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# Orthodox Canada



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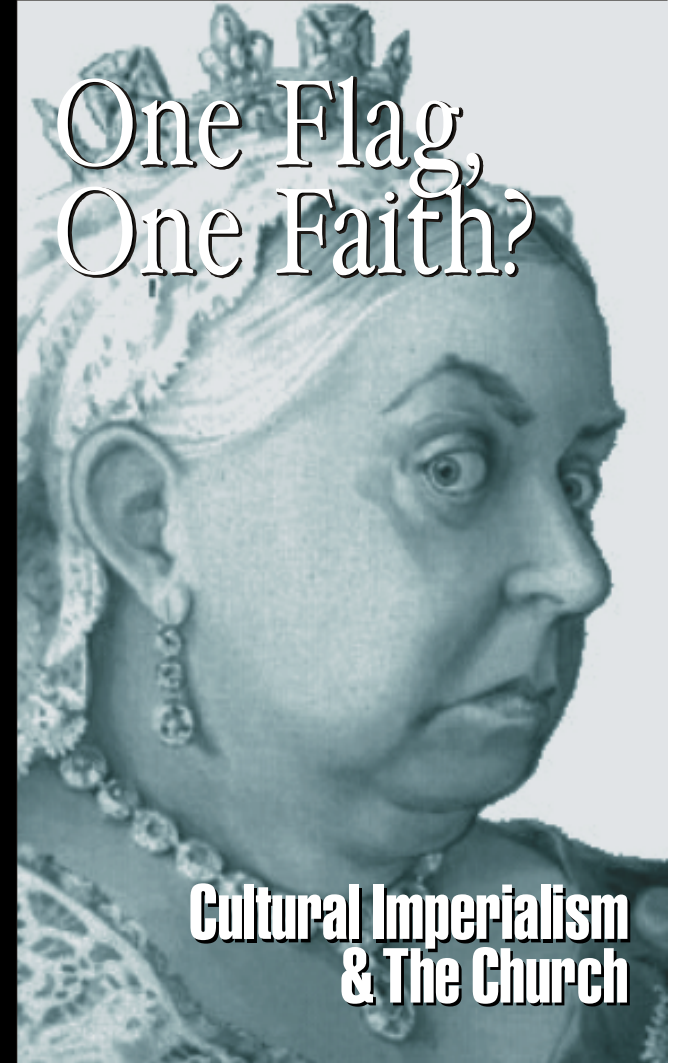
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THE CHURCH  
KITCHEN

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NOTE WORTHY

## One Flag, One Faith?



**Cultural Imperialism  
& The Church**

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*ORTHODOX CANADA is dedicated to sharing a traditional vision of Orthodox Christianity with Canadians. The opinions expressed in these articles are those of the author(s), and do not necessarily reflect those of the Archdiocese of Canada (OCA). Uncredited articles are the work of the editorial board.*

## FROM THE EDITOR

### *On the Achievements of Empires*

Several decades ago when I was a child in years, the concept of what it meant to be Canadian was undergoing a profound change. Amid the changes, historic icons of Canada as a part of the British Empire - the Queen, the flag, tea socials, the Lord's Prayer in schools - were giving way to a new, somewhat confused understanding of national identity.

The confusion over Canadian identity was not only with those who had lived here for generations. It also impacted those who were new to the country, who had come seeking ways to find their place in Canadian society. When Canadian society failed to provide such a framework as a result of the strange animal called multiculturalism, most new Canadians sought their sense of identity in the only place they knew: in the Old Country. Having given up one Imperial identity, Canada inadvertently adopted hundreds of new ones.

It was perhaps inevitable that the new Imperial identities, like the old one, would impact on the life of the Church. Yet perhaps no one could have anticipated the extent to which these competing identities would bolster the uncanonical divisions between Orthodox jurisdictions, turning each one inward on itself, almost eradicating any chance of common Orthodox Christian witness to the country as a whole. Canada, the country which should have provided the best opportunity for the nations of the world to hear about Christ and His Church, instead became a religious marketplace in which individuals held tight to old loyalties, in order to have some kind of imperial identity.

As Orthodox Christian, one must ask what part of this Imperial identity is compatible with, and relates to, the eternity of Christ's Church. Some of it is good, where it incarnates loyalty and stability, and fosters faith in small ways in our daily lives.

Yet the flag and the Empire do not make one an Orthodox Christian. Orthodox Christianity in Canada or anywhere else must never be reduced to such things. There are those in Canada who live for the reestablishment of the Imperial order of various Orthodox empires - Byzantium, Russia, Serbia, and others. Yet the vision of a true empire

goes beyond one people or language, to an identity that is more important than political divisions and nationalist politics. Wherever the Imperial identity of an empire is reduced to one people and one language, it fails to pass on the Orthodox Christian faith to all her children. And this, of course, is exactly the Canadian experience.

The most a true Christian empire can ever hope to do is to provide an image of the Eternal Empire in Heaven, with the sovereign as an icon of the Heavenly King, the imperial laws striving to uphold the holiness of the people, the symbols and songs recalling the virtues of the saints of the land in which they live.

The great Orthodox empires are great because they have succeeded in doing this, by being in every way humanly possible an icon of Christ in the physical world. This is the very reason it is never enough to try to recreate Orthodox Empires in miniature, since such recreations are always a mere shadow. They are human creations, which soon crumble into national pride and nostalgia, recounting stories of old, lost tribal glories.

In this issue, we will look at the impact of imperial identities, old and new, and their impact of the life, faith, and salvation of individual Orthodox Christians. In doing so, it is our prayer that we will begin to carry forward the enduring inheritance of all Orthodox Christians, who share the same citizenship through the same Heavenly Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Father Geoffrey Korz+  
Managing Editor*



## LETTERS

### God is faithful

I was browsing online trying to find your address, and stumbled across the "Orthodox Canada" journal. (I'm sending a) cheque for a years' subscription.

God bless the work you do! He is faithful to His saints and will not abandon them. May we be alert and watchful, so that we will be ready to accompany Him into the bridal chamber with the saints.

J.A., Guelph, Ontario

### On Saint John the Baptist

In your Authentic Christian Life Issue (Vol. 3, No. 1 Pascha 2008) you indicated in your article about Saint John the Baptist (Northern Nomenclature) that the Feast of the Beheading of St. John is often associated with disaster. You noted that the terrorist attacks in New York in 2001 and London in 2005 took place on the Beheading and the Nativity of the Baptist, respectively, according to the Julian calendar. You did, however, not note another recent North American disaster - Hurricane Katrina. Katrina hit New Orleans on the morning of August 29, 2005 - the Feast of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist. I should know - I was there!

Fr. Polycarp Gilbert  
London, ON

### For the love of North America's Saints

I am from Romania and I am very interested in all (the) Saints from North America. I first loved Saint John the Wonderworker from San Francisco, and so I read a few about the other Saints too. But my people speak Romanian, not everybody can read English.

I want people from my country to know more about these Saints! They deserve to be known. I want to do this for their sake.

Besides, I discovered the Saints from Orthodox England and that life of Saint Martin from Tours is not yet translated in Romanian and I found out it was written by Sulpicius Severus, a Latin author. This is the first time when I actually understand the use of learning Latin (I am about to finish courses).

- A.S., Romania

*Editor's Response:*

*Thank you for your note. It is very encouraging to learn of Romanian faithful interested in the saints of North America.*

*The first thing I would encourage you to do is ask their prayers in your work. This is very important, since without them, we end up doing whatever comes into our mind, rather than allowing God to direct us.*

*There are several good books on Saint John the Wonderworker of Shanghai and San Francisco, and Saint Herman, which provide good starting points. There are several akathists and services available in English. Whatever is published in terms of services should definitely have the blessing of a bishop.*





## THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

### *Cultural Imperialism and the Heart of Orthodoxy*

*"Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations."*

- Psalm 145:13 (144 LXX)

What is the essential quality of an empire? Or, more precisely, what makes an empire different from a nation, a country or a tribe?

Throughout much of modern history, and certain periods of the ancient world, tribes (whether in the form of small groups, or in the form of nation-states) have dominated the landscape. Tribes define themselves based on sameness and uniformity, an identity based on ancestry and territory, language and local custom. It is from tribalism that political divisions are drawn, and by which nations are often defined in earthly, political terms. The divisions of tribalism are the building blocks of conflicts of all kinds, in the state or in the Church.

The concept of empire transcends tribalism. While a tribe divides cultures, setting up one culture as superior to another, empires have

historically called all their members to the highest expressions common to all cultures: language, learning, the arts, and higher levels of wisdom. Empires unify diverse peoples, based on an identity that is higher than the tribe, and identity that transcends petty tribal politics.

Ancient empires understood this idea. Early empires such as the Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, and Chinese introduced the concept of one empire, combining a variety of cultures, with loyalties transcending tribal identities. When one tribe sought to assert itself against the unity of the empire, the power of the empire united to put down rebellion.

Such an imperial ideal was heavy-handed, and varied in its effectiveness to create a higher culture on human terms (the Chinese are perhaps the best example of an enduring empire which preserved such high culture from ancient times until the Maoist revolution). Yet it was arguably not until the Roman Empire that nations of the western world were finally united under the broad banner of one imperial ensign. Yet for all its glory, the Roman empire, with its corrupt gods, brutal military campaigns, and bizarre coliseum games, could not offer an enduring spiritual identity to civilize the human soul. Thus, the glory of Rome as the first pre-Christian empire of the west was doomed to failure, its territory carved up by squabbling tribes, its symbols and forms left for later adoption by others.

It was on the ruins of pagan Rome that the basis of a true Christian empire emerged. The Byzantine Empire<sup>1</sup> married the outward structures of Imperial Rome with the interior life of the Christian faith. For all its failings, Byzantium presented to the world something new, something brilliant, something precious: an empire that transcended tribalism,

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<sup>1</sup> The use of "Byzantium" as the name for the Eastern Roman Empire centered in Constantinople is a modern invention by historians who used this to more easily distinguish between the pre-Christian united Rome and its legitimate Christianized successor in the East. During its lifetime, people did not refer to the Christian Empire centered in Constantinople as "Byzantium", but rather simply as "Rome". Today's "Roumania" and "Romanians", or the Bulgarian province known as "Rumelia", attest to this nomenclature. Furthermore, Arabs refer to Orthodox Christians as "Rum Orthodox", i.e. Roman Orthodox. Also, Jews refer often to the Greek-speaking Byzantines as "Romans", or to the Romans in general as "Greeks". Also the Russian Empire, modeled after "Byzantium", was often referred to as the *New Rome* or *Third Rome*, rather than the *New* or *Second Byzantium*. See also <http://www.romanity.org/index.htm>.

offering unity not simply based on imperial citizenship, but on the enduring unity of the shared Blood of Christ, the citizenship of Heaven. The scholarly merits of the universal Greek language allowed the transfer of the achievements of all Christian cultures to all their brothers in Christ. The identity of citizenship extended beyond the tribe to all Christian Orthodox people. To be a Christian in Byzantium was not to be a “Greek” in the narrow sense (since the empire was multicultural and multi-lingual), but to be something much more: a *Christian Roman*.

With the later decline of the Byzantine empire, the growing Slavic Christian empire of Rus took on the mantle of this universal Christian imperial identity. To be a “Russian” in the Orthodox Empire did not mean that one was born into a Slavic family in Moscow or Saint Petersburg: it meant that one was a member of the Orthodox Church, whether from a Slavic, Scandinavian, Asiatic, Balkan, Hellenic, or another background. Where the imperial identity was Christian and Orthodox, land claims, language, and folk customs were secondary: Orthodox faith came first.

While it is the madness of the French Revolution that fuelled the rise of the modern nation states of Europe<sup>2</sup>, Canada’s sense of imperial identity was garnered from a different source: the British Empire. While many would debate the various merits of that Empire, history demonstrates that the Empire of which Canada was part (not to mention its current successor Commonwealth) had not completely cut itself off from the best features of other historic empires. The best aspects of Canada’s own multicultural policy are derived from the notion that many cultures and languages can exist within an empire, that an empire transcends nation and tribe. Orthodox Empires understood this, offering the Church as the Imperial identity for all citizens, regardless of culture or language<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> See *Saint Clotilde vs. the Revolution*, Orthodox Canada Vol. 3, No. 2, Pentecost 2008.

<sup>3</sup> In modern times, Canada’s loss of an authentic imperial identity has left a vacuum that has been replaced with multicultural segregation below, and with a common imperial culture of commercialism and pleasure-seeking from below. One might argue that Canada has maintained the lowest qualities of cultural diversity, while losing the highest ones of vitality and co-operation between cultures, while embracing the worst qualities of the French Revolution - unlimited freedom to seek money and pleasure - as the nation’s new imperial identity.

The rise of the nation state - the idea that every self-identified nation deserved its own separate, distinct, and independent regime, attacked this notion of the universal citizenship of Orthodox Christians. It attacked the notion of Orthodox monarchy, substituting the secular, western construct of individualism, placing the nation before faith in Christ and His Church. Thus, tribalism trumped Christ as the measure of identity.

Perhaps the greatest victims of this distortion were Orthodox Christians themselves. By the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Orthodox Christians were increasingly adopting the alien notion of the nation state, a notion which formed the basis for a new Europe, a New World Order, and a new concept of Orthodox identity in North America. Whereas Orthodox Christians in past centuries would have viewed other Orthodox Christians as brothers, in far too many cases, Orthodox in the twentieth century began to view each other as denominations based on tribe. Thus, hyphenated Orthodox identities - Greek-Orthodox, Ukrainian-Orthodox, Russian-Orthodox, Serbian-Orthodox, Romanian-Orthodox, etc. - began to emerge, with the distinct emphasis on tribal identity. From this poisoned root, jurisdictional chaos grew, resulting in the splintering and disunity that plagues Orthodox Christians in almost every corner of the world today.

In recent years, certain Church factions have bought into this distorted idea, using tribalism as a context for the mission of the Church: we must make other nations more like us, they argue, in order to make them Orthodox. This is clearly seen recently in Alaska with attempts to “Russianize” native Alaskans who have been Orthodox for over two centuries. It can be further seen in one Patriarchate trying to Hellenize Africans and Chinese Orthodox Christians. Such distorted notions of Orthodox identity, which hold up Greek or Slavonic as languages most suitable for the spiritual education of new faithful, firmly reject the inheritance of multi-cultural empires such as Byzantium and Rus, losing the essential Orthodox identity in a morass of tribalism<sup>4</sup>.

Whenever cultural imperialism triumphs, the identity of universal Orthodox Christian identity - the Orthodox empire - is lost. In losing

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<sup>4</sup> In fact, this concept of Orthodox brotherhood did exist in North America until the 1920s, when the breakdown of Russia after the Communist revolution disrupted the administration of the Church, and gave rise to the multi-jurisdictional tribalism that exists today.

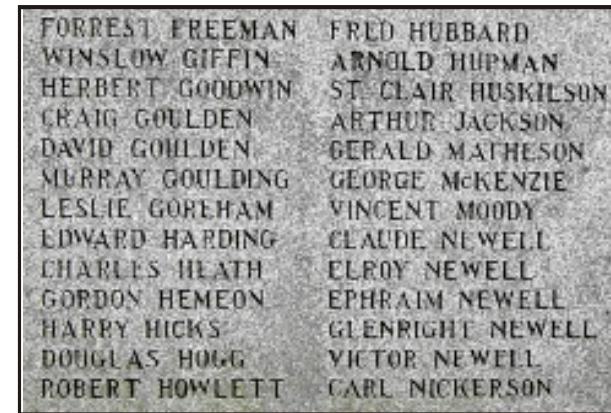


this, we abandon the wisdom of great Byzantine saints like Constantine, who had a sense of the potential for multi-cultural Empires, held together not by uniculturalism, but by shared Orthodox Christian faith. This ignores the lessons of great Byzantine missionaries like Saint Cyril and Methodius, who delivered the most traditional Orthodox teachings and liturgical life to the Slavic people, by first creating a written Slavic language in which to do this. It turns its back on holy men like Saint Innocent of Alaska, who managed to evangelize numerous Alaskan nations in their own languages - nations who often despised each other - and to unite them in the brotherhood of Orthodox Christianity.

The heart of Orthodoxy, the survival of the faith among men, lies in the concept of the *Orthodox* empire, a brotherhood that transcends tribalism. For those who betray Orthodoxy, in favour of their own tribe, the loss is not only evangelical. This loss extends to their own children, who lose not only the precious Orthodox Christian faith, but their own tribal inheritance as well, swallowed up in the cultural imperialism of modern secular culture. For those with eyes to see and ears to hear, the heart of Orthodoxy is clear. Orthodox Christianity is *its own imperial culture*. It is *its own citizenship*. It is the universal Orthodox Christian brotherhood which provides for both personal salvation, and the salvation of local nations and tribal cultures, which may be either fed in the fertile soil of the Church, or left to become lifeless in the dry winds of modernism, and to perish in the sands of time.

- Father Geoffrey Korz and Zoran Radisic

Special thanks to Father Alexander Tefft of the Antiochian Church in London, England, for his inspiration and encouragement in promoting an understanding of Orthodox identity and brotherhood, and for inspiring many of the thoughts expressed in this article.



## WHAT'S IN A NAME? *Personal Christian Names*

*"He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though he is not far from each one of us;"*

- Acts 17:26-27

A few weeks before my ordination to the priesthood, a beloved, senior priest friend approached me to offer his best wishes.

"Father Deacon, what will your new name be?" he asked with a smile. I explained that I would keep the same name, as most priests do, since it was an Orthodox saint's name. Somewhat confused - no doubt on account of the unfamiliarity of the history of the name - he asked again.

"But what will your *Orthodox* name be?" he queried.

"The same name," I replied, trying to explain myself. "It's an Orthodox name, you know."

Chuckling, somewhat unconvinced, he jumped to his real question.

"Yes, yes. But what will your *Greek* name be?"

Such charming moments underscore how much we have lost in our country, where the memory of the names of saints has been so far

reduced, to a point where only the most familiar ones (and often, the ones most foreign to many Canadian ears) are remembered. It is another unfortunate reminder that for many Canadians, both Orthodox and heterodox, that the Orthodox faith remains something from long ago, and far away.

Names provide the essence of our identity. From the earliest times, those who sought the Lord were often given new names to seal their covenant with God. Abram became Abraham, and his wife Sarai became Sarah. Jacob came to be known as Israel, and the Church today - the new Israel - still bears his name. Numerous other examples could be given.

With the coming of Christ in the flesh, the practice of changing names - in particular, the practice of God giving a new name to those who convert - continued. The fisherman Simon became the Apostle Peter. The persecutor Saul became the Apostle and Evangelist Paul. In many places, the early Church continued this practice at baptism, as the newly illumined infant or adult took on a new name, a new identity, and a new patron to intercede on his behalf before the throne of Christ<sup>1</sup>.

Recently, some in the media remarked on a national survey of Canadians and Americans, which demonstrated our country's notable secularization. Almost half of Canadians surveyed (42%) indicated that they almost never attend a religious service, contrasting with a similar figure (46%) of Americans who indicate they attend church on a weekly basis<sup>2</sup>. Yet for all our secularization, Canadians continue to demonstrate a dogged attachment to Christian names for their children. Whether this attachment is indicative of an awareness of our inherited identity, or whether it is merely nostalgia for simpler times, our names provide an indication that the Canadian connection with the saints is not entirely severed, even among secular people. For the faithful, this is a place to begin.

Consider the following examples. In 2003, of the twenty top names for boys and girls in English Canada, half were recognizable Christian given names. For boys, these included Justin, Joshua, Matthew, Jacob, and Nicholas; for girls, these included Emma and Emily (the mother of Saint

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<sup>1</sup> Even the common Orthodox practice of the Jesus Prayer is rooted in the use of the Personal Name of Jesus Christ.

<sup>2</sup> Stategic Council CTV News / Globe and Mail poll, June 12-22, 2008.

Basil and his siblings), Sarah, Hannah, and Madison. The last example, Madison, provides one of the many cases where a diminutive of a Christian name has become so common, that it has lost its Christian connection in the popular mind. In the case of Madison - originally a boy's name, the "son" of Maud/Matilda or Matthew in Old High German - all its roots are Christian, despite popular amnesia about its origins.

Alberta (sometimes known as Canada's "Bible belt") boasts an even wider usage of Christian names for children in the 2007 list. In addition to those mentioned above, other familiar biblical and saints names abound - including Jacob, Noah, Alexander, Ethan, Nathan, and Owen (from the Old English Eugenius, meaning "well born"), as well as Liam (a diminutive Irish version of William or Basil, with a Hebrew root).

The same is the case for girls names. Albertans fill out their baby names top-ten with Sarah, Sophia, and Ava (a Latin version of Eve, used as a dedication to the New Eve, the Mother of God).

Even in the militantly secular and celebrity-worshipping culture of Quebec, Christian names top the list. For 2007, the boy names list reads like an Orthodox calendar of saints, for those who recognize the roots. In order, they are (for boys) William (Basil), Samuel, Gabriel (the Archangel), Nathan, Alexis, Thomas, Felix (of East Anglia), Antoine (Anthony), and Justin. Only one name in the top ten - Oliver - comes from a non-Christian root. For girls, the case is similar, with Léa (Leah), Juliette (a version of Julia), Gabrielle (feminine of Gabriel), Sarah, and Noémie (Naomi) dominating the top ten list of given names.

This contemporary reality should be an encouragement to Orthodox Christians on two levels. Firstly, while most Canadians are choosing Christian names for their children, many have no idea about the origins of their name, the story of their saint, and the identity which comes with the chosen name. This presents an opportunity - a missionary opportunity, if you will - for faithful Christian witness to those who, far from having no Christian connection, merely find themselves cut off from a Christian inheritance that is their own, from their own ancestry and cultural heritage. (In many if not most cases, this heritage is Orthodox at some time in its past, even if it is one thousand years ago).

Secondly, in order to be true witnesses of the lives of Christ's saints to those who bear their names, the faithful must take the time to prepare themselves each day with the reading of lives of the saints, the collection of their icons from the holy ones of the East and West, and the intimate

familiarization of their holy witness. The lives of certain popular saints are more easily learned (Saints Nicholas and Catherine being classic examples which cut across cultures). Yet the names of thousands of Orthodox saints, particularly those of the Orthodox West, have until recently been almost lost in the sands of time<sup>3</sup>. These are often the very names which are familiar given names for Canadians, young and old.

The capacity to give this gift takes time to develop, yet it is not and cannot be a dry academic exercise. Rather, our familiarity with the saints must be part of the daily pattern of our lives. It means using the Church calendar to give context to our day. It means including under the date in our personal letters the name of the feast of the day. It means reading the lives of saints, and searching out their icons in churches, shops, and in online collections. It means discovering children's books with the lives of saints, to give as gifts to adults and children alike. It even means finding an icon for the name saint of our friend, co-worker, or the neighbourhood child's birthday, and using our colour printer to print off a holy image, alongside all the snapshots from our vacations.

It is popular today to speak of the need to build bridges for unchurched people to find their way to - or their way *back to* - the Church. Too often, such good intentions can lead to the creation of false bridges, inspired more by the imperial popular culture and the entertainment industry than the gift of the Orthodox tradition. Yet in making the connection between the names that we bear and the saints who bear them as well - their lives, their writings, their histories, and their icons - Orthodox Christian faithful have the opportunity to build true bridges to the inheritance not just of the Church, but to the links most Canadians have with the Orthodox Church from their own family heritage.

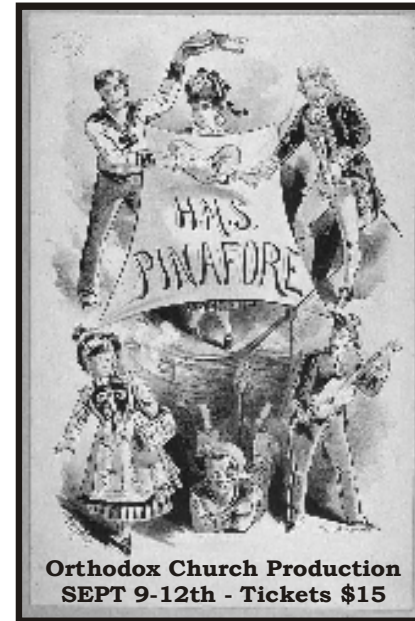
In a time obsessed with individualism, there is perhaps no better gift that faithful people can give than to fill this mark of individual identity - our given names - with the knowledge of Christ and His martyrs and saints. It is something we can and must do.

- *Father Geoffrey Korz+*

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<sup>2</sup> The Church in Russia recently added hundreds of Western Orthodox saints to the calendar of the Church in Russia. This praiseworthy step was the result of the early labours of Saint John Maximovitch, who urged the Russian Synod to recognize the pre-Schism saints of the West. In recent years, the labours of Father Andrew Phillips to make known these saints must also be noted.

\* Image at beginning of this article taken from the World War II Memorial at Shelburne, Nova Scotia



## THE TRINITY AND THE TRICOLOUR

*Cultural fetishism and the Church*

*"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."*

- Joshua 24:15

Where do problems occur when culture and Orthodox Christianity overlap?

It is easy to view the question as a linguistic one. It is also incorrect to do so. Liturgical language can be a barrier, but in parishes where the faithful behave like Christians, flexibility and Christian love can overcome linguistic obstacles. Much more serious, however, is the approach taken by those who mix the aspirations of their culture with the Orthodox Faith - or even worse, use the Orthodox Church as a vehicle to promote their cultural fetish.



Ethnically homogeneous communities are not Orthodox: they are the product of secular, socialistic multiculturalism, which seeks to keep Christ's Holy Church divided. What immigration patterns began has been entrenched by civic leaders, often for political reasons. Sadly, many hierarchs, clergy, and laity play along with this, thus bolstering phyletism, which is a complete association of Orthodox faith with a particular culture. It is manifested on a small level when individuals, raised and immersed in an "ethnically" Orthodox upbringing are at pains to understand how those from outside traditionally Orthodox cultures could be Orthodox. It is manifested on a broad level when individuals assume only certain ethnic or cultural identities are suitable to convey the essence of Orthodoxy.

The real issue is this: *whom do you serve?* Invariably, everyone is part of some kind of culture that informs their habits, their dress, the food they eat, the music they like, and the social circle they enjoy. In this limited respect, cultures (at least in most cases) are spiritually neutral. The trouble begins when the Orthodox faith becomes a vehicle for cultural ends.

Imagine an Orthodox parish where ostensibly faithful people gather in a Church basement several times each year for a concert. Imagine guests decked out in lederhosen and green felt hats. Imagine young people, months of practice under their belts, performing a series of songs from Gilbert and Sullivan. Imagine a sumptuous meal of Chinese cuisine, or an after-dinner presentation of break-dancing or salsa music.

A fun evening? Certainly! The connection with the Orthodox faith? Nothing! Yet this is exactly the reality in parishes of all Orthodox jurisdictions in North America - expressed in culturally different examples, to be sure, but merely cultural nonetheless. The crime in this is not that any of the dances, songs, ethnic costumes, or traditions are particularly sinful (although admittedly, some might be): the travesty is the reinforcement in the minds of faithful people that the Holy Orthodox Church and ethnic social clubs are an appropriate - even inevitable - mix. It would be virtually unimaginable to attempt to mix Holy Orthodoxy with any other mundane pursuit: an association of Orthodox Republicans, Orthodox Triathletes, Orthodox Line Dancers, Orthodox

Lovers of Broadway, Orthodox Jazz Musicians<sup>1</sup>, or Orthodox model train enthusiasts. Any of these would be thought odd, even inappropriate, and many would immediately attract the ban of a bishop as an unsuitable vehicle for the Orthodox Faith. Why? Not because any of the activities are overtly bad, but because of the confusion between the sacred and profane. This kind of confusion has a distracting and destructive effect on souls.

Where is the power? Is it in the culture? Does the culture take us into eternity? How can cultural fetishism stand us before the judgement seat of Christ?

Misunderstanding or stubborn stupidity might lead one to believe this is somehow a call to expunge culture from Orthodox life: it is not. How could it be? Culture is indelibly imprinted on all of us - we cannot escape it. It is also a constantly changing aspect of our lives, which leads us to the biggest problem of mixing Orthodoxy and culture. While the Holy Orthodox Church remains constant, culture changes. In the wake of cultural change, Orthodoxy too closely associated with any cultural influence is faced with two utterly unacceptable choices: either the Church must change to "move with the times" and the culture at large, or "Orthodoxy" must turn into a dry museum piece, repeating the same cultural dirges, dancing the same dances, wearing the same costumes "as we did in the old country". Frightfully, it was so-called Orthodox "old countries" that gave birth to poisons such as communism, neo-paganism, materialism, secularism, nationalism, and every force that has stood against Christ's Holy Church for a thousand years. To tie the survival of the Church (which is not our task, but God's) to the culture is not simply wrong - it is suicidal.

How should timeless Orthodox Christianity confront the tide of cultural change facing us in the world today? As Orthodox faithful, our answers must be rooted in the practice of the Church over two thousand years, and not the politics of our own time:

**1) Our Orthodox citizenship must be our primary citizenship.** This means viewing other Orthodox as brethren, whatever their culture or race. This means ceasing the use of national epithets when describing

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<sup>1</sup>An ironic website has appeared in recent years dedicated to John Coltrane, the late jazz musician of infamous moral record. The page is a memorial lined to a religious group calling itself the "Saint" John Coltrane African Orthodox Church. See also [www.coltranechurch.org](http://www.coltranechurch.org).

our faith. Practically, this means clarifying religious identity blurred by culture<sup>2</sup>, and supporting Orthodox Christians who are persecuted for their faith<sup>3</sup>. Our parishes and our hierarchy must take active steps to reflect this unity of faith by cultivating harmony between parishes, and through canonical administrative unity and cultural openness. This could start with stripping national epithets from the signs and letterheads of Orthodox parishes, and by all Orthodox parishes sharing the same category in the yellow pages.

**2) Our Orthodox citizenship must bind us together.** Pan-Orthodox clergy committees in many cities already meet to support member parishes morally, spiritually, and in other ways. Seniors residences must address the demographic realities in North America through the spiritual and physical care of the elderly - ideally in an Orthodox environment with active chapel life. Similarly, hospital chaplaincy programs must be maximized, providing Orthodox clergy for a cross-section of lapsed Orthodox individuals, particularly those in critical care (including the families of terminally ill children) and the elderly.

**3) Our Orthodox citizenship must be the basis of our preparation of the next generation.** Orthodox children who go to public school stand only a remote chance of marrying other Orthodox. They stand about the same chance of themselves remaining practising Orthodox Christians. Those who attend heterodox parochial schools stand a higher chance of marrying heterodox. Orthodox schools must be at the forefront of binding together the Orthodox community of tomorrow. Such schools must be built on Orthodox citizenship, and reject racist policies that cut to the heart of Christ's Holy Church.

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<sup>2</sup> Increased rates of religious intermarriage are in the process of creating a generation that is orphaned in terms of the Orthodox faith. Children from religiously mixed families - particularly from cultures with more than one dominant religion (such as Romania, Ukraine, and the Middle East) must be nurtured in their faith to the extent that when confronted with the question, "What religion are you, Orthodox or Catholic?" they would answer, "Both." Those who drift between churches and chalices because "we are the same people" must be corrected, both in their mindset and in their practice.

<sup>3</sup> This is a domestic, as well as an international reality. The recent bombing of Serbia is a good example of Orthodox unity - not on an issue of politics, but on a matter of targeted attacks on Orthodox clergy, monastics, and holy sites. The persecution of Orthodox Christians in various parts of the Islamic world is another critical issue, often ignored as a result of the desire by Orthodox in the west to "fit in" with the culture at large.

Similarly, Orthodox campus associations must serve to spiritually feed and bring together faithful on university and college campuses, and to spread the Gospel as our Lord Jesus Christ commanded. Joint summer and Saturday programs, teaching the fundamentals of Orthodox belief, history, and prayer life must be initiated to prepare young Orthodox faithful, through genuine participation across jurisdictions.

It is no longer possible to speak of any culture in the world today as a "traditional Orthodox" culture. Several might be described as "historically Orthodox", but none have comprehensively maintained Orthodox Christianity as its underpinning in the modern world. Greece has been absorbed into European paganism, the Middle East is a hotbed of Muslim/Jewish political conflict, and the former Soviet Union suffers the deep effects of nearly a century of militant atheism.

We must turn the page on the notion of phyletism - the notion that the Orthodox Church can be associated with the identity of any one culture - to rediscover the how the Church Fathers, saints, and martyrs have been able to maintain Orthodox tradition, and the way in which we can maintain it in the environment in which we live, today.

- *Father Geoffrey Korz+*





## ON THE COMMEMORATION OF THE DEAD

*All Orthodox Ancestors,  
Known and Unknown*

*“To this end Christ died and rose and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living.” - Romans 14:9*

At many of the services of the Orthodox Church, the clergy and faithful pray for the departed souls of those who have gone before us in the Faith. Commemorations for the souls of the departed are offered at the Service of Preparation (called the *Proskomedija*) before the Divine Liturgy, and at certain times during the year, prayers are also offered during the Liturgy itself, particularly on Saturdays during Great Lent.

For those whose parents and grandparents held to the Orthodox Faith, such commemorations are a manifestation of the unity between living and departed relatives - a unity that is found in the Holy Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ. Since such Communion is shared by those

on earth and in Heaven, including the saints, this unity provides a great comfort and hope to the living, who might otherwise become overwhelmed with grief or the fear of death.

Beyond the commemoration of our own immediate relatives, the remembrance in prayer of the souls of the departed also underscores the family relationship of all those who share in the same Holy Chalice, the Blood of Christ, which makes all Orthodox communicants members of one family, and one race. The evolutionary foundations of modern racism - the concept that God created separate races, and that some races have advanced to a superior level beyond others - is completely foreign to the Orthodox understanding of the relationship between people and cultures. As far as the Christian Orthodox Church is considered, there are only two kinds of people: those who are part of the family of Orthodox Christians, and those who are not, or who are yet to be. Any other understanding comes from the Evil One, the sower of lies and divisions.

But what of those who have come to the Orthodox Church apart from their families? For whom can they pray? With whom can they hope to share in the intimacy of the common Blood of Christ? And in earthly terms, how can they avoid suffering from the nationalist arrogance that often afflicts parish life in North America, which can lead those new to the faith or outside her to believe they are alone in not sharing Orthodox ancestors that they know, for whom they can pray on a very personal level?

Certainly, Orthodox Christians can and should pray for those they love, for family and friends inside and outside the Church. But what of prayers for ancestors? Are such even relevant for individuals who have converted to Orthodoxy? Clearly, in praying for the departed souls of people in the Church, we do not pray only for those we know, but for those we do not know as well. How encouraging it is to see faithful and pious Orthodox Christians taking the time to stay behind after divine services, to join in memorial prayers for the departed souls of people they do not know - those who although strangers to them on earth, would be brothers and sister to them in Heaven. Such a small sacrifice of time is a true example of Christian love.

Yet for almost everyone, there are examples of actual earthly relatives who share the same Orthodox Faith, be they known or unknown.

For those of Russian, Serbian, Greek, or Arabic background, such Orthodox ancestors are very likely only a generation or two removed,

and their names are often known. For those whose families had to flee Communism, the separation may be a whole century - a mere heartbeat in the eyes of God and eternity.

For those of Ukrainian or Romanian background, the connection may be a single generation, or it may date back a few centuries to a period of forced divisions of large numbers of faithful families from the Church by the Roman Catholic Unia. For those of Western European descent, for South Americans, Mexicans, Phillipinos, or those of African heritage, the separation may be even one thousand years, back to the Great Schism of 1054. For central Asians, one might have to look back over one and a half millennia to find Orthodox ancestors; their names may be forgotten by us, yet they are known to God. For those North Africans, Indians, Syrians, and Armenians, the connection to the Church of the Seven Ecumenical Councils is farther back still.

And what of other peoples? The Church Fathers suggest in a few places, and a variety of contemporary research leads us to believe that even the religions of antiquity, monotheistic faiths predating even Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, and Hinduism, followed rites of worship of the One True God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, and that their various faiths mirrored closely the common sacrificial rites, prayers, and beliefs of the ancient Hebrews, the forerunners of the Orthodox Church, the New Israel. Much has been written about this fascinating possibility<sup>1</sup>.

Prayer for the reposed souls of loved ones grows out of the common love of faithful Christians, across time and place. In so doing, we are united not just with our relatives of the flesh, but with those who share in the same Blood - the Blood of Christ, across time, in Heaven, and on earth.



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<sup>1</sup> On this question, see the book *Faith of Our Fathers: God in Ancient China*, by Chan Kei Thong with Charlene L. Fu, Beijing: Dong Fang Publishing House/China Publishing Group, and the article *Ancient Chinese History in Light of the Book of Genesis* by Hieromonk Damascene, available at [www.orthodox.cn](http://www.orthodox.cn).

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## A CANADIAN FIRST HIERARCH

### *On the Busses with Metropolitan Hilarion*

At the 2008 Orthodox Conference held in Erie, Pennsylvania in June, Orthodox Canada caught up with Metropolitan Hilarion, newly consecrated First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia (ROCOR). Daily shuttle bus trips between the conference site and the local Church of the Nativity provided a number of opportunities to speak with Vladika Hilarion, who gave his kind blessing to share details of his Canadian connection with readers of our journal.

“Please, have a seat,” Vladika Hilarion offered in a friendly tone, as we climbed aboard the conference shuttle bus. We would soon discover that the noteworthy genuineness of the Metropolitan’s invitation was one of the qualities for which he has become known.

Metropolitan Hilarion seemed pleased to discover a Canadian presence at this Church conference, yet another remarkable development in the recent history of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia, whose recent reunion with the Moscow Patriarchate brought to a joyful resolution decades of separation between the two jurisdictions. When the

late Metropolitan Laurus reposed less than one year after the reunion was accomplished, Vladika Hilarion was consecrated to succeed him. Like the recent reunion, the elevation of Metropolitan Hilarion has been widely greeted with optimism and hope for the future of the Church.

When we mentioned somewhere hearing about Vladika Hilarion’s Canadian roots, he responded in his customary gentle and cheerful way, “Yes, of course I’m Canadian!”. Born in Alberta in 1948 of Ukrainian immigrant parents, he was baptized Igor. After completing Holy Trinity Seminary at Jordanville, New York, he entered the monastic community there, where he was tonsured a monk with the name Hilarion (for Saint Hilarion, Metropolitan of Kiev).

“So, do I still have a Canadian accent?” Vladika asked, smiling. Indeed, it was not hard to detect it, a tone that sang of the hospitality of the Canadian prairies, of a gentler time and place, of neighbours who were friends, of another period in history for most urban folks. “It’s really the Ukrainian that shaped the accent, I think,” he continued. Of course, any prairie-dweller would tell you he is right. He still holds a Canadian passport, along with an Australian citizenship.

Our talk was wide ranging, a conversation rather than an interview - which is really the best way for things to be in our celebrity-obsessed times. Though one would never know by his humble manner, the Metropolitan holds a double Masters in Slavic Studies and Russian Literature, and can match point-for-point topics as varied as hagiography and politics, language and cultural identity. Yet much more importantly, Vladika Hilarion bears a quiet, prayer-filled steadiness, so needed in our times. By reputation and in person, his traditionalism and keen pastoral love are in solid evidence.

By God’s grace, the Russian Church Abroad has not been granted a celebrity to lead Her, but has been blessed with a humble and faithful shepherd. As he reminisced about prairie life, Vladika Hilarion shared also his faithful reassurance about the future, not so much by his words (since he is a man of few words, to be sure), but simply by his steadiness of faith, and his attention to each one of his flock.

And riding along on the conference bus, one could not help but think of the ways that life on the Canadian prairies helped to form this shepherd. May God grant him many, many blessed years.







## REWARDING EVIL

### *The Order of Canada and the redefinition of a “better country”*

*“From the prophet even to the priest, Everyone deals falsely. They have also healed the hurt of My people slightly, saying, ‘Peace, peace!’ when there is no peace. Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed.”*

-Jeremiah 6:13-15

As one crosses the bridge into North Winnipeg, one of the poorest neighbourhoods in the country, a large sign proclaims, “People - Not Profits”. The sentiment was inspired by the Canadian prairie Social Gospel movement, a uniquely Canadian mixture of evangelical Protestantism and socialist doctrine. The movement has broadly shaped the face of Canadian life, providing the basis for Canada’s social safety net, and the national healthcare system.

The successes of the Social Gospel movement in Canada have attracted the praises of Canadians, religious and secular alike. Yet its Christian-inspired roots defending family life and the right to life have grown increasingly awkward for Canadians - again, both religious and secular - to discuss in public. Rendered mute by the fear of disagreement

or offending, most Canadians, including religious leaders, prefer to talk about easier subjects, allowing their light to shine through more socially acceptable windows.

Externally, Canadians maintain a veneer of civility, inherited from our mannerly Anglo formation, and the moralism of its puritan parliamentary tradition. Yet behind the cheerful exterior and economic prosperity, the reality of one of the world’s most liberal abortion laws looms large. Since the striking down of Canada’s abortion law in 1983, the country has been unique among nations as a place where abortion can be legally performed at any stage of pregnancy - up to the day before delivery.

The latest official national hero in this struggle can be found in the person of Henry Morgentaler, a secular humanist whose fortune has been made promoting and performing abortions across Canada for the last four decades. A committee advising Canada’s Governor General has nominated the abortion partisan for the country’s highest honour, the Order of Canada, as a kind of national recognition for the significant part Morgentaler has played in Canada’s history.

On a certain level, Canadians would be right to recognise the man for his role in national history, a role which has cost more Canadian lives than any war in our two and a half centuries<sup>1</sup>, and which has done immeasurable emotional damage to the women left as victims of his crimes. Such a role is certainly worth mentioning in the history books, alongside other atrocities.

The Order of Canada, like the country of its birth, suffers from an identity crisis of mammoth proportions. Initiated in the Canadian Centennial Year of 1967, its measure of worth was defined by its motto, based on Hebrews 11:16, *desiderantes meliorem patriam*, meaning “they desire a better country.” The exact nature of such a country - and what would make it a *better country* - has undoubtedly strayed from the mind of the nations founders, or even from the spirit of the defenders of the Social Gospel of a century ago.

What is perhaps most evident from the awarding to Morgentaler of Canada’s highest order is the fact that he does, in many ways, reflect the national distinction of hypocrisy. His life has been a study in contradictions, of publicly-won personal wealth made from the suffering

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<sup>1</sup> In 1973, Morgentaler indicated that he had by that time performed over 5,000 abortions.

of Canada's poorest citizens<sup>2</sup>. His public discourse has been sprinkled for three decades with the jargon of freedom, equality, and fairness, while his sole private practice has been directed at stopping the beating hearts of children in the womb. The madness of his own story - including perhaps especially his chirpy public image as a liberator of those in personal crisis - reflects our own national confusion over questions of truth, questions which Canadians would much prefer to keep private and silent.

Morgentaler has taken to new heights the very quality that modern, politically correct Canadians value most, and that is the value of public niceness. Do not speak of sin. Do not speak of death. Just smile, wave, and smile some more. The camera will capture only pretty pictures. After all, this is Canada, and Canadians are nice, polite people.

This is our identity. It has become our national creed.

A survivor of the Nazi Holocaust, Morgentaler has succeeded in perpetrating his own brand of evil in the desert of Canadian niceness. In the decades since the Holocaust of the Second World War, Canadians have too often become paralysed by the fear that strongly articulated worldviews can only lead to conflict, and conflict is the thing most to be avoided in our home and native land.

Upon announcing the award, the good people at Rideau Hall (the official residence of our Governor General) indicated that Morgentaler had become a member of the Order, "for his commitment to increased health care options for women, his determined efforts to influence Canadian public policy and his leadership in humanist and civil liberties organizations." One can only wonder if an outspoken Christian would ever qualify for the same honours, and if they did, how two such contradictory views could be reconciled, in the name of seeking a *better country*.

While such an award is not surprising (it is the logical result of the progressive secularism of the True North), it is cold comfort to witness the silence of far too many Orthodox Christian leaders across the land

when it comes to such issues. Yet this is but another example of Canada's imperial identity at play, exerting an unforgiving pull on immigrants (and those who after generations in Canada still think of themselves as immigrants) to submit to the all-encompassing Canadian moral imperative to *be nice*, and to *be quiet*.

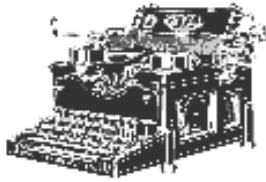
For many Orthodox Christians, it is likely difficult to remember the last time the question of abortion - its victims both inside the womb and the mothers themselves, and the mountains of social efforts to support them - was mentioned in an Orthodox parish. One may ask, how many parishes would take up a collection to fund a support agency for unwed mothers? How many would circulate a petition to preserve local schools from providing abortion referrals? How many would put in place parish counselling to rescue young women contemplating an abortion? For Canadians - including far, far too many Orthodox Christian laity and clergy - such questions are much too uncomfortable to entertain, let alone to address. It's all so... *unpleasant*. And pleasantness, along with niceness, is a cardinal Canadian virtue.

As Morgentaler takes his place as the dark icon of Canadian hypocrisy, the victims of his efforts to make Canada a "better country" will be left to the care of social workers, to the couches of psychiatrists, and to the confessionals of priests. Quiet, private solutions to very public evils - this is the way it is done in Canada. And but for a few voices out of step with the national obsession with politeness, the voiceless will remain voiceless - because that is the Canadian way.



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<sup>2</sup> Morgentaler has an estimated gross annual revenue of \$11 million from his abortion clinics, according to research published in the Ottawa newspaper *Le Droit* on Saturday, October 26, 2002.



## POETRY

### *In Praise of the Holy Trinity*

What sings within my soul? What beauty brings  
And wrings from me the tears which now do fall  
Unbid? What silent, silver sound doth call  
My soul to weep for joy as deep as things  
Of mortal flesh can feel? What spreadeth wings  
Of purifying flame without a pall  
Of smoke to dim the purity of all  
The peace which in its ceaseless whisper rings?  
It is The Father, and it is The son!  
It is the love which each doth bear to each.  
It is The Spirit too, The Holy One  
Which for our good did Jesus Christ beseech  
Be sent to all who wish His race to run  
And seek The Truth, which He alone can teach.

- Sara Hillis



## THE CHURCH KITCHEN

### PLANKED OR BAKED BRIE

*In the spirit of barbecue season*

1 maple plank soaked    2 small brie wheels  
2 spring onions chopped    olive oil  
2 small heads of garlic separated, peeled and chopped  
1 roasted red pepper (seeded and finely chopped) or salsa if in a hurry  
2 tbsp balsamic vinegar  
2 tbsp thyme, oregano or basil (your choice)  
salt and ground pepper to taste

Preheat BBQ to high. Cut the top rind off each brie wheel to expose the cheese. Heat olive oil in saucepan, add garlic and cook until tender and it starts to change colour. Remove from heat, and place in a small bowl. Reserve oil for future use. Mash cooked garlic, green onions, red pepper, thyme, vinegar black pepper and two tablespoons of olive oil together. Spread mixture over the top of the brie wheels. Place soaked plank on grill, close lid for 10 minutes or until the plank starts to crackle and smoke. Open carefully and add cheese on planks cook for 10 to 12 minutes. *OR* Bake at 400 for 15- 20 minutes wrapped in aluminum foil.

- Laurentia Woods





## NORTHERN NOMENCLATURE

### VICTORIA (*Pr. Noun*)

The city of Victoria, British Columbia, like the reign of the queen for whom it was named, share a history that encompasses diverse chapters of our national history.

Until the nineteenth century, the area around Victoria was inhabited almost exclusively by the Coast Salish nations, who were witnesses to the first explorations of the Spanish, and the British under Captain James Cook in 1776, the year of the American Revolution. Within two decades, Spanish sailors visited the harbour, and by the mid-nineteenth century, a trading post of the Hudson's Bay Company had been established.

It was this outpost which would have very likely been one of the stopping points for Saint Peter the Aleut on his mercantile trips down the Pacific Coast between Alaska and northern California, where he was martyred by Spanish conquistadors. By the time of the Gold Rush in 1858, Victoria's size exploded, providing the hub for later growth, and the infrastructure for the Pacific coast's base of Canada's navy.

The city of Victoria was named at the height of the British Empire for Queen Victoria. The city was proposed as a capital for the newly established Dominion of Canada, but the strategy was rejected by the sovereign as logistically unworkable, and the second choice city of Ottawa was established as the capital.

The proper name "Victoria" comes from the Latin root for "victory", which like many Latin words in recorded history is often found in a military context. For the Christian reader who must look for a higher victory, for a higher Sovereign and Victor, the association with the victory of the Cross of Christ over Death at His Resurrection is an inevitable association for this word.

### SAINT ELIAS DAY (*Pr. Noun*)

This summertime feast day falls in the midst of Canadian vacation season (July 20 / August 2), and has thus suffered from a lack of observance in some places.

Yet as the feast of the prophet who was taken up into heaven in a fiery chariot, no better timing could be given for this celebration of the patron saint of vehicles. While the feast days of some other patron saints of travel fall in the cold weather months (such as Saint Nicholas or Saint Innocent of Alaska), the feast of Saint Elias (also known as the Prophet Elijah) is celebrated at a time of year ideal for the blessing of vehicles, in the warm Canadian summer.

In some areas, this day or the closest Sunday to it marks the occasion for a procession from the church after the Divine Liturgy, to the assembled vehicles in the parish parking lot or along the roadside. Like the Theophany house blessings in January, the blessing of vehicles on the feast of Saint Elias may be annually observed in parish communities.

It is worth noting that the Prophet Elias is one of only two Old Testament figures (along with Enoch) who, according to the teaching of the Fathers, did not see death. After completing his earthly ministry, Saint Elias was taken up to heaven, alive in the midst of fire, befitting the patron of those who would travel the great expanse of Canada's highways in safety, both in body and soul.





## Q & A

### Questions from Readers

**How do the use of icons validate/help or hinder the inward/outward expression of your faith? Why do you kiss the cross and icons as you touch them?**

- E.A., Fergus, Ontario

*Icons are tangible manifestations of the grace of Christ, working through holy people, His saints. Because we are composed of soul and body, and Christ is fully God and fully Man, our prayers require both physical expression, and spiritual effort. Icons, along with the Sign of the Cross, bows, etc., fulfil this role, within the framework of the Church from Apostolic times (i.e. it's not simply something individualistic). As for kissing icons and the cross, Orthodox do this because we love Christ and His saints, hopefully at least as much as we love our own family members (no sarcasm intended).*

**It's wonderful to meet faithful, spiritually solid people with a real interest in the Orthodox Church. A woman I met is such an example. Why isn't she Orthodox already? What seems to hold people back?**

- T.T., Waterloo, Ontario

*This is a very familiar situation to many people in the Church! Assuming that such an*

*individual is more than a spiritual "shopper", and that their drawing to Orthodoxy is more than a hobby, several possible barriers may exist:*

- *Family Reasons: The person may have relatives who reject any sort of religious life, or who are threatened by Orthodoxy in particular.*

- *Social Reasons: For those already involved in a religious community, the idea of giving up regular interaction with friends in that community is often unthinkable. In some cases, an individual make desire to make the move, but maintaining their comfort level maintains such a hold on them, that they never do this. We know of cases where individuals have said something to the effect that, "I know Orthodoxy is the historic Church, and I know I should be Orthodox, but I just love the little community I'm in right now. Maybe some time in the future."*

- *Cultural Gap: This is perhaps the biggest problem for people approaching Orthodox Christianity, especially in Canada. Just as new immigrants to Canada tend to cultivate friendships within their own cultural circle, so too do those who seek the Orthodox faith.*

*Such friendships are very difficult to set aside, and since most parishes suffer from the same inward-facing condition, it is very unlikely most potential converts will ever become Orthodox. In short, even when there is a God-given spiritual openness on the part of outsiders, it is often Orthodox Christians themselves who drive them away. This is a painful reality, but alas, it's the truth.*

*The question behind your question would seem to be, what can Orthodox Christians do about this? Firstly, we must realize that we can do very little, that God brings people to His Church. We can pray for those who show some interest, but we should not become very excited: most people see the Church as an exotic hobby of some kind, and are not really interested in the struggles of the interior life, confession of sins, etc.*

*For those who are serious, and struggle seriously with the issues listed above, we must pray specifically for the individual, that God will help and strengthen the person.*

*We can also be a "provider". Most people today are consumers; it is up to Christians to be providers, offering good literature, paper icons, books, and opportunities to see the Orthodox Faith in action. This means taking the initiative to invite those who seem to respond to the witness of the Church, and not becoming discouraged or distracted by those who are not interested. Pray to God; He will bless it.*

**I would like to find a faithful Orthodox spouse. How on earth is this possible?**

- Anonymous, Hamilton, Ontario

*The short answer is: pray. Asking the prayers of St. Xenia of St. Petersburg is a very common Christian appeal in this kind of need. Prayers should be offered daily, since this choice is perhaps the second most important factor in our long-term spiritual stability - far more important than even our job.*

*We must put very little faith in "shopping" for someone, especially in schools or nightclubs. The environment in which we find ourselves*

*will present us either more or fewer stumbling blocks in our search, and provide more struggles and heartaches along the way. As we used to tell students, if you are shopping for shoes, go to a shoe store, not to the dump - in short, don't expect to find some exquisite perfect match at a dance club. It's far better to cultivate a wide variety of activities that have at least some level of moral normalcy (sports, hobbies, large family and community gatherings, and other interests can be useful), than to expect something spiritually healthy to arise out of the sewer.*

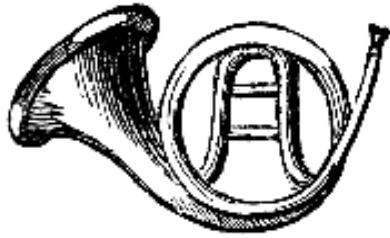
**We were reading the book Seraphim's Beatitudes, and had a discussion about God's laws. I made a comment to my child about how we should fear God, who asked why. My response was, if we don't fear God, we will do as we please, when we please, and take control of our own lives. We need to ask God for his will in directing our lives, and provided we follow God's laws in fear, our lives will be kept on the right path in doing what is right and pleasing to God. God will always care and provide for our needs, because God is love. Is this a satisfactory response?**

- N.V., Kitchener, Ontario

*Regarding your question, this is a very good answer to give a child. You might want to add the following: Most people forget about God, and end up fearing everything else - failure, death, other people, etc. When we fear God, and recognize that He will judge our whole life, we take Him seriously. If we do this, we have no reason to fear anything else. Our choice is not "fear God or fear nothing", but "fear God, or be afraid of everything else". This is a critical question for children, and for adults, too.*







## NOTEWORTHY

### THE MAPLE LEAF FOREVER

*Alexander Muir, 1867*

In days of yore, from Britain's shore,  
Wolfe, the dauntless hero came,  
And planted firm Britannia's flag,  
On Canada's fair domain.  
Here may it wave, our boast, our pride,  
And joined in love together,  
The Lily, Thistle, Shamrock, Rose,  
The Maple Leaf forever!

*Chorus:*  
The Maple Leaf, our emblem dear,  
The Maple Leaf forever!  
God save our Queen, and Heaven bless,  
The Maple Leaf forever!

At Queenston Heights and Lundy's Lane,  
Our brave fathers, side by side,  
For freedom, homes, and loved ones dear,  
Firmly stood and nobly died;  
And those dear rights which they  
maintained,  
We swear to yield them never!  
Our watchword evermore shall be,  
The Maple Leaf forever!

*(Chorus)*

Our fair Dominion now extends  
From Cape Race to Nootka Sound;  
May peace forever be our lot,  
And plenteous store abound:  
And may those ties of love be ours  
Which discord cannot sever,  
And flourish green o'er freedom's home  
The Maple Leaf forever!

*(Chorus)*

