

THE TOWER OF ST. CASSIAN

VOLUME 4,#1

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Ο σταυρός ἐστὶ τὸ φάρμακον κόσμου

The formula is Oh God, come to my aid.

Vladimir Soloviev, Witness For The Spirit Of Unity

St. Cassian

"...I solemnly urge you to preach the message, to insist upon proclaiming it..., to convince, reproach, and encourage, as you teach with all patience." (2 Timothy 4,2)

"..It is not without reason that the Orthodox Church, in enumerating the animate and inanimate creations of God, continually repeats the hymn, 'In wisdom hast Thou made them all.'"

Staretz Amvrosy

To the great majority of American Christians, even very educated ones, Vladimir Soloviev's (1853-1900) name is hardly a household word. While most of his writings have been translated into English and while there are a number of in depth studies on him, like Dr. Paul Allen's "Vladimir Soloviev : Russian Mystic" (SteinerBooks, 1978), Soloviev's influence is still very far from being felt in Christian theological circles. Unlike Teilhard de Chardin, Soloviev was strickly a philosopher and theologian. He seems more like 20th-Century Christian Thinkers than the 19th-Century ones who revelled in a sort of pseudo-scientific thinking similar to Freud's.

Soloviev was a man of great genius, poet , philosopher, mystic , immensely well educated and well read, who after studying all the philosophies in existence, Eastern and Western, found only in Christianity the complete answers to all humankind's problems. He found in Jesus Christ, the God-Man, the longed for answer which encompasses all problems, the Panacea. Like St. Basil the Great he refuted those who denied Christ's Divinity and solidly taught the Godhead of the Holy Spirit Whom he encountered in a vision. It is in the depths of Soloviev's spiritual and contemplative life, the profound Silence and Stillness , which qualifies him to be a witness for the Spirit of Unity, the Holy Spirit. Soloviev wrote, " Mankind can only evolve toward Divinity through an inner unity with everything; thus the truly apotheosized man is by necessity both ecumenical and catholic !"

To Soloviev it was an essential concept of Orthodox and Catholic Christianity that humanity is not saved alone but through fellowship and love along with all fellow human beings. He knew that the living reality of his joint participation, koinonia , in salvation under the headship of Jesus Christ was the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, the Mystical Body of Christ. He ultimately concluded that this Church must, in reality, become both ecumenical and catholic. Anything that prevents this unity is to be overcome and rejected. Soloviev's life long goal was to bring together again, but not as they were before, in fraternal unity, Eastern and Western Churches, in a new synthesis as if in a sacramental marriage ! Vladimir Soloviev wanted to be the witness at the marriage of the Eastern and Western Churches , a witness for the Spirit of Unity. For Soloviev this would be the major , daunting task of the 20th-Century , the remedy for



Our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee. St. Augustine

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St. Cassian

avoiding a great catastrophe in the 21st-Century.

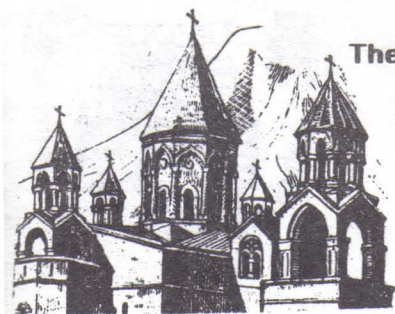
Soloviev's message is then, expressively, a clarion call to true unification of the Christian churches, which can only be the real, true salvation of European Civilization under the headship of Jesus Christ from another onslaught of barbarians. Through Soloviev there can be a valuable and healthy exchange of ideas between East and West. It is to be a union of souls, not dead souls, but living ones transformed by the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Unity. It is very important, especially today, to recall the writings of Soloviev as Europe moves toward unification and as the newly liberated countries of Eastern Europe struggle to stand democratically on their own feet. That is why his witnessing for the Spirit of Unity is so very significant now because he dedicated his life and death so that our civilization might survive. His was an apocalyptic spirituality.

In an article by the late Helene Iswolsky, which appeared in the Catholic Worker in January 1972, she wrote of Vladimir Soloviev: "Known as a pioneer of Unity, at a time when the ecumenical movement had not as yet come into existence, Solovyev(sic) is claimed both by the Orthodox and the Catholics; as one of his commentators, Efmert Munzer puts it, he 'was a Catholic by intellectual convictions and an Orthodox by all the inclination of his heart.' Actually he saw beyond the Churches separated in time and history. His was a prophetic vision of the Church Universal, in which everything fell into place..."

In Dostoyevsky's (1821-1881) epic tale, "The Brothers Karamazov," Vladimir Soloviev was the actual, real life model for Aloysha, and Staretz Amvrosy (1812-1891) the model for Fr. Zossima. In that novel is described the spiritual rebirth of the young Aloysha through the death-experience of Fr. Zossima "His enraptured soul was craving for freedom, space, openness ... the silence of the earth seemed to melt in the silence of the heavens; the mystery of the world was joining the mystery of the stars... Aloysha stood gazing, and suddenly, as though his legs had given way, he threw himself to the ground. He did not know why he kissed it, why he had such an irresistible desire to embrace the whole of it..."

The Editor

IN MEMORIAM: On Sept. 13, '95, M. Rev. Paul G.W. Schultz (b. 1931) fell asleep in the Lord; O.M. Macario Ga installed him, 6/7/90 as apostolic administrator of the Am. Archdiocese of the PIC. Dr. Schultz was cons., 3/20/77, by E. F. Rodriguez-Fairfield of the Mexican National Catholic Church, who also did the funeral on 9/15 at Forest Lawn. Bp. Don Hugh represented AEC. Dr. Schultz is survived by his wife, Ada, and three children. Rt. Rev. Francis C. Spataro succeeds Dr. Schultz as Rector Pro-Provincial of the OCR, U.S. Council. Memory Eternal!



The Risen Christ makes of man's life a

continual festival. St. Athanasius

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The Tower of St. Cassian
80-46 234th Street
Jamaica, NY 11427-2116
Attn: Editor

NEWS NOTES

On July 8, 1995 at the end of Clergy Conf.VI, Archbp. Mark S. Shirilau consecrated as bishops Richard J. Cardarelli(CT), Michael R. Frost (NY), Denis A. Martel (LA) and Robert W. Martin (OK) at St. Michael's Ecumenical Catholic Church PO Box 32, Villa Grande, CA 95486.

Interested in the Hispano-Mozarabic Rite? NEW GROUP forming, Write: Mr. P. McGhee, 83-30 St. James Ave., Queens, NY 11373.

On June 2, 1995 Fr. Gregory Tillet, a Coptic Orthodox priest at Sidney's Coptic Cathedral wrote to tell us that in 1994 Mar Seraphim, Metropolitan of Glastonbury, was consecrated s.c as bishop ordinary by Coptic Pope Shenouda III in St. Mark's Cathedral, Cairo. The Metropolis is now simply an English Rite Diocese of Cairo; Fr. Tillet's new address: 300 New Canterbury Rd., Petersham, NSW 2049, AUSTRALIA. (FAX 61 2 560 9528). In effect, this means that Mar Seraphim resigns all rights and privileges he claimed over the AEC in the USA, since he thus repudiates the late Mar Georgius & Mar David I

Sept. 17, '95: V. Rev. Canon Paul Faunch, MA, DD, DMus, FASA, Prelate of The Order of St. John of Malta, died peacefully at home in London; the funeral was held on 9/22 at St. Giles-in-the-Fields. He was Editor of THE ANGLICAN CATHOLIC and Chairman of the Exec. Comm. of the Anglican Society for the 1662 BCP.

Oct 6, '95 (Queens, NY) Pope John Paul II: "...Is there room for the mystery of God?....the mystery of the Father and the Son in the unity of the Holy Spirit; the mystery of divine love which is the source of everything?.....Is there room for the revelation of life ---that transcendent life which Christ brings us at the price of his Cross and through the victory of his Resurrection?"

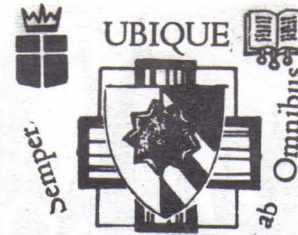
Oct. 10, '95 an evening of Prayer For Peace on earth at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, sponsored by Women of Vision the World Peace Prayer Society, Nicholas Roerich Museum and the Temple of Understanding; the OCR was represented by our Editor, invited by Ms Carole Van Chieri of Women of Vision Committee. The meditation was led by Olga Butterworth of the NYC Unity Church. Those in attendance numbered over 500.

On Nov. 1, '95 Dr. George W. Boyer (b. 11/19/21) announced that on his 74th birthday he would retire as AEC archbishop for U.K.; he had been consecrated 12/15/57 by Archbp. Charles E. Brearley of the Old Holy Catholic Church of Great Britain.

Nov. 5, '95: The USCC declared, " We stand with the unborn & the undocumented when many politicians seem to be abandoning them. We defend children in the womb and on welfare. We oppose the violence of abortion and the vengeance of capital punishment. We oppose assault weapons in our streets and condoms in our schools..." (fr. THE GOSPEL OF LIFE)

FREE RESOLVE

From an essay on Free Will by Maria Babwahsingh



"...Resolve to achieve this through the matter itself, and then carry this decision into reality, putting everything else aside, or, having removed one's heart from everything, give it over to the full action of Divine grace." St. Theophan

...As human beings we can perceive freedom with certain limitations and not to its full extent. We are, after all, under the control of Cosmic and even man made laws and regulations ...therefore, freedom is somewhat constrained and not fully experienced.. Free Will is an attribute of the Divine Essence that extends to the human level and manifests through our expression of True Will which in turn is an aspect of our Higher Self. The part of us connected to the spirit of the Divine reflects the Divine Image like an icon. We are all children of the Supreme Being, and we carry the subtle qualities deep in our psyche. Sometimes we even tend to bury them under the elements of our mundane existence.

...The possibility of this connecting makes all the difference and makes us hope to live freely in a world of shared existence with others; the idea that connection is sought from both sides not only makes the unknown easier, but also anchors our faith in the midst of the suffering we experience. Humanity has been gifted with reason that should be guiding us to take appropriate action to avoid suffering. Yet this does not always bring about the right conclusion. Through our experiences we keep attempting to make our reason reliable. One main indication that we are on the correct path of our True Will is to live in accordance with the experience of what happens in Nature and by Nature. We have superiority and cannot change the work and experiences of Universal Nature.

...There is a medium that we need to explore - the balance, so to speak, between two extremes, Free Will and Fate ! In considering the Law of Cause and Effect, Fate is accepted on that theleological level. However, since we are reasoning beings, we can make choices, based on reason; so to prevent or alter situations, we are free to choose to protect ourselves or to experience pain. We can choose to suffer.

...It becomes evident that on our plane of existence we are given the freedom to choose based on what we have experienced as being good or bad in ourselves. Wittgenstein wrote: "You learned the concept of 'pain' when you learned language." Therefore, we have to be prepared to reap the consequences. During many thoughts on this subject, generated by exposure to the Synergy of St. John Cassian, I have come to the conclusion that there is only one Free Will - that of the Creator of All - the Divine Will. St. Cassian's Synergy says that we humans have the freedom to cooperate with God's Will or not. This is a powerful Force which penetrates the very Depths of the Universe, and is reflected in us as the desire to know and follow the Higher Self for that which is truly free within us. The Love for all living beings is thus expressed freely and without any reservations of race or creed. God wills that we don't suffer, but do we cooperate?