



# “Joy of All Who Sorrow”

No. 71 October 2014



## *Are we growing or standing still?*

### **A Homily by Patriarch Kirill of Moscow & All Russia on the 700<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Birth of St Sergius of Radonezh**

**E**very time when we visit the Lavra, we come in contact with not only the history of our Motherland, but also its spiritual roots. One of these roots was the spiritual struggle of Saint Serguis of Radonezh. In the distant fourteenth century, he established his monastery here—deep in the forest, far from settlements; and perhaps no one in those days could imagine that the Lavra of Holy Rus would shine forth from this place, that the spiritual struggles of many people would bring bountiful fruits, that the fate of Rus would be decided here more than once during the country’s history, including during the most terrible times of the Tatar-Mongol invasion and Polish intervention.

Indeed, we are standing on holy ground. But the Lavra was strong not in the strength of the walls of its fortress, nor in the strength of its weapons, which it practically did not have. The Lavra was always strong in its spirit and its faithfulness to the Orthodox Faith. And precisely because the main treasures of this place have always been the strength of spirit, strength of prayer, and strength of faith, people from all over Holy Rus who yearned for spiritual combat, who yearned to reveal faith in their actions, have flocked here. What does this mean? This means only one thing—a saint is a real and visible bearer of the presence of God’s grace in the world; he is the most vivid witness of God’s existence. And in order to strengthen their faith, people have always been drawn

to those who are strong in spirit, in order that having touched them, they themselves might become stronger.

And today, perhaps like no other time, the Lavra serves as the spiritual centre of Holy Rus and bears forth the witness of the presence of God's grace. We come here primarily in order to touch the holy relics of Saint Sergius, to draw upon his grace; and everyone who enters under the vaulted ceilings of the Trinity Cathedral feels this grace, if only his heart is not hardened. He feels distinctive movements of the Spirit of God; he feels that he is in a holy place. And falling down in veneration before the relics of Saint Sergius, we fall down before the grace of God which is revealed through these holy relics, and we leave here comforted, inspired, strengthened in our faith, able to do good and to witness about our faith.

Saint Sergius began his life here in asceticism. Asceticism always means the bearing of a spiritual struggle, and a struggle always involves self-denial. This ascetic task cannot be undertaken by a person who cares about himself and his own wellbeing, about money or career - by a person who is immersed in vanity. This ascetic feat always requires sacrificing oneself in the name of those who are close and those who are far, in the name of solving many earthly and heavenly tasks, and it takes everything one has. This struggle is like being crucified with Christ. And it is with this feat that Saint Sergius began his life; and he grew from strength to strength and is now a great example for us. If we also want to live the way that the Lord commanded us - if we want to walk in the footsteps of the great saints of God - then we must learn to undertake this spiritual struggle—big or small—depending on our strength, where we find ourselves, and how much the results of our feat will affect those people around us. But we must undertake this through denying ourselves, through sacrifice, and through the ability to serve God's purpose and higher ideals.

But if a person is not growing spiritually, if nothing is happening in his life, then it means that he is spiritually deteriorating. It is so important for each of us to feel what is actually happening to us—whether we are growing or standing in one place. If we are standing in one place, then we are spiritually deteriorating, then we are not following in the footsteps of Saint Sergius, not following in the footsteps of the saints. This is why we must be watchful of our thoughts and our actions, constantly evaluating them before our own conscience and before the face of God in prayer. And if a man yearns for that which is higher, every day he adds even a small scintilla to his spiritual strength. Such a man is on the path of salvation.

Saint Sergius began his spiritual life with small things and concluded with his becoming the Abbot of all of Russia, with the thousands of pilgrims who came here today despite bad weather to venerate his holy relics. Let us ask our holy and God-bearing Father Sergius to help us grow from strength to strength, help us learn to undertake our own spiritual warfare, whether big or small. We must remember that without this feat there cannot be salvation; and then no trouble or temptation, whether from the outside or from within, will keep us from following the path of Saint Sergius, the Abbot of Radonezh, and the great host of the saints of Radonezh, the brethren of this holy monastery, both canonized and not. May the blessing of Saint Sergius and his prayer for our Motherland and for our Church help each one of us to follow the path which he showed to many—to those who glorified the name of God in their lives. Amen.

Source: <http://www.pravmir.com/patriarch-kirill-if-a-person-is-not-growing-spiritually-he-is-degrading/#ixzz3EeFxlOO3>



## *A Pilgrimage for St Sergius*

On 16 July 2014 pilgrims from all over Russia – Kazakhstan, Udmurtia, Chuvashia, Vologda, Penza, and the Moscow region converged on Khotkovo to take part in a 15km procession from the Cathedral of St Nicholas to St Sergiev Posad as part of the international celebration of the 700<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Birth of St Sergius of Radonezh.

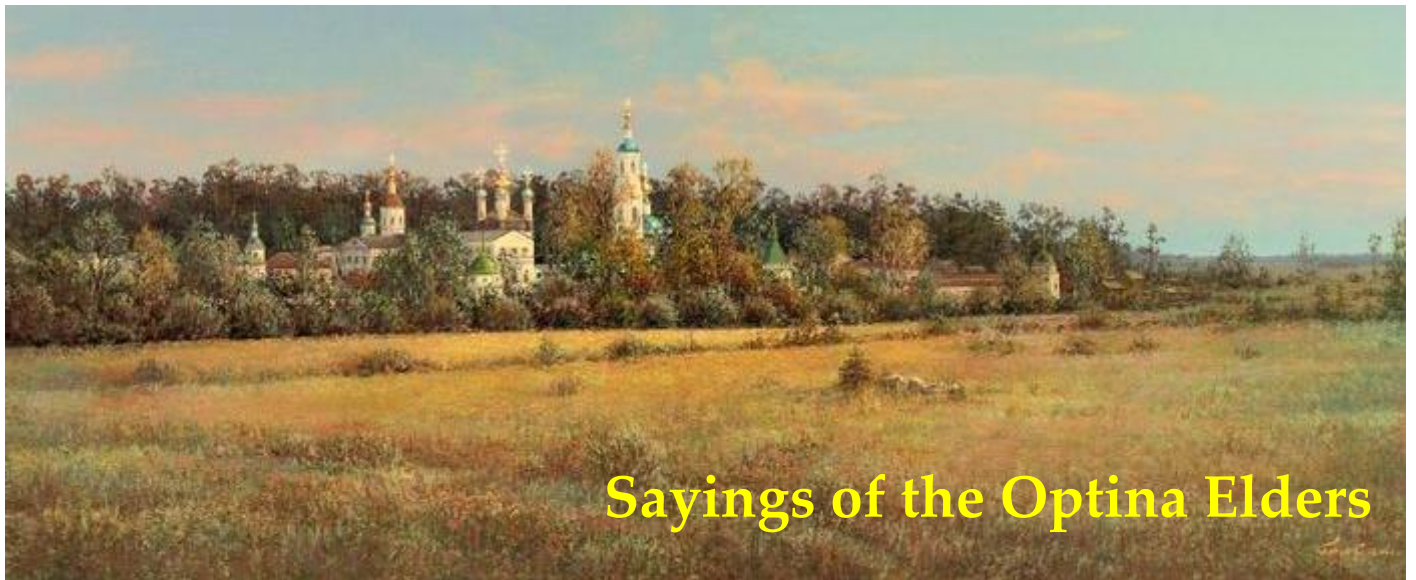
The pilgrimage began at Noon, with a moleben to St Sergius served in front of the relics of St Sergius' parents Sts Cyril and Maria of Radonezh, who later entered the monastic life.

According to official statistics, about 36,000 people came to Khotkovo and Sergiev Posad with approximately 29,000 people participating in the procession which stretched over five kilometres.

In a specially constructed stadium outside Sergiev Posad, Patriarch Kirill served a moleben to St Sergius and gave an address.

To view more pictures and read the Patriarch's address, click [here](#).





## Sayings of the Optina Elders

### **Elder Leo of Optina**

*Try to be more attentive to yourself instead of judging the actions, behaviour and attitude of others towards you; if you do not see love in them, it is because you yourself have no love within you.*

### **Elder Macarius**

*We, weak-minded people, thinking to arrange our possessions, bustle around, despair, deprive ourselves of rest, only in order to leave our children a good estate. But do we know whether it will be of benefit to them? A foolish son is not helped by wealth—it only serves to lead him into immorality. We must concern ourselves with leaving our children the good example of our lives and rearing them in the fear of God and His commandments—that is their primary treasure. When we seek the Kingdom of God and His truth, all that is needful here will also be added (cf. Mt. 6:33). You will say: but we cannot do this, the modern world requires different things now! All right, but have you borne your children for this world only, and not for the hereafter? Comfort yourself with the word of God: If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. (Jn. 15:18), while the carnal mind is enmity against God. It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be (cf. Rm. 8:7). Do not desire earthly glory for your children, but that they may be good people and obedient children, and when God grants it—kind spouses and tender parents, concerned for those serving them, loving to all, and tolerant of their enemies.*

### **Elder Moses**

*Examine yourself daily: what did you sow for the next life—wheat or chaff? Having tested yourself, resolve to make an improvement on the following day, and spend your entire life in this manner. If the day was spent poorly, so that you did not offer even a decent prayer to God, nor felt any remorse of heart, nor humbled yourself in thought, nor showed mercy to anyone, nor gave any charity, nor forgave your offenders, nor bore any insult, but on the contrary, you did not restrain yourself from anger, did not restrain yourself in word, food, and drink, or immersed your mind in unclean thoughts—having examined all this in good conscience, condemn yourself and prepare on the following day to be more attentive towards good and more cautious towards evil.*

### **Elder Anthony**

*Of course it would be easier to get to paradise with a full stomach, all snuggled up in a soft feather-bed, but what is required is to carry one's cross along the way, for the Kingdom of God is not attained by enduring one or two troubles, but many!*

### **Elder Hilarion**

*For us the Church is heaven on earth, where God Himself is invisibly present and watches over those whose stand before Him there. For this reason, one must stand in church in an orderly manner, with great reverence. Let us love the Church, and let us be zealous therein, for it is a delight and consolation for us amid both sorrows and joys.*

## Elder Ambrose

*Why do men sin? Either because they do not know what they should do, or, if they do know, they forget; and if they forget, they are slothful and despondent... This is why we pray to the Queen of Heaven: O all-holy Theotokos, my Mistress ... drive from me, thy servant, despondency, forgetfulness, negligence, and all vile and wicked and evil thoughts... Why is man bad? Because he forgets that God is above him.*

## Elder Anatole I

*One should pray to God so that between God and the soul of the one who prays there is nothing and nobody, only God and the soul: and that the one who prays senses neither heaven nor earth, nor anything else beside God.*

## Elder Joseph

*The example of God's longsuffering must curb our impatience, which gives us no rest. Nothing so calms us and reconciles us to the actions of others as silence, prayer and love.*

## Elder Barsanuphius

*Prayer in church is important. The best thoughts and feelings come in church, yes, and the enemy attacks more violently in church, but with the sign of the Cross and the Jesus Prayer, you drive him away. It is good to stand in some dark corner in church and to pray to God. "Let us lift up our hearts!" the priest exclaims, but our mind often creeps along the ground, thinking about indecent things. Fight against this.*

## Elder Anatole the "Younger"

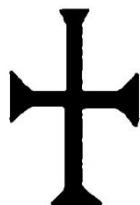
*Our teacher is humility. God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble, and the grace of God is everything. That is your greatest wisdom. Humble yourself and say to yourself: 'Although I'm a speck of earthly dust, still God cares for me, and may the will of God be done in me.' If you say this, not only with your mind, but also with your heart, boldly—as becomes a true Christian—relying on the Lord with a firm intention to submit to the will of God—whatever it may be—without murmuring, then the clouds will disperse before you and the sun will look out, and will enlighten and warm you. And you will know true joy from the Lord and everything will seem clear and transparent to you, and you will cease tormenting yourself, and it will become light in your soul.*

## Elder Nektary

*One must not demand of a fly that it do the work of a bee. Every man should give according to his own measure. Not everyone can do the same thing.*

## Elder Nikon

*You must firmly remember this spiritual law of life: if you condemn someone for something or are disturbed by something in another person, you will experience the very same thing. You will do that which you condemned someone else for doing, or you will suffer from the same infirmity.*



<http://www.stgabrielashland.org/synaxis-of-the-saints-of-optina/>



**Ikona of the Synaxis of the Elders of Optina**

# Notes & Jottings

## ALL SAINTS OF SWITZERLAND

Our friend Subdeacon Claude Lopez-Ginisty has donated an ikon of All Saints of Switzerland to our church. Set into the ikon is a small reliquary with myrrh from another ikon of these saints, which is in Greece, together with a tiny relic of St Maurice. We are grateful for this kind gift.

## GRAVE OF THE FOUNDRRESS

Discussions with a local company concerning the permanent grave furniture eventually produced an estimate of the cost which was a staggering £10,000. The person who would have been most shocked by this is the Foundress herself and so this necessitated a rethink of the plan. In the event, this may be a good thing because we have come up with an idea to make the arrangements of the grave harmonise with the knapped flintwork of the wall and steps of the approach to the grave. A different stonemason has been consulted and we are currently awaiting the new estimate.

## CHRISTMAS CARDS

Over the years we've produced Christmas cards of various designs. These have included ikons, a photograph of the church, paintings and other specially designed pieces of artwork. Many of these designs are still in print and will be advertised in *The Emporium* which is now being prepared for publication. New ideas are needed for Christmas cards, and maybe children's art is a possible source. Could this be done through churches and church schools? Maybe there could be a competition in two age groups; 5 – 10 years old and 11-15 years old. There would need to be a prize but, of course, the artist's name would be printed on the card. Clearly this requires adequate planning and that takes time. We could not do it for this Christmas but what about next year? Your feedback is essential. Let us know what you think of this idea, particularly if you are involved with the young people in your church. Is it viable?

## ST HERMAN CALENDAR 2015

The St Herman Calendar for 2015 has arrived very early this year on the theme of the Orthodox Saints of Siberia. The calendar is in magazine format and contains 112 pages with the universal and local saints listed for each day together with the assigned scriptural readings. The calendar retails at £6.50 and can be purchased through our [on-line store](#) or by [contacting us](#).

## NAMEDAYS

We send our congratulations to all who are celebrating a nameday at this time and wish them:

**Many Years!**

3 October – **St Oleg of Briansk** – Oleg Myslov

5 October – **St Peter the Tax-collector** – Archpriest Peter Baulk

8 October – **St Sergei of Radonezh** –

Priest Sergei (Armstone), Sergey Kouzmin

9 October – **St John the Theologian** – Priest John Palmer, John Harwood

17 October – **St Gurii, Archbishop of Kazan** – Gary Meyer



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

**OCTOBER 2014**

**DAILY AT 6PM: COMPLINE WITH PRAYERS BEFORE THE IKON**

*(If you would like the name of a friend or loved one to be included in our intercessions list, please contact us)*

**Saturday 4 October**

*7.30pm ~ Vigil*

**Sunday 5 October**

**10.10am ~ Hours & Divine Liturgy (26 Monk-Martyrs of Zographou of Mt Athos)**

**Tuesday 7 October**

*7.30pm ~ Service to St Sergius of Radonezh (700<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of his birth)*

**Saturday 11 October**

*7.30pm ~ Vigil*

**Sunday 12 October**

**10.10am ~ Hours & Divine Liturgy (St Cyriacus the Hermit)**

**Saturday 18 October**

*7.30pm ~ Vigil*

**Sunday 19 October**

**10.10am ~ Hours & Divine Liturgy (Apostle Thomas)**

**Saturday 25 October**

*7.30pm ~ Vigil*

**Sunday 26 October**

**10.10am ~ Hours & Divine Liturgy (Martyrs Carpus & Pappylus)**

**FOUNDER'S DAY**

**Friday 14<sup>th</sup> November**

*7.30pm ~ Vigil for the Departed*

**Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> November**

*10.10am Requiem Liturgy for the Departed followed by Prayers at the Grave*

*Followed by a Memorial Meal (buffet lunch) in the college dining room.*



*'I asked one of the monks how he could sum up, in a couple of words, his way of life. He paused a moment and said, 'Have you ever been in love?' I said, 'Yes'. A large Fernandel smile spread across his face, 'Ah good,' he said, 'it is exactly the same ...'*

**Patrick Leigh Fermor**

**A Time to Keep Silence: 'The Abbey of St Wandrille de Fontanelle'**

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