



“Joy of All Who Sorrow”

No 24 November '10

METROPOLITAN HILARION VISITS *THE JOY OF ALL WHO SORROW* CHURCH IN MOSCOW

On 6 October, 2010 Metropolitan Hilarion, First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia, who visited our church in July of last year, was invited for the first time to participate in the workings of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church in Moscow. During his visit to the capital, as well as meeting with His Holiness Patriarch Kyrill of Moscow and All Russia, he also was invited to visit the Church of the Mother of God *Joy of All Who Sorrow* by the rector of the church, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, Chairman of the Department of External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate.

During his visit to the church Metropolitan Hilarion of New York and Eastern America venerated the Shrine Ikon of the Mother of God, *Joy of All Who Sorrow* which was the same ikon through which the Lady Euphemia received healing. After giving a guided tour of the church, and an opportunity to venerate its other precious ikons and relics, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk said,

The church of Our Lady, *Joy of All Who Sorrow*, in Bolshaya Ordynka, which you have visited and in where I serve with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kyrill, is one of the most revered churches in Moscow, which stayed open even in the time of godlessness. Archbishop Kiprian (Zernov) used to serve in it. I attended this church when I was a schoolchild. Today you have attended a meeting of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church for the first time. It is a joyful event which serves as another landmark on the road of our common service.

In his response, the Primate of ROCOR thanked Metropolitan Hilarion for his hospitality and expressed joy over the fact that for the first time a hierarch of the Russian Church Outside Russia took part in a meeting of the Russian Church's Holy Synod. He noted the important role of the Russian Church in bearing witness before the whole world to the Truth of the Orthodox Christian Faith.

TWO IMPORTANT SAINTS ON 1 NOVEMBER

On the 1 November (ns) two important saints are celebrated, neither of them as well known here as they should be.

SAINT LAURA (+ 864)

Although little known in this country, St. Laura was born at Córdoba in Spain in the 9th century, and lived the life of a married woman until the death of her husband led her to take the veil at a convent in Cuteclara nearby. Under the Moorish Yoke she was condemned for being a follower of Christ and was

thrown into a vat of molten lead in the year 864. Remarkably, Leon had painted an ikon of St Laura for a church in London, and we hope one day to acquire a copy to place in our church.

SAINT JOHN OF RILA (+916)

Saint John of Kronstadt's name saint was a much loved ascetic and Elder who laboured for Christ in the mountains and forests of Bulgaria around the 10th century. St. John was born in a village by the name of Skrino, near the ancient city of Sredets (now Sofia). His parents were God-fearing people, and from an early age the Saint was disposed towards a life of piety and good deeds. In his youth, the Saint distributed his possessions among the poor and went to a monastery where he became a monk. After mastering the virtues of obedience and humility, he was led by the grace of God to an uninhabited mountain. There he built a small hut for himself. Dressed only in a leather coat and sustaining himself on wild plants, he spent his time in fasting, prayer, vigil and other ascetic labours, preserving a golden silence which is, in the words of St. Isaac the Syrian, the mystery of the future age. Despite his attempts to escape the world and the desire for fame by moving further into the forested wilderness of Bulgaria, just like St Sergius of Radonezh, St John's holy life attracted disciples and pilgrims so that soon churches and monasteries were founded around him with lay people, monks and even kings seeking his spiritual counsel and blessing. After his repose in 916, his relics were still found to be incorrupt and can be venerated at the Monastery of St John in Rila.

CHURCH NEWS

PATRONAL FESTIVAL - Feast of the Ikon of the Mother of God *Joy of All Who Sorrow* - Saturday 6 November

The Liturgy for our Patronal Festival will begin at 10.30 am.

THANKS

We would like to thank our friend Margo Hopkins for her donation to pay for the All Saints Ikon as mentioned in the recently published "wish list".

READER ANTONY AND HELEN BARDSLEY

With the blessing of Archbishop Mark, Reader Antony Bardsley has now been officially received into ROCOR and is formally assigned as another clergyman for our church. Reader Antony and Helen have already contributed so much to our church and we wish them both many years!

MORE ABOUT ST WANDREGISILIUS

Fr Elias has secured a copy of *The Church of St Wandregisilius the Abbot, Bixley, Norfolk - Statement of Significance* by Stephen Heywood FSA, January 2009, which gives extensive details about the fire in 2004, which caused total devastation. Of interest to us are the paragraphs concerning the earlier history of the church and the connections with the saint.

The Dedication

The dedication to St Wandregisilius, or the various names which this saint has been given, of which the best known is probably St Wandrille; the town in Normandy named after the founder and first abbot of the monastery of Fontanelle. The church (there) was founded in 649 and, after the death of the saintly abbot in 668, his remains soon became the focus of veneration and, during periods of unrest, were carefully preserved and transported from place to place before returning to Fontanelle in 966.

The question is why was this odd dedication given to the church at Bixley? There are several references to the church being the subject of pilgrimage. This in turn suggests that there was a relic of the saint or, at least, a special association gained during travels in Normandy when the monastery of Fontanelle could

have been visited. William of Dunwich, who re-founded the church and probably chose the dedication, was a successful merchant who would have needed to travel for his business.

*It is known that William of Dunwich was responsible for re-founding the church by the remarkable survival of the foundation stone which has the following inscription as transcribed by Blomefield: *anime Wilelmi de Dunwico fudatoris huius ecclesie propiciare Deus.* The 1272 date has been chosen by Blomefield and followed subsequently, but William of Dunwich could have re-founded the church at any time during his life before 1272 when he died. Unless there is further evidence, the church must have been re-founded at any time during the 1250s and 1260s when William's activities are recorded. He may well have acquired a relic of St Wandrille during his travels as a merchant. The acquisition of relics, by hook or by crook, was a common practice during the Middle Ages.*

It is not known whether or not the church was completely rebuilt by William or whether he just rebuilt the chancel. There was a church at Bixley, probably on this site, during the Anglo-Saxon period and this could have been rebuilt in stone by the Normans and just added to by William of Dunwich.

This does pose a number of questions. If there was a church at Bixley in Anglo-Saxon (Pre-Schism) times, what was the dedication? Is there any evidence to suggest that the dedication was changed in the 13th Century? If the shrine of St Wandregisilius was famous as a centre of pilgrimage, why is it so difficult to find details of the form and nature of the shrine? There are fairly detailed records of the destruction of shrines in the 16th Century so, in this context, there could possibly be some documentary evidence of the form of the shrine.

PRAYERS NEEDED

Please pray for Mary, the foundress of our church, who is sick.

ALSO

Of your charity, pray for the soul of the ever-memorable servant of God, Archimandrite Lazarus (Moore) who reposed on 27 November in 1992.

NAMEDAYS

To all who will celebrate a name day this month, we send congratulations and wish you Many Years.

1 November - St Laura of Cordova - Laura Jordan-Tozeland

27 November - St Philip the Apostle - Fr Philip Steer

Date given according to the regular civil calendar for convenience.

Orthodox Church of the Mother of God *Joy of All Who Sorrow*
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REGULAR SERVICES: Every Sunday 10.30am - Every evening 6pm

Extra services for festivals and saints days will be announced in the bulletin.

e-mail churchmettingham@aol.com Website www.joyofallwhosorrow.org.uk

Cheques for the church fund should be made payable to "*Joy of All Who Sorrow*" Church.

The account is in HSBC Bank, 3 New Market, Beccles, Suffolk NR34 9HQ

Account No 71395912 Sort Code 40-09-24