



## Holy Ghost Orthodox Church

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**ON THE MEND:** Please keep the following parishioners and others in your prayers for recovery from their illnesses and injuries: Bishop Robert, Father Jakiw Norton, Father Dragan Filipović, Father Stevo Rocknage, Father Paul Stoll, Father Igor Soroka, Father Michael Mihalick [MS], Father Joseph Kopchak, Father Cuthbert Jack, Father Elias Warnke, Father Nestor Kowal, Father Paul Bigelow, Father Emilian Balan, Father John Nakonachny, Deacon Dennis Lapushanski, Protopresbyter Peter Hotrovich, Protodeacon Joseph Hotrovich, Pani-Dobrodijka Sonia Diakiw, Joshua Agosto and his family, Mike Holupka, Eva Malesnick, Stella Peanoske, Joe Nezolyk, Nick Behun, Grace Holupka, Virginia Bryan, Joseph Sliwinsky, Linda Mechtly, Mary Mochnick, Evelyn Misko, Jeanne Boehing, Alex Drobot, Rachelle, Jane Golofski, Doug Diller, Harry Krewsun, Mary Alice Babcock, Dorie Kunkle, Andrea, & Melissa [Betty O'Masta's relatives], Mary Evelyn King, Stella Cherepko, Sam Wadrose, Isabella Olivia Lindgren, Ethel Thomas, Donna, Erin, Michael Miller, Dave May, Grace & Owen Ostrasky, Alverta, Patti Sinecki, David Genshi, Sue Segeleon, Mike Gallagher, Michael Miller, Liz Stumpf, Theodore Nixon, Michelle Corba Kapeluck, Robert Hippert & family, Margaret Vladimir, Luke Emmerling, John Sheliga, George & Mika Rocknage, Robert McKivitz, Liz Obradovich, Halyna Zelinska [Bishop Daniel's mother], Charlotte, Andrew Mark Olynyk, Deborah Finley, Claire Senita, Eleanor Kelly, Bryan, Doris Artman, Nancy Barylak, Patrick Keenan, Khrystyna Chorniy, Anthony Cormier, Nathan Forbeck, Sarah Doyle, Samuel Peters, Jean Stutchell, Charles & Esther Holupka, Wanda Mefford, Lynn (Bush) Gill, David Vallor, Henry Faraly, Betty O'Masta, Julie Eiler, Glenn Miller, Vince Ferro, Michael Pawlyshyn, Dorothy Lednovich, Bob C., Allie— young girl with leukemia, Heather Kramer, Jane Wartinbee, Matthew—21-year-old with cancer, Nicholas Orlando, Mary Ann Kuznik, Michael Woloschak, Michael Pryhodzenko, Sonia Luciw, Theresa Ditto, Mary Ann Musial, Mary Pelino, Yvonne Christy, Myron & Barbara Spak, Pete Niederberger, Julia Duda, Lisa Pandle, Kris & Julie Hanczar, John Kennedy, Diane McDaniel, Loretta, Nancy, Carol, & Michael Sheliga, Gaelle Kelly, Irma McDivitt, Robin Young, Mckayla, Rachel, Tony Butecoff, Carl & Margaret Reed, Theodore Demopoulos, Jillian Bowman, Lydia Wilson, Robert Pointon,

Walter Cecelia, John Persico, Jeff Miller, Mary Kernick, Glenn Miller, Jean Marie, Donna & Walter McCrackin, Doug Smith [Millie Kerr's son-in-law], Bonnie & Eugene Blair [Pani Gina's parents], Mel & Charlotte Malik, Paula Pasquinelli, David Hoenshell, Barbara Macino, Shelley Hill, Mikaela Kapeluck, Linda Cawley, Gerald Cogley, Helen Bozo, June Miller, Corey Guich, Monica Salvatore, Glenda Tickerhoof, Robert Vangrin, Juliana Leis, Susan "Billie" Mason, Pauline Witkowsky, Sera White, LuAnne [Mike Horvath's daughter], Donald Griffey, Deborah Smith, Nancy & Eric Dunik, Julian Strozh [child with cerebral palsy], Thomas Stutzman, Dr. Kirsten Ream, Patricia Corey, Michelle, Katie Swarm, Richard Dunst, Michelle, Jamie Gardner, and Daria Masur. ARNOLD: Stefania Lucci, Steve Sakal, and Homer Paul Kline. We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.

**PRAYER LIST: Please help update our prayer list. If you or someone you know no longer needs to be on the prayer list or if there is someone who needs to be on the list please let Father Bob know. Remember—Prayers are ALWAYS FREE! Thank you!**

Please remember Ryan Fuller, James John Logue, George Senita, John Kirkowski, Matthew Machak, Michael Repasky, and ALL American service men and women in your prayers. May God watch over them and all American service men and women—and bring them all home safely!

PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR "BOXTOPS FOR EDUCATION" AND CAMPBELL'S SOUP LABELS TO CHURCH. There is a shoebox in the basement for Debbie Paouncic's class. THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR HELP!

**REMEMBER—PRAYERS ARE ALWAYS FREE!**

**Communion Fasting:** nothing to eat or drink after midnight, EXCEPT in cases where your doctor tells you to eat or drink something for medical reasons: medication, diabetes, etc. **If you have a question, please call Father Bob.**

**AT ANY TIME—if there is an emergency, if you have questions, or if you just need to talk, please CALL FATHER BOB at [412] 279-5640.**

#### SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11    Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom    10:30 AM**

**TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; VIRGIN-MARTYR ANASTASIA THE ROMAN; SAINT ABRAMIUS THE RECLUSE & HIS NIECE SAINT MARY OF MESOPOTAMIA; MARTYRS CLAUDIUS, ASTERIUS, NEON, & THEONILLA OF AEGAE IN CILICIA; SAINT ANNA EUPHEMIANUS OF CONSTANTINOPLE; SAINT ABRAMIUS-ARCHIMANDRITE OF ROSTOV; SAINT ABRAMIUS-RECLUSE OF PERCHEVSKY LAVRA**

*Tone 6*

Ephesians 2:4-10

Luke 8:26-39

***Litany in Blessed Memory of All Deceased Veterans—Fr. Bob  
Parastas in Blessed Memory of Walter, Victor, Jacob, & Katerina Burlack—  
Burlack family***

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 18 Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom 10:30 AM  
TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; MARTYRS GALACTEON & WIFE  
EPISTEME AT EMESA; APOSTLES PATROBUS, HERMAS, LINUS, GAIUS, &  
PHILOGOGUS OF THE 70; SAINT GREGORY-ARCHBISHOP OF ALEXANDRIA**

*Tone 7*

Ephesians 2:14-22

Luke 8:41-56

***Litany in Blessed Memory of Paul Popichak—Fr. Bob  
Parastas in Blessed Memory of Sam Kerr & Mary Pekich—Millie Kerr***

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 19 SLICKVILLE ECUMENICAL THANKGIVING SERVICE  
7 PM**

**Saint Sylvester Roman Catholic Church—Rev. Linda Steward speaking**

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 25 Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom 10:30 AM  
TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; SAINT JOHN THE MERCIFUL-  
PATRIARCH OF ALEXANDRIA; SAINT NILUS THE FASTER OF SINAI; PROPHET  
AHIJA**

*Tone 8*

Ephesians 4:1-6

Luke 10:25-37

***Litany in Blessed Memory of Helen Pytlak—Rebecca, Donna, & Michelle Behun  
Parastas in Blessed Memory of George Luciw—Sonia***

## **BULLETIN INSERT FOR 11 NOVEMBER 2012**

**TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; VIRGIN-  
MARTYR ANASTASIA THE ROMAN; SAINT ABRAMIUS THE  
RECLUSE & HIS NIECE SAINT MARY OF MESOPOTAMIA;  
MARTYRS CLAUDIUS, ASTERIUS, NEON, & THEONILLA OF  
AEGAE IN CILICIA; SAINT ANNA EUPHEMIANUS OF  
CONSTANTINOPLE; SAINT ABRAMIUS-ARCHIMANDRITE OF**

# **ROSTOV; SAINT ABRAMIUS-RECLUSE OF PERCHEVSKY LAVRA**

## **TROPARION—TONE 6**

The angelic powers were at Thy tomb; the guards became as dead men.  
Mary stood by Thy grave, seeking Thy most pure body.  
Thou didst capture hell, not being tempted by it.  
Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life.  
O Lord who didst rise from the dead: glory to Thee!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever,  
and unto ages of ages. Amen.

## **KONTAKION—TONE 6**

When Christ God, the Giver of Life,  
Raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His might hand,  
He bestowed resurrection on the human race.  
He is the Savior of all,  
The Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all!

## **PROKEIMENON—TONE 6**

**READER:** O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance.

**PEOPLE: O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance.**

**READER:** To Thee, O Lord, will I call. O my God, be not silent to me.

**PEOPLE: O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance.**

**READER:** O Lord, save Thy people.

**PEOPLE: And bless Thine inheritance.**

## **ALLELUIA VERSES—TONE 6**

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of  
the heavenly God.

He will say to the Lord: My Protector and my Refuge; my God, in whom I  
trust.

### **Some early thoughts on Sola Scriptura**

*[Father Bob's comment—the reference to catholic Church is in the truest sense—pre-Schism—that the Church is one and universal, not in the sense of the Roman Catholic Church.]*

I have continually given the greatest pains and diligence to inquiring,  
from the greatest possible number of men outstanding in holiness and in  
doctrine, how I can secure a kind of fixed and, as it were, general and  
guiding principle for distinguishing the true catholic faith from the degraded

falsehoods of heresy. And the answer that I receive is always to this effect; that if I wish, or indeed if anyone wishes, to detect the deceits of heretics that arise and to avoid their snares and to keep healthy and sound in a healthy faith, we ought, with the Lord's help, to fortify our faith in a twofold manner, firstly, that is, by the authority of God's Law, then by the tradition of the catholic Church.

Here, it may be, someone will ask, "Since the canon of Scripture is complete, and is in itself abundantly sufficient, what need is there to join to it the interpretation of the Church? The answer is that because of the very depth of Scripture all men do not place one identical interpretation upon it. The statements of the same writer are explained by different men in different ways, so much so that it seems almost possible to extract from it as many opinions as there are men. Novatian expounds in one way, Sabellius in another, Donatus in another, Arius, Eunomius and Macedonius in another, Photinus, Apollinaris and Priscillian in another, Jovinian, Pelagius and Caelestius in another, and latterly Nestorius in another. Therefore, because of the intricacies of error, which is so multiform, there is great need for the laying down of a rule for the exposition of Prophets and Apostles in accordance with the standard of the interpretation of the catholic Church.

Now in the catholic Church itself we take the greatest care to hold that which has been believed everywhere, always and by all (*quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est*). That is truly and properly 'catholic,' as is shown by the very force and meaning of the word, which comprehends everything almost universally. We shall hold to this rule if we follow universality, antiquity, and consent. We shall follow universality if we acknowledge that one Faith to be true which the whole Church throughout the world confesses; antiquity if we in no wise depart from those interpretations which it is clear that our ancestors and fathers proclaimed; consent, if in antiquity itself we keep following the definitions and opinions of all, or certainly nearly all, bishops and doctors alike.

What then will the catholic Christian do, if a small part of the Church has cut itself off from the communion of the universal Faith? The answer is sure. He will prefer the healthiness of the whole body to the morbid and corrupt limb. But what if some novel contagion tries to infect the whole Church, and not merely a tiny part of it? Then he will take care to cleave to antiquity, which cannot now be led astray by any deceit of novelty. What if in antiquity itself two or three men, or it may be a city, or even a whole province be detected in error? Then he will take the greatest care to prefer the decrees of the ancient General Councils, if there are such, to the irresponsible ignorance of a few men. But what if some error arises regarding which nothing of this sort is to be found? Then he must do his

best to compare the opinions of the Fathers and inquire their meaning, provided always that, though they belonged to diverse times and places, they yet continued in the faith and communion of the one catholic Church; and let them be teachers approved and outstanding. And whatever he shall find to have been held, approved and taught, not by one or two only but by all equally and with one consent, openly, frequently, and persistently, let him take this as to be held by him without the slightest hesitation.

*St. Vincent of Lerins, Commonitorium 2.4-8 (c. 434 AD), commemorated 24 May*

### **Saint Helena, mother of Saint Constantine the Great**

For she (Helena, mother of Constantine), having resolved to discharge the duties of pious devotion to the God, the King of kings, and feeling it incumbent on her to render thanksgivings with prayers on behalf both of her own son, now so mighty an emperor, and of his sons, her own grandchildren, the divinely favored Caesars, though now advanced in years, yet gifted with no common degree of wisdom, had hastened with youthful alacrity to survey this venerable land (Palestine); and at the same time to visit the eastern provinces, cities, and people, with a truly imperial solicitude (probably in 326). As soon, then, as she had rendered due reverence to the ground which the Savior's feet had trodden, according to the prophetic word which says "Let us worship at the place whereon his feet have stood," she immediately bequeathed the fruit of her piety to future generations.

For without delay she dedicated two churches to the God whom she adored, one at the grotto which had been the scene of the Savior's birth; the other on the mount of his ascension. For he who was "God with us" had submitted to be born even in a cave of the earth, and the place of his nativity was called Bethlehem by the Hebrews. Accordingly the pious empress honored with rare memorials the scene of her travail who bore this heavenly child, and beautified the sacred cave with all possible splendor. The emperor himself soon after testified his reverence for the spot by princely offerings, and added to his mother's magnificence by costly presents of silver and gold, and embroidered hangings. And farther, the mother of the emperor raised a stately structure on the Mount of Olives also, in memory of his ascent to heaven who is the Savior of mankind, erecting a sacred church and temple on the very summit of the mount. And indeed authentic history informs us that in this very cave the Savior imparted his secret revelations to his disciples. And here also the emperor testified his reverence for the King of kings, by diverse and costly offerings. Thus did Helena Augusta, the pious mother of a pious emperor, erect over the two mystic caverns these two noble and beautiful monuments of devotion, worthy of everlasting remembrance, to the honor of God her

Savior, and as proofs of her holy zeal, receiving from her son the aid of his imperial power. Nor was it long ere this aged woman reaped the due reward of her labors. After passing the whole period of her life, even to declining age, in the greatest prosperity, and exhibiting both in word and deed abundant fruits of obedience to the divine precepts, and having enjoyed in consequence an easy and tranquil existence, with unimpaired powers of body and mind, at length she obtained from God an end befitting her pious course, and a recompense of her good deeds even in this present life.

For on the occasion of a circuit which she made of the eastern provinces, in the splendor of imperial authority, she bestowed abundant proofs of her liberality as well on the inhabitants of the several cities collectively, as on individuals who approached her, at the same time that she scattered gifts among the soldiery with a liberal hand. But especially abundant were the gifts she bestowed on the naked and unprotected poor. To some she gave money, to others an ample supply of clothing: she liberated some from imprisonment, or from the bitter servitude of the mines; others she delivered from unjust oppression, and others again, she restored from exile.

While, however, her character derived luster from such deeds as I have described, she was far from neglecting personal piety toward God. She might be seen continually frequenting his Church, while at the same time she adorned the houses of prayer with splendid offerings, not overlooking the churches of the smallest cities. In short, this admirable woman was to be seen, in simple and modest attire, mingling with the crowd of worshipers, and testifying her devotion to God by a uniform course of pious conduct.

And when at length at the close of a long life, she was called to inherit a happier lot, having arrived at the eightieth year of her age (probably in 329), and being very near the time of her departure, she prepared and executed her last will in favor of her only son, the emperor and sole monarch of the world, and her grandchildren, the Caesars his sons, to whom severally she bequeathed whatever property she possessed in any part of the world. Having thus made her will, this thrice blessed woman died in the presence of her illustrious son, who was in attendance at her side, caring for her and held her hands: so that, to those who rightly discerned the truth, the thrice blessed one seemed not to die, but to experience a real change and transition from an earthly to a heavenly existence, since her soul, remolded as it were into an incorruptible and angelic essence, was received up into her Savior's presence.

Her body, too, was honored with special tokens of respect, being escorted on its way to the imperial city by a vast train of guards, and there deposited in a royal tomb. Such were the last days of our emperor's

mother, a person worthy of being had in perpetual remembrance, both for her own practical piety, and because she had given birth to so extraordinary and admirable an offspring. And well may his character be styled blessed, for his filial piety as well as on other grounds. He rendered her through his influence so devout a worshiper of God, though she had not previously been such, that she seemed to have been instructed from the first by the Savior of mankind: and besides this, he had honored her so fully with imperial dignities, that in every province, and in the very ranks of the soldiery, she was spoken of under the titles of Augusta and empress, and her likeness was impressed on golden coins. He had even granted her authority over the imperial treasures, to use and dispense them according to her own will and discretion in every case for this enviable distinction also she received at the hands of her son. Hence it is that among the qualities which shed a luster on his memory, we may rightly include that surpassing degree of filial affection whereby he rendered full obedience to the Divine precepts which enjoin due honor from children to their parents. In this manner, then, the emperor executed in Palestine the noble works I have above described: and indeed in every province he raised new churches on a far more imposing scale than those which had existed before his time.

***Eusebius, Life of Constantine 3.42-47***

*Sts. Constantine and Helen, commemorated 21 May icon and troparion at:*

<http://www.comeandseeicons.com/c/phn32.htm>

*coin portraits of Helena may be viewed at:*

<http://wildwinds.com/coins/ric/helena/t.html>

The irreligious man is a mortal being with a rational nature, who of his own free will turns his back on life and thinks of his own maker, the ever-existent, as non-existent.

The transgressor is one who holds the law of God after his own depraved fashion, and thinks to combine faith in God with heresy that is opposed to Him.

The Christian is one who imitates Christ in thought, word and deed, as far as is possible for human beings, believing rightly and blamelessly in the Holy Trinity.

The lover of God is he who lives in communion with all that is natural and sinless, and as far as he is able, neglects nothing good.

*St. John Climacus, The Ladder of Divine Ascent 1.4*

**April 7, 2011 marks the 86th anniversary of the repose of Saint Tikhon**





Bishop Tikhon shortly  
after his arrival in North  
America.

Saint Tikhon of Moscow is one of the Church's most beloved saints, not only because of his evident love of Christ and His People, but because of the example he offered as a suffering, yet ever faithful, servant of God in the midst of countless tribulations.

Inasmuch as he served as Bishop, and later Archbishop, of North America from 1898 until 1907, his legacy is perhaps best remembered for convening the first All-American Sobor in Mayfield, PA in 1907. He also is well remembered for imparting his blessing for the establishment of Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery, South Canaan, PA. Many older parishes of the Orthodox Church in America were established during his episcopate, and they still recall with fondness his archpastoral visits.

After he returned to Russia in 1907 to serve the Diocese of Yaroslavl, and later the Church in Lithuania, his life was intimately linked with the dramatic events surrounding the Russian Revolution and its aftermath. It was in the midst of revolutionary forces sweeping across the Russian Empire that the All-Russian Church Council opened in Moscow in August 1917. Within weeks -- and with the Revolution raging around them -- the delegates to the Council reestablished the Patriarchal office and elected Archbishop Tikhon as Patriarch. In his new position, Patriarch Tikhon faced constant threats, the persecution of the Church, denunciation by some elements in the Russian Church and elsewhere, civil war, house arrests, famine, and endless internal and external challenges to the Church's stability. On March 25/April 7, 1925, he fell asleep in the Lord, a Confessor for the Church during one of the most brutal periods in its history. O Holy Father Tikhon, pray unto God for us!

### **The Life of Saint Tikhon**



Archbishop Tikhon was elected Patriarch of Moscow in 1917.

Vasily Ivanovich Belavin, the future Saint Tikhon, was born on January 19, 1865 into the family of Ioann Belavin, a rural priest of the Toropetz district of the Pskov diocese. His childhood and adolescence were spent in the village in direct contact with peasants and their labor. From his early years he displayed a particular religious disposition, love for the Church as well as rare meekness and humility. When Vasily was still a boy, his father had a revelation about each of his children. One night, when he and his three sons slept in the hayloft, he suddenly woke up and roused them. He had seen in a dream his dead mother, who foretold to him his imminent death, and the fate of his three sons. One would be unfortunate throughout his entire life, another would die young, while the third, Vasily, would be a great man. The prophecy of the dead woman proved to be entirely accurate in regard to all three brothers.

From 1878 to 1883, Vasily studied at the Pskov Theological Seminary. The modest seminarian was tender and affectionate by nature. He was fair-haired and tall of stature. His fellow students liked and respected him for his piety, brilliant progress in studies, and constant readiness to help comrades, who often turned to him for explanations of lessons, especially for help in drawing up and correcting numerous compositions. Vasily was called "bishop" and "patriarch" by his classmates.

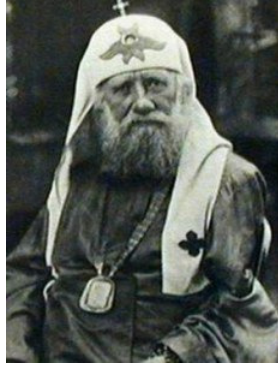
In 1888, at the age of 23, Vasily Belavin graduated from the St. Petersburg Theological Academy as a layman, and returned to the Pskov Seminary as an instructor of Moral and Dogmatic Theology. The whole seminary and the town of Pskov became very fond of him. He led an austere and chaste life, and in 1891, when he turned 26, he took monastic vows. Nearly the whole town gathered for the ceremony. He embarked on this new way of life consciously and deliberately, desiring to dedicate himself entirely to the service of the Church. The meek and humble young man was given the name Tikhon in honor of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk. He was transferred from the Pskov Seminary to the Kholm Theological Seminary in 1892, and was raised to the rank of archimandrite. Archimandrite Tikhon was consecrated Bishop of Lublin on October 19, 1897, and returned to

Kholm for a year as Vicar Bishop of the Kholm Diocese. Bishop Tikhon zealously devoted his energy to the establishment of the new vicariate. His attractive moral make-up won the general affection, of not only the Russian population, but also of the Lithuanians and Poles. On September 14, 1898, Bishop Tikhon was made Bishop of the Aleutians and Alaska. As head of the Orthodox Church in America, Bishop Tikhon was a zealous laborer in the Lord's vineyard. He did much to promote the spread of Orthodoxy, and to improve his vast diocese. He reorganized the diocesan structure, and changed its name from "Diocese of the Aleutians and Alaska" to "Diocese of the Aleutians and North America" in 1900. Both clergy and laity loved their archpastor, and held him in such esteem that the Americans made Archbishop Tikhon an honorary citizen of the United States.

On May 22, 1901, he blessed the cornerstone for St. Nicholas Cathedral in New York, and was also involved in establishing other churches. On November 9, 1902, he consecrated the church of St. Nicholas in Brooklyn for the Syrian Orthodox immigrants. Two weeks later, he consecrated St. Nicholas Cathedral in NY.

In 1905, the American Mission was made an Archdiocese, and St. Tikhon was elevated to the rank of Archbishop. He had two vicar bishops: Bishop Innocent (Pustynsky) in Alaska, and St. Raphael (Hawaweeny) in Brooklyn to assist him in administering his large, ethnically diverse diocese. In June of 1905, St. Tikhon gave his blessing for the establishment of St. Tikhon's Monastery.

In 1907, he returned to Russia, and was appointed to Yaroslavl, where he quickly won the affection of his flock. They came to love him as a friendly, communicative, and wise archpastor. He spoke simply to his subordinates, never resorting to a peremptory or overbearing tone. When he had to reprimand someone, he did so in a good-natured, sometimes joking manner, which encouraged the person to correct his mistakes. When St. Tikhon was transferred to Lithuania on December 22, 1913, the people of Yaroslavl voted him an honorary citizen of their town. After his transfer to Vilnius, he did much in terms of material support for various charitable institutions. There too, his generous soul and love of people clearly manifested themselves. World War I broke out when His Eminence was in Vilnius. He spared no effort to help the poor residents of the Vilna region who were left without a roof over their heads or means of subsistence as a result of the war with the Germans, and who flocked to their archpastor in droves.



The trials Saint Tikhon faced, especially at the hands of the Soviet regime, are evident in this photograph from the early 1920s.

After the February Revolution and formation of a new Synod, Saint Tikhon became one of its members. On June 21, 1917, the Moscow Diocesan Congress of clergy and laity elected him as their ruling bishop. He was a zealous and educated archpastor, widely known even outside his country.

On August 15, 1917, a local council was opened in Moscow, and Archbishop Tikhon was raised to the dignity of Metropolitan, and then elected as chairman of the council. The council had as its aim to restore the life of Russian Orthodox Church on strictly canonical principles, and its primary concern was the restoration of the Patriarchate. All council members would select three candidates, and then a lot would reveal the will of God. The council members chose three candidates: Archbishop Anthony of Kharkov, the wisest, Archbishop Arseny of Novgorod, the strictest, and Metropolitan Tikhon of Moscow, the kindest of the Russian hierarchs. On November 5, following the Divine Liturgy and a Molieben in the Cathedral of Christ the Savior, a monk removed one of the three ballots from the ballot box, which stood before the Vladimir Icon of the Mother of God. Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev announced Metropolitan Tikhon as the newly elected Patriarch. Saint Tikhon did not change after becoming the primate of the Russian Orthodox Church. In accepting the will of the council, Patriarch Tikhon referred to the scroll that the Prophet Ezekiel had to eat, on which was written, "Lamentations, mourning, and woe." He foresaw that his ministry would be filled with affliction and tears, but through all his suffering, he remained the same accessible, unassuming, and kindly person.

All who met Saint Tikhon were surprised by his accessibility, simplicity and modesty. His gentle disposition did not prevent him from showing firmness in Church matters, however, particularly when he had to defend the Church from her enemies. He bore a very heavy cross. He had to administer and direct the Church amidst wholesale church disorganization,

without auxiliary administrative bodies, in conditions of internal schisms and upheavals by various adherents of the Living Church, renovationists, and autocephalists.

The situation was complicated by external circumstances: the change of the political system, by the accession to power of the godless regime, by hunger, and civil war. This was a time when Church property was being confiscated, when clergy were subjected to court trials and persecutions, and Christ's Church endured repression. News of this came to the Patriarch from all ends of Russia. His exceptionally high moral and religious authority helped him to unite the scattered and enfeebled flock. At a crucial time for the church, his unblemished name was a bright beacon pointing the way to the truth of Orthodoxy. In his messages, he called on people to fulfill the commandments of Christ, and to attain spiritual rebirth through repentance. His irreproachable life was an example to all.

In order to save thousands of lives and to improve the general position of the church, the Patriarch took measures to prevent clergy from making purely political statements. On September 25, 1919, when the civil war was at its height, he issued a message to the clergy urging them to stay away from political struggle.

The summer of 1921 brought a severe famine to the Volga region. In August, Patriarch Tikhon issued a message to the Russian people and to the people of the world, calling them to help famine victims. He gave his blessing for voluntary donations of church valuables, which were not directly used in liturgical services. However, on February 23, 1922, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee published a decree making all valuables subject to confiscation. According to the 73rd Apostolic Canon, such actions were regarded as sacrilege, and the Patriarch could not approve such total confiscation, especially since many doubted that the valuables would be used to combat famine. This forcible confiscation aroused popular indignation everywhere. Nearly two thousand trials were staged all over Russia, and more than ten thousand believers were shot. The Patriarch's message was viewed as sabotage, for which he was imprisoned from April 1922 until June 1923.

His Holiness, Patriarch Tikhon did much on behalf of the Russian Orthodox Church during the crucial time of the so-called Renovationist schism. He showed himself to be a faithful servant and custodian of the undistorted precepts of the true Orthodox Church. He was the living embodiment of Orthodoxy, which was unconsciously recognized even by enemies of the church, who called its members "Tikhonites."

When Renovationist priests and hierarchs repented and returned to the church, they were met with tenderness and love by Saint Tikhon. This, however, did not represent any deviation from his strictly Orthodox policy.

"I ask you to believe me that I will not come to agreement or make concessions which could lead to the loss of the purity and strength of Orthodoxy," the Patriarch said in 1924.

Being a good pastor, who devoted himself entirely to the church's cause, he called upon the clergy to do the same: "Devote all your energy to preaching the word of God and the truth of Christ, especially today, when unbelief and atheism are audaciously attacking the Church of Christ. May the God of peace and love be with all of you!"

It was extremely painful and hard for the Patriarch's loving, responsive heart to endure all the Church's misfortunes. Upheavals in and outside the church, the Renovationist schism, his primatial labors, his concern for the organization and tranquility of Church life, sleepless nights and heavy thoughts, his confinement that lasted more than a year, the spiteful and wicked baiting of his enemies, and the unrelenting criticism sometimes even from the Orthodox, combined to undermine his strength and health.



*Saint Tikhon's relics are enshrined in the central cathedral of Moscow's Monastery of Our Lady of the Don.*

In 1924, Patriarch Tikhon began to feel unwell. He checked into a hospital, but would leave it on Sundays and Feast Days in order to conduct services. On Sunday, April 5, 1925, he served his last Liturgy, and died two days later. On March 25/April 7, 1925 the Patriarch received Metropolitan Peter and had a long talk with him. In the evening, the Patriarch slept a little, then he woke up and asked what time it was. When he was told it was 11:45 P.M., he made the Sign of the Cross twice and said, "Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee." He did not have time to cross himself a third time. Almost a million people came to say farewell to the Patriarch. The large cathedral of the Donskoy Monastery in Moscow could not contain the crowd, which overflowed the monastery property into the square and adjacent streets. St. Tikhon, the eleventh Patriarch of Moscow, was primate of the Russian Church for seven and a half years.

In October 1989, the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church glorified Patriarch Tikhon and numbered him among the saints. For nearly seventy years, Saint Tikhon's relics were believed lost, but in February 1992, they were discovered in a concealed place in the Donskoy Monastery.

It would be difficult to imagine the Russian Orthodox Church without Patriarch Tikhon during those years. He did so much for the Church and for the strengthening of the Faith itself during those difficult years of trial. Perhaps the saint's own words can best sum up his life: "May God teach every one of us to strive for His truth, and for the good of the Holy Church, rather than something for our own sake."

An Athonite elder said: A mind that dwells on everyday matters of life and vain things disperses the soul. One should turn inwardly, looking at the soul's uncultivated vineyard, weeding it of all evil thorns and planting virtues there instead. But be wary, for this type of work is not easy at all. It requires perseverance and much patience. One will be confronted with a multitude of difficulties. Various writings of the Fathers are very helpful, and in our days are available by the dozens. In them one can find anything his heart desires, and anything it needs. The Fathers will lead you on the right spiritual path, if only you read them with humility and prayer.

*from An Athonite Gerontikon*

Be zealous within your soul, but do not give the slightest sign, word, or hint of it outwardly; and you will manage this as soon as you stop looking down on your neighbor, something you may be inclined to do. And if this is so, then become like your brethren in order not to differ from them solely by the measure of your conceit.

I once saw an inexperienced disciple who used to boast in certain quarters about the achievement of his teacher. He imagined that in this way he would win glory for himself from another's harvest. But he only got a bad name for himself, for everyone put this question concerning him, "How then could a good tree grow such a dead branch?"

*St. John Climacus, The Ladder of Divine Ascent, 4 7th century*

**There are times, when the love of Christ touches us, that we feel eternity. This cannot be understood rationally. God acts in a manner proper to Himself, which is beyond reason. We must not be too logical in our Christian life. *Archimandrite Sophrony +1993***