



# St. Xenia Parish News

170 North Lowell Street, Methuen, MA 01844

July - August 2017

## The Restoration of the Orthodox Way of Life

*by Archbishop Andrew of New-Diveyevo †*

In recent years Archbishop Andrew, founder of New-Diveyevo Convent in Spring Valley, New York, where the memory of St. Seraphim is sacredly kept, has deservedly been given much honor, especially in 1971 on the 50th anniversary of his ordination as a priest, and in 1973 on his 80th birthday, when he was elevated to the rank of Archbishop. Many came to him just to receive his blessing, knowing of him as a kind of "last Russian Orthodox Elder," and hoping to obtain through him some contact with the genuine tradition of Orthodox spirituality which is fast dying out today. And to be sure, he was a living link with the Holy Fathers in a literal sense, for he was a disciple of the last two Optina Elders, Anatole and Nectarius, and it was under his epitrachilion that the last Elder, Nectarius, died in 1928. But it is not for this that he is most important to us today; it is rather for his teaching, received from these holy Elders, on how to survive as an Orthodox Christian in the anti-Christian 20th century.

This teaching, while solidly Patristic, is not a teaching from books, but from life. The four excerpts from his writings that are presented below tell the main events of his life, which is one of great trials and sufferings, taking place in conditions of revolution, anarchy, arrests, catacomb services, exile, bombings, evacuations. But in these sufferings alone—as helpful as they are to spiritual life—is not to be found the key to his teaching; others have suffered similar trials fruitlessly. In every place where historical circumstances have driven him—Kiev, Berlin, Wendlingen, New York State—a close-knit Orthodox community has formed around him; and this is closer to a key to understanding his teaching. Such communities, rare today among Orthodox Christians, do not

arise spontaneously, but only in especially favorable circumstances, if there is present a conscious Orthodox philosophy of life. This conscious Patristic philosophy is what, most of all, we can learn from Archbishop Andrew. Let us try to set down here the main points of this philosophy—which, of course, is not a "systematic" philosophy based on abstractions, but a living philosophy derived from Orthodox spiritual experience.

First, Orthodoxy is not merely a ritual, or belief, or pattern of behavior, or anything else that a man may possess, thinking that he is thereby a Christian, and still be spiritually dead; it is rather an elemental reality or power which transforms a man and gives him the strength to live in the most difficult and tormenting conditions, and prepares him to depart with peace into eternal life.

Second, the essence of the true Orthodox life is godliness or piety which is, in the definition of Elder Nectarius, based on the etymology of the word, "holding what is God's in honor." This is deeper than mere right doctrine; it is the entrance of God into every aspect of life, life lived in trembling and fear of God.

Third, such an attitude produces the Orthodox Way of Life which is not merely the outward customs or behavior that characterize Orthodox Christians, but the whole of the conscious struggle of the man for whom the Church and its laws are the center of everything he does and thinks. The shared, conscious experience of this way of life, centered on the daily Divine services, produces the genuine Orthodox community, with its feeling of lightness, joy, and inward quietness. Non-Orthodox people, and even many not fully conscious Orthodox Christians, are scarcely able to imagine what this experience of community might

be, and would be inclined to dismiss it as something "subjective"; but no one who has wholeheartedly participated in the life of a true Orthodox community, monastic or lay, will ever doubt the reality of this Orthodox feeling. When Archbishop Andrew tells of his lifelong—and successful—search to find and even create the lost "quietness" of his Orthodox childhood, he expresses the desire of everyone who has drunk deeply of Holy Orthodoxy to find the place, create the conditions, and acquire the state of soul wherein to live the full and authentic Orthodox life, one in mind and soul with other similar strugglers. Even if this ideal is seldom attained in practice, it still remains the Orthodox ideal.

Fourth, without a constant and conscious spiritual struggle even the best Orthodox life or community can become a "hothouse," an artificial Orthodox atmosphere in which the outward manifestations of Orthodox life are merely "enjoyed" or taken for granted, while the soul remains unchanged, being relaxed and comfortable instead of tense in the struggle for salvation. How often a community, when it becomes prosperous and renowned, loses the precious fervor and oneness of soul of its early days of hard struggles! There is no "formula" for the truly God-pleasing Orthodox life; anything outward can become a counterfeit; everything depends on the state of the soul, which must be trembling before God, having the law of God before it in every area of life, every moment keeping what is God's in honor, in the first place in life.

Fifth, the greatest danger to the Orthodox way of life in modern times is what Archbishop Andrew calls "humanism"—a general term encompassing the whole vast intellectual (and now also political) movement which has as its ultimate aim to destroy Christianity and replace it with a this-worldly, rationalistic philosophy in which man, in

effect, becomes a god unto himself. The manifestations of humanism are many, from the Renaissance in the West and the heresy of the Judaizers in Russia in the 15th century and before, through the brazen atheism and Revolution of the 18th century, to Communism and every other philosophy in our own day which places the ultimate value in this world and leads men away from God. Humanism takes possession of men in various ways, not usually by a conscious intellectual conversion to it, but more often by laxness and unawareness in spiritual life. The Orthodox answer to this danger—whose ultimate end is the reign of Antichrist—is a conscious Orthodox philosophy of life.

This teaching is profound, and few perhaps are they who are capable of following it to its end; this living link with a time and a tradition much richer than our own is no longer with us in the flesh. But his teaching must not die with him. By God's Providence, the celebrated writer Solzhenitsyn came this year to New-Diveyevo, and Archbishop Andrew took advantage of this opportunity to communicate this teaching, even if in the briefest form, to him, a typical example of the awakening—but still unformed—religious consciousness in Russia today. But this teaching is not only for Russians, who either have known Orthodoxy thoroughly incarnated in life, or else (like Solzhenitsyn) are drawn by their blood with longing for something their ancestors had; it is the teaching of life for all conscious Orthodox Christians.

Let those who deeply love and treasure Orthodoxy now take this teaching and—even as Archbishop Andrew did with the teaching of his beloved St. Tikhon—live by it, and thereby regain and restore even in our barbarous and anti-Christian times, the Orthodox Way of Life.

St. Xenia of St. Petersburg Orthodox Church is a parish of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, under the omophorion of Met. HILARION of Eastern America & New York. The parish newsletter is published bi-monthly under the direction of the Rev. Michael Crowley. In order to ensure timely delivery to our far-flung parish, please submit all notices by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to publication to Father Michael at [frmichael@stxenia.org](mailto:frmichael@stxenia.org). Thank you.

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Confessions on Saturday during Vigil, on Sunday during the Hours, and by appointment.

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**Trapeza Schedule**

\* = strict fast

If you cannot be at church on your assigned Sunday, please contact someone directly to switch. If you are not on this list and would like to help, please add your name on the hard copy posted in the church hall and you will be added for the next round. If you have any questions, contact Judy Engalichev -- [dujy-kot@comcast.net](mailto:dujy-kot@comcast.net).

Trapeza can be whatever you would like to prepare, anything is appreciated. **Note: If you are preparing anything containing nuts or other allergens, please put a small label to that effect in front of your dish. Nut allergies are especially fatal to small children.**

**A note about Trapeza etiquette:** Standing, even for short periods of time, is often extremely difficult for older people and expectant mothers. It would be an act of Christian charity to allow them to collect their meal first and to be seated. It should go without saying that this courtesy should also be extended to visiting clergy.

**JULY**

\*July 2 – Potluck – Fast Day, Fish allowed  
\*July 9 – Potluck – Fast Day, Fish allowed  
July 16 - Potluck  
July 23 – Potluck  
July 30 – Potluck

**AUGUST**

Aug 6 – Potluck  
Aug 13 – Potluck  
\*Aug 20 – Potluck – Fast Day, Wine & Oil allowed  
\*Aug 27 – Potluck – Fast Day, Wine & Oil allowed

During the summer months, we still need to regularly clean the Church and the basement.



Posted on the bulletin board near the entrance to the Naïve will be a list of the things that need cleaning. Please consider signing up for a task. It won't take long to do and the more people helping, the easier it is for all! Thank you in advance.

## Sisterhood News --

### Please Remember in Your Prayers --

Athanasia Tamvlakis, Peter Danas, Dimitry Emelianoff, and Masha Harris.

Also, please be sure to inform the Sisterhood if someone is in the hospital or shut in at home.

**Congratulations --** To Meghan and David Nettleton and family on the birth of their baby boy, Thomas, on June 30, 2017!

## St. John of Damascus Church School News --

We had a very successful VCS and learned all about the First Ecumenical Council. Thank you to Alexandra and all the teachers! We had somewhere in the vicinity of 35 students.

## Choir News --

If you have a private service - wedding, baptism, funeral, etc. - and would like to have choir singers, please contact Laryssa directly at [stxeniachoir@gmail.com](mailto:stxeniachoir@gmail.com).

If you are interested in singing in the choir, please see Laryssa Doohovskoy.

## From the Synod website --

PRIEST GEORGE TEMIDIS:

*"I Always Feel Russian, Wherever I Am"*

Tatiana Veselkina

*A computer security expert working for IBM, and Deputy Rector of Nativity of the Mother of God Stavropighial Church in Mahopac, NY, which in the 1950's became a home of the Kursk Root Icon of*

*the Mother of God "of the Sign," Fr George Temidis was born in Long Island, NY. He was reared in Sea Cliff and attended the Russian school of St Seraphim Parish, which later became a memorial church to the reconciliation of the Russian Orthodox Church. He served as an acolyte at Intercession Church in Glen Cove, the rector of which at the time was the future Bishop Konstantin (Esensky). When "Yura" started kindergarten, he knew only three phrases in English, which was not rare for the families of Russian emigres, who tried to delay the assimilation of their children. Even today you will find Americans who speak flawless Russian. Long Island was home to one of the many post-WWII Russian communities which pooled their money to build their own modest churches in neighborhoods with large mansions.*

*Fr George: All of my ancestors were Russian, my maternal grandfather, Dmitry Alexandrovich Potemkin, was born in the city of Orel and hails from the historical figure Prince Gregory Alexandrovich Potemkin, who built the Black Sea Fleet.*



Before the 1917 Revolution, my grandfather studied at Sumsk Cadet Corps. When they closed the school, the graduates refused to leave. [Red Army] soldiers were sent there. My grandfather and his friend salvaged the Sumsk Regiment banner, which had been given to the school by Emperor Nicholas II. The banner was sown into my grandfather's shirt, which he was then able to smuggle to Yugoslavia, then America. It is now found at the Synodal Cathedral of Our Lady "of the Sign" in New York. It is the only such banner they have which can even now be opened without crumbling.

The last year of his studies was completed at the cadet academy in Yugoslavia. There he met my grandmother, Irina Lvovna Peiker. She also had an interesting ancestry; she was born in St Petersburg, her great-grandfather, Prince Alexei Feodorovich Lvov, composed the hymn "God Save the Tsar." They say that in 1833, he accompanied Tsar Nicho-

las I on a visit to Austria and Prussia, where the Emperor was met by orchestras playing an English march. Upon returning, the Emperor instructed Lvov, who was a musician, to write a new hymn. Lvov wrote the music, Vasily Andreevich Zhukovsky wrote the words, and it was first performed in December 1833 as "The Prayer of the Russian Nation," and from December 31 of that year, it became the official national anthem of the Russian Empire until the February Revolution of 1917, and known subsequently as "God Save the Tsar."

Another ancestor on my grandmother's side was the Swede Sabelius (Sven) Wachsel, who served under Peter I. He participated in the Second Kamchatka Expedition of 1733-1744, and reached what was later to become America's Alaska. On the journey back he took over the helm from the late Commander Bering. The ship capsized and they had to spend a cold winter on a mountainous island, after which they rebuilt a ship from the wreckage and returned to Russia.

*TV:* I see there are quite a few famous people in your family...

*FG:* We put together our family tree and found two Byzantine Emperors among our ancestors: John VI Cantacuzene and Matthew-Asen Cantacuzene of the 14th century.

Not long before World War II, my grandfather, who held two doctorates in engineering, moved from Yugoslavia to Germany. After the war, Allied military officers who admired the Russian people warned him that they would be repatriated to the USSR. His family then fled to Brazil, where they lived for 13 years, and in 1957 moved to America. So my mother, who was born in Yugoslavia, found herself in NY.

My father, Gabriel Georgievich, was born in Gelendzhik, on the Black Sea. His father was of Greek birth. He lived near Odessa, and was in the sparkling-wine business in the Black Sea region. In 1930's, he was arrested, and died in prison. Papa was only seven years old then. In 1940, his relatives in Greece provided documentation which he used to emigrate. He lived in Athens until the age of 18, then moved to America.

My parents met in New York, at the Synod residence, where they were to marry later, in 1960. I have two brothers; I am the eldest, by brother Protodeacon Dimitry serves in Holy Virgin Protection

Church in Nyack, NY, and youngest brother Andre is the Warden at Intercession Church in Glen Cove.

We were always close to the Church. Our parish priest, Fr Manuel Esensky, taught us how to serve as altar boys. I wasn't even five years old when I got the blessing to serve as an acolyte. It was Paschal vespers on Sunday. Our church had a large icon of St Panteleimon the Healer containing his relics. Under the icon were two small steps where my brother and I often sat during the reading of the Epistles and Gospel. But that day I was already serving as an altar boy; when they started reading the Gospel, I stood holding a candle, which seemed very heavy and kept swaying. One old man came up behind me and started to hold the top of the candle steady, unbeknownst to me. Then I saw my brother sitting on the steps, and since I was bored, I let go of the candle, and was surprised to see that it didn't fall, so I thought "Why am I holding it?" and went to sit down next to my brother.

I served in the altar until the age of 17. Then I left for college, majored in information technology, and got a job at IBM, where I've been working now for 31 years in global computer security, doing analysis and planning. It's a fascinating career.

*TV:* What has that job given you, personally?

*FG:* I need to think things through and analyze problems. I often need to make prognoses on the direction of computer technology.

I used to work in the headquarters in New York, but now I work from home, as do about 40% of our employees. It really suits me as a priest. I can perform a moleben service, and a few minutes later, I'm at my desk working again. If I need to administer the Holy Gifts, I can do it and then come home and work. I have six weeks of vacation, which I use at my discretion: I can serve on the Twelve Great Feasts, and I have plenty of other off days I can use for my ministry.

*TV:* There has been a lot of discussion in Russia lately about priests working at civil jobs. You were ordained to the priesthood and continue to work...

*FG:* In the diaspora, a priest not having a second job is the exception. Working priests, and especially working deacons, are a reality in our Church, and it helps the parish, which doesn't have to support the clergyman's family, for example, I need health insurance, a salary... On the contrary, I have a good enough salary that I can contribute to my own par-

ish. This frees up our parish's finances. We are now renovating the New Kursk-Root Hermitage in Mahopac, NY, which in the 1990's and 2000's fell into disrepair. Had our parish needed to support a priest, we probably wouldn't have been able to do it. Now everything that we raise can go towards renovation and other parish needs. We put a new roof on the church building, replaced the windows, cleaned the altar frescoes, and renovated and re-consecrated the Chapel of the "Passion" Icon of the Mother of God near the pond. Now we're about to replace the bell tower. This is the way parish life is in the diaspora; we couldn't do it any other way.

*TV: The New Kursk-Root Hermitage was set up as the new home for the Kursk-Root Icon of the Mother of God "of the Sign," which was brought from Europe...*

Our community was the first "Home of the Mother of God of Kursk," when she arrived in America. As of 1950 it was the estate of Prince Beloselsky-Belozersky, and he donated it to the Church to be the home of the Synod of Bishops and of the miracle-working icon.

Bishop Seraphim (Ivanov, +1987), was appointed to build it and be the prior of the monastic community—he later became the Archbishop of Chicago and Detroit. He was originally from the city of Kursk. He proposed calling it the "New Kursk-Root Hermitage" in honor of the original monastery in Russia, which had been destroyed. It marked the site of the finding of the icon in the year 1295.

The estate had suffered from a fire; a Russian engineer by the name of Vishnevsky not only renovated it, but added a chapel to the main house. He didn't waste any time; he would visit all of his friends with a painted copy of the Kursk-Root Icon and collected whatever donations he could. This miracle-working copy, painted in Geneva with the blessing of Metropolitan Anastassy, was brought to the New Kursk-Root Hermitage. Vladyka Seraphim also visited parishes in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The first miracle that occurred from the copy of the icon was recorded in Lakewood, NJ; a woman who suffered for many years from internal bleeding was healed after fervent prayer before this icon.

A month after the first Divine Liturgy was performed, the bishop began to build a permanent church. By this time, the Hermitage attracted two hieromonks: Adam and Viktorin. Fr Viktorin's father, Sergei Nikiforovich Lyabakh, was a jack of all trades, and set up the first church in five months. It

was consecrated in honor of the Nativity of the Most-Holy Mother of God on November 19, 1950, five days before the arrival of Metropolitan Anastassy. It was actually the very same Sergei Nikiforovich who years later held the candle over my head.

As in the original Kursk-Root Hermitage, a place was set up on the left side of the church for the Kursk-Root Icon, which was to arrive from Germany in early February.

The icon spent three days in the New Kursk-Root Hermitage before departing for a tour of Russian parishes in the United States.

The first year and a half in America, the icon was usually housed in our church, but with time it began to spend more and more time in New York City. In fact, it was becoming increasingly difficult for the Synod to be based far from the city, so in 1951, Prince Beloselsky-Belozersky gave the Synod a building on West 77th Street in Manhattan, and in 1959, the Synod moved to one of the best neighborhoods in Manhattan, East 93rd Street on the Upper East Side. Soon thereafter, the icon would be taken to Orthodox Christians on other continents.

*TV: And so the Hermitage fell to disrepair?*

*FG:* By the mid-1980's, there were almost no monks left there. Divine services continued to be held there, but time took its toll: first the roof leaked, then the ceiling began to crumble, the heating system had problems. In the early 2000's, I remember that Metropolitan Laurus said that a monastery without monks is not a monastery, and it was time to establish a parish there. In 2004, he gave his blessing. I was elected parish warden, and we started renovation work. It was very difficult, and at times we thought that all our efforts were for naught. One winter we held services without heat in the church. But every time, some help would come, our hopes were bolstered, and we continued to work. This was often right after the Kursk-Root Icon came to visit. We would carry the icon throughout the territory and return to work.

*TV: Fr George, who are your parishioners?*

*FG:* At first, most of our parishioners were from the old emigration, but now, more than half are people who came from Russia, Ukraine, Georgia and other countries. More than 80% of our parishioners speak Russian. There are a few families that don't speak

Russian but still attend our services, so we serve in Church Slavonic, but the Epistle and Gospel are read in English. Many people come from afar, driving an hour or more. The parish is growing, however. There are about 65 people on average at Sunday Liturgy, over 50 partake of the Holy Gifts.

*TV: How did you come to New Kursk-Root Hermitage, was it closer to your childhood parish?*

– It was 20 years ago, after I got married. My wife Liza was born in St Petersburg, Russia, and came to America to study, and came to the Church here, started to attend Holy Virgin Protection Church in Nyack, NY.

Actually, we have another family connection with the New Kursk-Root Hermitage in Mahopac. My paternal grandmother, Marfa Gavriilovna, worked at the Synod as a cook for Metropolitan Philaret (Voznesensky). During the summer, Vladyka Philaret spent a lot of time in Mahopac, and she would go there with him. My parents would take my brother and me to visit her there every other Sunday.

In 1967, a new bishop came to Mahopac, the recently-consecrated Bishop Laurus (Skurla). During one of our visits, my grandmother asked Vladyka Laurus to watch us while she went to the supermarket. Vladyka Laurus “babysat” us (I was 6, my brother 4), and even played soccer with us in the meadow near the church. When Metropolitan Hilarion decided to ordain me to the priesthood, he did it on the feast day of the Nativity of the Mother of God in Mahopac in the presence of the Kursk-Root Icon.

*TV: What icon do you put in the traditional place of the Kursk Icon in your church? –*

*FG:* We have the main painted copy of the Kursk Icon in our church, which by the blessing of the second Primate of the Church Abroad, Metropolitan Anastassy (Gribanovsky), was painted by the renowned icon-painter Archimandrite Kyprian (Pyzhov). He made an exact copy of the original, and even prepared the wood panel to look like it. The story goes that when Fr Kyprian showed Vladyka Anastassy the two icons, the Metropolitan was alarmed, because they looked identical! So they cut out a little rectangle from the copy, took a splinter from the original and sealed it in with wax.

*TV: So if you remove the rizas [ornamented covers], you couldn't tell the difference?*

*FG:* We never remove the riza, which is a very simple one on the copy: it is made of thin metal and attached with brads. The riza looks like the original but without the enamel and precious stones.

*TV: Fr George, you have served at the altar for almost two years. Who decided to ordain you, and what traditions do you try to maintain?*

*FG:* I always felt that the priesthood awaited me, ever since childhood, but I tried with all my might to delay it...

As our parish warden, I wanted to study church tradition purely from an academic point of view, and with the blessing of Metropolitan Hilarion, I enrolled in the Chicago Pastoral School in 2011. I've known Vladyka Metropolitan since I was 17, when I would go to confession to him in Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville.

I started my studies on September 18, and on the 25th, Vladyka Metropolitan ordained me to the diaconate. Four years later I was ordained to the priesthood.

Our parish has a very familial atmosphere. After every Liturgy we have a trapeza pot-luck luncheon, free of charge. People of various ages socialize, parishioners and visitors. On Pascha, after midnight services, we all stay to celebrate and only go home at about 4-5 am. Everyone is on a first-name basis, our families are friendly, we work together for the church, we gather for Bible study, namesdays, birthdays, our children grow up together. We share both sorrows and joys.

*TV: In Russia these days we hear a lot about “burnout,” the professional exhaustion some priests experience. As a working priest, do you think it's possible to avoid this, have you experienced it?*

– It's probably too early for me after only two years, but I can understand how these priests and their families feel. It's different in the diaspora: our priests and their families all know and support each other. I've been to churches in Moscow and St Petersburg, but I haven't gotten to know parish life there.

We have direct access to our bishops and Metropolitan: at any time, they will speak to you and give you advice. I think this helps against “burnout.” I am sure that most of the bishops in Russia have many more clergymen under them, so priests need to help each other.

*TV: You just said that you've been to Russia. Do you feel Russian when you're there?*

*FG:* Of course. I always feel Russian, wherever I am. When I started kindergarten in America, I only spoke three phrases in English, so when I visit Russia, I feel at home.

The first time I went there on a business trip, in 2007 (three weeks after the reconciliation): I attended a conference as an interpreter for the president of IBM. It took place in St Petersburg, and afterwards I spent a few days in Moscow.

My second visit was in 2009; a committee set up to help restore the original Kursk-Root Hermitage in Russia invited me to represent my parish, so I was able to visit Kursk as well.

The third time, in 2016, we went with our kids: 17-year-old John and 13-year-old Alexey. I found it interesting how they felt there; they both liked it a great deal, and they, too, felt Russian. They speak, read and write fluent Russian.

John was born with hemophilia, and by the time we were expecting our second son, we came to pray to Tsarevich Alexey, who became a sort of heavenly patron of our family. There was a 50% chance that our second son would also be a hemophiliac.

*TV: This year marks 10 years since the reconciliation within the Russian Orthodox Church. When you first heard of talk regarding possible unification, what was your reaction? Which side did you take? What about your friends and family?*

*FG:* In 2006, I was a delegate to the IV All-Diaspora Council in San Francisco, when we voted for reunification. Then I was still a layperson, and I was greatly impressed by the effect of the Holy Spirit on the Council. I then told my wife over the phone that if we had to vote over such a trifle as when to have lunch, we would all die of starvation, that's how bad the differences of opinion were.

For me personally, the path towards reunification was long and difficult. In 2003, when our clergymen gathered in Nyack, I carefully followed the proceedings and thought that too many people of the older generation, my parents included, were not ready for it, and that the rapprochement was taking place faster than they could absorb. I thought they needed more time. I was very afraid of a schism and for that reason, I headed to the Council prepared to vote against reunification.

But everything changed. At the beginning of Great Lent in 2006, Metropolitan Laurus, with whom I had a close relationship, and who was close to my father, appealed in his Lenten Epistle for people to pray fervently for the upcoming Church Council and for its participants. I decided that I would commit to partaking of Holy Communion every Sunday before the Council. At the time, there was a great deal of debate, and it was hard to imagine what the Council would decide.

It was not we, the delegates at the Council, sinners all, who made the decision, but the Holy Spirit. At the Council itself, everything started to change direction. After we all sang an akathist together, the mood eased. I remember how the members of one of the committees (either the recording committee or the draft-resolution committee, I don't remember which), finished their work very late and decided to go upstairs to the cathedral. They opened the reliquary of St John of Shanghai and San Francisco and put their draft on his relics, then performed a moleben, commemorating every delegate by name.

When deliberation on the text began, the atmosphere was transformed. Everyone worked together, suggesting alternate wording, proposing to delete certain things, and very gradually, a concordance was reached. We were all surprised how few "opponents" remained during the vote. I was left with the impression that it wasn't us sinners, the delegates, who made the decision, but that the Holy Spirit directed us.

After the Council, over the year that followed before reunification, I spoke to many people about the Council in great detail, sharing my notes and documents. With time, my parents and many others I knew calmly accepted the decision of the All-Diaspora Council.

*TV: Fr George, you make prognoses about computer technology as part of your job. What prognosis would you make about the Russian Church Abroad?*

*FG:* I don't think we can predict the future of our Church Abroad. This is beyond our competency. We must continue to apply all our powers to benefit the Church: rear our youth, educate our flock, bring people closer to the Church, establish a beneficial environment in our parishes, to draw people closer to the Church and to God, to edify them in faith. This all depends on God and His mercy.



## Diocese News --

### The Holy Apostle Jude (*commemorated*

#### Jordanville, NY: Lectures in Orthodox Church History & Canon Law being offered by Deacon Andrei Psarev

Deacon Andrei Psarev, teacher at Holy Trinity Seminary in Jordanville, NY since 1995, is offering a subscription to his lectures: "History of the Russian Church Abroad," "History of the Russian Church," "Canon Law," and "History of the Byzantine Empire."

Fr. Andrei has a Master's Degree in Theology and is a PhD candidate at Queen's University in Belfast, Northern Ireland. He is the founder and the editor of [www.RocorStudies.org](http://www.RocorStudies.org).

Subscription to his courses is available here: [www.patreon.com/rocorstudies](http://www.patreon.com/rocorstudies).

*July 2/June 19*) among the rank of the Twelve Disciples of Christ, is descended from the lineage of King David and Solomon, and was the son of Righteous Joseph the Affianced from his first wife.

The Holy Apostle John the Theologian writes in his Gospel: "For none of his brethren believe on Him" (John 7: 5). Sainted Theophilact, Archbishop of Bulgaria, explains these words thus: at the beginning of the worldly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ – the sons of Joseph, among whose number was Jude, did not believe in His Divine essence. The tradition relates that when Righteous Joseph the Affianced, having returned from Egypt, began to divide among his sons the worldly things belonging to him, he wanted to allot part also to Christ the Saviour, born miraculously and incorruptibly from the All-Pure Virgin Mary. The brothers were opposed to this and only the eldest of them, James, accepted Christ Jesus in a joint ownership of his allotment, and for this he was termed Brother of the Lord. Later on Jude believed in Christ the Saviour as the awaited Messiah, and with all his heart he turned to Him and was chosen by Him into the number of the closest 12 disciples. But mindful of his sin, the Apostle Jude considered himself unworthy to be termed a brother with God and in his own soborno-catholic Epistle he calls himself merely the brother of James.

The Holy Apostle Jude also had other names: the Evangelist Matthew terms him "Levi, nicknamed Thaddeus" (Mt. 10, 3). The Holy Evangelist Mark also

calls him Thaddeus (Mk. 3, 18), and in the Acts of the Holy Apostles he is mentioned under the name Barsaba (Acts 15, 22). This was customary at that time.

After the Ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Apostle Jude set off preaching the Gospel. He propagated the faith in Christ at first in Judea, Galilee, Samaria and Idumeia, and later -- in the lands of Arabia, Syria and Mesopotamia, and finally he went to the city of Edessa. Here he finished that which was not completed by his predecessor, the disciple from the 70 -- Thaddeus. There is preserved an account, that the Holy Apostle Jude went preaching to Persia and from there wrote in the Greek language his soborno-catholic Epistle, in the brief wording of which consisted much profound truth. It contained dogmatic teaching about the Holy Trinity, about the Incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ, about the separation of Angels good and bad, and about the Dread Last-Judgement. In its moral content the Apostle urges believers to guard themselves against fleshly impurity, to be diligent in their obligations in prayer, faith and love, to convert the lost to the way of salvation, and to guard themselves from the teachings of heretics. The Apostle Jude taught that faith alone in Christ is not sufficient, good works also are necessary, the evidence to Christian teaching.

The Holy Apostle Jude died a martyr about the year 80 in Armenia in the city of Arata, where he was crucified on a cross and pierced by arrows.

### Uncovering of the Relics of the Monk Seraphim, Wonderworker of Sarov:

*(commemorated Aug 1/July 19)* At the beginning of the last century (i.e. the 1800's) a new bright taper blazed upon the candle-tiara of the Russian Orthodox Church. The Lord deigned to send to us on earth a great man of prayer, an ascetic and wonder-worker.

In 1903 occurred the glorification of the Monk Seraphim of Sarov, 70 years after his repose (the Vita (Life) of the saint is located under 2 January, the day of his repose). On 19 July, the birthday of the saint, his relics were opened with great solemnity and placed in a prepared reliquary. The long awaited event was accompanied by numerous miraculous healings of the sick, who in large number had gathered at Sarov. Very widely esteemed while yet alive, the Monk Seraphim became one of the most beloved saints of the Russian Orthodox nation, indeed like the Monk Sergei of Radonezh.

The spiritual path of the Monk Seraphim was marked by great modesty, inherent to the Russian saint. From childhood having been chosen by God, the

Sarovsk ascetic without hesitation or misgiving ascended from strength to strength in his striving for spiritual perfection. Eight years of novitiate tasks and eight years of temple service in the dignity of deacon and priestmonk, wilderness-dwelling and pillar-dwelling, hermitage and solitude followed upon each other and crown his eldership. His deeds, by far exceeding natural human abilities (for example, the prayer upon the stone for a thousand days and nights), harmoniously and readily enter into the life of the saint.

The mystery of a living and prayerful communality defines the spiritual legacy of the Monk Seraphim, but he left to the Church still another precious thing -- a short but fine directive, written in part by himself, and in parts by those listening to him. Shortly before the glorification of the saint there was found and printed in 1903 his "Conversation of the Monk Seraphim of Sarov, Concerning the Goal of Christian Life", compiled at the end of November 1831, roughly a year before his repose. This conversation was a very precious contribution of the ascetic into the treasury of teachings of Russian holy-fathers. Besides his teaching about the essence of Christian life, in it are contained new explanations of many important places of Holy Scripture.

"Fasting, prayer, vigil and every good deed, -- taught the Monk Seraphim, -- being howso no less fine in themselves, yet however in fact the goal of our Christian life does not consist only but in them, though they serve as means for its attainment. The true goal of our Christian life is the acquisition of the Holy Spirit of God". Once however situated in the Spirit of God, the monk glimpsed all the Russian land, and it was filled and as it were covered over by the incense-cloud of the prayers of the faithful, rising up in supplication to the Lord.

In the recorded life and deeds of Saint Seraphim are quoted many eye-witness accounts of the graced gift of perspicacity (i.e. insight), which he utilised for stimulating within people repentance of sins and moral rectification.

"The Lord hath revealed to me, -- said he, -- that there shalt be a time, when the hierarchs of the Russian land and other spiritual persons will deviate from the preservation of Orthodoxy in all its purity, and for this the wrath of God wilt strike them. For three days I stood, I besought the Lord to have mercy on them and besought it better to deprive me, the wretch Seraphim, of the Kingdom of Heaven, than to punish them. But the Lord inclined not to the plea of the wretch Seraphim and said, that there would be not mercy for them, since they will teach human teachings

and commandments, while their hearts stand far from Me".

Manifesting the graced gifts and power of God to people, the Monk Seraphim instructed those coming to him, on how to transverse the narrow path of salvation. He commanded obedience of his spiritual children and to the end of his life he was faithful to it. Having spent all his life in ascetic deeds beyond the power of ordinary people, his advice was to go by "the royal (middle) way" of the holy-fathers and not take upon oneself excessive difficult works: "to take on excessive measure of exploit is not necessary; but strive, so that the other aspect -- our flesh -- be true and capable for the doing of good deeds".

The monk considered prayer to be the prime exploit and means for the acquisition of the Holy Spirit. "Every good deed, done on account of Christ, bestows the grace of the Holy Spirit, but... prayer most of all beareth the Holy Spirit, and it is most convenient of all for each to improve".

The Monk Seraphim advised during the time of Divine-services to stand in temple now with eyes closed, and then to turn one's gaze upon an image or burning candle and ponder this thought, -- that it would suggest the fine comparison of human life with a waxen candle.

If someone complained to the holy elder about the impossibility to fulfill the rule of prayer, he then advised them to pray unceasingly: both during the time of work, and when going wherever, and even in bed. And if anyone can make the time, said the monk, let them take on soul-edifying prayers and readings of prayer-canons, akathists, psalms, the Gospel and Epistles. The saint also advised to study the order of Divine-services and to commit them to memory.

The Monk Seraphim regarded a lengthy rule of prayer as non-obligatory and he gave his Diveevsk community of women monastics a light rule. The Mother of God forbade Father seraphim to obligate novices with the reading of long akathists, so as not to impose an excessive burden on the incapable. But with this the saint strictly mentioned, that prayer ought not to be a formality: "Those monks, who do not unite external prayer with the inner, are not monks, but black torch-heads!" There thus became known the Seraphim Rule for those laypeople, who under the circumstances of life were not able to read the customary morning and evening prayers -- in the morning, before lunch and at evening to read the "Our Father", thrice the "Hail Mary, Virgin Mother of God", the Creed "I Believe" once; attending to necessary tasks, from morning til dinner to do the Jesus Prayer "Lord, Jesus Christ Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner" or but simply

"Lord, have mercy", and from dinner til evening the prayer "MostHoly Mother of God, save me a sinner" or "Lord, Jesus Christ, through the Mother of God have mercy on me a sinner".

"In prayers be attentive to thyself, -- advised the ascetic, -- that is, prepare the mind and unite it with the soul. On the first day, twice or more make this prayer with the whole mind, attending separately to each particular word. Later on, when the Lord heats thy heart with His warm grace and unites that in thee in one spirit: then flows within thee unceasingly that prayer and always will it be with thee, delighting and nourishing thee..." The monk said that in fulfilling this rule with humility, it is possible to attain Christian perfection even in worldly life.

"One must needs provide the soul with the Word of God. Most of all one ought to exercise in the reading of the New Testament and the Psalter. From this occurs enlightenment of the intellect, which is transformed by a Divine transformation", -- advised the holy ascetic of Sarov, himself constantly reading through all the New Testament during the course of the week.

Communing the Holy Mysteries each Sunday and each feastday without fail, -- to the question of how often one should approach for Communion, the Monk Seraphim answered: "the more often, the better". He said to the priest of the Diveevsk community, Vasilii Sadovsky: "The Grace, given us by Communion, is so great, that though a man be unworthy and sinful, if such a man in humility conscious of his all-sinfulness approacheth nigh [for Communion] to the Lord, Who hath redeemed us all, though he be covered head to foot by the bounds of sin, yet shalt he be cleansed by the grace of Christ, for all the more and more it illumineth him, and altogether it doth enlighten and save him".

"I believe, that through the great blessing of God grace doth make its mark also upon those communing..." The saint however did not give everyone the identical advice regarding frequent Communion. For many he advised to make the preparatory fast during all four lenten periods and during all the twelve feastdays. But it is necessary to remember his warning about the possibility of communing unto condemnation: "Sometimes thus it doth happen: here on earth they indeed do commune, but with the Lord they remain non-communicants!"

"There is no worse a sin and nothing is more terrible and harmful of spirit than despondency", -- said

Saint Seraphim. He himself shone with a spiritual joy, and with this quiet peaceful joy he in abundance filled the hearts of those about him, greeting them with the words: "My joy! Christ is Risen!" Every burden of life became light while being close to the ascetic, and a multitude of the grieving people and seekers of God crowded about his cell and together with them hermits, wanting to share in the graces radiating from the God-pleasing saint. In the eyes of all was affirmed the truth, expressed by the saint himself in a great angelic calling-out: "Acquire peace, and around thee a thousand wilt be saved". This command about the acquisition of peace leads up to the teaching about the acquisition of the Holy Spirit, but of itself it appears as a most important step on the way of spiritual growth. The Monk Seraphim, in experience having passed through all the ancient Orthodox science of ascetic deed, foresaw how the spiritual activity of coming generations would be, and he taught to seek out peace of soul and to condemn no one: "Whoso goeth about in a worldly manner, that one as though a liar draweth up spiritual gifts". "For preserving peace of soul... everyone ought to flee the judging of others... In order to be delivered from judgement, one ought to attend to oneself, and not from whomever to adopt extraneous ideas and become deadened towards everything".

The Monk Seraphim rightly can be called a disciple of the Mother of God. The MostHoly Mother of God thrice healed him from grievous illness, and repeatedly She appeared to him, guiding and encouraging him. While still at the beginning of his way he heard, how the Mother of God in directing him as he lay upon his sick bed, said to the Apostle John the Theologian: "This one is of our kind".

Upon emerging from seclusion the monk devoted much effort to the building up of the women's monastic community at Diveevo and he himself said, that he gave no particular directives on his own, but rather he gave everything through the will of the Queen of Heaven.

The Monk Seraphim stands at the head of a remarkable upwards-flight of Russian Orthodox spirituality. With great strength resounds his recollection: "The Lord seeketh out the heart, overflowing with love towards God and neighbour; here is the throne, upon which He doth love to preside and appear in the fullness of His supra-heavenly Glory. "Son, give Me thine heart, -- sayeth He, -- and all else I Myself wilt provide thee", -- wherefore it is in the human heart that the Kingdom of Heaven can be realised".



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**JULY 2017**

| Sunday   | Monday   | Tuesday   | Wednesday  | Thursday  | Friday   | Saturday   |
|--|--|---|--|---|--|--|
| <b>Jun 25 (Jun 12)</b><br><b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 2</b><br><br><b>9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy</b><br><br>Fast: fish, wine & oil | <b>Jun 26 (Jun 13)</b><br><br><br><br><br>Fast | <b>Jun 27 (Jun 14)</b><br><br><br><br><br>Fast: wine & oil                    | <b>Jun 28 (Jun 15)</b><br><br><br><br><br>Fast: wine & oil   | <b>Jun 29 (Jun 16)</b><br><b>Venerable Tikhon of Kaluga</b><br><br><br><br>Fast: fish, wine & oil | <b>Jun 30 (Jun 17)</b><br><br><br><br><br>Fast   | <b>1 (Jun 18)</b><br><br><br><br><br><b>5:30 All-Night Vigil</b><br><br>Fast: fish, wine & oil |
| <b>2 (Jun 19)</b><br><br><br><b>9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy</b><br><br>Fast: wine & oil  | <b>3 (Jun 20)</b><br><br><br><br><br>Fast      | <b>4 (Jun 21)</b><br><br><br><br><br>Fast: wine & oil                         | <b>5 (Jun 22)</b><br><br><br><br><br>Fast  | <b>6 (Jun 23)</b><br><br><br><br><br>Fast: fish, wine & oil                                       | <b>7 (Jun 24)</b><br><b>Nativity of the Baptist</b><br><br><br><br>Fast: fish, wine, & oil | <b>8 (Jun 25)</b><br><br><br><br><br><b>5:30 All-Night Vigil</b><br><br>Fast: fish, wine & oil |
| <b>9 (Jun 26)</b><br><br><br><b>9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy</b><br><br>Fast: fish, wine & oil  | <b>10 (Jun 27)</b><br><br><br><br><br>Fast     | <b>11 (Jun 28)</b><br><br><br><b>6:30 Vigil</b><br><br>Fast: fish, wine & oil | <b>12 (Jun 29)</b><br><b>Ss. Peter &amp; Paul</b><br><br><b>9:30 Hours, Divine Liturgy &amp; Procession to Cemetery</b><br><br>Fast: fish, wine, & oil | <b>13 (Jun 30)</b><br><br><br><br><br>  | <b>14 (Jul 1)</b><br><br><br><br><br>Fast  | <b>15 (Jul 2)</b><br><br><br><br><br><b>5:30 All-Night Vigil</b>                               |
| <b>16 (Jul 3)</b><br><br><br><b>9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy</b>  | <b>17 (Jul 4)</b><br><br><br><br><br>          | <b>18 (Jul 5)</b><br><br><br><br><br>   | <b>19 (Jul 6)</b><br><br><br><br>Fast  | <b>20 (Jul 7)</b><br><br><br><br><br>   | <b>21 (Jul 8)</b><br><br><br><br><br>Fast: fish, wine & oil                                | <b>22 (Jul 9)</b><br><br><br><br><br><b>5:30 All-Night Vigil</b>                               |
| <b>23 (Jul 10)</b><br><br><br><b>9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy</b>   | <b>24 (Jul 11)</b><br><br><br><br><br>         | <b>25 (Jul 12)</b><br><br><br><br><br>  | <b>26 (Jul 13)</b><br><br><br><br>Fast   | <b>27 (Jul 14)</b><br><br><br><br><br>  | <b>28 (Jul 15)</b><br><b>St. Vladimir</b><br><br><br><br>Fast: fish, wine, & oil           | <b>29 (Jul 16)</b><br><br><br><br><br><b>5:30 All-Night Vigil</b>                              |
| <b>30 (Jul 17)</b><br><br><br><b>9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy</b>   | <b>31 (Jul 18)</b><br><br><br><br><br>         | <b>Aug 1 (Jul 19)</b><br><br><br><br><br>                                     | <b>Aug 2 (Jul 20)</b><br><b>Prophet Elijah</b><br><br><br><br>Fast: fish, wine, & oil  | <b>Aug 3 (Jul 21)</b><br><br><br><br><br>   | <b>Aug 4 (Jul 22)</b><br><br><br><br><br>Fast  | <b>Aug 5 (Jul 23)</b><br><br><br><br><br><b>5:30 All-Night Vigil</b>                           |



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**AUGUST 2017**

| Sunday  | Monday   | Tuesday                                   | Wednesday  | Thursday                       | Friday   | Saturday  |
|---|--|---|--|--------------------------------|--|---|
| <b>Jul 30 (Jul 17)</b><br><br><b>9:30 Hours and<br/>Divine Liturgy</b>  | <b>Jul 31 (Jul 18)</b>   | <b>1 (Jul 19)</b>                         | <b>2 (Jul 20)</b><br><b>Prophet Elijah</b><br><br>Fast: fish, wine, &<br>oil | <b>3 (Jul 21)</b>              | <b>4 (Jul 22)</b><br><br>Fast                          | <b>5 (Jul 23)</b><br><br><b>5:30 All-Night Vigil</b>  |
| <b>6 (Jul 24)</b><br><br><b>9:30 Hours and<br/>Divine Liturgy<br/>2:00 Kronauer<br/>Wedding</b>                                   | <b>7 (Jul 25)</b>  | <b>8 (Jul 26)</b>                         | <b>9 (Jul 27)</b><br><br>Fast  | <b>10 (Jul 28)</b>             | <b>11 (Jul 29)</b><br><br>Fast                         | <b>12 (Jul 30)</b><br><br><b>5:30 All-Night Vigil</b>   |
| <b>13 (Jul 31)</b><br><br><b>9:30 Hours and<br/>Divine Liturgy</b>  | <b>14 (Aug 1)</b><br><b>Procession of the<br/>Cross</b><br><br>Fast  | <b>15 (Aug 2)</b><br><br>Fast             | <b>16 (Aug 3)</b><br><br>Fast  | <b>17 (Aug 4)</b><br><br>Fast  | <b>18 (Aug 5)</b><br><br><b>6:30 Vigil</b><br><br>Fast | <b>19 (Aug 6)</b><br><b>TRANSFIGURATION<br/>OF THE LORD</b><br><br><b>9:30 Hours &amp; Divine<br/>Liturgy<br/>1:00 Sunday<br/>Vespers</b><br><br>Fast: fish, wine, &<br>oil |
| <b>20 (Aug 7)</b><br><br><b>9:00 Matins and<br/>Divine Liturgy</b><br><br>Fast: wine & oil  | <b>21 (Aug 8)</b><br><br>Fast: wine & oil  | <b>22 (Aug 9)</b><br><br>Fast: wine & oil | <b>23 (Aug 10)</b><br><br>Fast   | <b>24 (Aug 11)</b><br><br>Fast | <b>25 (Aug 12)</b><br><br>Fast                         | <b>26 (Aug 13)</b><br><br><b>5:30 All-Night Vigil</b><br><br>Fast: wine & oil   |
| <b>27 (Aug 14)</b><br><br><b>9:30 Hours and<br/>Divine Liturgy<br/>1:00 Great Vespers<br/>&amp; Litya</b><br><br>Fast: wine & oil | <b>28 (Aug 15)</b><br><b>DORMITION OF<br/>THE THEOTOKOS</b><br><br><b>9:00 Matins &amp;<br/>Divine Liturgy</b> | <b>29 (Aug 16)</b>                        | <b>30 (Aug 17)</b><br><br>Fast   | <b>31 (Aug 18)</b>             | <b>Sep 1 (Aug 19)</b><br><br>Fast                      | <b>Sep 2 (Aug 20)</b><br><br><b>5:30 All-Night Vigil</b>  |