



The evangelists and the whole Church invariably underline the humanity of Christ: it was not a spirit who ascended, not a ghost, not a mirage, but God in human nature. “Look at My hands and My feet,” says Christ. “It is I Myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have”.

Why is it so important that the Savior ascended in His Body? It is because Christ came to raise not just part of a person, not the soul only or the spirit, but “healing the whole man”. Christianity insists that our body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, and must be restored, cleansed, and sanctified.

Having once become incarnate, the Savior always remains human, forever “uniting things on earth with the heavens”, and He took His humanity up to the right hand of the Father, and we in the Body of the Savior will be taken up to the Father. Is this, perhaps, the reason why Christians partake of Holy Communion with such awe, uniting with the Body and Blood of Christ?

The ascension of the Lord in the flesh means that His Body, the Holy Church is not a ghost, nor an abstract concept, not a hobby club, but a living and whole body. It is not enough, therefore, to just think about the Church, to sympathize with Christianity, to like it. It is not enough to know about the Church or to stop by now and again. One must be in the Church, live in her, live by the Body and Blood of the Savior.

Only in the Body of Christ does the resurrection of the Savior become our resurrection, the ascension—our ascension, the heavenly Father—our Father, and the eternal life with God—our life. Let us not spin cobwebs in our minds, thinking that missing church services, abstaining from confession and Holy Communion, not living according to the commandments of Christ, we somehow remain invisible members of an “invisible Church.” No! Christ ascended not in

virtual reality, but in His Body; and our salvation is not in fruitless fantasies, but in the Church. St. Cyprian of Carthage said: “He who does not obey the Church is not her son; and to whom the Church is not the mother, God is not the father”.

Fr Sergii Sveshnikov, Mulino, Oregon

Christ is Risen!
Χριστός Βοσκρесе !
Χριστός Ανεστη!

Sunday, May 29

Sixth Sunday of Pascha
Sunday of the Blind Man

Divine Liturgy 9:30 A.M.

Commemoration of Venerable Theodore the Sanctified (†368)

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Wednesday, June 1

Great Vespers 6:30 P.M.

Thursday, June 2

Ascension of the Lord

Divine Liturgy 9:00 A.M.

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Sunday, June 5

Seventh Sunday of Pascha
Sunday of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council

Divine Liturgy 9:30 A.M.

Holy New Venerable Martyrs Grand Duchess Elizabeth Feodorovna and Barbara

by Metropolitan Anastasy (†1965)

Part IV



The high position of the grand duchess along with her openness attracted many and various organizations and individual petitioners to her for her help, protection, or authoritative influence in the higher echelons of the government. She carefully replied to all petitions except for those which bore political overtones.

She paid special attention to all institutions of the Church, be they of charitable, artistic or scientific character. She also zealously worked to preserve the more important daily customs and traditions which made life so rich in old, beloved Moscow. The anniversary holiday of 1912 (*commemorating Russia's victory in 1812 over the Napoleonic armies both in Russia and throughout Europe*) gave her an unexpected chance to exhibit her zeal in this direction.

Here are the circumstances, hitherto known only to a few people. During the elaboration of the program for the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the War, there arose in the special committee organized in Moscow a heated debate over how to celebrate the 30th of August, the final day of the anniversary festival in Moscow. The representative of the ministry of the court offered to place at the center of the festival day a visit by the emperor to the *Zemsky Kustarny* Museum (*the museum of the traditional Russian crafts*), which had absolutely nothing to do with the historical

recollection of 1812.

Others supported my proposed offer that this holy day for Russia, St. Alexander Nevsky's Day, be noted with a festive service of thanksgiving on Red Square. The ceremonial officialdom refused to put aside its plan, protecting itself with the impenetrable iron plating of "imperial order," a being whose existence no one, of course, could verify. As for me, a representative of the clerical department, and those who were of like mind, all we could do was submit to the inescapable. At my meeting with the grand duchess, I told her all about the conflict. Having heard out my tale in much distress she said, "I will try to write about it to the emperor. It's true," she added with a reserved smile, "for us women, all is permitted." Within a week, she informed me that the emperor had changed the program according to our desires.

When the 30th of August arrived, it presented a magnificent picture of a genuinely national, Church and patriotic festivity which will never be forgotten by the participants. For this triumphant celebration Moscow was indebted to the intercessions of the grand duchess who exhibited not only her devotion to the Church but a deeply historical, purely Russian devotion.

At the beginning of the war (*First World War*), she gave herself over with complete self-sacrifice to the service of the sick and wounded soldiers whom she visited not only in the hospitals and sanitoriums of Moscow but also at the front. Like the empress, she was not spared the slander which accused them of excessive sympathy for wounded Germans, and the grand duchess bore this unwarranted, bitter offense with her usual magnanimity.



Royal nurses: Empress Alexandra with daughters

When the revolutionary storm broke out, she met it with amazing self-control and calm. It seemed that she stood on a high, unshakable cliff, and from there fearlessly looked out at the waves storming around her and raised her spiritual vision to eternity.

She did not harbor even a shadow of ill feelings against the madness of the agitated masses. "The people are children, innocent of what is transpiring," she remarked quietly. "They are led into deception by the enemies of Russia." Nor was she depressed by the great suffering and humiliation that befell the royal family who were so close to her: "This will serve for their moral purification and bring them nearer to God," she noted once with radiant gentleness. She suffered deeply for the royal family only when the thorns of grievous slander were woven around them, especially during the war.

In order not to give impetus to new evil gossip, the grand duchess tried to avoid conversations on the subject. If it so happened that because of idle people's tasteless curiosity the subject was broached in her presence, she immediately killed it by her expressive silence.

The charm of her whole temperament was so great that it automatically attracted even the revolutionaries when they first arrived to examine the Martha and Mary Convent. One of them, apparently a student, even praised the life of the sisters, saying that no luxuries were noticeable, and that cleanliness and good order were the rule, which was in no way blameworthy. Seeing his sincerity, the grand duchess struck up a conversation with him about the outstanding qualities of socialist and Christian ideals. "Who knows," remarked her unknown conversationalist as if influenced by her arguments, "perhaps we are headed for the same goal, only by different paths," and with these words left the convent. "Obviously we are still unworthy of a martyr's crown," the abbess replied to the sisters' congratulating her for such a successful end to the first encounter with the Bolsheviks. But that crown was not far from her.

Conclusion is following

..... News From All The Ends Of The Earth



Chicago, IL: The second meeting of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of North and Central America was convened last week in Chicago under the chairmanship of His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios (Greek Orthodox Church). The first-day session opened with prayers with 44 bishops present. Most Canonical Orthodox Bishops from Canada did not attend, as they are seeking to establish a separate assembly. At the beginning of the meeting a letter was read from Patriarch Irinej of Serbia conveying that the Serbian members of the Assembly could not be present at this meeting because of the needs of the Serbian Church. Archbishop Demetrios conveyed the greetings of Patriarch Bartholomew who said that he "is much desirous of encouraging and enhancing the unity of the Church, especially through the Pre-Conciliar Conferences that have come to be known as the 'Chambésy Process'." Archbishop Demetrios underlined the importance of this second meeting of the Assembly: "It is not without significance that we have traveled many miles to be with one another, in a spirit of fraternity, peace, fellowship and above all Christian love. As Chairman of this Assembly, I am grateful for your prayerful and irenic presence, and I am hopeful

that we will be able to move our nascent body forward with positive steps that will lead to tangible results for all the Orthodox.” He also spoke of the great potential that lies ahead for Orthodoxy in America and around the world.



Left to right: Bishop Tikhon, Metropolitan Hilarion, Metropolitan Jonah and Archbishop Justinian

New York, NY: On May 24, the feast day of Saints Cyril and Methodius and the namesday of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, Metropolitan Hilarion, First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, and Metropolitan Jonah, Primate of the Orthodox Church in America, concelebrated at Divine Liturgy at St Nicholas Patriarchal Cathedral in New York. This was the first joint service by hierarchs of the ROCOR and OCA after the almost 70-year absence of liturgical communion. Joining the two metropolitans in the service was Archbishop Justinian, Administrator of the Patriarchal Parishes in the US; Bishop Tikhon of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania (OCA); and Bishop Jerome of Manhattan (ROCOR), along with clergymen of the Moscow Patriarchate, the OCA and Church Abroad. After Divine Liturgy, Metropolitan Jonah and Metropolitan Hilarion read a joint greeting sent to Patriarch Kyrill on his namesday. Metropolitan Jonah then greeted his fellow archpastors, clergy and laity, expressing his joy over the joint celebration of Divine Liturgy with Hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. As a sign of fraternal love and in prayerful memory of the Liturgy they celebrated, Metropolitan Jonah gave the Primate of the Russian Church Abroad a portion of the relics of the Enlighteners and Missionaries of America, Saints Herman of Alaska and Alexei (Toth). Responding to the greeting, Metropolitan Hilarion gave Metropolitan Jonah a gift of a portion of the relics of St John of Shanghai. The heads of the OCA and ROCOR, as well as Bishop Tikhon and Bishop Jerome, were greeted Archbishop Justinian: “Today is truly a great day: in these bright days of the Pascha of Christ, we share the joy of common prayer on the namesday of the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill, who gathered us all here at St Nicholas Patriarchal Cathedral. This day will enter the history books of our Churches and will remain in the memory of many Orthodox Christians. The canonical demands, the claims of one part of the Orthodox Church

against another have erected high walls which separate the One Church, and it seemed to each side that it is correct in its demands, and right in its view of the life of the Church. But the Lord judges us by His mercy, and He desires the same mercy from us in our interrelationships, for if He judges us by the law, then we shall have no forgiveness. Commissions established by the American Church and Russian Church Abroad worked in the spirit of brotherly love and the desire for Eucharistic unity, and their Councils of Bishops approved the need for Liturgical communion, and today I wish to thank everyone who labored for the sake of today's celebration." Vladyka Justinian, in prayerful memory of the celebrations and the namesday of His Holiness, gave Metropolitan Jonah and Metropolitan Hilarion icons of the Mother of God of Vladimir and of the Mother of God of Kazan to Bishops Tikhon and Jerome. Divine services ended with the singing of Many Years to His Holiness Patriarch Kirill, Metropolitans Hilarion and Jonah. The celebration then continued at a fraternal trapeza.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. May bulletin covers' sponsors are Djuric family — Ryan Campbell's Chrismation and birthday and Alexander Djuric's 2nd birthday.
2. This Tuesday, May 31, the Parish Board members are summoned for a meeting at 6:30 P.M.
3. Beginning on Wednesday night, we stop chanting the Paschal troparion ("Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death and upon those in the tombs bestowing life") in our prayers at the meals and during the Morning and Evening prayers, and replace it with the troparion of the Ascension: "Thou hast ascended in glory, O Christ Our God, having gladdened Thy disciples with the promise of the Holy Spirit; and they were assured by the blessing that Thou art the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world."