

DEVELOP OUR OWN 'VIRTUAL CATACOMBS'!

by

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Throughout Christian history, believers have taken refuge in what are called catacombs. The reasons were mainly to escape the world and avoid persecution which included massacres, throwing them to the lions and a variety of evil torture devices. Their crime – to believe with all their hearts in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

They were no threat to anyone, yet those in power perceived them to be so. They worshipped One who was not of this world. He was a lawful One who taught obedience to the authorities, giving to Caesar what was his. He was not a leader in the world's sense, no Alexander the Great was He. He was much more than that. He conquered with the weapons of humility and love, the latter indeed was for one's enemies, not just friends.

The Jewish oligarchy feared Him and wouldn't accept Him as Messiah. Nor would the Jewish peasantry at large. After all He was not an earthly-warrior type. So they still wait for their Messiah, as do millions of others, who will be the Antichrist:

[Dr. Alexandre Kalomiros from AGAINST FALSE UNION, pp. 9-10.]

They were waiting for an earthly king, a world conqueror. They awaited someone who would subject all the races of the world at the feet of the nation of Israel, who would force the Roman rulers of the world to bow down and worship him, who would give power and glory to his followers.

When they saw Him, poor and humble, meek and full of peace, one Who offered no earthly goods but spoke of heavenly things, and not only that, but even asked them to deny the earthly and tangible so that liberated they could reach the heavenly and intangible, they realised that he was not for them.

...

The tragedy is that the Messiah whom the Jews await will come... He will be what Christ is not, and he will not be what Christ is. He will be the *Antichrist* (emphasis supplied).

St. Constantine the Great, equal-to-the-Apostles, freed the Church from its persecution, but, as we all know, this liberty has been short-lived and/or imperfect through time. The Bolshevik beast devoured millions of True Orthodox Christians in the Soviet Union period, and Christians have been persecuted and massacred by the Muslims in the territories the latter conquered. Remember the 1.5 million Armenians massacred by the Turks in the early 20th century.

In Western countries, Christ's people (few as they are) are being systematically and sometimes indirectly emasculated by the Evil One promoting discriminatory legislation enacted under the subterfuge of political correctness. In the United Kingdom apparently there is legislation making it a criminal offence to quote Scripture in certain cases. This is probably under the same category as in America and Canada where so-called 'hate' legislation is in vogue. In reality, simply anti-Church laws. Or, so they will be used. These are just some of the many attempts to destroy the Church from within. The germ eating at the foundation of Christ's Truth is rationalistic relativism. However, in the final analysis, this is doomed to failure because Christ will always be with us:

[Christ Our Lord]

and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

[St. Matthew 28: 20]

As True Orthodox Christians though, we should not be surprised at these events. Christ told us we would be hated as He is:

[Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ]

And ye shall be hated of all men for My name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

...Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you, falsely for My sake.

[St. Matthew 10:22 and 5:11]

The Evil One has no chance (unless we give him the opportunity).

Our Virtual Catacombs

In the midst of all this apostasy, what should we do?

Even in the syncretistic ecumenist orthodox groupings (I use the small “o” deliberately), the True Christian is despised. Their pseudo-bishops treat their Roman Catholic, Protestant and pagan ‘friends’ with great courtesy and deference whilst they silently applaud and support the horrible actions taken against the courageous Monks of the Esphigmenou Monastery on Mt. Athos. They dine and smoke cigars with their ecumenist ‘fellows,’ but literally hate the ‘Old Calendar’ Orthodox. How truly hierarchically orthodox, but completely unChristian! Where is the spiritual traitors’ humility without which one cannot be saved?

Let us remember not to be like them in reverse roles. *I.e.*, we must love these pseudo-bishops and pray that they will reconsider their positions, repent and come back to Christ. Remember though that even if all of us forgive them, unless *they* repent of their actions they are not forgiven:

[St. Innocent, Enlightener of America]

But when the doors of the heavenly Kingdom are closed to you, that is, if you die without repentance and good works, then however much you may want and however much you may try to enter, you will not be admitted.

Of course, this certainly also applies to ourselves!

I humbly suggest that a proper measured spiritual response to apostasy is to separate ourselves from the heretics. The word “heretics” is used because it is appropriate by the consensus of the True Church, Holy Orthodoxy. Perhaps we should develop our own Virtual Catacombs.

The present day Orthodox situation in Russia is grave. The apostate Moscow Patriarchate has commandeered the previous True Orthodox jurisdiction of ROCOR. The latter has gone into apostasy and ‘joined up’ with the former. Resovietisation is proceeding full speed ahead, its evil ship being sailed by a former KGB agent who has a lot in common with the pseudo-bishop in charge of the MP. Russia’s Catacomb Saints cry “Shame, Shame!”

Those who have opted to register with the state should rethink their position. They are particularly vulnerable. Perhaps they should return to the catacombs. But what should we do in America and the rest of the West where the charlatans are a bit more subtle but spiritually deadly just the same?

Look spiritually inward to ourselves:

[Dr. Alexandre Kalomiros]

What is the profoundest characteristic of Orthodox life, the quintessential characteristic of Orthodox piety, the sign of authentic Orthodoxy as well as a premise of the true faith? It is turning inward.

Put up a “Chinese Wall” between the apostates and ourselves. Tune out conversations that impugn the Lord and His work. Do not watch television shows or movies that are antireligious, blasphemous; avoid propaganda for practising homosexuals (almost all so-called sitcoms now apparently just have to have a “resident gay” or two), same-sex ‘situations’, abortion approval or deviancy in any way. Confine your communications with friends to those who either are truly Orthodox or vow to follow the true Path. Do not associate in any way with orthodox pseudo-bishops, hierarchs who have moral problems or who have condoned or ignored them:

St. Photios the Great

Is the shepherd a heretic? Then he is a wolf! You must flee from him: do not be deceived to approach him even if he appears gentle and tame. Flee from communion and conversation with him even as you would flee from a poisonous snake.

If you cannot find a True Orthodox bishop in your locality, establish a regimen of prayer, saying the Jesus Prayer in your home. Invite likeminded spiritual folk to pray with you in your home. Your newly-formed spiritual body can pray the Typica [http://www.stjamesthejust.com/liturgies%20&%20courses/\(21\)%20Typica%20\(without%20priest\)%20and%20Hours.mht](http://www.stjamesthejust.com/liturgies%20&%20courses/(21)%20Typica%20(without%20priest)%20and%20Hours.mht) [Hold mouse over link, press Ctrl while you click on the link then page will come up.], which is designed for those without clergy. In this way, our homes, once again, as in Apostolic times will be the location of our Church. Do not fret that you will be lonely. Solitude in pursuit of spiritual perfection ‘speaks’ from the heart, and numbers mean little:

[St. Athanasius the Great]

Even if Christians faithful to tradition are reduced to a handful, they are the ones who are the *true* (emphasis supplied) Church of Jesus Christ.

If you are Orthodox and wish to wall yourself off from your ecumenistic pseudo-bishop, send us an e-mail at frphotios@tx.rr.com. We’ll help you and, where possible, arrange for Holy Communion to be brought to you if you wish. We will also assist you in developing your own “virtual catacombs,” again, only if this is your free choice. May the Lord bless you on your spiritual journey.

+ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.