

~ Number 10, 9 February 2003 ~

СВЯТЫХЪ НОВОМУЧЕНИКОВЪ И ИСПОВЕДНИКОВЪ РОССИЙСКИХЪ The Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia

On the Sunday closest to February 7th each year (January 25th on the Church calendar), the Russian Orthodox Church remembers all of the holy new martyrs and confessors of Russia. This is the day on which the Metropolitan of Kiev, Vladimir, was killed in 1918. He was the first bishop to be killed by the communists during the Russian revolution. The other bishops of Russian Church, who were at that time meeting in Moscow, immediately decided that this day would be a day for remembering all the Orthodox Christians who were killed or persecuted by the communists.

The history of Russia - the tragedy of Russia - in the 20th century - is well known to us. In October 1917 - during the First World War - there was a revolution in Russia. Communists, who then took over the government of Russia, led this revolution. We know what the fine promises of the communists were, and we also know what communism meant in practice. They promised freedom, peace and wealth for all, but gave slavery, bitter civil war, and desperate poverty. The communists especially hated Christians and our Holy Orthodox Church.

As soon as they took over the government of Russia the communists started to persecute Christians and attack the Church. They put many priests and bishops in jail. They closed churches down, burned icons in the streets, and stole holy things to sell. They stated that there would be no church and no Christians left in Russia by May 1, 1937! That was 20 years in which they planned to completely eliminate Holy Orthodoxy from Russia, and from the hearts and minds of the Russia people. They were not idle words.

In 1930, the communists announced that 42, 800 bishops, priests & deacons had died in prison or had been killed. In all, there were hundreds of thousands - probably millions - of Orthodox Christian martyrs and confessors in Russia under the communists. They are called "new" martyrs and confessors to show that they are different from the "old" martyrs and confessors who suffered in Roman times.

Sometimes when we read the lives of those "old" martyrs, it is hard to comprehend their sufferings. But the sufferings of the new martyrs and confessors are real to us. Many of you here may have known someone, or may have a relative, who suffered at the hands of the communists. Seeing what has been done in our own times, we can listen with renewed faith to the lives of the martyrs of old.

The new martyrs and confessors boldly stood up for Christ in a time when faith in God was fading, and when many Russian people, influenced by foreign ideas, had turned away from the

faith of their fathers. They showed by their courage that they would rather suffer or die than give up their Orthodox Christian faith. They told the world by their actions that Holy Orthodoxy was something so precious that life was not worth living without it.

Russia was greatly glorified by these New Martyrs and Confessors. Has it ever happened in the history of the world that the king of a great country - there was none greater - and all his family, and the highest ranking amongst the clergy, were found worthy to suffer boldly for Christ? That the cream of that society became martyrs for the faith is a measure of what Holy Russia was. The martyrs and confessors were the fruit of the tremendous Orthodox Christian faith of the Russian people.

The Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia are some of the most wonderful saints in our Church. They are great heroes of Orthodox Russia. They stand forth as great examples to us of Christian patience and endurance in the face of adversity. They show us how truly valuable our Holy Orthodox faith is. And by their holy prayers, they help us in our struggle to be steadfast & faithful Orthodox Christians.

Following the Divine Liturgy today, a general moleben will be served to the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia.

PARISH NEWS: NEW CHALICE, ALTAR CROSS

As reported in the August 2002 newsletter, a collection was taken up some time ago to enable us to purchase a new chalice. The one that we have been using for some time is not in the Russian style, and is generally too small for our needs. For larger services, we have been borrowing a chalice from Cabramatta. Father James was to make arrangements to obtain a new chalice (Чаша), diskos (Дискосъ), star (Звезда) and other items. With the help of Father Serafim Gan, Father James has now located a source & placed an order for these items, together with a gold altar cross, a baptismal set, & some other service items. God willing, these items should arrive soon.

PARISH NEWS: IN BRIEF

✱ We will be having another BESEDA, the first of what will hopefully become a regular parish activity. This one, as with the last, will be held at the home of Vic & Irene Krikunov at 16/21 Goonak Parade, Narara (tel:4329-6922). Date: THURSDAY February 20th at 7.00PM. Topic: GREAT LENT/Великий Пост. ✱ Our parish legal expert, Vassily (Bill) Reid has been in touch again with the solicitors representing the trustees for the Narara property. The trustees have yet to meet to consider our expression of interest, but hopefully - with the holiday period coming to an end - this meeting will take place soon. ✱ On Sunday March 2nd (Неделя Мясопустная - Meatfare Sunday), the ladies' committee will be preparing blini - pancakes. Please be sure to stay after the service to enjoy the food & support the ladies in their work. ✱ Bill Reid reports that he placed the Holy Water blessed on Theophany in the fridge at home. Without realising that it was Holy Water, his son Sebastian took the bottle with him to cricket last weekend &, having drunk most of the water, scored an amazing 99 runs not out! Strange but true...

CHURCH NEWS: CHURCH BUILT FOR RUSSIAN POLAR EXPLORERS WORKING IN ANTARCTICA

"Moscow, January 9, 2003 (RIA Novosti) - Gorno-Altaiisk, a town in Western Siberia, has built a church for Russian polar explorers working in Antarctica. In the next few months, the details of the church will be transported to the ice continent and erected at Bellinshausen station.

The idea to construct a temple for polar explorers was advanced by a resident of Gorno-Altaiisk. Russian explorers asked that the church be named after St. Nicholas the Wonder-Worker, the saint known in Russian Orthodox tradition as the protector of all travelers. Constructed to admit 25-30 people at a time, the church was built of Siberian cedar, a wood species known for its durability and frost-proof qualities. The iconostasis is being painted by artists from Palekh, a Central Russian village famous for its lacquered miniatures. The bells were ordered by descendants of the famous Russian Decembrist Muravyov-Apostol, who reside in Switzerland. In December 1825, the Decembrists organized an uprising against the tsar. The majority of the plotters were later exiled to Siberia."

Reprinted from the daily Orthodox & World News service of www.3saints.com, the website of the Russian Orthodox Church of "Three Saints" in NJ, USA

VLADIMIR OF KIEV TRIUMPHED OVER KARL MARX: RELIGIOUS REVIVAL IN EASTERN EUROPE

" In an article submitted to the London 'Tablet', Fr Andrew Greeley speaks of 'the dramatic revival of religion in Russia, now so obvious that no one can dispute it.' According to Fr Greeley, 'three out of five Russians say that they believe in God, a higher rate than in West Germany, the Netherlands, and the Scandinavian countries. Two out of five say that they didn't formerly believe in God but do now. 58% describe their religion as Orthodox, though only one out of ten were raised Orthodox. The majority of Russians want baptisms, weddings and funerals in church and agree that religion provides the moral basis for life and a support for family relationships.' (According to more recent statistics, about 70% of Russians describe themselves as Orthodox Christians).

Referring to the religious revival in Russia as 'perhaps the most dramatic in human history,' Fr Greeley states: 'Patently the millennium-long Russian religious heritage was too strong to be destroyed by seventy years of sometimes vicious but almost always inept Socialist oppression. [Prince] Vladimir of Kiev triumphed over Karl Marx.'

Similar, though more subtle, revival affects former socialist countries, such as Slovenia, Hungary, East Germany, Poland, the Czech Republic, Latvia, and Bulgaria. 'At a time when religious leaders in the West bemoan the loss of religious faith among the young,' writes Fr Greeley, 'the former socialist countries witness a dramatic rise of religious faith.'

A native of Chicago, Rev. Andrew M. Greeley is a priest and sociologist, Professor of Social Sciences at the University of Chicago and the University of Arizona. He is the author of 30

best-selling novels and an autobiography, 'Confessions of a Parish Priest.'

Reprinted from www.orthodoxeurope.org, the website of the Russian Orthodox Church (MP)
Representation to the European Institutions

THE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL ARE ASKED FOR:

The sick: Metropolitan Laurus, Metropolitan Vitaly, Archbishop Alypy, George, Seraphim

Expectant mothers: Victoria, Amy, Maria

Special needs: Katherine, David

Preparing for marriage: Peter & Svetlana, Daniel & Ioanna, Peter & Tatiana

GOSFORD SERVICES IN MARCH

2 March	Sunday	Meatfare Sunday Divine Liturgy	9.00 am
23 March	Sunday	2nd Sunday of Great Lent: Saint Gregory Palamas Divine Liturgy	9.00 am

OTHER IMPORTANT CHURCH DATES

15 February Сретение Господне
Presentation of the Lord

This is one of the 12 Great Feasts of our Holy Orthodox Church. A blessing of grapes & other fruit, & sometimes a blessing of candles, usually follows the Divine Liturgy on this day.

10 March Начало Великаго Поста
Beginning of Great Lent

NEWCASTLE SERVICES IN FEBRUARY

<http://www.rocor.org.au/stnicholaschurch/>

The following services have been scheduled for Saint Nicholas, Wallsend (Newcastle) in February. Father James will be serving at Newcastle on these days.

14th February	Friday	All-night vigil	6.00 pm
15th February	Saturday	PRESENTATION OF THE LORD Divine Liturgy, blessing of grapes and other fruits	9.00 am
22nd February	Saturday	All-night vigil	6.00 pm
23rd February	Sunday	Sunday of the Prodigal Son Divine Liturgy	9.00 am

Father James will be preparing this newsletter to coincide with each service at Gosford. Try and let him know at least a week in advance if there is anything that you would like included (prayer requests, news, announcements). You can call him on 02-9721-2659 or email him at fr.james.carles@rocor.org.au.