

049. May 27/June 9,1970. Priest-Martyr Ferapont

Categories : [Letters](#)

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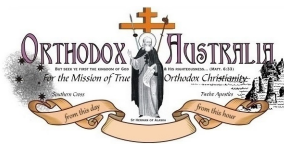
Dear Fr. Nektas,
Bless us, Father!

We're sitting in a surprise rainstorm of two days duration, more or less cut off from the world by a slippery road. Very good for our garden, but of dubious value to our linotype, which sits under a plastic covering and a hastily-devised temporary roof. It took us four days to get it dismantled, loaded (with a fervent prayer that the lift on our rented truck would work on a 1500 pound load), transported, and unloaded. Unfortunately it will now be a matter of weeks before the building is finished, linotype assembled, gas and electricity hooked up, etc., which also interferes with our sadly belated March-April issue, which we will start finally to handset in only a day or two, hoping to get it out not long past July 1st. Once the linotype is operating we will progress rapidly, but meanwhile...pray for us!

We received the officially approved service to Fr. Herman last week and have translated it and will include it in this issue, the only issue that will reach our readers before the canonization. It will be 24 pages in the middle of the magazine, and we'll also print 1000 or so separate in brochure-form. We tried to keep some poetic feeling in the English, not with entire success, I'm afraid. The Slavonic itself is sometimes inspiring, and sometimes rather pale. The troparion is still in doubt; we stand for the old one, but there may be a completely new one...or perhaps a choice of two. This being really the first "American" service, we've tried to make it a model, right down to the acrostic, which worked out rather successfully in both languages. The Slavonic committee does not care much for acrostics, but we found it rather inspiring to have to work within the norms of a sacred phrase from the words of Father Herman. Jordanville is printing Fr. Cyprian's icon of Fr. Herman in 2 sizes — 4 x 5 and 6x9. Were having our icon reprinted in smaller size — something like 2 1/2x3 1/2.

Yes, we have the text of Fr. Michael's answer to Fr. Schmemmann — it's just what is needed today. Unfortunately, because of the service, it will have to go in next issue. It's 15 pages long. The Synod is now getting quite a nucleus of American priests. May God grant all to flourish under her. It will doubtless take a while before the Russian psychology comes around to accepting the Synod's crucial role in world Orthodoxy, but fortunately there are some who understand already.

Is the Synod priest you mention in Alaska by any chance Fr. Nicholas Harris in Anchorage? He ordered a number of copies of our Fr. Gerasim issue and subscribed at that time. We hear from Fr. Elias Armistead that he is bringing his wife to Alaska to open an Inn — but still he doesn't say a word about what he's doing, though he notes that our richest diocese, San Francisco, doesn't



give him a dime. But for what? Our doubts about him only grow.

We read with interest your comments on the times. Alas, I fear that the free, liberal, naive America of our childhood is gone, and the increasing anarchism will only call forth a dictatorship, of right or left, depending on who can seize it. Whichever it may be, we Orthodox don't have a bright future, in worldly terms; but doubles this will give us our chance really to confess our Orthodoxy in difficult circumstances. The "official" jurisdictions might be able to make their peace with the new conditions and "flourish" ? Is the Soviet Church or the Church of Greece, in which case we who are less politically-minded would be reduced to a more or less catacomb status even under a rightist dictatorship, while under leftists we might not even be allowed to exist. Although we don't get much news here (mainly week-old comment in US News) and aren't really aware of the "polarization" of feelings that is going on, my guess is that rightism will install itself, leading to one last world conflagration, out of which may emerge... the beast of the last days who will finally reconcile all.

But that is all guesswork. For us what is important is to stick to our holy Orthodoxy, which is our real battle, and face each new day in a spirit of confession.

Hitler, by the way, was a most interesting apocalyptic phenomenon. Besides his insane jealousy of the Jews, which led him to destroy them so that the Germans could be the "chosen race" and he the Messiah (I even recall, though I can't find the source, that he once said that if he couldn't be the Messiah then he would willingly be Antichrist!) he was himself basically a Bolshevik with an idol-worship of Lenin and Communist techniques who saw 20th-century world history as a battle between his National Bolshevism and Soviet international Bolshevism, and who when he saw the end of his hopes gave his political inheritance to the Soviets in the words: "The future belongs to the stronger Eastern power [nation]." In the last days of the war the Nazis organized "werewolves" who took their inspiration from the positively "mystical" broadcasts of Goebbels to the effect that since the war was lost, Germany and Europe must be positively destroyed so that the new order of the future could be built on the total ruin and ashes of everything man had hitherto valued and built. Hitlerism, in short, is only the handmaid of Communism, which in turn points to the "mystical" pinnacle of modern times: Antichrist. Hider, also, while anti-monarchist, kept the crown and scepter of the Holy Roman Emperors "just in case" the times should change and a "monarch" should be demanded; and he once also said "if the monks of Mount Athos should ever sign a document giving me the inheritance of the Eastern Empire, by all means preserve it" for just such a change in the spirit of the times. Exactly the same features are apparent also in Napoleon, who however chose the side of the Jews and convened their Sanhedrin for the first time in 1800 years to have himself proclaimed Emperor. Napoleon also (I forget whether just in the Russian campaign or in general) had his soldiers and followers tattooed on the right hand, without which they had no right to receive food.

Perhaps these are all "minor details," but I somehow think they will loom large when modern godlessness comes to demand its symbolic crowning.



But again, such speculations carried too far tend to divert our attention from the one important thing: Orthodoxy. World and national politics will take their course without us, but few indeed are they who care to stand up for Orthodoxy. For ourselves, we feel even more pressingly the need to print whatever we can of solid Orthodoxy while there is still time. May God help us all to work while there is still light!

Thank you for letting us see the letters to John Harwood, which we return herewith.

Please pray for us in these crucial days.

With love in Christ our Saviour,