



044. May 6/19, 1970. St. Job the Long-Suffering

Categories : [Letters](#)

Date : May 3, 2016

Dear Dr. [John] Johnstone,
In truth Christ is risen!

Many thanks for your letter, the enclosed article, and the two checks for \$15. The excess above your renewal we have applied to missionary-library funds; trial subscriptions have been entered for the three libraries whose addresses you sent.

We surely sympathize with you in your very difficult situation and pray that you will soon find a solution to your uncertainties. My own experience as a convert is rather the opposite of yours, as almost all the people I know in the Synod are Russians — and in the main I have found them to be such a caliber of people, from bishops to laymen — Orthodox through and through, aware of what's going on today, and ready and willing to suffer and die for their unashamed faith — that there are just no words for it. The world does not know these people. Of course, most of them have known the Soviets at first hand, and that seems to make a difference that most “free” Orthodox just can't imagine.

There is, of course, a language problem, but with time that is resolving itself. I was surprised recently when I stopped and counted some 30 converts at the San Francisco cathedral in the last three or four years (exclusive of those who marry into the Church) — at a cathedral where there are no English services or sermons, no priest who speaks fluent English (they all speak “passable” English, however), and no “convert” program whatever. And almost all of them are being successfully rooted into the faith. Here the language problem is obviously secondary to something else — which can be seen also in the fact that several of the most recent converts have come from the Greek Archdiocese and the Metropolia.

About the Moscow Patriarchate, by the way, contrary to common impression our Synod has never “condemned” it, reserving that judgement to a future All-Russian Sobor; but the Synod's position is unbending that until such a Sobor there can be no communion or contact with such a dubious ecclesiastical organization. Speaking of the 1920's, we've printed almost nothing yet of the available material on the schism of 1927 — when the majority was anti-Sergian, and the “Soviet Church” triumphed only because its opponents were imprisoned, murdered, and driven underground. And now the Metropolia, for the sake of the “Patriarch's” signature, has prejudged the case of the Soviet Church and found it “canonical” — because everyone else says so! Our Synod has yet to issue its final statement on the matter, but certainly the situation of the Metropolia has become now so dubious that no further communion with it is possible. Spiritually and theologically, also, its direction is already clear — with the current of the times; and we will print



several critiques of its theologians to point this out in detail.

By the way, do you know Hieromonk Seraphim of St. Tikhon's Monastery? After his outspoken letter which Fr. Neketas published he was immediately suspended by Bp. Kiprian (on Passion Monday), who seems to be trying to exploit his monastic "humility" and "obedience" in order to extract a full retraction of things which are, after all, true! Please pray for him.

We hope to hear more from you.

With love in Christ our Saviour,

P.s. Platina is on most maps, I believe — some 45 miles west of Red Bluff on Hwy 36 (some maps show only Beegum, 5 miles east, which is no longer on the hwy). It is a wilderness area, and our conditions are appropriately "primitive" — two small cabins with no conveniences. Our former bookshop remains in San Francisco. Under such conditions we of course are not too anxious to have merely casual visitors, but those who really want to see us are welcome; but those had better notify us in advance, as we are sometimes in San Francisco for several days at a time, and it is a 100-mile round trip from the main hwy to find this out (no telephone, either). We can put up an occasional rough- and-ready male visitor overnight. As you see, we are "escaping"! If God blesses our venture, of course, there will be more provision for visitors in future.

Fr. Panteleimon visited us for several days last November, and we are just now taking advantage of his generous offer to help us buy a linotype. It's so old that I'm afraid Father will have to pray for us every time just to get it started! Glory be to God for all things!