

300. Nov. 23/Dec. 6, 1980 St. Alexander Nevsky

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Date : October 10, 2016

Dear Father Demetrios,

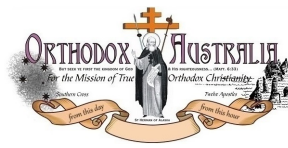
Christ is in our midst!

Many, many thanks for your letter of concern over the latest outbreak of hostile feelings in our Church (Deacon Levs Open Letter). I certainly have no intention to reply to such a letter, which seems more like some kind of deliberate “provocation” than a serious or well-meaning approach to matters he disputes. To the few priests who have inquired about this, I have replied that I mean to say nothing more than I have already said in Appendix 4 of *The Soul After Death*. I wrote the same to Bishop Gregory, who wrote me recently thanking me for a copy of *The Soul After Death* and saying that he found it interesting.

I am sad to say that I think such attacks will probably get worse before they get better; the cause for attack seems to be incidental—our Greeks seem determined to prove at any cost that the rest of us are not really Orthodox, and Fr. Lev has eagerly joined their camp. This group is simply so narrow that they will not be satisfied until everyone agrees with their opinions or at least is silent and allows their narrow views to prevail. If they get their way, the spirit of freedom and brotherly joy will disappear from our Church and be replaced by their narrow “party line,” and if anyone disagrees with it he will be squashed. How Western and rationalistic this is—and such a “Western captivity” is surely much worse than the one they accuse our whole Church of being in! I really don’t see how our Greeks will be able to avoid a schism in the end.

I sense a danger in one of the speakers at your summer conference also—Dr. Kalomiros. He has written many good things, but he is also very narrow. The last we heard he had created a schism (with a few of his followers) from the Old Calendarists of Greece over the question of the icon of the Holy Trinity showing the Father as an old man (the kind that Bishop Alypy and Fr. Cyprian paint): anyone who venerates or even tolerates it is apparently a “heretic”! (That’s also about what Fr. Lev says.) Dr. Kalomiros is also very immoderate in his pro-evolutionism, and in a talk on “creation” (or in a discussion afterwards) he is very likely to express some of his strange opinions, such as: Adam may well have looked like an ape, since he was born as an ape-like creature and only became “man” when God breathed His Spirit into this ape-like creature! (Conservative theologians in Greece regard him as a radical evolutionist.) Such opinions, like Fr. Lev’s ideas on life after death, only confuse people. The polemical tone with which they present their opinions is perhaps the most disturbing thing of all—it means that no discussion is possible with them.

I think you are right to address the Synod of Bishops directly with your appeal about Fr. Levs Open



Letter. Some other priests have done this too. May our bishops give a clear and God-inspired word for the guidance of all!

Two weeks ago we opened up a small mission in Willits, Calif, (at Deacon Vladimir Anderson's house). Glory be to God, we are able to do something in missionary work.

I hope that you do not find the disorders in the Church too discouraging. This is what we are to expect for our sins, and in the end God will draw good for us out of all this sad experience.

Please pray for us.

With low in Christ,
Unworthy Hieromonk Seraphim