

054. June 29/July 12, 1970. Sts. Peter and Paul

Categories : [Letters](#)

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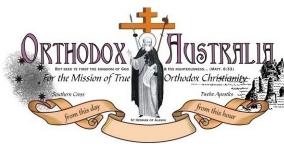
Dear Father Neketas,
Bless us, Father!

It's Sunday and a feast day, and I have a chance to rest and catch up on correspondence. First: thank you for letting us see the enclosed letter. Indeed, it is time to apply strictness in Orthodox reading material. It just can't be assumed that the Orthodox reader will get through a book by Schmemann etc. unaffected by the big and little discrepancies from Orthodoxy, which by now have added up to a whole new approach to Orthodoxy. As the list of pre-schism Western Saints, we recently discovered this list in an old Orthodox Russia which I will try to get around to copying one of these days. It was short — probably some 15 or so names, most of them included in our article on St. Cassian last year. Whether there is another longer list I don't know. The Dutch Orthodox sent us a list of some 40 local (Dutch) saints in their calendar, but I haven't yet been able to get from them a list of non-Dutch Western saints.

We are plodding on with The Orthodox Word, but it will be another week before it's out. We resolved to make the Service to Father Herman a model in every way, including typographically, which means printing every page twice (2 colors), and we printed a number of extras to bind separately. Glory be to God, it is almost finished, and we are sufficiently full of inspiration and hope to want to print a whole series of services to the glory of God and His saints and for the inculcation of genuine Orthodox piety in this direct way. We are already dreaming of the service to St. Nectarios (if Fr. Panteleimon or someone can be persuaded to translate the Orthros) and St. Mark of Ephesus.

Of course, this presumes that we will get caught up on The Orthodox Word. Our linotype still sits unassembled, and there are several complications that await resolution—such as long-awaited parts needed for gas connections, and the problem of obtaining matrices of type. One set (Roman and Italic) if new costs almost as much as the whole linotype (\$500). We have located a used set at about half that, and are hoping for word of something even more reasonable from the East. Of course there is also the problem of getting and keeping the machine in operation. One look at an operators manual persuaded me that my ignorance was just about absolute. But we trust in God, and await Fr. Alexy Poluektov in a week or two to assemble the machine and give some ABCs.

We were blessed to receive Holy Communion at the Sepulchre of Vladika John last week on the 4th anniversary of his death, and again yesterday when Vladika Nektary visited us on the feast of Sts. Sergius and Herman. Glory be to God! We noticed in S.F. that attendance at the Sepulchre declines each year, and it seems, sadly, that the Russians are forgetting him, and that when the



older generation of those who knew him is gone in a few years, his memory will almost vanish among them — and will be preserved then chiefly by those non-Russians, most of whom did not know him, whose acquaintance with him is based not on personal relationships but on the attraction of his sanctity. Thus are God and His saints glorified in unexpected ways.

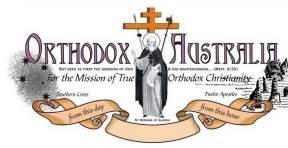
The report of Glebs tonsure on Father Hermans canonization day — is just another wild rumor. The day for both of us is, however, indeed drawing nigh, but it will only be after the canonization. I can't remember how many times I've already been made a deacon or priest myself! In fact, a student-composer friend even composed an "Axios" which he rushed to me in time to be sung at my ordination! But everything comes in God's own time.

Have you heard anything more from Fr. Seraphim of St. Tikhon's? Our letter a month ago was returned "No longer at this address," and the other day we learned from a seminarian (his co-conspirator) that he refused to "repent" and left at the end of May to visit relatives.

We were fortunate two weeks ago to be visited by Fr. Alexander Mileant of Los Angeles — one of our finer young Russian priests. He fell in love with our place and made us realize all the more how fortunate we are to be here. Indeed, while the world relapses into anarchy and men become lower than beasts, we live in a veritable paradise where speechless creatures, our nearest neighbors, continually praise the Lord by their very existence. Three weeks ago we found a fawn lying exhausted by the side of the road. We brought it home, kept it overnight, got it to drink milk, and returned it to the hill down which we presumed it had fallen. (We would have kept it longer but discovered there's a strict law against it.) Then two days ago our mother deer who comes every day for our garbage brought her fawn for us to see — apparently the same one, and too touching a sight to describe. She's so used to us that she suckles the fawn only 10 or 15 feet away from us, and we hear their talk among themselves — rather like sheep's bleating, only higher. Recently, too, we saw our first bear running up our hill — and fortunately we did not take Vladika Nektary's advice and offer it sugar; it didn't seem like that kind of bear, much too businesslike! Even our one local enemy, the rattlesnake, praises the Lord — such a beautiful yellow with a pattern of diamonds on his back and the bearing of a prince, albeit a sinister one! Last week we had a 15-minute battle with a huge one before we dislodged it from its squirrel-hole and beheaded it (thereby saving our squirrel family, where the father joins the mother in carrying the young from nest to nest). Of course, it is not our lot in this life to sit back and enjoy all this, but we are grateful to have a little corner where God's order is so evident. What will be here in future — is in God's hands, and may it be for His glory! Somehow, in the back of our minds, we keep seeing our wilderness transformed into an Orthodox refugee camp! May God's will be done!

Of the names you sent, 4 are not present subscribers (Alepakos, Sims, Blackstone, Brukses, nor are the 3 Metropolia people (Magner, Dimoff, Eppler), to all of whom we will send the next issue.

Pray for us.



With love in Christ our Saviour,