

ПАНТЕЛЕИМОНСКИЙ ЛИСТОК

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

~ Number 44, June 2005 ~

IN THIS ISSUE

Synod News ~ Epistles from the Synod of Bishops in Russian & English ~ Parish Council News ~
Successful Benefit Concert in May ~ Services in June & July ~ Raffle tickets
~ Holy Martyrs of China ~

СОСТОЯЛОСЬ ОЧЕРЕДНОЕ ЗАСЕДАНИЕ АРХИЕРЕЙСКОГО СИНОДА

В весенней сессии Архиерейского Синода, прошедшей в г. Мюнхене под председательством Высокопреосвященнейшего Митрополита Лавра, Первоиерарха Русской Зарубежной Церкви, приняли участие Преосвященнейшие Архиепископы Берлинский и Германский Марк и Сан-Францисский и Западно-Американский Кирилл, Епископы Вевейский Амвросий, Манхеттенский Гавриил, Бостонский Михаил и Штуттгартский Агапит. Очередное заседание было приурочено к великому освящению Николаевского придела кафедрального собора во имя святых Новомучеников и Исповедников Российских в том же городе. Весьма содержательные и радостные пасхальные песнопения и праздничная молитва святителю Николаю и святым Новомученикам Российским сопутствовали Преосвященным в их мирной и созидательной работе.

Заслушав доклад протоиерея Александра Лебедева, секретаря Комиссии по переговорам с Московским Патриархатом, Архиерейский Синод одобрил и утвердил документы, доработанные на последней совместной встрече церковных комиссий, состоявшейся 2-4 марта 2005 г. в окрестностях Парижа, и благословил их публикацию, поручив Преосвященнейшему Архиепископу Берлинскому и Германскому Марку, председателю Комиссии, согласовать с председателем встречной Комиссии Московского Патриархата точный день и час их публикации на официальных сайтах обеих частей Русской Церкви.

Протоиерей Петр Перекрестов, секретарь Предсоборной комиссии, готовящей IV Всезарубежный Собор, и священник Серафим Ган, член той же комиссии, представили материалы, выработанные на ее заседаниях. С большим вниманием выслушав их доклад, Архиерейский Синод постановил созвать IV Всезарубежный Собор, который пройдет с 6 по 14 мая 2006 г. в Сан-Франциско - городе, освященном подвигами будущего Всероссийского Патриарха-Исповедника Тихона и святителя Иоанна (Максимовича; + 1966 г.). В ближайшие недели будут опубликованы некоторые материалы Предсоборной комиссии, касающиеся порядка избрания и утверждения делегатов на предстоящий церковный Собор.

Ввиду того, что некоторая часть клира и паствы Русской Зарубежной Церкви выразила мнение, что не владеет достаточной информацией и нуждается в разъяснении недоуменных вопросов, связанных с последними событиями в жизни нашей Церкви, Архиерейский Синод решил направить одного члена Комиссии по переговорам с Московским Патриархатом и одного члена Предсоборной комиссии, сопровождающих

Коренно-Курскую икону Божией Матери, на все избирательные Епархиальные Собрания. Молитва у Курской Одигитрии и весьма подробный отчет о деятельности обеих комиссий будут способствовать более мирной, вдумчивой и плодотворной дискуссии среди клира и паствы Церкви.

Кроме вышеупомянутых докладов, были выслушаны сообщения Преосвященных о положении вещей в церковной жизни в разных епархиях, а также в Святой Земле, Бари и Оттаве; о принесении в Россию мощей святых преподобномучениц Княгини Елизаветы и инокини Варвары; вопросы хозяйственного характера; и ходатайства Преосвященных, представивших ряд клириков к церковным наградам.

ПОСЛАНИЕ АРХИЕРЕЙСКОГО СИНОДА РУССКОЙ ПРАВОСЛАВНОЙ ЦЕРКВИ ЗАГРАНИЦЕЙ

Возлюбленной о Господе пастве,

Архиерейский Синод, собравшийся под покровом собора святых Новомучеников Российских и святителя Николая Мирликийского чудотворца в г. Мюнхене, Германии, приветствует вас, верных чад Русской Зарубежной Церкви, радостным пасхальным приветствием - Христос воскрес!

В течение 85-летней истории Русской Зарубежной Церкви мы прошли через разные времена: времена радости и времена скорби, времена роста и времена численного сокращения, времена мирной церковной жизни и времена трудного стояния перед лицом враждебных Церкви сил, времена разделений и времена собирания. Во все эти времена наша Церковь не только стояла и не только существовала, но она живо реагировала на события, на вызовы, на окружающие ее перемены, всегда помня о главной задаче Церкви Христовой: спасении душ человеческих.

В настоящее время Господь поставил перед нами новые задачи: в России за последние 15 лет произошли огромные перемены; в мире быстрым темпом идет процесс глобализации; информационный век меняет не только способ общения людей друг с другом, но и самый характер общения; набирает силу отвержение божественного нравственного закона - под угрозой даже самое понятие о христианской семье. Вместе с тем, в нашей церковной жизни и в жизни Поместных Церквей изменились как состав прихожан, так и внутрицерковная динамика. В этих условиях мы обязаны не только дать оценку окружающей нас жизни, но и определить, как нам быть, как нам дальше жить и спастись. В свете многочисленных положительных перемен в церковной жизни России перед нами остро стоит и вопрос взаимоотношений между зарубежной частью Русской Церкви и Церковью в России. Этот вопрос всегда был животрепещущим для Русской Зарубежной Церкви, но сегодня назрела необходимость его конечного осмысления и разрешения.

Архиерейский Синод считает, что настало время для созыва IV Всезарубежного Собора Русской Православной Церкви за границей с участием духовенства и мирян, настало время для особого соборного сотрудничества и созидания. Созывается IV Всезарубежный Собор с 6 по 14 мая 2006 года, в знаменательный год 85-летия Первого Всезарубежного Собора,

при кафедральном соборе в честь иконы Божией Матери Всех Скорбящих Радости в Сан-Франциско - городе, освященном архипастырскими подвигами Святителя Тихона, в последствии Всероссийского Патриарха-Исповедника, и Святителя Иоанна, Чудотворца Шанхайского и Сан-Францисского, чьи нетленные мощи почивают в кафедральном соборе.

Для подготовки IV Всезарубежного Собора Архиерейским Синодом учреждена Предсоборная комиссия под председательством Архиепископа Сиднейского и Австралийско-Новозеландского Илариона.

Главные две темы предстоящего Всезарубежного Собора следующие:

1. Вопрос установления нормальных отношений между Церквами в России и за рубежом, и,
2. Миссия и служение Русской Зарубежной Церкви в современном мире.

В ближайшее время всем епархиальным Преосвященным будет разослан официальный Указ о созыве Собора и о порядке избрания делегатов на него. По ходу подготовки к Собору в церковной печати (виртуальной и периодической) будут опубликованы материалы, относящиеся к этому важному и ответственному церковному событию.

Архиерейский Синод призывает духовенство и паству Русской Православной Церкви за границей включиться в предсоборный процесс, в первую очередь усердной молитвой о благопоспешении предстоящего церковного Собора, дабы все решения были бы угодны Богу, во спасение душ человеческих и на пользу Русской Церкви.

Христос воскрес!

12/25 мая 2005 г.

Преполовление Пятидесятницы

A REGULAR SESSION OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS IS HELD

Participating in the spring session of the Synod of Bishops, held in Munich under the chairmanship of His Eminence Metropolitan Laurus, First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, were His Eminence Archbishop Mark of Berlin and Germany, His Eminence Archbishop Kyrill of San Francisco and Western America, His Grace Bishop Ambroise of Vevey, His Grace Bishop Gabriel of Manhattan, His Grace Bishop Michael of Boston and His Grace Bishop Agapit of Stuttgart. This regular session was timed to coincide with the great consecration of St Nicholas Chapel dedicated to the New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia in Munich. The rich and joyful Paschal songs and festive prayers to St Nicholas and the Holy New Martyrs of Russia helped the bishops in their peaceful and constructive work.

Hearing the report of Protopriest Alexander Lebedeff, Secretary of the Committee on discussions with the Moscow Patriarchate, the Synod of Bishops approved and confirmed the documents drafted at the last joint session of the church committees, held on March 2-4, 2005, in the outskirts of Paris, and blessed their publication, instructing His Eminence Archbishop Mark, President of the Committee, to coordinate with the corresponding Committee of the Moscow Patriarchate the exact date and time of their publication on the official sites of

the two parts of the Russian Church.

Protopriest Peter Perekrestov, Secretary of the Pre-Council Committee organizing the IV All-Diaspora Council (Sobor), and Priest Serafim Gan, a member of the same committee, presented materials prepared during its meetings. Carefully considering these reports, the Synod of Bishops decreed to convene the IV All-Diaspora Council on May 6-14, 2006, in San Francisco, a city illumined by the spiritual feats of the man who later became the Patriarch of All-Russia, Holy Martyr Patriarch Tikhon, and of St John (Maximovich, +1966). Some documents prepared by the Pre-Council Committee on the order of the election and confirmation of delegates to this ecclesiastical Council will be published in the coming weeks.

In light of the fact that some members of the clergy and flock of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia have expressed the opinion that they do not possess enough information and are in need of clarification of unanswered questions connected with the latest events in the life of our Church, the Synod of bishops decided to send one member of the Committee on discussions with the Moscow Patriarchate and one member of the Pre-Council Committee to accompany the Kursk-Root Icon of the Mother of God to all the electoral Diocesan Assemblies. Prayer before the Kursk-Root Icon and detailed reports on the activities of both committees will facilitate a more peaceful, thoughtful and fruitful discussion among the clergy and flock of the Church.

In addition to the subjects mentioned, the Synod heard reports by the bishops on the state of affairs in church life in various dioceses, in the Holy Land, Bari and Ottawa; on the visit to Russia of the relics of Holy Martyrs Elizaveta and Varvara; on administrative matters, and finally, requests by the bishops for ecclesiastical awards for their clergymen.

EPISTLE OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OUTSIDE OF RUSSIA

Beloved in the Lord Flock!

The Synod of Bishops, having gathered under the protection of the host of Holy New Martyrs of Russia and of St Nicholas the Wonderworker of Myra, in Munich, Germany, greets you all, the faithful children of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, with the joyful Paschal words: Christ is Risen!

Over the 85-year history of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, we have experienced various periods: times of joy and times of sorrow, times of growth and times when our numbers decreased; times of ecclesiastical peace and times of difficult forbearance in the face of forces hostile to the Church; times of division and times of coming together. During all these times, our Church not only survived and continued her existence, but actively reacted to events, to challenges, to the changes surrounding her, always remembering the main task of the Church of Christ: to save human souls.

At the present time, the Lord has placed the following goals before us: over the last 15 years, enormous changes have taken place in Russia; the process of globalization in the world is rapidly

moving forward; the age of information is not only changing the way that people interact with each other, but it is changing the very character of communication; the rejection of Divine moral law is gaining strength—the very concept of the Christian family is now threatened. At the same time, the ranks of parishioners have shifted in our church life and in the lives of the Local (National) Churches; changing also are intra-church dynamics. Under these circumstances we are obligated not only to evaluate life that surrounds us, but to determine what we should do, how we are to live and how we seek salvation. In light of the abundance of positive changes in church life in Russia, we are faced with the acute question of the relationship between the part of the Russian Church abroad and the Church in Russia. This question was always of vital importance for the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, but today it is necessary to comprehend and resolve this question.

The Synod of Bishops feels that the time has come to convene the IV All-Diaspora Council (Sobor) of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, with the participation of the clergy and laity, the time of special conciliar cooperation and constructiveness has come. The IV All-Diaspora is scheduled for May 6-14, 2006, on the significant 85th anniversary of the First All-Diaspora Council, to be held at the Cathedral of the Mother of God "Joy of All Who Sorrow" in San Francisco, a city illuminated by the spiritual labors (podvigi) of Bishop Tikhon, who later became Patriarch Tikhon of All-Russia the Confessor, and St John of Shanghai and San Francisco, whose incorruptible relics reside at the Cathedral.

A Pre-Council Committee has been established by the Synod of Bishops to prepare the IV All-Diaspora Council, under the chairmanship of His Eminence Archbishop Hilarion of Sydney and the Diocese of Australia and New Zealand.

The main questions to be considered by the All-Diaspora Council are:

1. The matter of establishing normal relations between the Churches in Russia and abroad, and
2. The missions and service of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia in the contemporary world.

In the near future, all diocesan bishops will receive an official Ukase on the Convening of the Council and on the process of the election of delegates. During the preparations for the Council, the ecclesiastical press (electronic and printed) will publish materials relating to this important and crucial church event.

The Synod of Bishops calls upon the clergymen and flock of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia to participate in the pre-Council process, first and foremost by praying fervently for the success of the forthcoming ecclesiastical Council, that all its decisions would be pleasing to God, towards the salvation of human souls and to the benefit of the Russian Church.

Christ is Risen!

May 12/25, 2005

Mid-Pentecost

SUCCESSFUL PARISH BENEFIT CONCERT ON MAY 29th

On Sunday May 29th a very successful benefit concert to assist our parish was held at the Russian Club in Strathfield. Organised by our choir director, Olga Ivanovna Itsikson, and by a friend of the parish, Mrs E. Yakupova, the concert programme included instrumental and vocal items, drama, dancing and comedy, with many talented children and adults from the broader Russian community contributing their time to assist our parish. The concert raised \$4300.50, of which \$3300 will go towards the mortgage. We are very grateful to Olga Ivanovna and Mrs Yakupova for their work in support of our parish, and to all who contributed in any way to make the day a success.

RAFFLE TICKETS NOW FOR SALE

The next major event in parish life will be our patronal feast of Saint Panteleimon. The feast itself falls this year on a Tuesday, August 9th. For the sake of our parishioners with work and school commitments and for the many guests who travel from Sydney and elsewhere, our main celebration will be on Sunday August 7th. As is usual, a raffle will be drawn at the festive lunch after the service. Our head sister Olga Petroff has acquired a number of lovely prizes and has also arranged for raffle tickets to be printed. Books of tickets are available to sell in the lead-up to the feast. The monies raised through the raffle greatly assist the work of the sisterhood and the needs of the parish, so please take a book to sell if you can.

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

The most recent Parish Council meeting was on June 14th 2005. At this meeting, the Parish Council considered notification from the Diocese of changes in candle prices and sizes; heard a report from Olga Petroff on the successful fundraising concert; resolved to write to the former Starosta, Alexander Yakimov, to thank him for his contribution to the new icon frame behind the proskomedia table in the altar; noted the new processional candles made and donated by Protodeacon Basil Hadarin; and viewed the new stationery designed by Strathfield parishioner Tamara Chernih. Father James reported briefly on the need for parish administrative practices to be consistent with Australian privacy legislation, and will present a draft policy at the next parish council meeting. The need for an inventory of parish property was discussed, and Father James reported that he had asked parish councilor Paul Pereboeff to assist in the design of a database to support this process. The Parish Council is due to meet next on Tuesday July 5th.

PARISH LIFE: SERVICES IN JUNE & JULY 2005

The last service in June after Pentecost is a relatively brief one, a moleben and akathist to the Holy New Martyrs of China. An article about these great saints is included elsewhere in this newsletter. In July we have 11 services, almost all of which commemorate saints of great significance: Saint John of Shanghai & San Francisco, All Saints of Russia, Saints Peter & Paul, the Holy Royal Martyrs of Russia, and Saint Seraphim of Sarov. Also commemorated is the wonder-working "Akhtyrskaya" Icon of the Mother of God, the original of which is kept in the Archbishop's Chapel at Croydon. Please try and make time for the inspiring and spiritually profitable services.

18 th June	Saturday	All-night vigil	6.00 pm
19 th June	Sunday	PENTECOST Divine Liturgy; Vespers with the kneeling prayers	9.00 am
23 rd June	Thursday	Moleben with akathist to the Chinese Martyrs	7.00 pm
24 th June	Friday	New Martyrs of China	
1 st July	Friday	Moleben with akathist to Saint John	7.00 pm
2 nd July	Saturday	Saint John of Shanghai & San Francisco Matins	6.00 pm
3 rd July	Sunday	All Saints of Russia Divine Liturgy	9.00 am
11 th July	Monday	All-night vigil	6.00 pm
12 th July	Tuesday	Saints Peter and Paul Divine Liturgy	9.00 am
14 th July	Thursday	Akathist to the Mother of God	7.00 pm
15 th July	Friday	"Akhtyrka" Icon of the Mother of God	
16 th July	Saturday	Matins	6.00 pm
17 th July	Sunday	Royal Martyrs of Russia Divine Liturgy	9.00 am
30 th July	Saturday	Matins	6.00 pm
31 st July	Sunday	Divine Liturgy Moleben with akathist to Saint Seraphim	9.00 am 6.00 pm
1 st August	Monday	Saint Seraphim of Sarov	

THE FIRST CHINESE ORTHODOX MARTYRS

On June 24th (June 11th on the Church calendar), the Orthodox Church remembers the first holy martyrs of China, killed during the Boxer Rebellion in 1900 because they were Christians.

Civilisation in China is very old and China developed quite differently to countries in the west. The beginnings of contact between Europeans and China were sometimes difficult because they thought about things differently. Sometimes Europeans brought good things to China, like the Holy Gospel, but sometimes they brought bad things, like the trade of drugs, especially opium. The Chinese tried hard to fight against the bad things, but the Europeans were much stronger. Because of this, many Chinese didn't like the Europeans and wished that they would go away.

In 1898 and 1899 the Chinese Empress told many of her subjects to try and throw out the Europeans and their religion. This became known as the "Boxer rebellion". The Europeans called the rebels "Boxers" because they did martial arts. These "Boxers" even began to bully & torture Chinese people who were Christians to make them stop being Christians.

In the capital city, Peking (Beijing), there were many Chinese who had become Orthodox Christians. Some families had been Orthodox Christian for over 200 years. On June 24th & 25th (11th & 12th on the Church calendar), the Boxer rebels attacked a lot of the Christian houses and began to torture

the people living there. A lot of them were scared and agreed to burn incense in front of the false Chinese gods, but 222 of them remained faithful to Christ.

The suffering of the martyrs was terrible, just as in Roman times. Even children were killed for being Christian!

One of the martyrs was a priest, Father Mitrophan Tsi-Chung. He was only 45 years old when he suffered for Christ. His father had died when he was a small boy, and his mother & grandmother had looked after him. He was a good and quiet boy. The Russian priests there helped to teach him and prepared him for the priesthood. When he was 25, he was made a priest by the holy Bishop, Saint Nicholas of Japan. He served faithfully as a priest for 15 years, and was badly treated by many people, but never complained.

When the rebellion started, many people came to Father Mitrophan's home, even those who had once treated him badly. He was kind to them all and did his best to comfort them. The Boxers attacked his home and killed him, his matushka Tatiana, and 2 of his sons, Isaiah and Ioann. Isaiah was 23 years old and engaged to be married, but Ioann was only 7 years old. When Ioann was tortured he said, "It is not hard to suffer for Christ". Isaiah's fiance, Maria, who was only 19 years old, was also very brave, and helped save many others before she herself was killed.

The Boxers were eventually defeated with help from Russian and Australian soldiers. Soon after the martyrdom of these saints, a church was built on the very place that they suffered for Christ. Father Mitrophan was buried underneath the altar.

In 1997 these saints were glorified by the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia. The main service of glorification was held in Cabramatta, Australia, because of the great number of Chinese Orthodox living in the area. How important it is, then, that we in Australia remember these saints!

In 1949, communists took control of China, just as they had earlier taken over Russia. Many more Christians were killed or suffered for their faith. One Christian who suffered greatly was Father Michael Li, a priest who now lives in Cabramatta. The communists took all his books and vestments and stopped him from serving the Church. He was made to do hard labour for many years.

There are still Orthodox Christians living in China today, but they don't have even one priest to look after them, and most of their churches were closed by the communists. They have to wait until a priest from overseas is able to visit them before they can get married, baptise their children, or receive Holy Communion. If someone dies, they have to ring a priest overseas and ask him to say the funeral service. Our Church often collects money to help the Chinese Orthodox Christians, so give what you can. Perhaps some of our children will one day go there as missionaries. Whatever God's will may be, each day ask the Holy Chinese Martyrs to pray for you, the Chinese Orthodox Christians, and the whole Orthodox Church.

Our parish newsletter will be published to coincide with the first Sunday service of each month. If you wish to receive it by post or email, please talk to Father James (0428-639156) or Katya Marcotrigiano, the parish secretary (4369-1765). Information and prayer requests for inclusion in the newsletter can be given to Father James or emailed to info@gosfordrussianchurch.org.