



137. Sept. 8/21, 1973. Nativity of the Most Holy Mother of God

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Date : September 2, 2016

Dear Brother in Christ, Alexey,

Greetings in our Lord Jesus Christ on the Feast of the Glorious Nativity of His Most Holy Mother! This is just a note to acknowledge your letters and clippings. We haven't read the "Secret Gospel" clipping yet, so have no comments on it.

Your projected "prisons" series sounds promising and certainly doesn't conflict with anything we have in mind. On Soviet prisons you should also read some other material if possible — for example, Anatoly Marchenko's *My Testimony*, which is in English (in paperback, I believe), a ghastly account of today's prisons in the USSR. He's not a believer, but his description of the systematic dehumanization in Soviet prisons shows anti-Christianity clearly in practice.

We received, after a long absence of communication, another letter from Fr. Neketas (written apparently before he got your reply to Fr. Ephraim), and he repeats his former statements to the effect that anyone who is against evolution and for the Shroud is in a bad way; so we wrote a reply telling him we quite disagree, but also begging that he will not allow disagreements on such questions, which after all are rather complicated and on which none of us is an absolute "expert," to cause him to lose sight of the larger Orthodox zealot cause of which we all strive to be a part.

Then yesterday we finally received a reply from Alexander Kalomiros to our letter inquiring as to his views on evolution — and he promises soon to send a detailed reply in English, with quotes from the Holy Fathers. We look forward to this with open mind and some expectation!

Michael Farnsworth has been with us for a month now, and it appears there will be five of us to struggle through the winter here. We will have enough to do preparing for it, not to mention the constant pressure of printing (which is good for us!).

By the way, Vladika Nektary's visit to us with the Kursk Icon on Oct. 2 (which Laurence mentioned in his note to you) is quite indefinite — i.e., it could occur any hour of the day or night, and it might not occur at all, in view of the fact that Vladika must catch a plane the next morning going to the Holy Land!

I've finally begun the translation of Fr. Michael Pomazansky's *Dogmatic Theology* and hope to get the first tape (10-12 pages) to you before long. Fr. Michael has just printed an article defending the 19th-century theologian, Metropolitan Macarius, and in particular his use of the terms "satisfaction" and "merits," as precisely a way of combatting the false Latin views involved with these terms, —



defeating the heretics with their own language, as it were. We will probably translate part of this and make a note out of it for the book.

We pray you are all well, and that Barbara and the children are learning to suffer and endure for Christ in their difficult trials. Pray for us all.

With love in Christ our Saviour,
Seraphim, monk

P.s. Congratulations on the new Nikodemos. May God grant you to continue in the same sober and inspiring tone! Can we have another three copies?