

# Eastern Churches NEWS-LETTER

*A quarterly publication of the  
Anglican and Eastern Churches Association*

No responsibility can be accepted either by the General Committee  
or by the Editor for the views expressed by contributors.

---

NO. 27

OCTOBER, 1962

---

## CONTENTS:

Notes

The Archbishop of Canterbury's Visit to Russian Orthodox Church

Russian Orthodox Monks on Mt. Athos

Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople

Price 2/-, post free, to non-members

**THE ANGLICAN & EASTERN CHURCHES  
ASSOCIATION**

founded in 1864

*Orthodox Patron :*

The Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople  
His All Holiness Athenagoras I

*Anglican Patron :*

His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury

*Anglican President :*

The Bishop of London

*Orthodox President :*

Archbishop Athenagoras of Thyatira

*Chairman of Committee :*

The Revd. AUSTIN OAKLEY

*General Secretary :*

The Revd. H. R. STRINGER  
S. Stephen's Vicarage, 25 Talbot Road, W.2.

*Treasurer :*

J. S. ULLMER, Esq.  
18a Queen's Avenue,  
Muswell Hill, N.10.

*Editor of News-Letter :*

NOTES

Our Annual Festival will take place this year on Saturday 13th of October. That day being the Feast of the Translation of S. Edward the Confessor, the Committee decided to ask the Dean and Chapter of Westminster if we might attend as a body the Choral Eucharist in the Abbey on that day. Permission was kindly given, and so the first part of our Festival will take that form. The meeting will be held in the afternoon.

As there are restaurants in the vicinity it seems unnecessary for the Association to undertake any catering, so members and their friends should make their own arrangements, and there is no need to notify the secretary.

It is hoped that there will be a good attendance both at the Eucharist, and at the afternoon meeting at which the Archdeacon of Oxford has kindly consented to be our speaker. Individual notices will be sent to members in London and the Home Counties. See notice below.

98th ANNUAL FESTIVAL

Saturday 13th October 1962

Translation of S. Edward the Confessor

Members and friends are invited to attend the

CHORAL EUCHARIST

in Westminster Abbey

by the kindness of the Dean and Chapter

10.30 a.m.

ANNUAL MEETING

in

Convocation Hall, Church House, Westminster S.W.1.

at 2 p.m.

Speaker :

THE ARCHDEACON OF OXFORD

The Ven. C. Witton-Davies

"The Christian Churches in the Holy Land"

The Annual General Meeting for the conduct of business will follow.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY'S VISIT  
TO THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH  
ON 30th JULY 1962

We are grateful to the B.B.C. Russian Programme  
for this article

In the desire to unite East and West the Archbishop of Canterbury's thoughts turned naturally, after his tour of the Near East, to the largest country in the East-Russia, and her enlightener of thousands of years, the Orthodox Church. On Monday July 30th, the Archbishop flew to Moscow. In the long history of Russia and Britain this was the first visit on Russian soil by a Primate of the Anglican Church. In the historical perspective this visit had double significance, in respect of both the past and the future. It was the culmination of the ancient past and the continuance of inter-relations between Russia and Britain which, contrary to all political divergencies of the 19th century, were finding a settlement on the church front. On the other hand, this was the first step to a closer rapprochement between Russia and Britain in the present and in the future; for nothing brings people so closely together as spiritual and cultural contacts. The role of the Church in both countries is enormous even in our day. Men of vision who are striving for peace and friendship between nations realise this full well.

At the airport the Archbishop of Canterbury was met personally by the Head of the Russian Orthodox Church, Alexei, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, accompanied by higher clergy and Her Majesty's Ambassador in the U.S.S.R. Sir Frank Roberts, "I welcome you warmly to our country", said the Patriarch to the Archbishop. "It is a great joy for me to be here", replied the Archbishop. They embraced and kissed.

From the airport the Archbishop of Canterbury and his party made their way to the Church of St. Iliia for common prayer. "Never have I seen a more beautiful Church", exclaimed the Archbishop, glancing round the beautiful monument to Russian art, "I am glad this is the first Church I have entered!" This Church had originally been built in one day of wood, and is to this day known as the One-Day Church. This one-day achievement is a tribute to the efforts of Russian believers. The first joint prayer in this church was certainly symbolical; it proved to the British Archbishop the full force of faith and sacrifice and devotion to God on the part of Russian Christians.

The Archbishop of Canterbury was met also by correspondents. And he had been seen off by correspondents in London. Everywhere he was asked questions. In London

someone interpreted his trip to Russia as a support to the idea of communism. He was asked; "Can one be a Christian and a communist at one and the same time?" The Archbishop's reply was clear and unambiguous: you cannot at one and the same time believe in God and not believe in Him. Christians believe in God, communists don't. This is incompatible. Every honest Christian and every honest communist will agree with the Archbishop's reply. And yet this ideological incompatibility does not preclude a desire for cultural contacts. We shall hear further on in our reportage what the Archbishop of Canterbury had to say on this subject.

Correspondents also asked him about the main purpose of his journey to Moscow. Archbishop Michael replied:

"We shall discuss questions of faith of our Churches, shall continue what we had already begun to discuss at the World Christian Assembly in New Delhi last year, and six years ago when I was in Russia."

The Archbishop of Canterbury had already visited the Soviet Union, before being appointed Primate, when in 1956, he led a group of Anglican theologians. Speaking of the purpose of his present visit, the Archbishop said: "The purpose is to deepen our friendship".

Next day the first official talks were held between the two Church leaders. Patriarch Alexei told Archbishop Michael Ramsey: "How I would like to see complete unity between us while I am still alive. There is so little time left. One must hurry. You Anglicans have done much in the matter of Christian unity. We Orthodox are ready gladly to do everything required of us." In reply the Archbishop proposed to form a joint theological Commission, but Patriarch Alexei interrupted: "The trouble is these Commissions take such a long time about everything! We have no time, we must hurry!" And the Archbishop replied, "let us put our faith in the grace of the Holy Spirit and the sense of urgency in our hearts."

The Archbishop invited Patriarch Alexei to come to London, and smiling, the Patriarch replied: "I remember my parents were afraid to cross the channel..." And the Archbishop replied; "This evil has now been remedied, thanks to the invention of the aeroplanes..."

After his talk with Patriarch Alexei, the Archbishop paid a visit to the Chairman of the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church attached to the U.S.S.R. Council of Ministers, Kuroyedov. Addressing him as a spokesman of the Soviet Government, the Archbishop of Canterbury touched on another aspect of his visit, namely the cultural exchanges and visits and contacts between the Soviet Union and Britain. In this context he made a formal proposal

## RUSSIAN ORTHODOX MONKS ON MT. ATHOS

by

Ivan Michaelson Czap

Athos seems so far away, in such a barely accessible part of northern Greece! Yet, from that verdant peninsula, the continuous rounds of services and ceaseless prayers join with our less frequent invocations; distance is vanquished, and we should feel the closeness.

It is tragic, yes, that until recently there was only a meagre knowledge of our vast Slavic religious treasures in that Monastic Republic. It is equally tragic that the outside world gives such scant appreciation for all that the monks have done for Orthodoxy over so many centuries; and that we seem to care so little for the future of Athos.

The Holy Mountain of Mt. Athos, (Svyataya Gora) has existed for almost 20 centuries. According to tradition its history began in apostolic times, in the days of the Mother of God. She came to teach pagans the new religion. The entire peninsula was then dedicated "for all the everlasting years" as a Christian Orthodox monastic center. Today, as through the centuries, the Athonian monks and their monasteries are under the protection of the Bohoroditsa.

Here is a world set apart by love and divine blessing. In strict fasting, prayer and work, the inhabitants live as commanded in the Bible: not of this world, though in it. What the pilgrim sees is much the same as it has been on Athos for centuries. Modernity has not invaded these cloistered places for the hermits. There are no automobiles, no electric lights or other recent inventions of man to soil the atmosphere, or spoil its ancient ways.

Athos is a microcosm of **traditional** Orthodoxy, a "heaven on earth" whose early-Christian atmosphere survives into modern times.

There are still about 3000 monks on Mt. Athos. Some 600 of them, (perhaps less, for they are aged and their numbers decline even as you read these lines,) are of Russian, Serbian, Bulgarian or other Slav origin. But national origins mean little in that religious place. It is faith, humility and dedication that are of the moment.

Thousands of persons used to come to the monastic chapels, to pray before the numberless sacred icons in this place of the angelic habit. Many came to study; others to contribute their hands and skills in work with the monks or under their guidance. Of those who came, some experienced such tranquility that they decided to stay on for the rest of their days. Others, upon returning home, found that spiritually opened eyes could no longer rest on the vanities of the world

and longed for the peace of mind they had found in the devotional atmosphere. They disposed of worldly belongings, and entered a new life on Athos. The ranks of monks increased over the years.

But the number of pilgrims became smaller. World Wars, and newly-loosed materialistic forces changed the face of the earth, brought strictures to the hearts of people, and raised barriers between man and his Maker. Men forgot the devotion owed to God. For a long time, hardly anyone came to Mt. Athos.

## THE MAIN RUSSIAN MONASTERIES

### I ST. PANTELEIMON

There are several monasteries whose monks are Russian in origin. St. Panteleimon's is the largest. Indeed, it is one of the largest and best managed of all the establishments on Athos. It is a Ruling Monastery, with a vote in the governing Kinot (a democratic Assembly), which has sole administrative authority over the entire peninsula.

St. Panteleimon's has one of the finest libraries on Mt. Athos magnificently housed and readily accessible. It still conducts extensive educational and charitable programs. At one time it maintained schools, and had a number of monastic branches or Chapter Houses. It issued numerous publications; counted scholars and writers amongst its brothers. There were icon painters, wood carvers and monk-artists in various fields, their talents blossoming fully in the religious atmosphere. The products of all this activity have survived to this day, not only on Mt. Athos, but elsewhere in the world. The monks of St. Panteleimon's, from just about every Slav country in Europe, are no longer young but their energies have not collapsed. To this day they maintain their well-deserved reputation for cleanliness, and for charity, prayer and good works.

Visitors are so few now that the housing facilities built in earlier years for the customary thousands of weekly visitors are far beyond today's needs. St. Panteleimon's, with its own harbor and well kept guest-houses, still receives just about everyone who comes to Mt. Athos. It is at St. Panteleimon's, whose balconied buildings face the blue sea, that most visitors get their first impressions of traditional Orthodox monastic life.

"Russiko", as the monastery is called locally, is known to everyone for its hospitality and for the friendly atmosphere the bearded ascetics create as they go about their assigned tasks. The monks adhere to strict principles of obedience, humility, prayer and charity, - but ungrudgingly share time from their chores to assist the pilgrim and make him comfortable.

## II ST. ELIAS SKETE

At the multi-terraced Skete of Prophet Elias, with its great church (the "Katholicon") there is a greatly reduced but altogether dedicated group, under a kindly, patriarchal abbot, the Igumen Nikolai. He is 80 years old, but so active that you could never guess his age.

I spent several weeks there last year, at a time when my companions were Russian Orthodox pilgrims from Paris, Brussels, London, Vienna and Salonika. At St. Elias' you will hear one of the finest monastic choirs in the world. There is an aged basso, in his eighties, whose voice, still strong and clear, reverberates through the large church. You will meet, among the monks, not only some who formerly were sailors, but those who once were captains of ships, - even an Admiral! These ships belonged to the Monastery, and sailed back and forth from Athos to Russia, until "Holy Russia" became the atheist-dominated Soviet Union.

How kind these monks are! But how old; and concerned for the future because so few novices come to replace them.

For no one is born on Mt. Athos. New generations of monks must come from the outside world.

## III ST. ANDREW'S

At St. Andrew's skete the choir is almost as good as at St. Elias'. St. Andrew's has incredible treasures in Byzantine musical manuscripts. Here, under its competent Igumen, you will learn what monastic discipline is; how the day is divided into regular periods of prayer and work, work and prayer. St. Andrew's is in the administrative monastic town of Karyes, and has many visitors. I met professors of music here, specialists in Byzantine chants, who had come to study the ancient manuscripts and documents. Scholars come from all over the world: that year they were from Rome, Princeton, New York, Paris and Munich. These Russian Orthodox monks have preserved for posterity our heritage in music, as well as the saintly relics, the icons, vestments and other religious articles. Here too the Athonian School is located; to St. Andrew's skete, for study in a 6 year course come novices and young monks from all over the peninsula.

## IV

The pages of this paper could hardly contain even a modified list of other Russian Orthodox sketes and hermitages: that of St. Nicholas, called Byelozherka; of St. John Chrysostom; of the shrine to St. Anthony, founder of the Kiev-Pecherskaya Lavra. Once there were hundreds of such establishments; today there are only dozens.

## THE NEED FOR NEW MONKS

What can be done for Athos?

First of all, those with the calling should become monks there. They can come to a quiet world which has preserved inviolate the traditions of our faith. Here are spiritual strengths gathered from regular, constant services which go on in the many chapels and churches, and from the private prayers and prostrations of the monks in the cells.

There is no place on earth quite like Mt. Athos. Indeed, as I have written before and so often stated, it is a bit of Paradise. A land where God is close; where angels and Saints surround: protecting, healing, inspiring.

## MONKS MAY NOW ENTER ATHOS

The first need, then, is for new monks. At one time it was difficult to enter monastic life on Mt. Athos. But today those who desire it will find a welcome not only from the monasteries, but also from the Greek government which has relaxed certain former requirements. Those left on Athos are old; they are not long for this world. Young applicants ought to seek entry so that the continuity of the oldest monastic traditions in the world will not be interrupted.

## FUNDS ALSO ARE NEEDED

Those without a monastic calling should not ignore our fellow Orthodox whose lives are dedicated to God's work. The monks pray for all of us, for our salvation, and for the repose of the souls of our departed. We must keep in close touch with them, help them, ask their prayers. Send them the names of those desired mentioned in prayer. Send your gifts, your good will, and funds.

Your smallest attentions will help relieve the severities which have so often in the past crippled their work. Contributions can be made through your priest.

Remember that these monks are as "lamps before the throne of God." Their prayers rise for you and me in rich, hurried, harried America.

Day upon day, and night after night, these prayers are as the fragrance of incense before the altars to God.

IVAN MICHAELSON CZAP,  
1421 Chestnut Street,  
Philadelphia 2, Pa.

## EDITOR'S NOTE :

Mr. Czap often writes and speaks about Mt. Athos and its religious treasures. He has lectured widely, using colored slides taken there over the years he has been visiting and conducting researches there.

## THE ARMENIAN PATRIARCHATE OF CONSTANTINOPLE

During the last and this year, the Armenian Communities all over the world have celebrated and are still celebrating two important historic anniversaries. The first one is the 1600th anniversary of the birth of St. Mesrob, the inventor of the Armenian Alphabet and one of the main translators of the Bible into the Armenian language. This anniversary celebration took place not only among the Armenian Communities of the Diaspora, but in Soviet Armenia as well. The celebration in the Dispersion was ordered and sponsored by His Holiness Vazken I, the Catholicos of All Armenians, in 1961. Whereas the celebration in Soviet Armenia took place in this year, and was a state affair, the Prime Minister of the country heading the Celebration Committee. To mark this important event, which was the moving cause of the beginning of the written literature and civilization in one of its constituent Republics, the Soviet Union has issued special commemorative stamps with the figure of St. Mesrob and the Armenian Alphabet in the background.

The second one is the Five Hundredth anniversary of the Establishment of the Armenian Patriarchate in Constantinople, now called Istanbul.

The Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church has at present four Hierarchical Sees. They are, in their order of pre-eminence, as follows :

- (a) The supreme Catholicosate of All Armenians, at Holy Etchmiadzine, Armenia,
- (b) The Minor Catholicosate of Cilicia, at Antelias, near Beirut, Lebanon,
- (c) The Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem,
- (d) The Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople.

At present the jurisdiction of the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople extends over Turkey alone. The Jerusalem Armenian Patriarchate has jurisdiction over Jordan and Israel only. The Cilician Catholicosate exercises jurisdiction over Syria, Lebanon and Cyprus only. All the remaining Dioceses the Armenian Church come under the jurisdiction of the pre-eminent See of Holy Etchmiadzine. Besides, only the supreme Catholicos of All Armenians can represent the Armenian Church as a whole in Ecclesiastical Councils and other official circles.

There has always been a small Armenian Community in the Imperial city of the Byzantines. But it was after the occupation of Constantinople by the Ottoman Turks in 1453, that Armenians started growing in this city, forming one of the main minority groups of the new capital city of the Ottomans.

The Ottoman laws were entirely of a religious character, and individual and social rights drew their inspiration wholly from Islamic principals. The Muslim powers, when bringing under subjection Christian countries, found themselves faced with the alternatives, either of imposing their religion on the conquered peoples, or of granting them an administrative and social autonomy. Neither of these two methods could be applied to Constantinople, which happened to be proclaimed the capital of the new Muslim empire. It seemed necessary, therefore, that the conquering power should grant to the religious head of the Greeks those social and civil privileges which were strictly connected with their religion. Thus all matters concerning family life, such as marriage, public instruction, charities, worship and its ministers, spiritual administration, etc., were made over to the jurisdiction of the religious head. In this way the Ecumenical patriarch found himself invested with a kind of civil jurisdiction.

The Turks, after occupation, caused the removal of large Armenian Communities to Constantinople. The Armenian colony was placed on the same footing as the Greek element. Bishop Hovagim, Metropolitan of the Armenian colonies in Asia Minor, was translated from Broosa to Constantinople, where he was invested with the titles and honours, as well as privileges, similar to those accorded to the Greek patriarch. This historic event took place in the year 1461.

The Greek and Armenian Patriarchs became the recognized heads of Christians under Ottoman rule. All the orthodox dyophysites, viz, Greeks, Bulgarians, Croatians, Servians, Albanians, Wallachians, Moldavians, Ruthenians, Melkites and Arabs, became associated under their respective chiefs, with the jurisdiction of the Greek patriarch, while the so called monophysites, comprising the Armenians, Syrians, Copts and Abyssinians, became subject, under their respective chiefs, to the jurisdiction of the Armenian patriarch.

The Armenian patriarchs of Constantinople tried to centralize as far as possible the affairs of their people in the provinces of Asia Minor. Their administrative sphere of action gradually extended itself over all the provinces of the Ottoman empire, until it comprised even the dioceses under the spiritual control of the patriarchates of Cilicia, of Aghthamar and of Jerusalem.

From the day that a patriarchal see and a strong colony

were established in the capital city of Constantinople, that city became also the centre of the Armenian national life.

From the beginning the Armenian patriarchate of Constantinople was being administered under the unrestricted authority of the patriarchs. These, in their turn, were sometimes subject to the influence and superior control of the **amiras**, who were the leading men of the nation. It is true that some of these latter had no claim to distinction save that which their wealth conferred on them. But in the 19th century the appearance of a new generation, educated in France, led to the aspiration of all classes in the social scale to take their share in public affairs. From this time forward, councils came into existence in accordance with elective principles. In order to fix the spheres of action of these councils and to regularize their system of management, a constitution (sahmana-droothium), or Armenian statute, was finally worked into shape in 1860. This important title-deed was approved by the Ottoman government in 1863. As a result of this constitution a more systematic and a more active administration was started with a better instructed clergy, more suitable church buildings, larger offerings, more solemn ritual, more edifying sermons, etc. This uninterrupted growth led the longings of the Armenian people towards a more perfect ideal of social welfare, and has moved them to force on the ears of the civilised world their legitimate desire for a real participation in the blessings of modern civilisation. Their desires however were not materialized; on the contrary they were mostly massacred or deported from the country, during the First World War, 1914-1918.

The patriarchate of Constantinople before the First World War had 2,200,000 people under its jurisdiction, scattered all over the Ottoman Empire. Only 100,000 Armenians now are left in Turkey, the great majority of whom live in Istanbul. There were more than fifty Dioceses under its jurisdiction. Only Istanbul is left with a few Parish churches in Anatolia where small remnants of the Armenian people still exist.

The patriarchate is now deprived of all its ancient privileges. The Armenian Communal Constitution by which the patriarchate was governed and which constituted a part of the Ottoman Law does not fully function now.

In 1916 the Turkish Authorities attempted to annex the patriarchates of Constantinople and Jerusalem to the catholicate of Cilicia. A catholicos-patriarch was appointed for all Armenians in the Turkish Empire having its see established in Jerusalem. This new status lasted only until the Armistice. In 1919, the Armenian patriarch of Constantinople, who was exiled in Baghdad because of this

annexation, was reinstated in his office. But in 1922 he was forced to leave Istanbul.

Until 1927 the see remained vacant and its affairs were administered by a locum tenens. In 1927 a new Patriarch was elected. After his death in 1944, until 1950, the see was governed again by a locum tenens. In that year Archbishop Garegin Khachatourian, the legate of Etchmiadzin in South America, was elected patriarch. He organised the patriarchate and in 1954 he opened a seminary in Uskudar, Istanbul. He was succeeded in 1961 by Archbishop Shnorhik Kaloustian, former Vicar of the Armenian church in London, 1945-1948, and former bishop of the Armenian Diocese of California. He is the 83rd Patriarch in succession.

At present there are 33 Armenian parish churches in Istanbul, and seven or eight churches in Asia Minor out of a total of more than 1500 churches existing before the First World War.

### **Aims of the Association**

The Association exists to unite members of the Anglican and Eastern Orthodox Churches for the following objects :-

- (a) The principle object for which the Anglican and Eastern Churches Association is established is for the advancement of the Christian religion in particular by means of teaching the members of the Anglican Churches and those of the Eastern Orthodox Churches the doctrines and respective principles and methods of each other in their work for advancement of the Christian religion.
- (b) The Association exists also to unite members of the two Communion in prayer and work in achieving the principle objects with a view to promotion of visible unity between them.

### **Some Methods of Helping the Work**

1. By joining the Association and getting others to join.
2. By arranging for a meeting in the neighbourhood, when a lecture may be given on the Eastern Churches and Reunion, and the objects of the Association explained.
3. By asking the Parochial Authorities to promise a Sunday collection every year either in the service or afterwards at the doors.
4. By uniting in local centres for the study of Eastern Christendom, and for Intercession for Reunion.

Lectures—with or without lantern illustrations—can be arranged by writing to the General Secretary.

### **Subscription**

The normal annual subscription is 10/- (Life-membership £5), but none will be excluded solely on account of inability to pay this amount, while it is hoped that those who can afford to pay more will do so.

All members receive the Eastern Churches News-Letter which is published quarterly.