



Fr Seraphim Rose: The Cry of the New Martyrs

Categories : [End Of Times](#), [Holy Fathers](#)

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Life on earth is given to man in order to acquire the Holy Spirit. To do this one must learn also to distinguish the worship of the true Spirit of God from the counterfeit spirit, the spirit of this world whose prince is satan, the enemy of God.

The whole earthly happiness of man consists in conscious growth in the knowledge and practice of the law of Christian spiritual life which, according to Bishop (Saint) Theophan the Recluse, is a realm into which the wisdom of this world does not penetrate. Christian life must be wholly devoted to "walking in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:16). For some, this may be a long, patient process up to old age and a blameless Christian death; but the martyrs, have acquired their heavenly crowns in a brief moment when death found them with a sober heart entirely directed to God, confessing Christ even unto torture and death. For Christ has said, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36.)

The first martyrs for Christ were the 14,000 Innocents, the children born at the time of Christ's Nativity whose death was the immediate result of the hatred of the Prince of this world for the Divine Infant. Even without knowing it, these children were witnesses of Christ, and all the martyrs who have followed them, even until now, are the same victims of satan's malice, and at the same time a sacrifice pleasing to God.

Today, as even worldly philosophers and historians have begun to admit, mankind has reached a dead-end, and the events of these times are unparalleled in all world history, as if pointing to the end of history itself.

These terrible times began in earnest in 1917 with the taking away of that which restraineth the coming of Antichrist (II Thes. 2:7) — that is, the lawful Christian authority which was especially incarnated in the Emperors of Byzantium and Russia. At this time, again, the attack of the anti-Christian power took first the form of the slaughter of the Royal Innocents, the children of the Tsar



who were martyred with their father, even as earlier the very first of Russia's New Martyrs had been a simple-hearted pastor who was killed on the very eve of the feast of the 14,000 Innocents (Dec. 28, 1904), in front of his own children. [Fr. Seraphim is referring to the Martyr Fr. Vladimir Troepolsky who for his fearless apostolic preaching of pure Orthodoxy against the revolutionaries and, the Protestant sect of Stundites, who worked together, was stabbed to death in his home before the eyes of his wife and children after being warned to stop his flaming sermons.]

Indeed, the innocent children who have been victims of the Soviet Yoke cannot be counted; there have even been special concentration camps in the USSR solely for children, as if to prove the satanic maliciousness of the Soviet system. For Orthodox Christians these are not "coincidences," but profound lessons: we Orthodox Christians of these last times must stand in Christ's Truth in utter simplicity and childlikeness, not trusting our own wisdom in order to reply to the wise inquisitors of this evil world, for the Holy Spirit shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say (Luke 12:12).

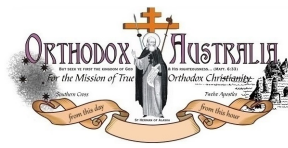
Russian history in the 20th century has given the world something of incalculable value: Saints who have endured and triumphed over the greatest experiment in anti-theism, warfare against God, in the history of the world - the New Confessors and Martyrs of Russia. They have proved that for the human soul there are no higher values than:

(1) FAITH in the purity of the Orthodoxy of Christ's Church,

(2) HOPE in everlasting life after death, and

(3) the all-conquering power of LOVE. both for men here on earth and for God in heaven. They have been tested in every conceivable trial and temptation and have withstood, being refined even as pure gold in the furnace, fit for the heavenly kingdom.

The New Martyrs of Russia fall into two periods: the period before and the period after 1927, the year of the infamous "Declaration" of Metropolitan Sergius.



First, there were the martyrs who were made by the first wave of the Revolution, when the servants of satan were probing to see how they might snatch the very essence of Orthodoxy from the people's hearts: they accused the faithful of "politics" and persecuted them ostensibly for this and not for their "religion"; they robbed the Church under the pretext of helping the victims of famine (a famine which was artificially created by the Soviets themselves); they instigated churchmen of weak conscience to "renovate" the Church (the "Living Church"). But these probings all failed. Millions lost their lives, churches were pillaged and destroyed, the holy things of Russia were desecrated - but the heart of the Church remained untouched, and the faithful stood as one man behind their Patriarch, the holy hieromartyr (Saint) Tikhon.

Then, the Soviets having failed to gain their end, they sought a Judas to betray the Church from within by a kiss: a hierarch who would be "Orthodox," who would "violate neither dogmas nor canons," who would draw to himself the whole Church people and stand at their head - solely in order "to blow the Church up from within," as Metropolitan (Saint) Cyril of Kazan has expressed it, by making the Church the servant of atheists who were conducting warfare against God.

After many attempts, the Soviets finally found such a Judas in Metropolitan Sergius, whose "Declaration" in 1927 bound the Church to the atheist State and destroyed its power to confess the Truth. Then indeed did the winnowing of the chaff and the wheat begin in the Russian Church.

Those who accepted the "Declaration" fell into a subtle trap from which it is scarcely possible to escape, sinning against the very dogma of the Church by identifying the Church with the church organization, binding the Church of Him Who is Truth to the Soviet lie. Thus they perpetrated a schism in the Russian Church, for the True Church of Christ cannot be so bound. The heroes of this second period of martyrdom are those who rightly distinguished between True Orthodoxy and its "outwardly correct" counterfeit, the Sergianist church organization, which is [now was] so brazen as to deny the very existence of the New Martyrs of Russia; they (those who battled against Sergianism) are greater than the confessors and martyrs of the first period of the Communist Yoke, for the temptation was greater.

This battle is still being waged today [this was written in 1974] in Russia. On a "secular" level this battle has been described by A. Solzhenitsyn as "not living by lies" - but few are they who are



capable of discerning the very subtle lie upon which the Sergianist church organization (the "Moscow Patriarchate") rests.

To the lovers of this world, living in the Truth is an impossible Utopia or else something totally incomprehensible; after all, almost the whole of public life both in the USSR and in the free world is based upon lies of varying degrees, and it is not only the Sergianist church organization that is eaten through with them. The voice of the confessors against Sergianism is not for Russia alone; thanks to the Russian Diaspora the Cry of the New Martyrs can now be heard everywhere, and the opportunity to understand and live True Orthodoxy has become universal.

The New Martyrs are the intercessors of all who stand in True Orthodoxy, wherever they may be or whatever the nature of their struggle against the counterfeit Christianity and counterfeit Orthodoxy of our times.

We, Orthodox Christians today are perishing! We need the New Martyrs to call us to authentic spiritual life. They touch in us something so deep and elemental that our souls and minds, made shallow by modern "enlightenment," can scarcely grasp it; and yet we know it.

Let us join their army in the march to eternal bliss, making the resolve to stand for the Truth even unto the death of the body. This stand, if only we knew it, contains the secret to the deepest happiness possible on earth, because it is natural for the soul created by God. Let us listen to the cry of the New Martyrs! Let us hear their clarion call and follow their beacon and become, in the words of St. Herman:

True Christians - Warriors fighting our way through the regiments of the unseen enemy to our Heavenly homeland. Amen.

Source (from Youtube Channel of Gregory Decapolite):

