

Part IV

Chapter 1.1. The Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem and the Diaspora in Africa & Asia

The Holy Land, or the "Orthodox East," as one says in Russian, played a special role in the consciousness of the simple Russian faithful: This was the veneration of the "holy, praised land" as the place where the Savior walked.¹ Connected with this veneration was the desire to visit these places, which were sanctified by Christ's life, suffering on the Cross, and Resurrection. It is, therefore, understandable that the project of a "Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in the Holy Land" would sooner or later have had to find its way into Russian Church circles in order to afford the thousands of pilgrims who yearly visited the holy places with refuge and religious care.

On the background and history of the Russian Mission in Jerusalem, there is much literature available.² In 1847, the Holy Synod decreed the establishment of a Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem in order to strengthen the contact between the Jerusalem Patriarchate and the Russian pilgrims who journeyed to Jerusalem. The first head of the Mission was Archimandrite Porphyrius (Uspensky), who was known and famed as a theologian and scholar for his writings on the Near East. His successor was Antoninus (Kapustin), who headed the Mission from 1865-1894. During his nearly thirty years of leadership, the Mission secured enormous property holdings in Palestine, on which it built churches, monasteries, pilgrim hostels, hospitals, schools and other buildings. Financially, the purchase was made possible by

the independent "Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society,"³ which raised its money from donations.

In the Russian Mission in Jerusalem, the Jerusalem Patriarch Cyril II consecrated the only churches in the Mission—the Church of the Holy Martyr Empress Alexandra and the Holy Trinity Cathedral—the only churches of the Mission, in 1864 and 1872 respectively.⁴ On property obtained in 1868, another Holy Trinity Church, with a secondary dedication to the Forefather Abraham and Foremother Sarah, was built. In 1886, the Church of the Ascension was built on the Mount of Olives, and two years later, in 1888, the Church of St. Mary Magdalene was erected only a few minutes walk away. With their numerous gilded domes, they bore witness to the Russian presence in the Holy Land.⁵ At Ein Karem (Lk. 1:39) near Jerusalem, a woman's monastic community was established in 1871, which in 1886 received recognition as a convent.⁶ A few years later, in 1890, the first Russian nuns settled on the Mount of Olives near the Church of the Ascension with its 64-meter-high belfry (the "Russian Candle"). Their community received recognition as a convent in 1906.

Before the outbreak of World War I, the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission and the Palestine Society possessed thirty-seven plots of land with eight churches and several chapels, two convents, five hospitals, seven pilgrim hostels, and ninety-three schools with 10,741 pupils (5,777 boys and 4,964 girls). The schools were located in Palestine and Syria. There were 417 teachers, including only 25 Russians. A teaching seminary also existed from 1886, at which pedagogical skills were developed. Especially in the realm of schooling, Imperial Russia did much, because they took in Christian Arabs, who had no Orthodox school of their own.⁷

In connection with such extensive purchases of land and the construction of so many buildings, there were accusations against Imperial Russia that political motives lay behind the

acquisition. Yet the numerous buildings were justified by the yearly influx of the 12,000 Russian pilgrims into the country before 1914. This would have been easily silenced, because for years all Christian confessions had striven and contended with each other over possession of the holy places. The envy of most observers was aroused by the fact that in little more than a half of a century Russia had succeeded in obtaining an influence in Palestine, for which the other confessions, who unlike the Russian Orthodox were not supported by the State, had sought in vain.

Doubtless political questions did play a rôle, though here the words of Metropolitan Philaret (Drozdov) should not be forgotten. He said: "Will the political influence of Russia thereby be magnified? Will the Orthodox Church thereby be heightened? Will Catholic propaganda thereby be weakened? In order to attain such goals, one does not need large buildings, but rather capable and enthusiastic people."⁸

With the outbreak of World War I, the blossoming life of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem was suddenly interrupted: the stream of pilgrims and the financial support stopped; monks and nuns had to depend on themselves. Turkey, which was at war with Russia, considered the activity of the Mission to be "hostile" and abruptly closed it and its monasteries, churches and retreats, and confiscated all Russian property. The head of the Mission, Archimandrite Leonid (Sentsov), with his priests, monks and nuns were sent out of Palestine. A part of the possessions was turned into Turkish barracks. Great Britain took up the defense of the clergy, who had gone to Alexandria. Then the defense of their rights to the church property was taken up first by the Italian, then, after 1916, by the American, and finally, after 1917, by the Spanish Consuls. Upon the collapse of the Ottoman Rule and the takeover of Palestine under

mandate by Great Britain (1919), for the first time it became possible for the Russian refugees to return to Jerusalem. The confiscated Mission and the churches were reopened. Hieromonk Meletius was appointed administrator in place of Archimandrite Leonid (Head of the Mission from 1903-1914, died 1918). This appointment was accepted by the Supreme Ecclesiastical Administration at its 16/29 November 1920 session. Simultaneously, a letter was sent to the Patriarch of Jerusalem, in which the SEA asked the Patriarch to elevate Hieromonk Meletius to the rank of hegumen. Until 1923, Meletius, as Archimandrite from 1922, headed the Mission.⁹

The SEA's arrangement of the Jerusalem Mission's affairs at this early point in time underscores the significance the Mission had for the Church Abroad from the beginning.

In March of 1921, a resolution was published assigning Archbishop Anastasius the task of putting the affairs of the Mission in order "in view of the material value of its possessions." Anastasius acted as direct appointee of the SEA and was the President's deputy in all ecclesiastical, canonical, legal and other matters.¹⁰ In the summer of 1921, he traveled to Jerusalem, where he spent several weeks. During his stay in Jerusalem he also personally came into contact with Patriarch Damian, who maintained a good personal relationship with Metropolitan Anthony. Because Damian's election had been opposed by several bishops of the Patriarchate, Patriarch Damian and Archbishop Anastasius together consecrated new bishops, who were under the jurisdiction of the Patriarch.

The subsequent excellent relations between the Jerusalem Patriarchate and the Church Abroad may be traced back to this time; Archbishop Anastasius lived in Jerusalem until 1934. In 1932 he took part in the consecration of Timothy (later Patriarch) to the episcopate, who maintained close contacts with the Church Abroad until his repose in 1955.¹¹

In November of 1921, the SEA published a list of the Mission clergy: the head was Hegumen Meletius, the Mission personnel consisted of three hieromonks (Tikhon, Hilarion and Polycarp), an archdeacon (Seraphim), and a novice.¹² Bishop Apollinarius was appointed to audit the financial situation of the Mission.¹³ He spent nearly two years in Jerusalem before taking over the Diocese of Winnipeg at the request of Metropolitan Platon, in 1924.

The main concern of the SEA, and later the Synod of Bishops, was to maintain the property of the Mission, which suffered greatly after the stream of pilgrims stopped and further donations were not forthcoming from Russia. The convents became noticeably impoverished. On their own resources, they were able to tend to the needs of their residents, but were hardly able to maintain the upkeep of the buildings and the extensive properties. Thus, after 1920, the Mission relied exclusively upon the money obtained from the emigration. Before World War II, the expenditures of the Mission were some £5,000 annually. This money was spent mainly on the upkeep of the buildings and the most necessary repairs. Those in the Mission -- between 200 and 450 people (including the convents) -- received £0.50 per month in support of each person.¹⁴

Between the wars, the Mission also received help from the Serbian and Jerusalem Patriarchates. After the establishment of the State of Israel, the Mission lost all of its property in the Israeli part of Palestine, including an extensive orange orchard, which belonged to the church in Jaffa and which represented a not insignificant source of income for the Mission.¹⁵ The Moscow Patriarchate, to which the Israeli Parliament handed over all the property located in Israel, sold the land and those buildings not used for church-related purposes to the State of Israel for £4.5 million. The Church Abroad only retained those possessions which lay in the

Jordanian portion of Palestine: a total of eighteen pieces of land with the churches and monasteries. Of these, seventeen have to be financially subsidized; only the Convent of the Ascension on the Mount of Olives is able to support itself by its own cultivation. Since this time, the Mission has been completely dependent on the financial help of the Church Abroad. The main support of the Mission comes from the Synod and various benevolent funds, including the Palestine Committee (Palestinsky Komitet), which was set up in 1956,¹⁶ the "St. John of Kronstadt Benevolent Fund," the "Archbishop Averky Fund," and others. Also, special collections were instituted throughout the Church Abroad for the support of the Mission and convents. Furthermore, there was a flow of income into the Mission from the publication of books and recordings of religious music.

All of these helpful measures cannot, however, hide the fact that the material situation of the Mission was extremely bad, since the maintenance of the buildings, which date back to the last century, demand ever greater expenditures. Thus, in 1969, \$39,000 was spent for repairs on the roof and cupolas of the St. Mary Magdalene Church in the Garden of Gethsemane. Despite the difficult financial situation, the Church Abroad has not only succeeded in maintaining its property, but has even expanded it with extensive new buildings (see below). Before the division of Palestine, the principle property of the Mission was the Holy Trinity Cathedral. In this building complex, the administrative offices of the Mission, two churches, an extensive library and archives with valuable inventory of church books and newspapers from pre-Revolutionary Russia, a printing press and various workshops (candle-works, an icon workshop) were located. The Mission also had four convents: the Gorny Convent (at Ein Karem, outside the Jerusalem Gate), which had some 100 nuns, the Convent of the Ascension, with some

200 nuns, the Gethsemane Convent and the Bethany Convent, in which some 50-60 nuns lived. There were two monasteries – one at Abraham's Oak and one in Pharan. The brotherhood at the former usually consisted of two or three monks, while St. Chariton's Skete at Pharan, some seven miles from Jerusalem, had two or three monks until the early 1960s, after which it has no longer had any permanent dwellers. The Church Abroad lost the Ein Karem convent through the division of Palestine.

Besides these convents, the Church Abroad had over a dozen churches at various biblical sites. The Church of the Forefather Abraham at Abraham's Oak (traditionally believed to be the Oak of Mamre, together with the monastery, is a particularly holy site of the Church Abroad.¹⁷ Other churches were located in Jaffa on the land where St. Tabitha is said to have been buried, on the Mediterranean Sea, in Jericho, Carmel, Magdala, and other places.¹⁸ All of these churches fell into the hands of the Moscow Patriarchate through the division of Palestine.¹⁹

During the period 1920-1945, the Mission personnel consisted of some 20-30 monks of all ranks and 300-350 nuns. From 1934 the Mission published its own newspaper, *The Holy Land (Svyataya Zemlya)*, which appeared monthly; each issue was approximately twenty-five pages long. Hieromonk Philip (von Gardner, later the Bishop of Potsdam) edited it; he was followed by Archimandrite Anthony (Sinkevich). The newspaper was printed at the Mission printing press and largely sent to subscribers outside of Palestine.²⁰

The Mission was administered from 1918-1922 by Hieromonk (Hegumen) Meletius, who from 1922-23 as archimandrite was its head. His successors were Archimandrite Hieronymus (Chernov), Archimandrite Meletius, and Hieromonk Rafael.²¹ In 1928, Archimandrite Cyprian (Kern) was appointed Head of the Mission; he remained so until 1933.²² He was succeeded by

Archimandrite Anthony (Sinkevich), who first took over the administration, then [officially] became Head of the Mission in 1937.²³ He remained in Jerusalem until 1951 when he was consecrated Bishop of Los Angeles. It is largely thanks to him that the Church Abroad today is still able to administer the churches and monasteries in the Jordanian part of Palestine. During Patriarch Alexis' visit to Palestine in 1945, his aides offered to consecrate the then Archimandrite Anthony as a metropolitan of the Patriarchal Church if he and the other members of the Mission would submit [to his authority]. Archimandrite Anthony refused, indicating that the legitimate heir of the Russian Mother Church is the Church Abroad.²⁴ From 1951 to 1968, Archimandrite Demetrius (Byakai) was Head of the Mission, followed until 1986 by Archimandrite Anthony (Grabbe)²⁵; the Mission was then temporarily administered by Archpriest Valery Lukianov (rector of the St. Alexander Nevsky Church in Lakewood, New Jersey), then Archpriest Vladimir Skalon (rector of Holy Resurrection Church in Buenos Aires, Argentina) until March 1988, and at present by Archimandrite Alexis (Rosentool), who was appointed the new Head of the Mission in 1988.

From 1924 to 1934, Archbishop Anastasius lived permanently at the Jerusalem Mission. He had spiritual oversight over the Mission and the Convents within the Church Abroad, but was not, however, the head of the Mission, as this position can be held only by someone in the rank of archimandrite.

Despite the aforementioned difficult material situation of the Mission and those belonging to it after 1918, it was possible to complete a few significant buildings since then. In 1925, the building of the church at Abraham's Oak was completed, which had been begun in 1906. The church was consecrated by Patriarch Damian and Archbishop Anastasius in memory

of the Forefather Abraham, who had lived there.²⁶ The most significant building, however, was on a piece of land in Bethany. In 1934, on a 2,000 square meter plot in the Garden of Gethsemane, the cornerstone was laid for an orphanage with a school for Orthodox Arab girls. The St. Mary Magdalene Church and the nuns of the Gethsemane Convent were already located on this land when two Scottish converts to Orthodoxy, Mother Mary (Barbara Robinson) and Mother Martha (Alice Sprott) received Metropolitan Anastasius' permission to establish a second convent. Both had been High Church Anglicans on their way to India, where they were to have worked as medical aides, when in Palestine they became acquainted with Orthodoxy, to which they felt attracted. After a year's stay in Palestine, they left for India, but decided to convert to Orthodoxy after a visit to the Patriarch of Antioch, and then returned to Jerusalem. Archbishop Anastasius tonsured them nuns, and they lived for a while in the Gethsemane Convent. In the following year, they received permission to establish a women's monastic community (the Bethany Community of the Resurrection of Christ) with the aim of opening a boarding school and a day school. Archbishop Anastasius, who in the meantime had been elevated to the rank of Metropolitan, appointed Mother Mary head of the newly founded community.²⁷

Within two years, the convent building for the sisterhood was completed, and the building of the orphanage and school was begun. Metropolitan Anastasius blessed the opening of the school in 1939. Seventy girls permanently lived there, and another seventy girls attended the school as day scholars. In 1966, these buildings were extended through the addition of a new building, in which the nuns' cells, the guest rooms, and the administrative offices are housed.²⁸

Above all else, the question of growth after 1918 was problematic for the convents and the Mission. The complexes, which had been planned for several hundred nuns and monks,

received no more monastics from Russia after 1914. The Ein Karem Convent, containing some two-hundred nuns, had been the largest convent before the outbreak of World War I. The Convent of the Ascension on the Mount of Olives had one hundred nuns, and the Gethsemane Convent had some twenty nuns. The majority of the nuns were Russians. During the 1920s, again and again isolated nuns from the emigration joined the convents, as well as small groups of nuns from the convents of Romanian Bessarabia, who rejected the Romanization of their convents and various reforms (such as the change to the New Style Calendar). Over the course of time, however, more and more Arab women joined the convents. In the Mount of Olives Convent, for example, between the years 1951 and 1965, seventy-five of the very aged nuns died, whereas only fifty new nuns entered the convent, including only two Russians. Today about one hundred, mostly of Arab extraction, live in the Convent.²⁹ Since the 1930s, approximately 50-60 nuns have at all times belonged to the Gethsemane and Bethany Convents. After the division of Palestine, from the Ein Karem Convent (which had fallen into the hands of the Moscow Patriarchate) about forty nuns, who remained faithful to the Church Abroad, joined the three aforementioned convents. These nuns, however, did not remain there, but rather continued on to England and Chile, where they founded new convents.³⁰ Despite the Arabization of these convents, they have continued to preserve their Russian character: Russian has remained the spoken language, and Russian customs and traditions continue to be observed.

The situation concerning those belonging to the Ecclesiastical Mission is more favorable. In the 1920s, the size of the Mission personnel increased to twenty, because émigré monks from Russia and monks from the Valaam monastery (proponents of the Old Calendar) joined the Mission. Candidates from émigré circles joined the Mission again and again. After the World

War II, monks from the St. Job Brotherhood in Ladomirova joined the Mission, after which the material needs of the established monastery [of St. Job] in Munich forced them to travel further. Yet the ravages of aging also affected the Mission. Since the early 1960s, the Brotherhood has become ever smaller. In 1968, the Mission – besides the head, Archimandrite Demetrius – included an Archimandrite, an hegumen, three hieromonks and two hierodeacons, a schemamonk, a monk and five novices, altogether fifteen people.³¹ In 1981, six archimandrites, two hegumens, two monks, a total of ten people, belonged to the Mission, but no novices, no younger coworkers.³²

The Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society, which had largely made possible the acquisition of the properties in Palestine in the 19th century, was the owner of numerous pieces of land and buildings. After the Russian Revolution, its assets, like that of other unions, were also nationalized. In the emigration, former members of the Society founded a [new] organization as its successor – the Palestine Committee. The goal of this committee is to protect the property titles of the Society in Palestine. This Committee protested to the State of Israel against the confiscation of its property by the Moscow Patriarchate.³³ The Committee, which collaborates closely with the Church Abroad, earlier had its headquarters in Versailles. In 1968, it became directly subject to the Synod and was registered as an association in New York. The buildings and land of the Imperial Palestine Society are registered as the Society's property in the Israeli and Jordanian parts of Palestine.³⁴ The President of the Society at that time, M.G. Khripunov, looked after the interests of the Committee.

Members of the Mission are also responsible for the Russian churches in Tehran, Beirut, and Addis Ababa, though only Tehran has its own clergyman. All of these churches are directly

subject to the Synod in New York.

In Iran, the Church Abroad has ten communities, of which half have their own church.³⁵ After the 20,000 or so Nestorian Christians joined the Russian Orthodox Church in 1898, an ecclesiastical mission in Iran was established. After 1918, the Mission made contact with the SEA, to whose authority the Mission's head, Abunmar Elias submitted in 1921.³⁶ His successor was Bishop John (Shleman),³⁷ who as representative of the Mission participated in the Second Pan-Diaspora Council in 1938.

Since the turn of the century, various Russian churches had sprung up in the country, because Persia was seen as a new field of missionary endeavor. The churches were taken over by the émigrés who fled to Persia. The most important parish was in Tehran. When diplomatic relations were established between the Soviet Union and Persia, after long opposition, the émigrés had to evacuate the embassy churches, which they had been using. Thus, they decided to build their own church, which was consecrated in 1944 in honor of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker. Built in the Novgorod style, the church had a small community center and an adjacent building that served as the rectory.³⁸ The first rector of the new parish was Archimandrite Vitalis (1944-46),³⁹ followed by Archimandrites Vladimir (1946-51), Seraphim (1951-61), and Victorinus (1961-68). With the appointment of Archimandrite Victorinus, who had belonged to the Brotherhood at the New Kursk Hermitage, parish life took a turn for the better. After a fundamental renovation of the Church, the community center was expanded by the addition of a library and a parish school. The school began giving instruction in 1962. In the first academic year, seventy-nine pupils were enrolled; they were taught by four teachers in as many classes. The school was equipped with its own 1200-volume library.⁴⁰ In the same year, a

Russian library was opened, which contained 13,000 books and had over 100 regular visitors.⁴¹ In Tehran, there was also a Russian cemetery (from 1894), a cemetery chapel (from 1905) and a small home for the elderly. After the death of Fr. Victorinus, there were no more priests until 1989. The parish was placed in the care of the head of the Jerusalem Mission.

[Trans. Note. After the outbreak of the Islamic Revolution, there was little possibility of caring for the flock there, because only Iranian nationals could serve as clergy in Iran, and an appropriate candidate was only recently found. The remaining parishes in Iran had been cared for by the clergy who served the Tehran parish. Many émigrés left the country in the course of the year and immigrated to America. In 1989, a priest, Fr. Stephen Evnich, an Iranian national who had grown up in Russia, was ordained to the priesthood at the Synod in New York to serve in Tehran.]

In Beirut there has been a small Russian colony since 1927, which set up its own place of worship in an Arab Orthodox church. When, in 1946, a part of the community joined the Moscow Patriarchate, the Church Abroad's faithful gathered in Arab Orthodox churches. After Archimandrite Athanasius (Mogilev) moved from Cairo to Beirut, the community opened a house chapel in his residence. Since the 1970s, the remainder of the community has been entrusted to the members of the Jerusalem Mission.⁴²

The small Russian community in Addis-Ababa was founded in 1927. It was located in the house of S. Khvostov, a former officer and lawyer, who was in the service of the Ethiopian Imperial House. A total of twenty White Russian émigrés lived in the city. From 1927 to 1937, Fr. Paul Voronovsky cared for the community. After his death, the church was closed. When Russian and Serbian families came to Ethiopia after World War II, they reopened the small

house church. Fr. A. Milovidov directed the community until the end of the 1950s.⁴³ The Ethiopian Imperial House gave [financial] support to the community. The Empress gave the Church Abroad an extensive piece of property in the environs of the capital, upon which a Russian convent was to be founded. This present was a gesture of thanks, because the nuns of the Mount of Olives convent had offered the Imperial Family refuge during its flight from Ethiopia in 1935. The property **consisted of more than 320 acres** and, in addition to a convent, there was a plan to establish a school and an infirmary modeled upon the Bethany Convent. The financial means for building were to be provided by the Imperial House, and the Synod planned to send there the three nuns of the St. Olga Sisterhood, who lived at the church house in Montréal. Another four nuns from Harbin were to join them.⁴⁴ Their plans were not realized, and the small community remaining came under the direction of Archimandrite Anthony (Grabbe).

In East and South Africa, there were a few smaller communities, which mostly consisted of a few families. These communities were serviced from Johannesburg and Nairobi, where Archimandrite Alexis and Fr. Simon Starikov had built chapels. After the outbreak of the independence movements in these countries, the émigrés left their new homeland and moved to South Africa or further overseas.⁴⁵

In Egypt and North Africa, a dozen or so numerically significant communities existed, which had an active church and cultural life. These communities were founded by refugees from the first emigration. After World War II, many refugees joined them, hoping for a better life in North Africa.⁴⁶ Community life blossomed in every way. Churches, schools and community centers were built; youth camps were organized; dance and music groups were founded. When the struggles for independence broke out in Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria, many émigrés,

especially from Algeria, moved to France, North and South America, and Australia. A similar development had occurred a few years earlier in Egypt, when many Russians had to leave or voluntarily left after the overthrow of the monarchy. In consequence, the newly revitalized church life was extinguished; the families who remained behind were no longer in the position to support their own priest. The communities and churches in Tunis, Bizerta, Algiers, Casablanca and Rabat today are directly subject to the Synod of Bishops. Clergy from France occasionally visit in order to celebrate the services for the few faithful remaining.⁴⁷ The first émigrés came to these countries in 1920; the English evacuated 2,000 sick and young Russians to Egypt. The French housed the former Russian Black Sea Navy and crews in Bizerta and Tunis.⁴⁸ From there, many servicemen moved to Algiers and Morocco.

These communities were made up for the most part of men. This resulted in the communities becoming ever smaller over the course of time, as the members died without progeny. Most marriages were of a mixed nature: Russian-French or Russian Arab. In the case of the former, subsequent emigration to France became easier.

Only the second emigration, after 1945, insured a normal social structure in these communities, because among the new émigrés were both women and children. In Egypt, there were two Russian communities, which like all communities in North Africa fell under the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Alexandria, but in a spiritual regard belonged to the Synod.⁴⁹ The administration of the Russian-exile Communities in this area came about very much as in the Orthodox Balkan countries, practically independent of the Patriarch of Alexandria, who granted these communities an autonomous status and in part supported them materially. Both Egyptian communities, in Alexandria and Cairo-Heliopolis, were founded in 1922. The community in

Alexandria assembled in the former Russian consulate church, whereas the community in Cairo had at its disposal a chapel in the Old City and in the suburb of Heliopolis, where a Russian home for the elderly and a Russian cemetery were located. These institutions were obtained and built by the émigrés with the support of the Patriarch of Alexandria.⁵⁰

During his visit to the Patriarch of Alexandria in 1945, Patriarch Alexis also visited the Russian community of this city. The parish priest, Fr. Alexis Dekhterev, and Deacon Nicholas Prozorov joined the Moscow Patriarchate along with most of the parish. This was the only parish in the Near East to separate itself from the Church Abroad during Patriarch Alexis' visit.⁵¹ About fifty people remained faithful to the Church Abroad, including Prince Roman Petrovich and the former Imperial Russian Ambassador. With his mother and sister, Tsar Symeon II of Bulgaria also joined the parish; he had found asylum in Egypt. The small community succeeded on setting up a house church in a residence; Fr. Zosimas (Anisimov) was their priest. After the Egyptian Revolution, the aristocratic families were banished from the country and went to America. The small remaining community was in the care of a Greek Archimandrite Dorotheus for a few more years and finally joined the Patriarchate of Alexandria.⁵² The Cairo community was entrusted to Archimandrite Athanasius (Mogilev) until 1960, when he was transferred to the community in Beirut. These communities also joined the Patriarchate of Alexandria

The communities in North Africa, which experienced a revival through the influx of new refugees, were then put under the direction of Archbishop Panteleimon (Rudyk). After his appointment as Bishop of Buenos Aires and Argentina in 1948, Archpriest Metrophanes Znosko-Borovsky assumed the position. In 1953 Bishop Nathaniel (Lvov) administered the communities; in the subsequent years until 1959, Archpriest Znosko-Borovsky resumed the position.⁵³

In Morocco there were communities in Casablanca, Rabat, Burnasel, Tangiers and Marrakesh. In Rabat there was the Church of the Resurrection of Christ, whose rector, Archimandrite Barsanuphrius (Tolstukhin) was subordinate to Metropolitan Eulogius. When Barsonuphrius joined the Moscow Patriarchate in 1948, only about 130 of the faithful followed him, while the majority of the community about 1,000 people joined the Russian exile colony in Casablanca. There were two small communities, one in the city and one in the suburb Burnasel, each of which had their own churches. In the early 1950s, the parish of the Dormition Church obtained a 1000 square meter plot of land, upon which a new church and community center were built, which was consecrated in 1958. Until 1964 the community had its own priest; thereafter, Fr. K. Lois took over the care of all the North African communities. In Burnasel and Tangiers, they built their own chapels after 1945, but did not have their own clergymen.⁵⁴

Since 1969, there have been no Russian clergy in Morocco. The 1,500 faithful of the Church Abroad who lived there were spread over twenty-two cities and villages. The church in Casablanca still belongs to the Synod in New York; the remaining communities were dissolved. Clergy from France occasionally celebrate the divine services there. Otherwise, the Greek clergy of the Patriarchate of Alexandria care for the faithful.⁵⁵

The two most important church buildings were built after the Second World War in Tunisia, where there had been communities in Bizerta and Tunis since 1920. Upon the initiative of Bishop Nathaniel, the house chapel of the former sailors from the Black Sea Fleet was replaced by a new building in North Russian style. Six to seven hundred Russians who lived in and around Tunis belonged to the Holy Resurrection Church in the 1950s.⁵⁶ By 1965, the parish lost almost all its parishioners through emigration and death. Only forty-eight mostly elderly émigrés belonged to the parish, which today is practically deserted. The situation was similar to

that of the 200-strong community in Bizerta, which after the Second World War had begun to build a church dedicated to St. Alexander Nevsky. Hegumen Panteleimon (Rogov), who had been part of the St. Job Brotherhood in Lodomirova, was rector of the community. After the re-establishment of the monastery in Munich he travelled first to France, where he was supposed to establish a monastery. When these plans had to be given up, he was transferred to the community in Bizerta. This community had also lost almost all its faithful by 1965 through emigration and death. In 1965 only six people still belonged to the church. Today the church is likewise deserted, but is still under the jurisdiction of the Church Abroad.

In Algiers a community has been in existence since 1923 and has a makeshift church in a barracks. Up to this time "a few hundred" Orthodox Russians lived in the country. In the 1930s, the church was situated in the center of Algiers, where a house chapel was set up in a residence. Plans to build a church, for which the community obtained a plot of land in 1957, were not realized, because almost all the émigrés left for France on account of the war in Algeria.⁵⁷

Today the only reminders of the Church Abroad's former communities are the churches and a few Russian cemeteries. The political circumstances as well as the sociological structure of the communities led to the death or emigration of these communities over the years. This also applied to all the diaspora communities in Africa. Providing these parishes with priests put a strain on the personnel resources of the Church Abroad. Yet the Church made every effort to provide for its faithful flock even in the furthestmost corners of Africa, as long as a community life could be maintained. The building of churches in North Africa may perhaps appear to the observer today as superficial, but it proves the great closeness between their church and the faithful, who were ready to take upon themselves a heavy financial sacrifice in order to celebrate their divine services in Russian churches. For them, the Church was the last part of the

homeland; their faith gave them the courage and hope to live.

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