

*The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few;  
pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest,  
that He will send forth laborers into His harvest.  
St. Matthew 9: 37-38*

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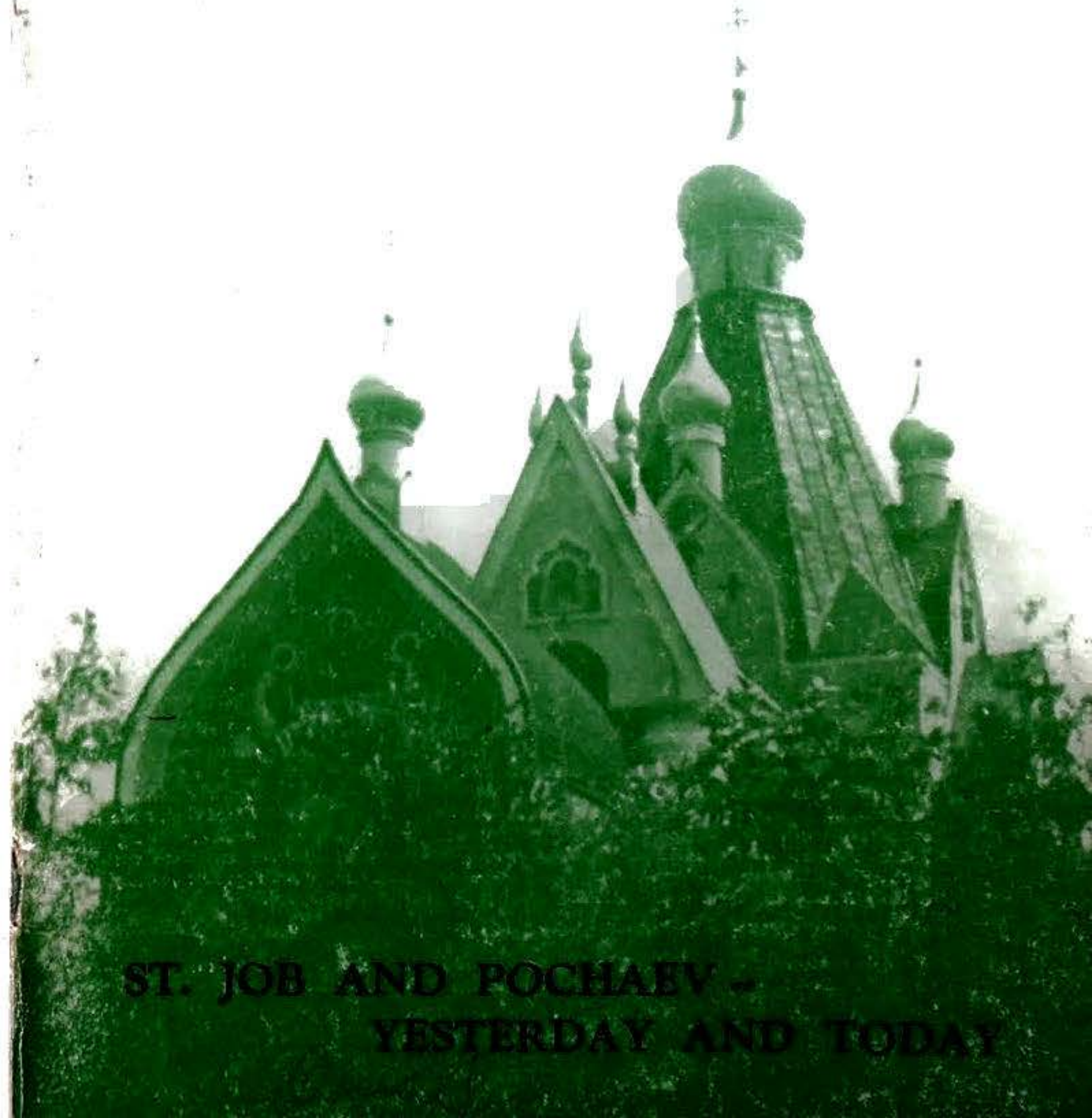


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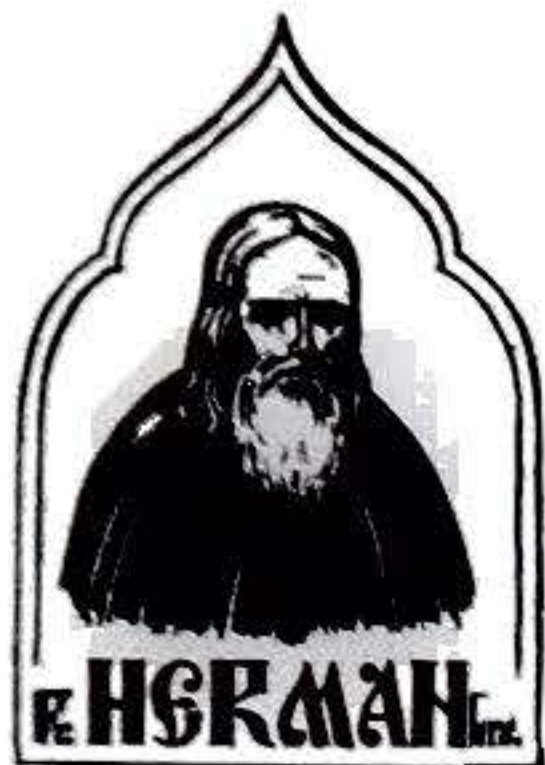
# THE ORTHODOX WORD

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ST. JOB AND POCHAEV -  
YESTERDAY AND TODAY



## THE ORTHODOX WORD

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## IN DEFENCE OF HOLY ORTHODOXY

Pochaev Monastery, to which this issue of *The Orthodox Word* is primarily devoted, has become a model for the defenders of Holy Orthodoxy. As their brothers three centuries ago stood firm against Catholic and Protestant persecutors, so the Pochaev monks today stand firm against the God-hating Communists. Their situation, even if not always in so acute a form, is the situation of every Orthodox Christian.

Never has the Church of Christ been so encompassed by enemies as today: in Eastern Europe, subject to the Communist yoke whose aim is the liquidation of the Church, in the free world, enticed by the false promises of ecumenism, holding out to unwary Orthodox the bait of a new "Union." This is truly the darkest hour in the history of the Orthodox Church.

But there is no cause for despair. The Church of Christ cannot be liquidated, for *the gates of hell shall not prevail against it* (St. Matthew 16: 18), and if there are false pastors and misled flocks who are prepared to renounce or change the unchanging Truth and tradition of Holy Orthodoxy in order to be absorbed into the approaching ecumenist "Union," there will yet be a faithful remnant who will witness Orthodox Truth even to martyrdom.

In a world which, in its fear and faint-heartedness, can speak only of "peace," Orthodox Christians are called upon to be warriors, as were the great Pochaev missionaries of the printed and spoken Orthodox word: St. Job in the 17th century, and Archbishop Vitaly in the 20th. They have set an example for us: in defence of Holy Orthodoxy, not to waver or compromise, but fearlessly to speak the truth.



"The Russian Monk", Pochaev, 1913

*View of Mount Pochaev that greets the approaching pilgrim.*

*No one has been more closely associated with the existence and mission of Pochaev Monastery than its first abbot, St. Job, who pleased God by his righteous life and intercedes today before God for the faithful in Pochaev as well as for those scattered throughout the world.*

*The Life of St. Job presented here for the first time in English is condensed from the Pochaev-Volhynian Patericon (Moscow, 1888), a thorough study of the history of Pochaev and the holy men associated with its glorious past.*

*The numbered sections correspond to those in the original.*

## SAINT JOB, ABBOT OF POCHAEV

By Archpriest A. T. HOINATZKY

**W**HEN THE MONGOL hordes invaded Kiev in the 13th century and destroyed the famous Monastery of the Caves, some of the monks who escaped settled in a wild, nearly uninhabited area of southwestern Russia near Poland; thus was Pochaev Monastery founded. Situated on a mountain dotted with rocky caves, Pochaev was especially suited to the strict hermitic life which its first inhabitants led in direct continuation of the Kiev-Caves monastic tradition. Little is known beyond the bare fact of the existence of such hermits; this is quite natural, since they would rarely have had occasion to enter into contact with the few inhabitants of the region, and they could lead their secluded ascetic life as they wished, quite undisturbed. The only event in the early history of Pochaev that has been preserved in tradition is the 14th-century appearance of the Mother of God in a pillar of fire.<sup>1</sup> It was, however, already at this early time that the Pochaev monks erected at the foot of the mountain a wooden church in honor of the Dormition of the Mother of God.

The actually documented history of Pochaev Monastery, however, begins in the second half of the 16th century with the donation of the wonderworking icon which was to take its name from the monastery,<sup>1</sup> and with the arrival of a monk who was to begin an entirely new page in the history of the monastery: St. Job of Pochaev, whose holy life and deeds illuminated the whole of southern Russia, and indeed the whole of the Orthodox world.

1. Discussed below in the article on the icon of the Pochaev Mother of God.

## I

John Zhelezo (the surname translates "Iron") was born in about the year 1551 in the region of Pokutya, in southwestern Galicia, in an area then belonging to Poland. His parents, John and Agafia, were apparently of the nobility, and raised their son in a Christian manner. When still a child he showed an inclination for a solitary religious life, and at the age of ten he left home and entered the neighboring Ugornitsky Monastery, where in two years he was tonsured as a monk and received the name of Job. Upon reaching maturity, probably at the age of thirty, he was ordained a hieromonk and not long after that, because of his pious and virtuous life and his burning zeal to praise God, he received the schema, and together with it received back his original name of John (after St. John the Forerunner and Baptist), by which he was known to the time of his death.

Word of St. Job's holy life and deeds began to spread throughout Poland and Little Russia, so much so that many even of the great lords began to come to him for spiritual help. He especially attracted the attention of the well-known defender of Orthodoxy in Volhynia, Prince Constantine Constantinovich Ostrozhsky, who, considering care for the good state of the monasteries located in his possessions to be one of the best means of defending the Orthodox faith, appealed to the abbot of Ugornitsky Monastery to send him St. Job to give the example of a life pleasing to God for the improvement of the monks of his Dubensky Holy Cross Monastery. The abbot finally gave his permission, and with sorrow St. Job left the monastery in which he had been spiritually born, and entered the Dubensky Monastery. In a short time he was elected abbot of the monastery and served in this office for the better part of the last two decades of the 16th and the first years of the 17th century.

This was a time of severe trials for the Orthodox Church, and especially in this southwestern part of Russia. It was the time of the Union of Brest (1596) when all Orthodox residing in the lands of the Polish King Sigismund III were deprived of their rights and a campaign of persecution was undertaken by the Jesuits to force them into submission to the Church of Rome. A majority of the Orthodox hierarchs in the region became apostates to Uniatism, but St. Job, together with many monks, priests, and laymen, became a warrior for the true Orthodox faith. Protected from the Jesuit persecution by Prince Ostrozhsky,



St. Job turned his attention to the dissemination of Orthodox books, which were one of the chief means by which Orthodoxy defended itself against Uniatism. For this purpose St. Job gathered about himself a numerous brotherhood, which occupied itself with the study and translation of the writings of the Fathers. The best books were copied out and distributed to Orthodox believers. It was at this time also that Prince Ostrozhsky was responsible for the publication of the first printed Slavonic Bible -- the famous Bible of Ostrog of 1581. The second edition (1588) of this Bible, and possibly also the first, was printed with the blessing and participation of St. Job.

The honor and praise which St. Job deservedly enjoyed among his Orthodox contemporaries weighed heavily upon him. With true Christian humility he desired his deeds to be seen and glorified, not by men, but only by God. Too, the actions of Prince Ostrozhsky, who had begun to use questionable means borrowed from Catholics and Protestants in his defence of Orthodoxy, doubtless did not please the Saint. So it was that St. Job, finding a favorable time, quietly left the Dubensky Monastery (somewhere between 1600 and 1604) and retired to Pochaev.

## II

When St. Job arrived at Pochaev, he found it to be quite different from what he had expected. In the course of the more than three centuries of its existence, the monastic life at Pochaev had always been strictly hermitic; monks there had preferred to work out their salvation in mountain caves, leaving them only for prayer in the small church of the Dormition of the Mother of God, located at the bottom of the mountain. In this way, doubtless, St. Job too had thought to work out his salvation, being himself especially inclined to the hermitic life. But Divine Providence judged otherwise.

In 1597 the owner of the land on which Pochaev was located, the widow Anna Goiskaya, gave a wonderworking icon of the Mother of God to the monastery, and in order to express her devotion and secure a worthy habitation for it, she donated much property to the monastery, and also required the monastery to become coenobitic.

St. Job, having left Dubensky Monastery secretly, had no intention of revealing his identity in Pochaev, but the monks soon sensed his spiritual power and with one accord elected him abbot. In all likelihood he was the first abbot of the monastery after it became coenobitic.

The state of Orthodox believers in Volhynia became progressively worse during St. Job's first years at Pochaev. Orthodox churches were turned by the Latins into taverns or entirely destroyed; many important nobles became apostates and some actively aided the persecution, and in 1612 the last Orthodox bishop of Volhynia died, leaving Orthodox believers at a loss where to turn for the ordination of their priests.

Pochaev itself, nonetheless, remained Orthodox and under St. Job's direction attracted many monks as well as the general interest of Orthodox believers living in the area. Thanks to the donations of many who were attracted by St. Job's holy life, the monastery also underwent some material improvements. Not the least of these was the erection of a new stone church in place of the former wooden church dedicated to the Dormition of the Mother of God. The latter was now found to be too small, especially in view of the many devout people who began to come to venerate the wonderworking image of the Pochaev Mother of God. A pious family paid for the erection of a new church located a little above the church of the Dormition, so that the rock with the miraculous Footprint became a part of the church itself, even as today it is to be found inside the great Monastery Cathedral of the Dormition.

With the death of Anna Goiskaya, the monastery entered upon a particularly difficult period of its history. The new owner of the land, Goiskaya's nephew Andrew Firley, was a Lutheran who held a particular hatred for Orthodoxy. In his attempt to destroy Pochaev Monastery he made use of various forms of harassment and persecution, and finally forbade the monks to drink from the wells on his property. As there were no wells on the monastery grounds proper, Pochaev was by this act threatened with speedy extinction. In his distress over this St. Job turned in prayer to the Most Holy Mother of God, Who had already revealed such mercies through Her wonderworking icon; and then, in hope of aid from above, he ordered a well to be dug in the cliff upon which the monastery stood. The Lord crowned the labor of the monks with success; water was soon struck, and it has supplied the monastery up to the present day.

## III

A printing works is known to have existed at Pochaev Monastery quite early and to have been licensed by the Polish kings to print books in Slavonic, Latin, and Polish. Tradition ascribes its establishment to the

founder of the coenobitic monastery at Pochaev, Anna Goiskaya; when St. Job came it was already in a flourishing state and offered him the opportunity of continuing on a wider scale the work he had begun at Dubensky Monastery. With the gradual closing of printing works in that area under pressure of the Latin persecution, the Pochaev works was left the only source for the printing of essential Orthodox literature in southwestern Russia; the support it gave to Orthodox churches in that time of trials can well be imagined.

As for St. Job's own writings, they were such as were called forth by his position as an abbot and a defender of the Orthodox faith. They consist mainly of notes and sermons for various feasts and other occasions of the Church year, commentaries on Gospel passages, and defences of Orthodoxy against its enemies, including a treatise against the Socinian sect which was spreading rapidly in southwestern Russia at that time. These writings were in the full tradition of the Fathers of the Church. Citations from St. John of the Ladder occupy a particularly prominent place in his writings, and among the other Fathers he cited are St. Basil the Great, St. John Chrysostom, St. John Damascene, and St. Theodore the Studite.

In addition to his work at the monastery, St. Job, as an important member of the Orthodox clergy, was called upon to take part in important Church affairs outside the monastery. In 1628 a council of the Orthodox bishops (newly appointed by the Patriarch of Jerusalem), archimandrites, and abbots of western Russia was held in Kiev. St. Job was present and signed the document that was then issued, a declaration of loyalty to the Orthodox faith; the renowned Metropolitan Peter Mogila, at that time archimandrite at the Kiev-Caves Monastery, also took part in the council.

No less remarkable than his external activity was St. Job's internal life which, again, was in full accord with the Orthodox spiritual tradition. "In the daytime," as his first biographer, his disciple Dosifei, relates, "his whole time was occupied in working with his hands: planting trees, working in the gardens, making dams."

The whole night was devoted by the Saint to the Lord alone. St. Job loved especially to withdraw for this purpose to the solitude of a stone cave on Pochaev Mountain. It is the very cave which is preserved even now at Pochaev Monastery, being located in the so-called cave church dedicated to St. Job, under the large gallery which leads to the

Cathedral of the Dormition. The cave is difficult of access, and once inside there is room for no more than seven people to stand at one time -- and that not comfortably; and there is no place whatever for one to sit or lie down properly, the floor of the cave being extremely rough and uneven. The rock in the cave is all of one sort: firm sandstone, the same from which the whole of Pochaev Mountain is made.

Surrounded on all sides by forest and thus hidden from human eyes, St. Job's cave offered the surest refuge for a lover of silence. "And if this stone cave had had a tongue," writes Dosifei, "it would have informed us completely as to how he, shut up in it sometimes for three days and sometimes for a whole week, and nourished only by tears flowing from a pure heart, prayed for the well-being of the world lying in evil." Once, when St. Job was praying thus, an extraordinary light suddenly illumined his cave and for "more than two hours" shone out from its depths onto the church which lay opposite. "And I," says Dosifei, "seeing this fell on the ground in great awe, overcome by such a strange vision."

In the meantime, from "such weakening of the flesh," and especially from intense long periods of standing, the feet of the Saint began to wear away, so that the flesh fell away in pieces from his bones -- "concerning which," as Dosifei says, "there is even to the present day the testimony of his precious incorruptible relics, which lie in the shrine." Of the same thing there is the testimony now also of the pious monks of Pochaev, who were destined to see the body of St. Job when his relics were transferred from one shrine to another.

In his relations with others St. Job was extraordinarily humble, obedient, kind, compassionate, full of brotherly love, and silent to such a degree that, according to Dosifei, it was difficult ever to hear anything from him "unless it be this prayer, which accompanied his every deed and movement, like a stream: *Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me.*" Once at night while he was passing through the monastery barn, St. Job surprised someone stealing wheat, "and he so came upon him unawares that the thief was unable to take so much as a step away from the sack full of wheat." In fear the thief fell at the feet of the Saint, begging him not to tell anyone of this; "for that man," remarks Dosifei, "was well-known among the neighboring folk and for this reason greatly feared lest his reputation be damaged by such an evil deed." But "the starets

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being merciful and without ill-will," not only did not reproach the thief by a single word, but even helped him to lift the stolen sack, instructing him only "by his humble words" not to repeat the action in future, "and, leading him up to mindfulness of the commandments of God and the just judgement at which one will have to give an account of everything to the Lord," he let him go.

St. Job's remarkable life and activity at Pochaev inspired the praise and veneration of many of his contemporaries. Not a few gave themselves over to his experienced spiritual direction and made him their spiritual father; others turned to him for help in difficult circumstances and received aid and comfort from him.

It was in such ways that St. Job labored at Pochaev until 1649. Having reached in that year the advanced age of 98, he began to concern himself with the choice of a successor as abbot of Pochaev. The choice was of critical importance. In the fifty-three years since the Union of Brest, the efforts of the Jesuits had succeeded in liquidating almost all the old Orthodox monasteries and churches in Volhynia and forcing many of the oldest Russian families into the Uniate Church; only a few steps remained before they could gain control of Pochaev itself, which stood as the last bulwark of the Orthodox Church in Volhynia. While St. Job was alive he kept a careful watch on the wiles of the enemies of Orthodoxy, and his influence over his contemporaries was such that the Latins were unable so much as to attempt to take his monastery. But now the Saint was at the end of his days, and he could not but have seen the dark clouds that threatened the monastery; like St. Theodosius of the Kiev-Caves Monastery before him, he wished himself to appoint a worthy successor. This he did in the person of Hieromonk Samuel Dobryansky. The obedient brethren received this choice with love, and at the request of their beloved abbot placed their signatures to a document promising obedience to his successor. St. Job, however, did not cease to be called abbot after this, and he continued to take some part in the direction of the monastery until his very death.

On the 21st of October, 1651, it was revealed to St. Job from above that he would die in seven days. "And thus," according to Dosifei, "he pronounced the day and the hour of his departure a week in advance"; "and so it happened," as the same writer notes.



On the 28th of October, 1651, St. Job himself served the Divine Liturgy and at its conclusion, having given a last embrace to the grieving brethren, "at the very hour which he had prophesied," without any illness whatever, "he peacefully passed from this most transitory life to eternal blessedness." He was just over one hundred years old at the time of his death.

In tears the brethren washed the body, "withered from fasting and labors," of their father and teacher, and having celebrated the funeral over it according to the rite of the Holy Orthodox Church, gave it reverently over to the earth, "according to the custom," in the sixth year of the reign of the Emperor of All Russia Alexei Michailovich.

For seven years after its burial the body of St. Job lay in the earth. During this time there quite often appeared above the grave an extraordinary light which amazed many. Finally in the eighth year afterwards (1659), St. Job himself appeared in a vision during sleep to the Metropolitan of Kiev, Dionisy Balaban, with this message: "I inform Your Eminence that God wishes you to uncover my bones." After a short time the vision was repeated; but it was only when it appeared for the third time and would allow him no rest that the wise and prudent Metropolitan at last paid serious attention to it, realizing it to be no ordinary dream, but a sign of God's will. That very morning, together with his whole clergy, he left for Pochaev.

Here he conducted an inquiry into the life of the Saint, "and learning of his good deeds, pleasing to God," he immediately ordered the grave opened, and in it were found the holy relics of the Saint, "without the least corruption, as if buried that very hour, and filled with an inconceivable fragrance." The Metropolitan took the incorrupt remains of the Saint and, "amidst a large gathering of people, with appropriate honor transferred them to the large Church of the Lifegiving Trinity," and here, in accordance with Orthodox custom, placed them near the entrance of the church on the 28th day of August, 1659.

There, as Dosifei testifies, "a great multitude of people possessed of various afflictions received healing"; for since St. Job "while yet in the body was filled with every virtue, so too after his death he did not cease to shed his beneficence upon those who came to him with faith."

An especially remarkable miracle occurred in the same year of 1659, in the person of the very Dosifei who wrote the life of the Saint, being then already abbot of Pochaev. Several days after the uncovering of the relics, Dosifei became ill as a result of severe abscesses on the skin, so that finally the doctors gave up hope for his recovery. At this same time there had come as a pilgrim to Pochaev one of the benefactors of the monastery, the Lady Domashevskaya, who was spending the night together with a maidservant in a special cell reserved for her. Suddenly at midnight she was astonished to hear the sound of singing from the church, and to see an extraordinary light shining in the windows. Thinking that the monks might be celebrating the All-night Vigil Service, she sent her servant Anna to find out what was happening. The

latter found the church doors open, and when she entered the church saw the same extraordinary light and in its midst St. Job standing at prayer with "two fair youths dressed in radiant vestments." Anna stopped in fear and stood motionless. Then the Saint turned to her and said: "Do not fear, maiden, but go and call to me the abbot of the monastery." "He is on his death-bed," replied Anna. The Saint gave her a silk kerchief soaked in holy oil and bade her take it to the sick man. Anna went to the door of Dosifei's cell and began to call him in the name of the newly-appeared Saint; and Dosifei, after being persuaded that it was not all a dream, allowed the door to be opened, took the kerchief, and after rubbing his body with it became suddenly completely well, rose from his bed, and went to church. There the heavenly vision had already ceased, and the ecclesiarch was unlocking the doors for the All-night Vigil. The latter, having seen nothing of the vision, was astonished to see the abbot hurrying to church and to hear him explain: "Our beloved Father Job, while we were all sleeping, prayed with angels for my salvation to the Most Holy Mother of God, and by the kerchief soaked with holy oil which he sent to me I have been completely healed." And no sooner had the ecclesiarch opened the doors than Dosifei fell to the ground before the shrine of the blessed Job, and giving thanks to God for such miracles worked by the Saint, began immediately to celebrate the All-night Vigil, to the general astonishment of all who had known of his illness.

In the years that followed there were other miraculous healings worked in the presence of the relics of St. Job, through his prayers. There were other kinds of miracles too. In 1711 there came to Pochaev a certain Lord Kaminsky with two brothers, who asked the abbot to allow them to pray in the church. One brother, Vladislav, seeing the incorrupt relics of St. Job, doubted their sanctity and secretly reproached the monks for, as he supposed, using the relics to deceive men and amass a fortune. Then, having attended Divine service, the brothers returned home. That same night Kaminsky was suddenly awakened by the extraordinary cry of Vladislav: "From now on I will not!" In amazement he awakened his brother and asked him why he was crying thus. "And do you not see," replied Vladislav, "this terrible old man threatening me with his finger, warning me not to dare speak blasphemously about the saints of God? Save me from the hand of Blessed Job Zhelezo!" The next

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day all three brothers went again to Pochaev and here, praying fervently before the shrine of the Saint for forgiveness of their sins, testified of this happening under oath in the presence of the abbot.

In this way for more than half a century after his relics were uncovered, St. Job did not cease to reveal a grace-giving power that testified to his sanctity, for the good of Orthodoxy. Then, in 1720, Pochaev Monastery together with its Orthodox holy objects -- the wonderworking icon, the Footprint of the Mother of God, and the relics of St. Job -- passed into the hands of the Uniates. The "Basilians" -- as the Uniate monks were called -- took care of the holy icon without any difficulty, since it was then the Catholic custom to appropriate Orthodox icons for their own use. But what could they do with the relics of St. Job? The perplexity of the Uniates was increased by the decision of a Uniate council in 1720 to allow the veneration only of a few of the earliest Russian saints. What is more, Blessed Job died "in schism," a defender of Orthodoxy. Consequently the Basilians, as soon as they had taken possession of the monastery, covered the relics of St. Job and placed them behind a grating; they no longer honored his memory or lit candles before his relics. Nonetheless, the miracles of the Saint did not stop. In spite of all the efforts of the Latins, St. Job continued to reveal his glory and to make known his intercession for the faithful.

The Uniates themselves ended by according him their veneration. It is known, for example, that they acknowledged the incorruption of his relics, and that eventually they allowed people to come to venerate them; they even went so far as to hold prayer-services, on request, before his relics, and to light candles before them as before a legitimate holy object. Finally, in the second half of the 18th century, they petitioned the Pope to canonize St. Job, and even composed hymns in his honor and made preparations to print an icon of him. The matter, however, was set aside in Rome, apparently because the Pope found out about St. Job's activity against Uniatism and Catholicism.

### V

The Uniates kept possession of Pochaev Monastery for over a century (1720-1831). It was during this time that the present monastery Cathedral of the Dormition was built, and also the cave church in which St. Job's cave has been so skillfully incorporated. It was then, too, in

## ST. JOB, ABBOT OF POCHAEV

all likelihood, that the incorrupt remains of St. Job were transferred to this church and placed under the canopy of a natural rock formation, where they repose even today. It was, in any case, in such condition that the monastery was found when, in October, 1831, by order of His Majesty the Emperor Nicholas I, the Basilians were banished from Pochaev and the monastery, together with the incorrupt relics of St. Job, was returned to the care of the Orthodox Church.

At the same time the Holy Synod began an investigation in view of the possible canonization of St. Job; and the Saint himself did not fail to attend to the preservation of his own memory, beginning anew to reveal his grace-giving power by special signs, in particular by miraculous healings. Permission was soon given by the Holy Synod to establish a special feast in honor of St. Job, and the date chosen for this was August 28, the date in 1659 when his relics were uncovered. This news was received with joy alike by the clergy and the faithful of the diocese of Volhynia; soon icons of him abounded in the area and prayer-services were being sung to him. A second solemn uncovering of the relics was held on August 27-28, 1833. On the eve the All-night Vigil Service with the blessing of bread was celebrated at the shrine of the Saint, and on the following day, after the Divine Liturgy and a prayer-service to St. Job, the relics were uncovered by the Archbishop of Volhynia and exposed to the veneration of the faithful. There followed a solemn procession with the relics and the wonderworking icon of the Mother of God. From this time forth St. Job began to be venerated by the Orthodox people as a saint, and his feast celebrated with special solemnity in the cave church before his shrine. In 1858 this part of the cave church (previously dedicated to St. Barbara) was made into a chapel dedicated to St. Job, and in 1862 the whole church was enlarged and dedicated anew to him.

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*Pochaev Monastery, together with its holy objects, has maintained a precarious existence up to the present day. The printing work of the Brotherhood of St. Job, on the other hand, is once more flourishing -- but now outside of Russia, in the midst of the Orthodox faithful providentially dispersed to all corners of the earth. Revived*

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after the Russian Revolution by Archimandrite Vitaly (Maximenko) in Czechoslovakia (see p. 100), the printing shop was later moved to Jordanville, N. Y., and it is today the primary source of Orthodox books in Russian and Slavonic, with some also in English. Two of Archimandrite Vitaly's students labored in post-war Europe. In Munich, Archimandrite Job (Leontiev, d. 1959) printed material in Russian and German in a new St. Job Monastery which became the center of the flourishing German mission. Archimandrite Vitaly (Ustinov) began a printing shop in London, which later moved with him to Holy Trinity Monastery in Sao Paulo, Brazil, then to Northville, Alta., Canada, where he established the Monastery of the Dormition, and finally to Montreal, where he is now Archbishop, and to Mansonville, Quebec, where he established the Holy Transfiguration Monastery. The brothers have produced a number of Orthodox books in Russian. In San Francisco the publication of *The Orthodox Word* was inspired by the example of the St. Job Brotherhood.

### TROPARION TO ST. JOB, TONE 4

Acquiring the patience of our long-suffering ancestor Job,  
Rivalling by thy continence the Baptist,  
And partaking of the Divine fervor of both,  
Thou wast enabled worthily to receive their names.  
Thou wast a fearless preacher of the true Faith,  
Thus bringing a multitude of monks to Christ  
And strengthening the whole people in Orthodoxy.  
O Saint Job our father,  
Pray that our souls may be saved.



THE MIRACULOUS ICONS  
OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

## THE POCHAEV MOTHER OF GOD

By E. POSELYANIN

**T**HIS ICON IS ONE of the most venerated of Russian Orthodox holy objects. Significant in itself, it has been made doubly significant by its location, standing as it does on the western border of Russia, between Orthodoxy and Catholicism. Around this icon Orthodox have fought for their faith and prayed for the strengthening of their zeal and perseverance. From the multitude of the miracles which have poured from it, it has become known throughout the whole Slavic world, and, together with Orthodox, many non-Orthodox Christians also venerate it.

The miracles worked by this icon are distinguished not only by their great number, but by their unusual nature as well. In the monastic books records have been preserved with the signatures of the very people who have been healed by the icon. There are cases of deliverance from incurable maladies, of rescue from captivity, of the enlightenment of sinners, and similar miracles.

## THE ORTHODOX WORD

The icon came to Pochaev Monastery over three centuries ago; but long before that Pochaev Mountain was marked by the grace of the Mother of God. Over five centuries ago, when the mountain was completely uninhabited, two monks came and settled in a small cave, and it is they who were witnesses of the miraculous appearance of the Mother of God. It was in 1340 that one of them, after saying his usual prayers, decided to climb to the top of the mountain. And suddenly he caught sight of the Mother of God standing on a rock, enveloped in flame. Without delay he called the other monk, who was also found worthy to behold the miraculous vision. It was seen also by a shepherd, John Bosoy. He ran up the hill, where he found both monks, and all three together gave glory to God. On the rock where the Mother of God had stood there was left the permanent impress of Her right foot, filled with water; from this miraculous spring many in the centuries since then have received healing.

When in 1559 the Greek Metropolitan Neophit was travelling through Volhynia from Constantinople, he visited Anna Goiskaya, who lived on an estate six miles from Pochaev, and at her request spent some time there as a guest. On his departure he left with her as a blessing an icon of the Mother of God which he had taken from Constantinople.

Signs began to appear from the icon; it was seen surrounded by light. Goiskaya placed before it an ever-burning lamp; and when, in 1597, it healed her brother Philip of his lameness, she gave the icon to the monks who had settled on Pochaev Mountain. She built a church on the mountain in honor of the Dermition of the Mother of God, and in connection with it established a coenobitic monastery, together with the means for its maintenance. It is from this time that the icon began to be called the "Pochaev" Mother of God.

After the death of Goiskaya, Pochaev Mountain passed to her nephew, Andrew Firley, a Lutheran and hater of Orthodoxy. He sacked the monastery and seized the icon, which he kept at his home for twenty years. On one occasion he decided to show his contempt for Orthodox holy objects. He invited guests and, having dressed his wife in the vestments of an Orthodox priest, placed a chalice in her hand, and she began loudly to blaspheme the Mother of God and Her icon. But she was immediately punished: an evil spirit took violent possession of her and tormented her until after her husband had finally returned the Pochaev icon to the monastery. This was in 1644.



### Troparion, Tone 5

*Those who pray before Thy holy icon, o Sovereign Lady, are made worthy of healing, receive understanding of the true faith, and repel the Tartar assault. Likewise for us who fall down before Thee, entreat forgiveness for our sins, enlighten our hearts with devout intents, and raise Thy prayer to Thy Son for our souls' salvation.*

## THE ORTHODOX WORD

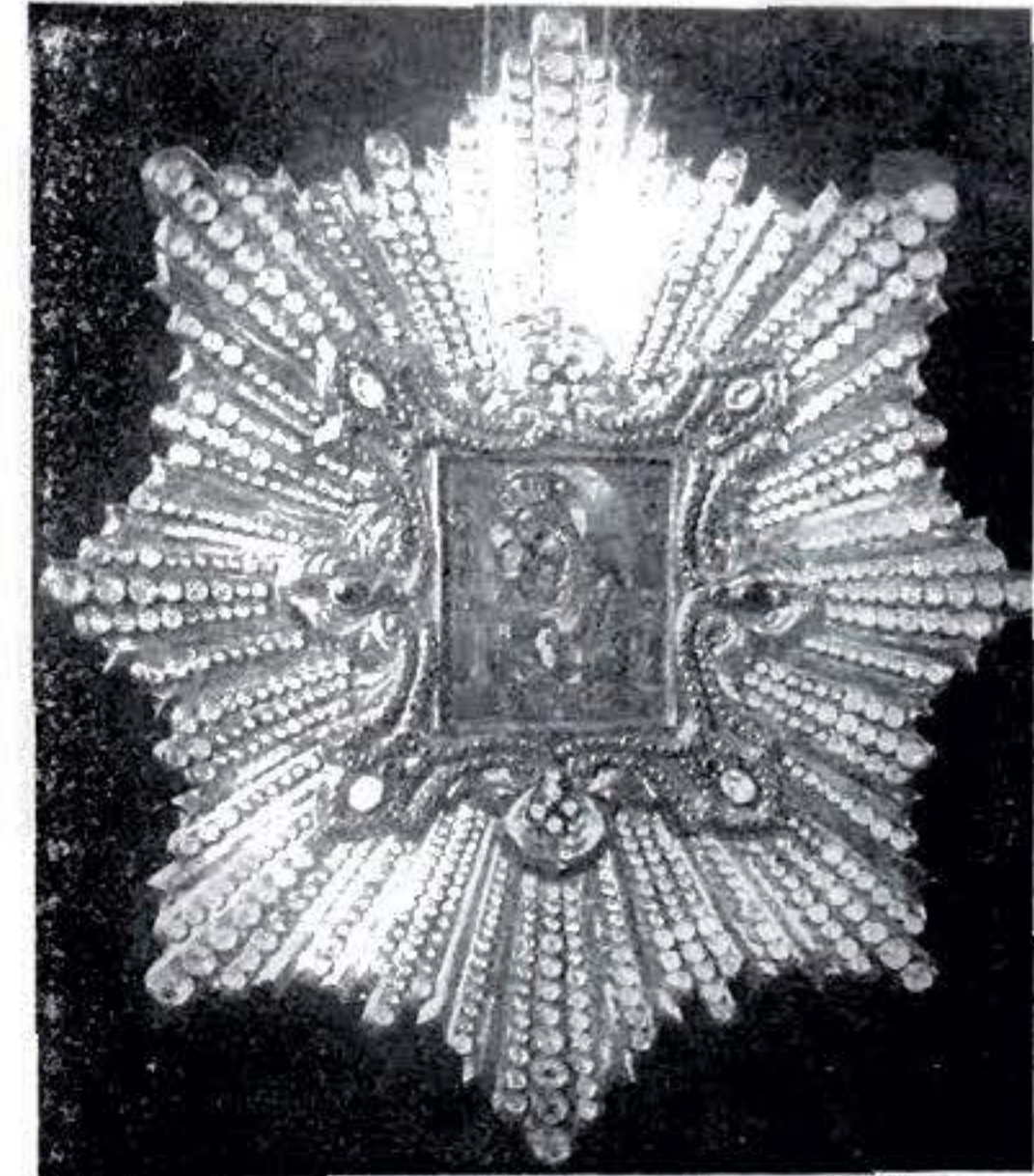
In five years the icon was transferred to the new Church of the Holy Trinity. Healings once more began to come from the icon; in particular on July 17, 1674, there were so many healings that it was as if the days of our Lord's earthly life had returned.

To the defenders of Her monastery the Mother of God displayed a marvellous assistance. In 1675 the Turks laid siege to Pochaev. The monastery was made up almost entirely of wooden buildings, and defense was difficult; the only hope lay in the Mother of God. With tears the monks prayed before Her image. The abbot ordered an acathist to be sung to the Mother of God, and no sooner had they begun to sing the first kontakion, *Queen of the Heavenly Host*, than there appeared in the sky above the church a wonderful apparition, immediately noticed by the Turks. In an aureole of brilliant light, blazing brighter than the sun, the Mother of God, in the form of a Woman of regal bearing, held up over Pochaev Her omophorion, as if covering the monastery with Her power. Around the Mother of God there was a multitude of angels in military dress with lightning-bearing swords in their hands; and beside Her was St. Job, earnestly praying to Her to save his monastery. The Turks let fly their arrows against this apparition, but the arrows began to turn back and strike those who had shot them; at this the Turks turned and fled in disarray, and the defenders of Pochaev sallied out and conclusively defeated them, taking many prisoners, some of whom later became Christians. Long afterwards the Turks could not forget this defeat. Fifty years later the Pochaev monk Gabriel was travelling through Constantinople and got into a conversation with a Turk. Hearing that the monk was from Pochaev, he asked, "And is your goddess still alive?" "She is alive and will ever live," replied the monk, understanding to Whom he was referring. "Your goddess is terrible!" cried the Turk in great agitation. "My father and many in our family were lost there. I was small then, but I will never forget this disaster."

In 1720 Pochaev, together with the icon, fell into Uniate hands. In place of the Church of the Trinity, which they took down, they built the spacious Cathedral of the Dormition. The miracles of the icon did not cease: in the 110 years it was in Uniate hands 539 miracles were recorded, and by no means all the miracles were entered in the annals.

In 1831, when the Union was dissolved, Pochaev returned to Orthodox hands and was designated a *lavra* (great monastery). The Catholics spread rumors that the wonderworking icon had left Pochaev and

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The original wonderworking icon of Pochaev, still located in the Monastery.

was located in a nearby Dominican monastery within the borders of Austria. But new and yet more healings of chronic diseases, restoration of sight to the blind, and strengthening of paralytics refuted these deceitful rumors.

Thus, in 1831 a blind girl, Anna Akimchukova, walked to Pochaev with her 70-year-old grandmother, from her village 130 miles away. After praying before the icon and washing her eyes with water from the Footprint of the Mother of God, she was suddenly able to see. Her grandmother, who was a Uniate, was so struck by the miracle that she became Orthodox right there.

In 1859 Emperor Alexander II, in memory of his visit to Pochaev, donated to the Church of the Dormition a high iconostasis. On the third tier, in a star-shaped case, the wonderworking icon was placed, with provision made for lowering it by means of a cord for those who wished to venerate it. The dimensions of the icon are not great: 11 by 9 inches.

The Mother of God is portrayed in half-stature. In her right hand is the Eternal Child, and in the left a kerchief. There are also on the icon seven small representations of various saints, which lead one to suppose that the icon belonged earlier to a family that had caused to be represented on the icon the saints whose names they bore.

At the entrance to the Cathedral of the Dormition, behind an iron grating, under a special canopy, there is the "Footprint of the Mother of God." In the same Cathedral there is preserved also another icon bearing the name of "Pochaev." It was placed there by some Kievans in memory of the deliverance of Kiev from cholera in 1848, and is also considered to be wonderworking. At the bottom of this icon there is a representation of the Footprint of the Mother of God. Such icons are known as those "with the Footprint," to distinguish them from those which have the figures of saints. Wonderworking copies of the Pochaev icon are located near Tobolsk and in Moscow. The Feast of the icon is celebrated at Pochaev on July 23, September 8, and on Friday of Easter Week.

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*E. Poselyanin was the pseudonym of Evgeny Nikolaevich Pogozev, a spiritual son and biographer of Starets Amvrossy of Optina, who blessed him to serve the Church through the medium of the printed word. He became a conservative publicist and editor, and wrote religious books on a popular level. His book on the miraculous icons of the Mother of God (St. Petersburg, about 1900), from which this article was taken, is a standard work on the subject. He died just before the Russian Revolution.*

*The following article (Orthodox Russia, Dec. 14, 1953) offers the testimony of a woman now living in San Francisco to a miracle performed by a simple copy of the Pochaev icon.*

#### HOW THE MOTHER OF GOD HEALED ME

In my childhood there crept into me a doubt about the existence of life after death. Although I believed in God, I gradually began to be light-minded about everything... Later, when I was grown up, I always considered myself a Christian; but I didn't pray at home, I stopped going to church, and I didn't receive Holy Communion for many years...

In 1947 I became ill with a pain in my left side. In Hong Kong the doctor diagnosed muscular rheumatism; with every day I became worse. Now I had constant pain in the head, neck, and left arm. I

couldn't turn my head to the left... My chest and back began to hurt so much that even breathing caused me pain, and I began to take short breaths. I became thin and a sickly-yellow color. I couldn't sleep and felt terribly weak. I took to bed and didn't get up for two months.

Once Mother told me in amazement that she had noticed in her room while praying a band of light around an icon of the Pochaev Mother of God which she had bought when I was ill as a child; she brought it to me and said: "Don't be sad; pray, and the Queen of Heaven will help you." She blessed me and hung the icon on a ribbon at the head of my bed. I paid no attention to what she said, since I had never believed in miracles and renewed icons.

My son (he was 10 years old then) was sleeping nearby on his own bed, and my husband was sleeping in the next room. Suddenly I began to feel suffocated, as if in a press... It seemed as if I were sinking down through the bed, as if a magnet were drawing me to the earth! I cried out to my husband, hoping he would call the doctor, but I couldn't utter a sound! All hope for any kind of help vanished. I thought: this must mean I am dying... But when I looked at my sleeping son, I was filled with pity; and as my last remaining hope I almost unconsciously took the icon in my right hand, and placing it with its face to my breast, I said silently; "Save me, Queen of Heaven, I so wish not to die!..." I didn't hope for any sudden miracle, but perhaps for a gradual healing--when suddenly I felt from the icon a kind of gentle burning, as if waves of warm air were pouring out of the icon into my breast. And suddenly the disease began literally to descend from the head downwards, and I immediately took a deep breath, something I wouldn't have dared dream of before. Raising the icon, I noticed that a marvellous light was coming from it in flashes... I realized instantly that I had been healed. With tears of joy I leaped out of bed, and running to my husband with the icon in my hands, I said: "Look, I am completely well, and this is Who healed me!" And as proof I turned my head and raised my left arm. We both wept on our knees... From the icon there came forth a marvellous, unearthly light, and weeping with joy we stood and prayed and marvelled almost the whole night.

In the morning I was pink-cheeked and without the slightest trace of yellow color. The illness never returned. The icon continued to shine for some time and was seen in this state by several believers.

To my stubborn unbelief and complete lack of attention to the Mother of God, she replied with the gift of life.

*Lidia Liu.*

## ARCHBISHOP VITALY

A TRUE DISCIPLE OF ST. JOB

1873 - 1960

By ABBOT LAURUS

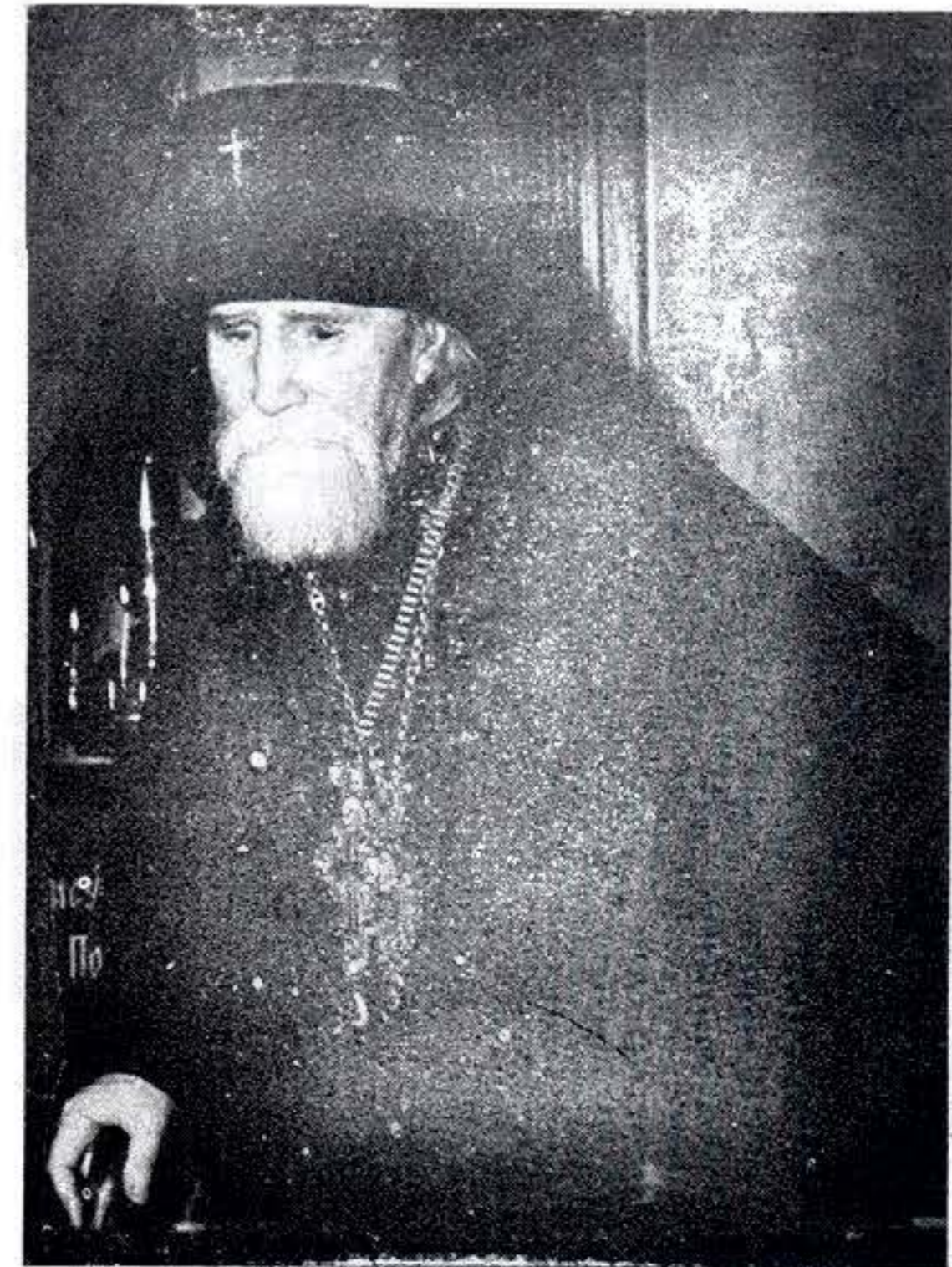
*Moved by St. Job's exemplary life and work, Archbishop Vitaly became a great missionary of the printed Orthodox word, which, beginning at Pochaev, he spread to the whole of Russia and the whole of the Russian diaspora.*

*The author of this brief biography entered the Brotherhood of St. Job as a child, and was for a number of years Archbishop Vitaly's cell-attendant. He is presently a lecturer at Holy Trinity Seminary and is writing a book on his Abba.*

**A**RCHBISHOP VITALY was born Basil Maximenko, the son of a poor deacon in the village of Glafirovka, district of Taganrog, on August 8, 1873. At the age of seven he lost both father and mother and, together with his six brothers and sisters, was settled with relatives. Basil lived at first with his aunt, a penniless widow, and then with an elder brother. After completing religious preparatory school, Basil went to the seminary at Ekaterinoslav, from which he graduated as one of the first in his class.

In his student years Basil was set apart by his exceptional reserve, modesty, and taciturnity. Christmas and Easter vacations he spent at school, having nowhere to go. Summers he stayed with his brother, but he received little kindness from his brother's wife and felt ill at ease there; and so he spent most of his time by himself, tending the bees or whittling.

After completing the seminary Basil went to the Kiev Theological Academy, where he studied for a year, and then to the Kazan Theological Academy, which he successfully completed. During his fourth year



The last portrait of Archbishop Vitaly, taken several weeks before his death.

at Kazan Basil decided, under the influence of the Rector of the Academy, Bishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky, later Metropolitan of Kiev and ultimately First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad), to become a monk. Despite Basil's ill-health -- he had tuberculosis and his days were considered numbered -- Bishop Anthony tonsured him (in 1899) and gave him the name Vitaly, which means "full of life," telling him, "You will live long." Upon completing the Academy Vitaly, now a hieromonk, was sent to teach in a missionary seminary in the Caucasus; his three-year residence there proved quite salutary for him, and he returned completely recovered.

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When Bishop Anthony was transferred to Volhynia he summoned Hieromonk Vitaly to himself for missionary work at Pochaev Monastery, placing him in charge of the printing works. There Vitaly, now an archimandrite, labored for twelve years from 1902, and in these years he transformed the small, impoverished printing works into an immense enterprise with 150 monk-laborers, utilizing every device of modern technology. Archimandrite Vitaly was inspired by the example of St. Job, the real founder of the printing works at Pochaev; he gave himself up wholly to the missionary work of printing, and in his hands it flourished. Metropolitan Anthony later, speaking of the activity of Archimandrite Vitaly at that time, said: "He slept little, often right at the printing press, somewhere underneath the machine, and he turned his archimandrite's cell into a regular dormitory for the monks." The exemplary printing works which was thus reestablished printed service books, textbooks, books and exhortations for the people, and missionary works, and issued five periodicals. These publications were popular throughout the whole of Russia.

Archimandrite Vitaly sowed the good seed not only by means of the printing press; his living word, too, resounded clearly and convincingly and was heard by the tens of thousands of the faithful who flocked to Pochaev from all parts of Russia. He built two sketes and several subsidiary monastery churches, and founded the Russian People's Union of Volhynia, which covered the whole of Volhynia with its network of cooperatives. Archimandrite Vitaly travelled throughout Volhynia with Church processions and raised the religious spirit of the people to a high level.

The outbreak of the war in 1914 forced Archimandrite Vitaly to evacuate most of the Pochaev printing works, but worse was yet to come; during the Revolution he was imprisoned and condemned to death by both Bolsheviks and Polish Catholics. Imprisoned by the Catholics for more than eight months in a damp, dark cell, beaten and mocked, he showed himself a worthy confessor of Holy Orthodoxy.

Largely through the efforts of Metropolitan Anthony, then living in Yugoslavia, Archimandrite Vitaly escaped from Poland and came to Belgrade; but he did not stay long there. Hearing that in the Carpathians there were Russians who, having been forcibly converted to Uniatism, were now turning toward Orthodoxy, he asked Metropolitan Anthony's blessing and set out for Czechoslovakia.

## ARCHBISHOP VITALY

In 1923, on the eve of the Annunciation, Archimandrite Vitaly arrived in the village of Vladimirova in the Carpathians, and there he labored for eleven years on a field untilled by anyone before him. Literally out of nothing, through his own and his monks' blood and sweat, he built a monastery and a large stone church and reestablished the Pochaev printing works in an impressive building of its own. Soon Russians abroad were being supplied with service books and religious literature. In 1928 the publication of a journal, *Orthodox Carpathian Russia*, still published today as *Orthodox Russia*, was begun. At the same time Archimandrite Vitaly engaged in the great missionary labor of converting the local Russian population from Uniatism to Orthodoxy.

Many times Archimandrite Vitaly refused the rank of bishop, and it was only the necessity to support the canonical Church in North America that finally led him to heed the plea of his infirm Abba, Metropolitan Anthony, and be consecrated bishop in 1934. His peacemaking activity in the United States did much to end the schism which had existed in the Church there since 1926; unity was restored in 1935. The new schism which occurred at the end of the Second World War was very painful for him. He did not dream that Metropolitan Theophilus would permit the North American parishes to leave the Church Outside of Russia and submit to the protege of Stalin, "Patriarch" Alexis; but that is just what happened at the Cleveland Sobor.

Archbishop Vitaly bore valiantly the first blows of the new schism, when he lost several parishes he himself had founded, and with his native perseverance and organizing ability put things once more in order in his vast diocese. Together with the ruling archbishops who remained, Tikhon, Isasaph, and Ieronim, he strengthened the canonical Church in North America. He prepared the transfer of Metropolitan Anastasy and the Synod of the Church Outside of Russia to North America, arranging for this purpose a residence in New York. He worked untiringly on the organization of his own diocese, and besides this devoted much time to his own offspring -- Holy Trinity Monastery and Holy Trinity Seminary at Jordanville, N. Y.

The Monastery was founded before Archbishop Vitaly's arrival in the United States, but after his arrival he took it under his own care. After the Second World War he sent for the fourteen monks from the monastery at Vladimirova, headed by Bishop Seraphim. At the new monastery in America he united to veneration of the Holy Trinity veneration



The Pochaev Lavra

of the former patron of their printing work, St. Job, "the Divinely-wise teacher of monks' industrious life..." Thus, in a new place Archbishop Vitaly again took up the holy work of St. Job -- the printing of service books, allowing every Orthodox parish abroad to have the books necessary to perform all services.

The existence of Holy Trinity Seminary is completely bound up with Archbishop Vitaly. He was the first to understand the importance of raising future pastors in a strict monastic environment. The work thus begun has grown and is now flourishing.

At the initiative of Archbishop Vitaly there is being built in Jackson (formerly Cassville), New Jersey, a splendid memorial church dedicated to St. Vladimir, Equal to the Apostles and Enlightener of the Russian people. In his last years he devoted himself to this undertaking with special enthusiasm. In his will he asked to be buried in this memorial church.

On the 8th (21st) of March, 1960, at 8:30 in the evening, Archbishop Vitaly quietly and painlessly departed to eternity... leaving behind a vivid and inspiring legacy for posterity which is to bring forth fruits in the Lord's Harvest.

Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, N. Y.



## AN APPEAL FROM POCHAEV TODAY

*The following letter<sup>1</sup> is one of several appeals which have been received in the free world from the persecuted Orthodox Christians of Russia. They present a vivid picture of the terrible trials to which the satanic Bolshevik government is subjecting our brothers in faith, in particular at Pochaev, which stands again as a spiritual center and bulwark of the Orthodox faith.*

TO THE EASTERN PATRIARCHS OF JERUSALEM,  
ANTIOCH, CONSTANTINOPLE, AND OTHERS

From the parishioners and pilgrims of  
Orthodox churches and of all Russia

### *A Petition*

Humbly bending our knees before Your Eminences, we implore:

In 1959 the Antichrist in Russia began a terrible persecution of the Orthodox Church. To begin with, by a directive of Kuroyedov, representative of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, and notwithstanding the protests of parents, all over Russia and even in Moscow children of school and pre-school age who served bishops in church were dismissed. In 1960 in the city of Minsk, in the White Russian Republic, it was officially forbidden to bless the graves after Easter, and in all White Russia the prices on icons, candles, and, other goods sold to parishioners at candle stands in churches were lowered, with the aim of depriving churches of income and closing them. In the same year the main church in Minsk was closed and torn down, and in 1962 the church in Senitzka, five kilometers from Minsk, was closed.<sup>2</sup>

In 1961 by official authorization children from three to eighteen years of age were forbidden to receive Holy Communion or to enter a

1. Translated from the Russian newspaper *Posev*, May 8, 1964; slightly abbreviated.

2. Between 1960 and 1965 three of the five churches remaining in Minsk were closed. In the same period fully half of the churches in the Soviet Union were closed (*trans. note*).

church. Using as their pretext the fact that the schools have assumed responsibility for the education of children, the harrassment of our children has reached such a degree that Lavrienko, authorized by the provincial authorities, stands at the door of the Minsk Cathedral and observes whether any children enter the church; and if he discovers any children in church, he orders the church warden Sila Velichko, and that servant of Antichrist takes the children by the collar and beats their heads against the wall, which is what happened to the widow Sviridovich's child Tolik, who didn't want to leave the church.

Tolik's mother, Sophia Sviridovich, a former partisan, gave all her health for her country and now is very sick. She herself is deeply religious, she goes to the Orthodox church and brings her children to church; she is bringing her children up in a religious spirit, at home she receives pilgrims and for this she and her children have been subjected to a terrible persecution. First an investigator came to her and tried to take her away, together with her icons and religious books. Then some unknown people tried to get into her room in the middle of the night. Finally officials came to take her children away to a boarding school, saying: Now they are making boarding schools with high walls for religious children, so that they will be completely isolated from their parents. Always the children would raise a cry and neighbors would come to her defence, and these attempts were unsuccessful. To save her children Sviridovich has now gone off to some unknown place.

Likewise Feodosia Varavva of Minsk, who raises her children in a religious manner and takes them to an Orthodox church, has been subjected to a terrible persecution because of her children. Orlova, the director of School No. 18 in Minsk, where Varavva's children study, has called Varavva to school several times to keep her from taking her children to church. The director said to her: You are crippling your children by raising them in a religious manner; but when Varavva remained unbending and said to Orlova, I've been taking my children to church and I'll keep on taking them, then Orlova said to her: We will put you on trial for crippling your children by raising them in a religious manner; we will take your children off to a boarding school and put you under medical supervision and send you to a psychiatric hospital.

Under such conditions of persecution the antichrists do not allow us to raise our children in a religious manner; everywhere demonic nets are set to destroy our children. Unbeliever teachers and students all try

to entice our children away from church. And what can be more ruinous for our children than if they are turned away from the source of eternal life, the Church and Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ?

For a whole year the parents of the city of Minsk have petitioned the civil authorities not to turn their children out of church and not to turn them away from Communion of the Holy Mysteries of Christ. They have personally gone to Moscow to Kuroyedov's office, they have appealed to Brezhnev, to Khrushchev, to the newspaper *Izvestia*, but the Moscow authorities haven't listened to our pleas. We appealed to the Patriarch, and he gave instructions to give Communion to the children and let them visit churches; but the Minsk clergy gave in to the Antichrist and don't carry out the Patriarch's orders.

On the 20th of May, new style, 1963, was the feast-day of the church in the village of Zhirovitsa -- the Appearance of the Zhirovitsa Icon of the Mother of God. For the feast many believers gathered from all parts of Russia, but the district officials came and prohibited the service. Besides that, the same year the district officials stopped recruitment for the seminary at the Zhirovitsa Monastery by going to the applicants and frightening them so much that none applied.

Pochaev Monastery, both monks and pilgrims, is also being subjected to a terrible persecution by the antichrists. The authorities constantly harrass pilgrims, they took away the inn at the monastery and they've forbidden residents of Pochaev to give lodging to any believers, under threat of being sent away from Pochaev. We'll give here the case of the barbaric treatment of a poor widow, Claudia Rubtsova, who lives in Pochaev village.

Rubtsova herself is an invalid with three small children. This poor widow is constantly persecuted by the atheists, especially by the Pochaev militia, because she gives overnight lodging to believers who come to the monastery. Many times she has been fined by the militia. On July 1, 1963, some pilgrims asked her for lodging. She took them in, and at 10 or 11 at night she was visited by Alexandra Golubova, who watches Pochaev residents to see who gives lodging to believers, and then right away brings the militia. So it was this time, Golubova brought a representative of the passport division, and he threw the believers out on the street right in the middle of the night. Rubtsova was fined ten rubles and given over to public trial. At her trial the head of the militia said: Rubtsova should be killed for giving lodging to

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believers; if she keeps on doing it we'll close up her broken-down hut and send her away from Pochaev. And so Rubtsova was fined ten rubles and warned that if she ever gave lodging to believers again she would be sent away from Pochaev.

Besides the Rubtsova case there was a Pochaev monk, Father Serapion, 97 years old, who asked for lodging in June, 1963. While he was walking to Pochaev Monastery, on the road the militia seized him and interrogated him for a whole week and finally ordered him to leave Pochaev. He went to the rector of the monastery, Archimandrite Bartholomew, with instructions from the Patriarchate allowing him to stay at the monastery where he had lived for forty years, but the rector not only didn't take him in, he even pushed him out of the monastery. And so this 97-year-old monk went out into the world to seek shelter for himself.

Despite the terrible persecution the militia is conducting at Pochaev, pilgrims love Pochaev Monastery very much and come from every corner of Russia to venerate its holy objects. The residents of Pochaev are afraid to give lodging to believers, so the pilgrims started sleeping beside the monastery churches, under any bush that would give them shelter. Then, on the night of July 18-19, 1963, the militia drove two trucks on to the monastery lands and was going to catch the pilgrims and take them off, but the pilgrims found out about it and ran away in every direction.

On July 31, 1963, a monk, Fr. Michael, was tried in Pochaev for breaking the passport laws and vagrancy, but actually because he was staying at Pochaev Monastery and praying to God. He is 72 years old now and an invalid; he came to Pochaev for repentance and to devote his remaining years to the salvation of his soul, but the Pochaev militia wouldn't even listen to this, they tore up his application for a visa to stay in Pochaev and ordered him to leave. Fr. Michael replied that he would never leave Pochaev Monastery. And so on July 31, 1963, Fr. Michael was tried. He was accused of leading a vagabond life, of speculating in crosses and icons, of cheating the people, of begging money from believers -- but all this was slander. These slanders didn't hold up in court, and they finally had to convict him of breaking the passport laws. He was sentenced to four months at hard labor, after the prosecutor had asked for a year.

## AN APPEAL FROM POCHAEV TODAY

The Pochaev monks -- these are the sufferers of the Russian land. In the past year many of the monks of Pochaev Monastery have had their passports taken from them and they've been driven out of the monastery by force; they lead a wandering life and have no place to lay their head. Some monks from Pochaev were sent to parishes in the country -- and in these parishes the atheists closed the churches, and the monks were left without a roof over their head. Other monks, who couldn't leave their beloved Pochaev, were tried and put in prison, and once their prison term was up they returned to the monastery. The local militia won't register them, but threatens them with even longer prison terms. The antichrists do this in order to close Pochaev Monastery. To these lawless acts our government pays no attention, and even gives occasion for them.

We, the pilgrims of Pochaev Monastery of all ages, our hearts can't bear to look at the wandering and homeless life of the Pochaev monks when they meet and ask each other where they managed to spend the night. May Your humble and pious hearts look on this and share this great sorrow of the wandering life of the Pochaev monks. In tears we implore You, help the monks who have been driven out of Pochaev to be registered again at the monastery.

We can't be silent about the barbarous humiliation of another monk, Abbot Joseph. He is 70 years old. In September, 1963, Fr. Joseph was beaten nearly to death by the atheist hangmen, his mouth was stuffed with rags so he wouldn't cry out, and they sent him to a psychiatric hospital. By God's mercy he was released, and he returned to Pochaev Monastery, but the Pochaev militia wouldn't register him and wouldn't let him live at the monastery, but ordered him to leave Pochaev. He found refuge in a nearby village. Fr. Joseph is a great man of prayer and our spiritual and bodily physician, by his prayers he has driven out demons and healed every kind of sickness; and so we all love Fr. Joseph, and wherever he is to be found people seek him out and appeal for his help in their sickness. But the local militia won't let him live, they persecute him because sick people come to him, they are against everything good and constantly persecute Fr. Joseph and the people who come to him and threaten Fr. Joseph with prison. And on July 16, 1963, in the evening many sick people came to Fr. Joseph seeking their salvation. The same evening the militia came and seized all the sick people, and Fr. Joseph had to hide himself from the militia.

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We, the pilgrims of all Russia, implore You to defend this 70-year-old monk, so he can return to Pochaev Monastery and spend his remaining years serving for the good of the people.

In order to close Pochaev Monastery, the local authorities--antichrists--have had recourse to other methods, acting secretly. It has been forbidden to bring firewood for the churches on to the monastery lands, and the cells of the monks are not heated in winter; as a result the monks and pilgrims are freezing with cold. Besides this the Pochaev monks have been forbidden to sell crosses and icons, incense and other religious articles, of which the people are in very great need. The monastery sells candles for a nominal price, without profit, and the local authorities have forbidden the monastery to make its own candles. The monastery cemetery has gone to ruin, the cemetery church was closed by the local authorities, and the priest-monk and the caretakers who lived at the cemetery in a house built by the monastery were all moved out and in their place some workers were moved in upstairs, and an office put in downstairs. The skete depending on Pochaev Monastery was closed in 1959; they turned the monks' cells into a sanatorium, and in the churches they opened clubs and a movie-house.

Twelve kilometers from Pochaev is located Holy Mountain, on which there is a healing spring. Your heart bleeds when you go to this spring, the whole place has been defiled and lies in ruins; the churches are closed, all the crosses have been burned or taken down by the local authorities. The healing spring has been dug up by excavators. Here on Holy Mountain there was a church on a rock. The local authorities burned it down and blew up the rock. Eight kilometers from Holy Mountain was the holy spring of the righteous St. Anne, with a small church above it; the local authorities have torn down the church and filled up the spring with stones.

In order the sooner to close churches and abolish the Orthodox faith, the government secretly prepares its own atheist-communists for the priesthood, sends them as rectors of churches, places them as bishops and priests. Other members of the clergy, through the weakness of their will, have become the servants of the Antichrist.

Sermons in churches have been forbidden by the Antichrist. Those members of the clergy who stand for the apostolic traditions are given no chance to live by the Antichrist and by those of the clergy who have submitted to the Antichrist. The Orthodox Church is in great danger.

## AN APPEAL FROM POCHAEV TODAY

Out of the Orthodox Church the antichrists can make a heretical Church; it is nothing for the Antichrist to change even the Creed -- of which there has already been a rumor. Only the Pochaev monks and a small number of the clergy stand firmly for the apostolic traditions and don't give in an inch to the Antichrist--and these true pastors the Antichrist won't let live. We can't be silent about our true pastors, the monks of Pochaev Monastery; despite the terrible humiliations the Antichrist has subjected them to, they have not left and are not leaving their monastery, and by their courage and patience they strengthen the weak will of us sinful, unworthy slaves of God; they are like a bright sun warming us by their prayers.

We will give one more case of the harassments of the Pochaev militia. On August 5-6 the Pochaev militia again went from house to house and threw out whatever pilgrims they discovered. Ekaterina Krasnova of Minsk, who is in poor health, was thrown out on the street in the middle of the night and had her health certificate taken away, and she sat and shivered from cold on the edge of town until morning.

We earnestly implore You to forbid the local militia from taking money from churches and monasteries and using the money we've contributed for building movie-houses and theaters, because Church and State are separated and they don't have any right to interfere in the Church's affairs; the money we've contributed should go for the needs of the monasteries and churches.

We should inform You that the Zhirovitsa Monastery on the frontier is closed, and with love we earnestly implore You to look into this and not allow the monastery to be closed. Since Pochaev Monastery was built not only with Russian money, but on the donations of foreign governments too, with tears we implore You to take under Your control our beloved Pochaev Monastery and forbid the government from interfering in the affairs of the monastery and all the churches. Ask the government for the brochure, "The Communist Party and the Soviet Government on Religion and the Church," published in Moscow in 1961; on pages 33, 52, 13, 44, 73, 90, and 89 all the Soviet laws on the Church are set forth.

We'll give one more case of the barbaric harassment of Orthodox parishioners and priests. On a feast-day this summer in the city of Goren, while the priest was celebrating Liturgy some atheists shouted "Fire!" The people were thrown into a fright and rushed for the doors,

## THE ORTHODOX WORD

and five people were crushed to death and fifteen seriously injured, and the innocent priest is being put on trial. There was a similar case two years ago in the city of Slutsk at the Easter Liturgy; some atheists threw in a smouldering piece of wood, and in the confusion there were people killed and injured.

Your Holinesses, we have full confidence in Your great and attentive assistance.

### Signatures.

*Some months after the above letter, three more letters from believers in the Soviet Union reached the free world (complete text of all three in Posev, Jan. 7, 1965). They were addressed to the same Eastern Patriarchs and to the United Nations; two of them were from individual believers, and one "from the Orthodox Christians of all Russia." From the latter we shall summarize here some information of general interest concerning recent persecutions of Orthodox believers.*

There have been more attacks of the militia on monks and pilgrims at Pochaev Monastery: books, crosses, icons, and money have been seized and pilgrims driven out of the monastery. A monk at Pochaev, Subdeacon Andrew, was sentenced to a year in prison for refusing to leave the monastery when ordered to do so by the militia, and later to three years for writing a complaint to the United Nations about the persecution of the Pochaev monks. In the process he was put to torture, both in the "rubber shirt"<sup>1</sup> and by an electric shock treatment.

The Chernigov Convent has been closed and the nuns forced to leave; those who had nowhere to go were put in prison or in a concentration camp. Archbishop Andrew of Chernigov was sentenced to 8 or 10 years for refusing to authorize this act.

The infamous concentration camp for bishops and clergy at the former Solovetsky Monastery on the White Sea has been moved to the Steppes beside the Aral Sea. About 30,000 monks and clergy are imprisoned there behind barbed wire.

The persecutions of the militia have failed to close Pochaev Monastery; pilgrims continue to flock to it. The Pochaev militia has accordingly stepped up its campaign of terror, which now includes sexual assaults of nuns and young girls who visit the monastery. In the autumn

1. The latest and most effective Soviet torture device. When inflated the "rubber shirt" crushes the chest and causes a pain said to be more intense than that of any other form of torture; and it leaves no traces for later investigators.

## AN APPEAL FROM POCHAEV TODAY

of 1963 an elderly nun was assaulted and sent to the hospital. A young girl was terrorized for four hours by the head of the militia and was only saved from assault by constantly screaming for help to the Mother of God, at Whose name her attacker recoiled each time as from fire.

In June, 1964, at Pochaev a young girl, Martha, who had at different times been imprisoned for being a believer, was martyred for the name of God. She was found in an attic by the head of the passport division and others and thrown out, badly injuring her side. They chased her into the garden, and there she was subjected to monstrous crimes. According to believers she was assaulted many times. She lost consciousness in the garden and only regained it later in the hospital; no one was allowed to visit her, and in a few days she died. When her body was washed, her arms were found to be twisted out of their sockets, her cheeks were pierced through on both sides, and one buttock was black from a severe injury. No one, neither her mother nor her friends, was allowed at the autopsy, where it was declared that she had died from "tuberculosis".

The letter appeals for an investigation by the United Nations of the death of Martha and of a number of other specific cases of persecution, asking only that the investigation not be entrusted to "our barbarians", the Soviet government.

## THE REACTION TO THE POCHAEV APPEALS

These appeals of the Orthodox Christians of Russia cry out to the conscience of the whole world. Fortunately, there has been some attempt to make them known in the free world. There have been articles on them and citations from them in the press of Western Europe and America, in particular after the press-conference given by Archbishop Anthony of Geneva (Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia) on December 16, 1964, at which the texts of the three later letters were distributed. The reaction of the Soviet government, anxious as it is to pass itself off on the world as a legitimate and "peace-loving" government, was immediate. On December 20 Moscow Radio broadcast a TASS report on a "conversation with Metropolitan Pimen" (reproduced in full in *Posev*, Feb. 5, 1965) concerning the press-conference of Archbp. Anthony. Earlier there appeared in English, in *One Church*, the journal of the Exarchate of the Moscow Patriarch in America (Sept.-Dec., 1964), a "Statement of Byelo-Russian Clergy and Laity," which was a response to the

earlier letter printed above. These two apologies for the Soviet regime are marked by a stereotyped argument and a wooden spirit obviously dictated by the Soviet authorities themselves. To the unprejudiced eye they only reinforce the impression left by the original letters.

In these statements the charges of the believers are denied in general, but only two or three specific charges are answered, and that unconvincingly. Both statements attempt primarily to cover up the charges with counter-accusations. The appeals are meant "to kindle political enmity between East and West" and prolong the "cold war"; in addition, Archbp. Anthony is a "schismatic". If churches have been destroyed, it is the "Fascist German aggressors" who are responsible, or else the "reconstruction" made necessary by the War; everything done by the Soviet government before the War, and much since then, is conveniently covered up by this charge. In short, if the situation of the Church today is not perfect, it is anyone and everyone *except the Soviet government* that is responsible; any persecution whatever is denied. According to the statement in *One Church*, believers in the Soviet Union "freely satisfy the requirements of their religious needs, as is guaranteed by Soviet law"; according to Metr. Pimen, "believers in the USSR have no need of defence. Their rights are protected by the Constitution of the USSR."

The cruelty and cynicism of such a statement are appalling. They cannot possibly be excused by ignorance, for the largest part of our information on the closing of churches and the persecution of believers comes from the Soviet press itself. The conclusion is inescapable: these Orthodox "pastors" are living, from whatever motives, to protect the Soviet State and in actual fact to help continue the persecution of the Church. The scorn in which the believers themselves hold such "pastors" may be seen in the letter printed above; one of the later letters, in addition, singles out Metropolitans Pimen and Nikodim as "our red-robed Metropolitans" and "wolves in sheep's clothing."

Can it still be seriously maintained by any Christians in the free world, and especially by any members of the free Orthodox Churches, that communion with such "pastors" is possible? One must choose: to support, in any way, the puppets of Communism, who serve the ultimate aim of the complete liquidation of religion; or to stand with the persecuted believers who, in a spirit of true Christian witness (actually giving their own names and exact addresses), have dared to tell the world what is really happening today behind the Iron Curtain.

## ON PURITY OF HEART AND SOUL

By PAISSY VELICHKOVSKY  
1722 - 1794

*Starets Paissy, responsible for the spiritual reawakening that swept Russia during the last two centuries and gave rise to an abundance of as yet uncanonized saints, is introduced here by a passage from his book, Lilies of the Field, taken from Archbishop Vitaly's Pochaev periodical The Russian Monk.*

**P**URITY OF HEART, mind, and soul is attained by a life of much labor, through spiritual effort, for the heart is purified by sorrows, by the most difficult spiritual and bodily virtues: by hunger, thirst, vigils, and other means... From filthy, passionate desires are born bodily passions, that is, lust. But from purity of soul and fasting with prayer, the mind is purified of filthy thoughts and fantasies. Through purity of mind the soul is liberated from its passions and is enlightened; and from purity of soul comes mental sight. Unless we have purity of heart, mind, and soul, that is, passionlessness, the demons venture to enter into us, they disturb us and display in us deception (*prelest*) in place of truth. For only by a pure heart, soul, and mind may the Mental Sun be contemplated.

One must apply oneself with special diligence to fasting and unceasing prayer, so that prayer may descend to the depths of the heart and purify it from the passions of the soul and body and enlighten the soul, bringing delight, assuagement, and joy, and driving away filthy thoughts and mental fantasies. When in such a way a man's heart, mind, soul, and body are purified, grace comes to dwell in him; the door is closed to demons and passions, and he begins to sense a spiritual sweetness. As long as the natural movements of the body are undiminished and arouse in the heart sinful pleasure and prevent the bodily senses from being purified in this life; as long as the mind has not been liberated

from dark, filthy fantasies and the soul has not been delivered from passions, -- for so long will the sweetness of grace fail to be awakened in a man, and he will not perceive the Divine in his soul.

The beginning of purity is non-acquiescence to sin of mind, and its end is mortification, a being dead to sin of body. Impurity of the heart consists of lustful pleasure and sinful excitement in the heart; impurity of the body, of a falling into sin in act. Impurity of mind consists of filthy thoughts; and impurity of soul, of various passions of the soul, when the soul loves something immoderately and is beguiled by it.

If a person labors with his body and achieves certain virtues, but neglects the ordering of his heart, does not fervently devote himself to mental activity (mindfulness) and does not concern himself with sobriety of soul, -- then he is like someone who gathers with one hand and scatters with the other; for bodily labors are only the beginning of the spiritual path, while internal sobriety of the heart, activity of the mind,<sup>1</sup> and an ordered soul are its end. Bodily labors without internal ordering and mindfulness are like dry leaves. Therefore we neither reach perfection nor receive grace if we do not know where to begin the spiritual life, what constitutes its middle and its end, and in what consists the essence and foundation of the virtues; and until we realize this we shall continue at one and the same time to labor and to undo the results of our labor.

Understand, O man, where the spiritual life begins, whence the virtues arise, and through what it is that the passions find easy entry into us; and then your soul will be soon enlightened. But without this beginning you will be sowing seed into the sea, and it will always be wasted.

1. *I.e.*, the Jesus Prayer (*trans. note*).

## ORTHODOXY IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

### DEATH OF METROPOLITAN ANASTASY

The Most Blessed Metropolitan Anastasy, Honorary Chairman of the Synod and Council of Bishops and former First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, died on Saturday, May 9 (22), at 8:45 p.m. in his residence at the Synod building in New York City.

Metr. Anastasy died during the celebration of the All-night Vigil Service at the Synodal Cathedral. Metr. Philaret, the chief celebrant, was called to the bedside of the dying hierarch, and himself read the concluding prayer of the canon recited "on the departure of the soul from the body, during which Metr. Anastasy died as Bishop Nektary made the sign of the Cross over him with the miraculous Kursk icon of the Mother of God. Metr. Philaret returned to church, concluded the Vigil Service, and immediately celebrated the first requiem service

for the deceased. Then, once more in the deceased Metropolitan's cell, he celebrated, together with bishops and clergy, the service read "after the departure of the soul." The vesting of the deceased hierarch in episcopal vestments followed, attended by the singing of the hymns of the Easter canon. Metr. Philaret thereupon began the reading of the Gospel, and this was continued by the clergy without interruption. At 2 a.m. the body of Metr. Anastasy was transferred to the Synodal Cathedral. All hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia were notified of his death. Burial was on the following day at the Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville, New York.

A biography of Metr. Anastasy and a Life of his patron saint will be contained in the next issue of *The Orthodox Word*.

### FIRST STATEMENT OF METROPOLITAN PHILARET ON THE AMERICAN METROPOLIA

On Sunday evening, June 14 (27), in San Francisco Metr. Philaret, who is now staying at his summer residence in Burlingame, Calif., delivered a brief but important address in which he for the first time publicly discussed the question of the American Metropolia and its relation to the Church Outside of Russia. The address was made at the conclusion of a solemn acathist celebrated in the new

Russian Orthodox Cathedral in San Francisco by visiting hierarchs and the entire clergy of the San Francisco area to the visiting Kursk icon of the Mother of God.

The Metropolitan began his remarks by emphasizing the necessity of being true to the spiritual testament of the late Metr. Anastasy: faithfulness to the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. There can be no change in the Church of

Christ, and every faithful child of the Church must uphold all her canons and traditions; it is impossible either to modify or to abrogate any of them.

He had not previously spoken, said the Metropolitan, of a certain matter, but recent unwarranted attacks on our Church and her hierarchs now made it necessary to speak of it. (We may supply here the context which the Metropolitan did not need to supply his audience: the hierarchs of the Church Outside of Russia have been accused of a lack of "charity" in refusing to take any official notice of the recent death of Metr. Leonty, head of the American Metropolia; in the view of these accusers, the difference between the two Churches is over no essential matter and is maintained only because of petty personal animosities.) The Metropolitan outlined briefly the history of the schism of the American Metropolia. The Church unity that prevailed from 1935 to 1946 was broken in the latter year when the Metropolia left the Mother Church, the Church Outside of Russia, and appealed to and accepted the "Patriarch"

#### EASTER SERVICES IN THE USSR, 1965

Characteristic of the Easter celebrations this year in the USSR was an increase in anti-religious demonstrations. In the Patriarchal Cathedral in Moscow the Church procession was met by drunken hooligans, who threw stones and attempted, by indecent songs, guitar-playing, and other means, to drown out the Easter hymns. Some drunken activists

of Moscow as her legitimate head. Later, it is true, the Metropolia found it impossible to accept the conditions imposed by the "Patriarch" and she left the Patriarchal Church, without, however, returning to the Church Outside of Russia. The subsequently self-proclaimed "autocephalicity" of the Metropolia is uncanonical, being directly opposed to the universal Orthodox practice governing the relation of a Mother Church to her daughter Churches. The Russian Church, for example, was for centuries in a state of dependence upon her Mother Church in Constantinople, even when she had become larger than the Mother Church. It is the duty of the Metropolia, if she desires to repair the schism, to petition to return to the Mother Church from which she cut herself off; only then can there be serious talk of reunion.

The remarks of the Metropolitan offered a welcome clarity and preciseness to a subject that has been obscured in some circles by wishful thinking and simple ignorance.

managed to get inside the Cathedral, but they were removed. The mounted militia attempted to preserve order and keep hooligans out of the Cathedral, it being obviously not in the interests of the government to allow such a demonstration to be seen by foreign diplomats and correspondents.

Even coarser demonstrations occurred

at the Holy Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius near Moscow. Crowds of drunken activists stopped automobiles on the road from Moscow, subjecting the occupants (many of them foreigners) to humiliations and indecent songs and not allowing them to continue. At the monastery itself hooligans interfered with the services in every way possible.

At the Vladimir Cathedral in Kiev the Church procession was abandoned this year, in view of demonstrations in previous years. A group of 2000-3000 komсомol youth gathered outside, and when they discovered there was to be no procession they tried in their anger to break into the Cathedral. Several hundred drunken youths of both sexes managed to do so; they sang their own songs during the service, replied to the greeting of the clergy, "Christ is risen!" with wild bellying and catcalls, and attempted to knock believers down. A group of 10 or 15 attempted to break into the altar to disrupt the services, but they were prevented from doing this. Despite all this,

#### THE "CONVOCAION OF RELIGION FOR WORLD PEACE"

If the spiritual atmosphere in the mid-20th century may be summed up in a single phrase, perhaps it is this: spiritual fruits are desired without the spiritual labors necessary to attain them. So it is that the air is full of "religious" expressions such as "peace," "brotherhood," "love," which, owing to a universal ignorance or rejection of genuine spiritual life are seldom more than empty words.

the services were not interrupted for a single minute, the choir continued to sing and believers to pray, paying no attention to the hooligans and offering no resistance to them. After an hour of such disturbances, the demonstrators began gradually to disperse, so that the end of the Easter services, the Divine Liturgy itself, proceeded in peace. During this whole time the militia was nowhere to be seen.

It is difficult to say whether all these drunken demonstrations, in which komсомol youth directly participated, were organized by the authorities themselves or only allowed by them, or were even the work of extremist atheist elements who were dissatisfied with the temporary slackening of anti-religious persecutions that followed Khushchev's fall.

*Posev*, May 21, 1965

Another source (*Posev*, May 7) indicates that nearly half of the 15,000 attending the service at the Holy Trinity Lavra were young people under 20, who stood with the rest of the congregation for the whole five hours of the service.

A typically "religious" phenomenon of the times was the "Convocation of Religion for World Peace" held on June 27 of this year in San Francisco, in connection with the sessions commemorating the 20th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. Hindu, Buddhist, Moslem, Jewish, Protestant, Catholic, -- and, regrettably, Orthodox -- speakers discussed the "religious" foundation for

world peace; interspersed were hymns of all faiths sung by a 2000-voice "inter-faith" choir. The Catholic Archbishop of San Francisco was chairman; more than 10,000 people attended.

All speakers praised the high ideal of "peace"; all were at one in following the "ecumenist" dictum: stress that which unites, not that which divides. But what precisely is it here that unites, and what that divides?

What unites is, in the Catholic Archbishop's words, "the universal yearning of all mankind for just and lasting peace"--that is to say, not something specifically Christian, but something "universal" and frankly worldly, something in which the atheist persecutors in the USSR, who are included in every ecumenist plan, can also believe. (The Soviet ambassador to the United Nations, while not attending the "Convocation," was invited to lunch before it by the Presbyterian Church leaders who attended.) What primarily divides men, here as elsewhere in the contemporary world, is--Christianity itself.

The canons of the Orthodox Church forbid prayer and religious communion with heretics and schismatics; how much more, then, with adherents of entirely alien religions, including one (Buddhism) which believes in no God and whose followers are hence specifically subject to the first of the anathemas of Orthodoxy Sunday. Orthodox Christianity stands apart from and opposed to every one of the world's religions; the Orthodox

Church alone preaches the complete truth of God's purpose for man and provides the sufficient means for attaining it; only in and through the Orthodox Church is eternal life in God, deification, possible. Ignorance or rejection of this truth and these means is not an indifferent matter; it is a matter of spiritual life or death, of salvation or damnation.

The world and its religions reject this exclusive claim of the Orthodox Church. Is it possible, then, for an Orthodox Christian to stand with the very leaders of these religions and, for the moment, "forget" what distinguishes and divides the Church of Christ from all other religions and agree upon common "religious" aims that have nothing to do with salvation?

The religion of this "Convocation" was "religion-in-general", a religion of humanity concerned solely with earthly, human things, those "universal" worldly aspirations which, however elevated and desirable in themselves, have nothing to do with Christianity and the Christian spiritual life. He who ceases, even for a moment, to preach salvation in Jesus Christ in order to support the aims of this "universal" religion, ceases at that moment to be distinct from the world and its religions, ceases, in a word, to be a Christian.

Here is only one more indication that contemporary ecumenism--in its "Orthodox" spokesmen no less than in others--is leaving the Church of Christ far behind.

## NEW BOOKS

EUSEBIUS: THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH FROM CHRIST TO CONSTANTINE. Trans. by G. A. Williamson. Penguin Books, Baltimore, 1965. 429 pp.

In Western Christendom the history of the Church has become, in recent centuries, very largely the province of rationalist critics. To read the earliest Church history, that of Eusebius, an Orthodox bishop and friend of the Emperor Constantine, is to return to the refreshing stream of genuine Church history--the history of God's communion with men.

Here we have not the preposterous inventions and the elaborate rationalist philosophy devised by sophisticated critics anxious to prove that God does not speak to men, that there are no miracles and no saints; but rather something of infinitely higher value: the careful compilation of a trustworthy recorder and witness who knows the meaning of the acts he records because he possesses the true faith in the very God Who performs these acts. The history of the Church can only be written and can only be understood by those whose history it is: Orthodox Christians.

*The History of the Church* is a book that was written and is intended to be read with piety and reverence. The Orthodox Christian reading this history cannot but be impressed with the awareness that it is his own history, the history of the Orthodox Christian people. He can suffer with them, weep with them, rejoice with

them, praise God together with His saints and righteous ones. It is a book for the faithful, for those who are not ashamed to weep (and yet rejoice) with the martyrs, to make the sign of the Cross with reverence when reading of one of God's miracles or outpourings of grace.

After the New Testament itself, there is no better place to begin the study of the early Church than this book. The chief events of early Christian history are described in detail, often in the words of the actors themselves or of eyewitnesses, whose testimony is where possible reproduced at length. The chief bishops and writers of the age are carefully listed and their books enumerated. The principal heresies are described and condemned. Of everything interpretation is made in accordance with the God-inspired judgment of the Church; everywhere are clearly discerned the primary elements of Christian history invariably overlooked by secular historians: the action of the Holy Spirit and the working of Divine Providence.

One can only welcome the appearance in an inexpensive edition of this classic of Church history. The translation, by an English scholar, is eminently readable, and his unobtrusive notes are generally helpful.

*Eugene Rose.*

*The book reviewed here may be purchased from ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN BOOKS & ICONS for \$1.95.*