



“Joy of All Who Sorrow”

No. 91 June 2016

The Chinese Martyrs of the Boxer Uprising



In 1900, a group of Chinese had risen in an uprising against the Europeans in their land, whom they called — "the white devils". Those fighters were called - "Boxers", and therefore their uprising is also known as the "Boxer Uprising". The Boxers started to kill the Europeans as intruders, robbers and tyrants. Anything European was detested by them, even the Faith which was brought by European heralds. The hatred for white men became also a hatred for Christians. From then on, the anger of the Boxers turned against their own Christians, i.e. the baptized Chinese, who are thus counted martyrs for the faith, or as we Serbs would put it — "for the Honourable Cross". The suffering and death of those Chinese martyrs we shall try to describe.

At that time, and still till today, there is a Russian Orthodox Mission in Beijing, the capital of the Chinese Empire. The Head of this Russian Mission was Archimandrite Innokenty, who later became a Metropolitan. As an eyewitness, he described those bloody events as follows:

"The main day of the martyrdom of Orthodox Chinese in Beijing was June 11, 1900. On the eve of that day, all over the streets proclamations were put calling the heathen to kill the Christians. Furthermore, threatened with death were also all those who would dare to shelter the Christians. During the night between 10 and 11 June, and then again in the night between the 11th and 12th, the Boxers showed up en masse in Beijing and started to attack the homes of Christians, seizing those unfortunate Christians, torturing them, forcing them to renounce Christ. In the face of torture and death, many did renounce the Christian faith and offered incense to the idols. But there were others who did not fear sufferings, but heroically confessed their faith in Christ. What then happened to them was gruesome. Some had their bellies sliced open, others were beheaded, some were burnt alive in their own homes. The hunt on Christians and their destruction continued for many more days, as long as the rebellion lasted. After burning down many Christian houses, the Boxers led out the Christians beyond the city walls and brought them before temples with idols. Here they were put to the test, and then burnt alive on stakes.

According to the testimony of heathens themselves, who saw everything with their own eyes, some of the Orthodox Chinese accepted death with tremendous courage. Thus: Paul Wang, catechist, died during torture with prayer on his lips; Iya Wen, a teacher in the Mission school, was twice put through an ordeal. First time, the Boxers had cut all of her body, and thinking her dead, covered her with earth. But she still managed to survive. Hearing her cries, a guard took her in his tent. When the Boxers came back and saw that she was still alive, they cut her all over again, so this time she died. During both of these trials, Iya Wen boldly and loudly proclaimed her faith in Christ the Saviour in the face of her torturers; Ivan Ji, was an eight-year-old boy, son of a murdered Chinese priest. The Boxers mercilessly tortured and disfigured him. His palms were cut off and his chest was covered in wounds. When the torturers asked him does it hurt, this tiny hero of Christ, replied with a smile: "It is not hard to suffer for Christ!" Then the villains had his head cut off, and his body was burnt; On 10 June, around 10pm the Boxers came to the house of Ji Chong and surrounded it. At time, in his house there were around 70 Christians. Some of them made their way out and escaped, but those who were either frail or with families stayed inside. Of course, Fr Ji Chong also stayed. He didn't try to hide. He was sitting in the garden and it is there where he met the Boxers. These heathens knowing that he was priest were especially angry at him. Therefore, they attacked immediately and stabbed him on his chest with their knives. The mortally wounded priest fell under a fig tree and gave his soul to God. Then the heathens burst inside the house and killed all the other Christians who were there. In 1903, in time of peace for the Chinese Empire, in Beijing a church dedicated to the Martyrs was constructed. The body of the holy martyr Ji Chong, together with the bodies of other Chinese martyrs was buried under the altar. On the spot where Ji Chong was killed, a large cross was erected. Each year on 10 June, the Day of the Chinese Martyrs, following the Service in the church, a procession is performed to the Cross, where a solemn commemoration is held.

So, this is how gloriously has ended his earthly life the unwavering warrior of Christ and made his abode in the Kingdom of Heaven. From there Ji Chong appeared to his countrymen when they were put to test, and as their protecting angel encouraged and comforted them, showing to them the crowns of glory. The priest Ji Chong had a wife Tatiana from the Li family, and also three sons: Isaiah, Sergius and John. Isaiah was married to his wife Mary. All but the middle son Sergius, who is now archpriest, were killed for Christ at the same time. Tatiana was 44 then. On that terrible night of 10 June, she somehow survived, but the following day was captured by the Boxers. She was caught together with 18 other Chinese Christians, and they were all led out of the city through *Andingmen* Gate and taken to the Boxer stronghold of *Xiaoyingfang*. Here they beheaded Tatiana and the others. On that place now there is an Orthodox Shelter for the poor called "Triangle". Isaiah was 23 years old. He served in the artillery units. On 7 June he was captured by the Boxers. Knowing him from earlier as a Christian, they beheaded him on the main street at *Pingzemen* Gate. John was only 8. The same night when his father, the priest Ji Chong was killed, the Boxers caught little

John and then flayed the skin from his back, cut off his nose and toes. His aunt Mary managed somehow to save him from death and hid him in the lavatory. The next day he was found with no shoes or cloths at the door, and they asked him does it hurt. The youngster replied — "nothing hurts". The power of Christ had subdued the pain. The street children laughed at him and called him — "*ermaozi*". This Chinese word means — "devil's servant". This the pagan Chinese used to call the Christians. Little John answered to this: "I believe in the true God and I am not *ermaozi*." When he asked for water, they didn't give it to him. Protasius Chang and Irodion Xu, then still unbaptized, testified to have seen the child with the wounds on his back and legs. The wounds were very deep, but he didn't feel any pain. When the Boxers caught him again, John peacefully and with no fear followed them "as lamb for slaughter". On the road, an old man saw him and took pity on him, saying: "What is the fault of this child. It is his parents who made him a devil's servant." Others mocked him because of his tattered walk. But John didn't pay any attention to that, and neither did his murderers, the Boxer, who had taken him to be killed. Mary, the wife of Isaiah and the daughter-in-law of the priest Ji Chong, was 19 years old. Two days before the pogrom, she came to the house of her father-in-law, wishing to die close to him. When on 10 June the Boxers surrounded the priest's house, Mary tried to help the others to save themselves. She led them out of the house and assisted them in climbing the garden wall in order to escape. At that moment the Boxers and the soldiers burst inside. Then Mary boldly stood up to them and started to denounce them for killing so many people with no trial. The attackers froze and didn't dare to kill Mary. But afterwards she was wounded in her arm and leg. Her brother-in-law Sergius tried three times to convince her to back down and avoid death, but Mary heroically replied: "I am born here near the church of the Most Holy Mother of God, and I want also to die here!" And she stayed there. Later, the Boxers found and killed the blessed Mary.

This is how these Chinese Orthodox Christians were killed and received the crown of martyrdom. Their courage in recognizing Christ as God and Lord before the unbelievers, as well as their fearless and steadfast death, reminds us of the ancient Christian confessors and martyrs in the lands closer to us.

By St Nikolai Velimirovich



St Walstan of Taverham: 1016-2016



On Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 June, the Joy of All Who Sorrow Parish will celebrate a millennium since the repose of St Walstan, a saint who is very local to us. Here is a short life of the saint:

St Walstan ... was born in ... the village of Bawburgh. He derived his parentage of distinguished royal stock, his father being called Benedict, his mother Blida. From his earliest childhood, he showed himself in the true intention of his mind to be obedient to the divine will in all things. He showed himself full of the grace of humility towards the greatest and the least, devoid of all pride and arrogance, striving with all his mind and in all honesty to be humble with dove-like simplicity.

When he reached the age of twelve, imbued in the spirit by divine inspiration and by the evangelical teaching, "He who will not renounce all that he has, cannot be My disciple" ... St Walstan renounced against their will all right of royal succession to which he was entitled thereafter. And so that he might be at leisure to devote himself more freely to prayer and other acts of contemplation without the pomp of the world, he left his birthplace, and did not delay to reach northern parts as quickly as he could.

In the name of Christ, Walstan bound himself in servitude and as it were in the strictness of obedience to a certain inhabitant of the vill of Taverham so that he should humbly serve him in all things. To such an extent did he give to the poor the victuals supplied for this own sustenance, but he also distributed his clothes and shoes to needy and sick people, exposing himself bare-foot to various sufferings.

When one day a certain pauper asked alms of St Walstan and he was moved with great pity, he gave his own footwear to the pauper, on condition that the pauper should not reveal the gift to anyone. But ... it happened that the evil and most pernicious wife of the man whom St Walstan was serving found out about this gift. Astutely inventing some plausible necessity, she sent without delay the most holy confessor Walstan barefoot to the wood in order to load thorns and thistles on to a cart. But since Almighty God defends his faithful in all dangers, he miraculously visited St Walstan, so that he sat and boldly stood with the bare soles of his feet on the sharpest points of the thorns and thistles without suffering any harm from their punctures, as if they were roses redolent with the sweet fragrance ... When the woman saw this

miracle, she recognised the guilt of her iniquity and, throwing herself in floods of tears at Walstan's feet, she begged forgiveness. The man of God benignly raised her to her feet and forgave her all the injury she had done to him.

When his master saw the signs and miracles which St Walstan performed ... he came to love him devoutly, and publically declared that he would make him his heir ... St Walstan rejected this promise with all of his heart, and he asked for nothing for his labour more than the offspring to be born to a certain cow ... so that God's will might be fulfilled through them. When one Friday, St Walstan was scything with a companion in a certain meadow, the angel of God appeared to him and said, "Brother Walstan, on the third day from today you will enter paradise", and at once vanished from sight. Walstan thanked God for this divine revelation ... and without delay asked and most devoutly received confession and with great contrition of heart the sacrament of the precious body and blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ and Extreme Unction from the priest.

When the time of Walstan's death came, that is the Monday of the following week, he went out as usual to work in the meadow with his companions. There he called together his master and certain other honest companions ... and commended his soul to God, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and all the saints. He added in addition that his body should be decently placed in a cart, and that his two bulls should be yoked to it and, without any driver, should take it wherever God ordains ... And at once in the aforesaid meadow he rendered his spirit to Almighty God.

Honest persons who were there put the holy body of Walstan on his cart as he had ordained, and the bulls took the road directly towards the wood of Costessey ... When the bulls with the holy body entered a pool of very deep water ... the wheels of the cart passed over the yielding and naturally liquid surface of the water as if over land ... Another miracle also happened. When ... the bulls stood for a while with the body of St Walstan on top of a steep hill, a spring of water ... appeared ... and through divine mercy is still there. The bulls went down from that place with the precious body towards the vill of Bawburgh. When they had come almost to the place where the body now lies buried, they made another stop in a certain place where ... the divine piety made another spring of wonderful power against fevers and many other infirmities, which is still there today. The body of the holy man Walstan was placed in the church of Bawburgh, which is dedicated in his name, and for love of him God performs diverse miracles.

That excellent man St Walstan migrated to the Lord in the year of Incarnation of Our Lord 1016, on 30 May. Sighing after him, dearest brothers, let us follow in his footsteps along the paths of truth and justice and of perfect humility, that we may be worthy to come with him to the realm of light and glory, in which God reigns, world without end. Amen.

Celebrations will involve a trip to Bawburgh where we will sing the newly composed Akathist in honour of the saint at 2pm on Saturday, and a Festal Liturgy in his honour at the usual time on Sunday. We hope to see you there – please see our [poster](#) for further information.

Notes & Jottings

PILGRIMAGE TO IKEN

Every year, our community makes a pilgrimage to Iken on the final Saturday in June. For the past several years, two of the churchwardens at the church have shown us hospitality after the service. This year, both churchwardens will be away on holiday on that date. We will still have the pilgrimage as usual, but what time it will be at, and whether we will eat together, has not been decided yet. Very shortly, when we have finalised these details, we will put them on the website and send out another e-mail.

AKATHIST

An akathist in honour of St Walstan of Taverham has been written and will be sung for the first time in St Mary & St Walstan Church, Bawburgh on Saturday 11 June to commemorate the millennial anniversary of his repose. His shrine was in the north transept of the church in former times.

COLLEGE DAY

A date to pencil into your diaries is Saturday 3 September, College Day when we welcome guests to join us in church to honour Our Lady of Mettingham, to whom the college is dedicated. This is followed by offering hospitality to our visitors and friends. This occasion also affords us an opportunity to present an update of our life and work here.

BOOKS

Our thanks are due to all who continue to support Olland Bookshop both by donating stock and by purchasing books. Not only is the shop at 22 Upper Olland Street, Bungay, well stocked, but there are now well over 8,000 titles advertised through Amazon.

NAMEDAYS

We congratulate all who are celebrating a nameday at this time and wish them:

MANY YEARS!

3 June – **St Helena** – Matushka Helen Bardsley, Elena Levine.

27 June – **Prophet Elisha** – Archbishop Elisey.

30 June – **St Botolph of Iken** – Botolph Beavis



COLLEGIATE CHURCH OF THE MOTHER OF GOD
JOY OF ALL WHO SORROW

JUNE 2016

Saturday 4 June

7.30pm ~ Vigil

Sunday 5 June

10.10am ~ Hours and Divine Liturgy (Sunday of the Blind Man)

Wednesday 8 June

7.30pm ~ Vigil

Thursday 9 June

10.10am ~ Hours and Divine Liturgy (Ascension of Our Lord)

Saturday 11 June

7.30pm ~ Vigil

Sunday 12 June

10.10am ~ Hours and Divine Liturgy (Sunday of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council)

Saturday 18 June

7.30pm ~ Vigil

Sunday 19 June

**10.10am ~ Hours and Divine Liturgy (Pentecost – Trinity Sunday)
2pm (Approx.) – Pentecost Vespers**

Saturday 25 June

7.30pm ~ Vigil

Sunday 26 June

10.10am ~ Hours and Divine Liturgy (Sunday of All Saints)



Anger is vanquished by renouncing our desires and our own will.

Elder Thaddeus

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