



284. March 26/April 8, 1980

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Date : October 10, 2016

The Orthodox Word
Saint Herman of Alaska Brotherhood
Platina, California 96076 U.S.A.

Dear Maria [Kraft],

CHRIST IS RISEN! May the blessing of the Lord be with you!

We have received your letter, and Gleb has received one also, informing us of your wish that Gleb leave us immediately.

Already several weeks before this, two representatives of the Redding Social Welfare Department had visited us and told us that you wished Gleb to leave. After talking to him and to us at length, they told us they were satisfied with his-situation and would not help you in your attempt to make him leave us as long as he himself did not desire this; and Gleb was very firm in telling them that he desired to stay. Legally, a boy of 15 (almost 16) has a right to decide with whom he wishes to live.

None of us know your motives in wishing him to leave. I only wish to tell you something from the bottom of my heart: Gleb has found a home, a spiritual maturity, and a deep psychological security with us. To uproot him from this security now and force him to live with someone else would be a most cruel thing to do. You would have to do this very much against his will, and this could only alienate him from you, perhaps for good; and such a compulsory move could have disastrous results for him both spiritually and psychologically. Please do not try to uproot him from the home he has found with us for five years now. In two years he will be already 18 and ready to make his own further decisions about his future, and nothing he has gained here will hinder such a free and mature decision.

We are prepared to support Gleb's decision (which does not involve any disrespect for you) to the utmost, and according to the law it is up to his free decision where he wishes to live. Please respect his decision.

As far as we are concerned, you need not send any money at all for his upkeep.

With love in Christ,
Unworthy Hieromonk Seraphim