

# The Light Comes From The East

## Reflections on the Papal Consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

by **Hugh Owen**  
Mt. Jackson, Virginia

Dedicated to my Father in Christ,  
Archimandrite Constantine Belisarius

*When asked if Russia will be converted to the Catholic Faith, as Our Lady of Fatima promised, through Sr. Lucia Santos, Padre [Pio] says that it will be, and suddenly, to the surprise of many. But then he adds: "Russia will give America a good example of what it means to convert."*

*St. Padre Pio*

*They who formerly were sinners and alcoholics will fill the churches and they will feel great thirst for the spiritual life. Many will become monastics. The monasteries will open and the churches will be full of believers. The young will go on pilgrimages to the holy lands. That time will be beautiful. That today they are sinning greatly, will lead them to a deeper repentance. Just like the candle which before it goes out, shines strongly and throws sparks, and with its light it enlightens the surrounding darkness, thus will be the Church's life in the last age. And that time is near.*

*Fr. Seraphim of Veritsa*

### *Editorial Note*

*The material presented here represents the Preface, Introduction and Chapter One of an unpublished manuscript for which the author is seeking sponsorship and eventual release as a book. Excerpts are used with the gracious permission of the author. His website is:  
<http://www.kolbecenter.org>*



## Preface

The message of this book is simple but urgent. It is addressed primarily to Catholics of the Latin Rite, but it is also addressed to Christians of the Eastern Rites of the Church.

My brothers and sisters in Christ, I do not address you as a prophet, but in the manner of Ruth, who gathered the scraps of grain from the wheat fields of Boaz. The wheat fields of the Church of God are white for the harvest, and the grains of truth that fall from the lips of her prophets more than suffice to fulfill the words

of the Prophet Amos: “The Lord God does nothing without telling His servants the prophets.”

Jesus scolded those in His day who could not read “the signs of the times.” How much more will He scold us who have the gifts of the Holy Spirit if we fail to read the signs of our times!

## Introduction: The Light Comes from the East

On October 13, 1917, the second greatest public miracle in history took place in Fatima, Portugal, before 70,000 witnesses. Author John Haffert described the miracle in this way:

A light was seen in the sky which looked like the sun. It was visible within a radius of more than twenty miles, clearly defined (hence not something seen through a fog or mist), whirled in the sky like a wheel of fire, threw off shafts of colored light which colored objects on the ground. After several minutes, it seemed suddenly to loose itself from the sky and to plummet toward the earth, causing the crowd to believe that the world was about to end. It was over in twelve minutes.

What distinguished this miracle from most other public miracles in the history of the Church—including most of the miracles of Jesus Himself—was the fact that it was predicted months in advance. John Haffert explains:

Three months in advance, three children had predicted that a miracle would take place, on that spot, at that particular time, “so that everyone would believe,” in a message which they had received from Heaven . . . To put it in a few simple words—the official words used by the Bishop of Fatima in his Pastoral Letter on the Miracle:

Thousands upon thousands of persons . . . saw all the manifestations of the sun . . . a phenomenon which no astronomical observatory registered and thus was not natural . . . persons of every category and social class, believers and unbelievers, journalists of the principal Portuguese newspapers, and even persons some miles away . . .<sup>1</sup>

Three months prior to the Miracle, the Blessed Virgin had made some remarkable statements to the three children—statements which the Miracle was meant to confirm. She told them that if men did not repent of their rebellion against God, a worse war than World War I would break out during the pontificate of a Pope

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<sup>1</sup> John M. Haffert, *Meet the Witnesses*

named Pius XI, and Russia would spread her errors throughout the world. At the time when these warnings were given, the children had little knowledge of geography or world affairs. They could not know how ridiculous these predictions sounded to learned people. Russia had been brought to her knees by the Germans and seemed in no shape to spread her influence anywhere. The First World War was known as “the war to end all wars,” so the idea that there could be a worse war in the reign of a later Pope seemed absurd. Finally, the statement that several nations could be annihilated seemed melodramatic and exaggerated in light of the military science of the day.

If mankind did not repent, the Blessed Mother told Lucia, the Holy Father would have much to suffer, there would be “wars, famines, and persecutions of the Church.” But “in the end,” She promised, her Immaculate Heart would triumph, “the Holy Father will consecrate Russia to me, Russia will be converted, and a period of peace will be granted to the world.”

In fulfillment of Our Lady’s warnings, the Bolsheviks seized power in October 1917. Superficially, the leader of the October Revolution was Vladimir Lenin. The German government conspired to send Lenin back into Russia during the First World War to destabilize the Russian government and to weaken its military resolve. But Lenin was also heavily financed by international financiers with strong ties to the occult and to international freemasonry.<sup>2</sup> One of the most important of Lenin’s financial backers was the Englishman Alfred Lord Milner, a 33<sup>rd</sup> degree Mason, and a member of a secret society whose goal was to establish a New World Order with an elite government. A magazine published by Milner’s society after October 1917 called the Bolshevik Revolution a great event, which had liberated the people by getting rid of the Russian monarchy. This accorded well with Freemasonry’s agenda to destroy the Catholic Church and to replace Christian monarchies with secular democracies, prior to consolidating political power in the hands of an elite governing body of a New World Order.

Milner was not the only international financier with occult connections who supported Lenin. According to Professor Antony Sutton, State Department files revealed that a member of the board of the Federal Reserve Bank, William Boyce Thompson, gave Lenin \$1,000,000. Thompson was represented in Russia by a man named Robins who had so much influence over Lenin that he could literally order Lenin about. Robins also represented billionaire J.P. Morgan, author of the

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Antony C. Sutton, *Wall Street and the Bolshevik Revolution* (Arlington House, 1974). “Sutton studied at the universities of London, Goettingen and California and received his D.Sc. degree from University of Southampton, England. He was an economics professor at California State University Los Angeles and a research fellow at Stanford University’s Hoover Institution from 1968 to 1973. During his time at the Hoover Institute he wrote the major study *Western Technology and Soviet Economic Development* (in three volumes), detailing how the West played a major role in developing Soviet Union from its very beginnings up until the present time (1970). He was forced out of the Hoover Institute after publishing *National Suicide: Military Aid to the Soviet Union in 1973*” (“Antony C. Sutton,” *Wikipedia* (Copyright (C) 2000,2001,2002 Free Software Foundation, Inc. 51 Franklin St, Fifth Floor, Boston, MA 02110-1301 USA). *Wall Street and the Bolshevik Revolution* meticulously documents the Bolshevik leadership’s dependence upon wealthy British and American financiers.

famous saying “millionaires don’t use astrology, billionaires do,” and Colonel Edward Mandel House, an unelected advisor to President Woodrow Wilson, who dominated Wilson throughout his presidency and who influenced the president and other world leaders not to resist the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia.

The support of men like Milner, Thompson, House and Morgan for the communist revolution in Russia may help to explain why more than twenty times as much food, clothing, and medical supplies was sent from the United States to the Bolsheviks as was sent to support the White Army in its efforts to overthrow the communists. It may also help to explain why British and American financiers cut off all aid to the leaders of the White Army when they were about to defeat the Bolsheviks.

In 1925, Josef Stalin replaced Lenin as dictator of the Soviet Union. Stalin intensified Lenin’s war on religion, purged the government of opponents, and launched a ruthless campaign to collectivize the nation’s farms by killing or exiling two million owners of substantial farms. The diabolical attacks on the Church in the Soviet Union prompted Pope Pius XI to publish a stern condemnation in which he chronicled the outrages of 1929:

During the Christmas holidays [in January], not only were hundreds of churches closed, great numbers of icons burned, all workers and schoolchildren compelled to work and Sundays suppressed, but they even compelled factory workers, both men and women, to sign a declaration of formal apostasy and hatred against God, or else be deprived of their bread rationing cards, clothing, and lodging, without which every inhabitant of this poor country is reduced to dying of hunger, misery, and cold.

On June 13, 1929, Our Lady appeared to Sister Lucia Dos Santos, in a convent in Tuy, Spain, to tell her that the time had come to ask the Pope to consecrate Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Sister Lucia reports the Blessed Mother’s words as follows:

The moment has come in which God asks the Holy Father to make, and to order that in union with him and at the same time, all the bishops of the world make the consecration of Russia to My Immaculate Heart, promising to convert it because of this day of prayer and worldwide reparation.<sup>3</sup>

The greatest public miracle in recorded history had already established the credibility of Our Lady’s message. But the primary purpose of that message was to persuade the Successor of St. Peter—in union with the successors of the Apostles throughout the world—to perform one single act: the Consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

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<sup>3</sup> Lucia Dos Santos, *Her Own Words to the Nuclear Age* (Asbury, NJ: 101 Foundation, 1993), p. 305.

## The Meaning of the Consecration

Much has been written about Our Lady's request, but most of it has failed to focus on the essential thing—the *consecration* of Russia. In our current state of desensitization to sacred things, it is easy to confuse the consecration of a nation with a mere blessing or even with a prayer for that nation's conversion. But a national consecration is nothing of the kind. According to the *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1913):

The Church distinguishes consecration from blessing, both in regard to persons and to things. Hence the Roman Pontifical treats of the consecration of a bishop and of the blessing of an abbot, of the blessing of a corner-stone and the consecration of a church or altar. **In both, the persons or things pass from a common, or profane, order to a new state, and become the subjects or the instruments of Divine protection** (emphasis added).<sup>4</sup>

As in the case of the consecration of Israel in the Old Testament, the explicit consecration of Russia at God's command signifies His decision to set that nation apart for Himself to be a "light to the nations." Our Lady's request for the consecration of Russia further signifies that God has given Russia a mission to sanctify the world. It behooves us to try to understand why this is so.

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<sup>4</sup> Augustin Joseph Schulte. "Consecration." *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. Vol. 4. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1908. 28 Aug. 2008 <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04276a.htm>>.

## Chapter One: A Visit to Russia

**I**N JANUARY 2005 I made my first visit to Russia for a conference on origins organized by the Russian Orthodox Church. The meeting had been orchestrated by a Russian Orthodox priest with a doctorate in geology, Fr. Constantine Bufeov, the head of the Shestodnev organization. Fr. Bufeov had invited many outstanding speakers. These included Dr. Valeri Shlenov, executive secretary of Department of Religion Education and Catechism of the Russian Orthodox Church, Lilijana Colic, Professor of philology at Belgrade State University, Dr. Alexander Lalomov, director of ARCTUR Geological Research Laboratory, Dr. Alexei Akifiev, Professor at the Genetic Institute of the Russian Academy of Science, and many others.

One of the most inspiring talks at the conference was delivered by Fr. Daniil Sosoyev, a young Russian Orthodox priest with a doctorate in theology, who spoke on the importance of the traditional doctrine of creation for successful evangelization. Fr. Sosoyev described the spiritual landscape of contemporary Russia as one in which atheism is “normal” but where the New Age movement and numerous cults—notably the Jehovah’s Witnesses—are making rapid inroads. In this atmosphere, Fr. Sosoyev observed that the traditional doctrine of creation and the scientific evidence against evolution hold the key to challenging the world views of unbelievers and opening their hearts and minds to the Gospel.

After our participation in the conference, we received an invitation to attend a reception with the Patriarch Alexy II at the newly-constructed Orthodox Cathedral of the Savior. The reception was held in the crypt of the Cathedral and consisted of a concert of Russian religious and folk music followed by a meal. The concert featured some of the most beautiful music I have ever heard. It was truly remarkable to stand in the former capital of world communism and to be part of a crowd of 1000 Russian bishops, priests, and lay people as they stood and fervently sang “God save the Tsar”! Still more wonderful was the opportunity to visit the Kremlin and to enter some of the most venerable churches of Russian Orthodoxy. Particularly beautiful was the Church of the Assumption where the Tsars of Russia worshipped for hundreds of years. Icons of spectacular loveliness covered the four interior walls of the church from the floor to the ceiling. I understood immediately the testimony of a Russian scientist, baptized as an infant but raised an atheist by his parents who were communist party members, who told me that at the age of 30, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, he had held a Bible in his hand for the first time and, after reading it, had become a Protestant Christian. As a Protestant he had been taught to distrust the Russian Orthodox Church and to regard its clergy as corrupt and idolatrous. But upon attending services one evening at the Church of the Assumption, he had been overcome with the conviction that that he had at last come home, that he belonged in the Russian Orthodox Church, and that he had rediscovered his lost

heritage—and so he had begged to be received into communion with the Orthodox Church that very day.

Indeed, Russia is the first of the 20 or so nations I have visited in my life where I sensed that an authentic Christian culture had not only been preserved but that it was actually gaining strength, and that it had the potential to draw an entire nation to itself. And, although I returned home thanking God for my Catholic Faith and for the gift of the Magisterium, I could not help feeling deeply humbled by the example of the Russian Orthodox and by the way that they have preserved—in practice—essential elements of our common Tradition much better than we Latin Rite Catholics have. I could write a book on my impressions of a week in Moscow, but in this chapter I will just mention one of the significant ways in which the Russian Orthodox practice of the Faith puts western practice to shame. Not surprisingly, it has everything to do with Genesis.

Perhaps the best way to introduce this particular topic is to recall my delight when, while seated in the crypt of the Orthodox Cathedral, I noticed to my left on the wall of the crypt a large mural. The mural depicted the creation of Adam, and showed God with Adam, fully-formed, and fresh from his hands. Other parts of the mural depicted other portions of the Genesis account, but it was this first scene that impressed me the most. It clearly showed that Adam was created **before** Eve, to be priest, prophet, and king, first for her, and then for the whole human race. It somehow conveyed the maleness of the holy priesthood of the first Adam, fully realized in the fullness of time in the New Adam. This image sounded a keynote that seemed to harmonize with a multitude of impressions of Russian Orthodox life—women and girls with kerchiefs on their heads; manly bishops and priests with beards dressed in solemn black robes; the patriarch with his flowing white beard; the deep bass of the men's voices; the loveliness of the women's voices from the standing congregations; and the utter absence of women from the sanctuary and from the altar.

For the first time in my life, I saw a priesthood that consistently imaged the manhood of Jesus Christ the God-MAN, and bishops who imaged the fatherhood of God the Father. I saw many women whose dress and deportment consistently evoked the femininity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. All of these things seemed to recall the truth that God created every man to be priest, prophet, and king, first to his wife and then to his children—and to be intimate with Him and to mediate Him to the world. In short, I returned to the United States astounded at the feminization of the western Church, the emasculation of so many men both as priests and as fathers of families, and the de-feminization of so many women—all in violent contrast to the traditional Russian Orthodox way of life, so deeply rooted in the traditional understanding of Genesis.

Having read about the ruthless communist persecution of the Orthodox Church in Russia, I was astonished to witness the vitality of her Christian culture. Not long after my visit to Moscow I had the opportunity to visit St. Tikhon's Seminary in Jordanville, New York, a seminary for the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad in

North America. At that time the rector of the seminary was one of several ROCOR priests engaged in delicate negotiations with the Moscow Patriarchate to achieve a restoration of communion between the Patriarchate and the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad. The bishops and priests of ROCOR represent the physical and spiritual descendants of the Russian Orthodox martyrs of communist persecution, much of it at the hands of Orthodox hierarchs who collaborated with the communist regime. Hence, they proceeded cautiously before reaching an agreement to return to full communion with the Patriarch of Moscow. According to Srdja Trifkovic:

In 20 years (1918-1938) the number of churches that remained open in Russia was reduced from 54,000 to under 500--to less than one percent, that is, of the pre-Bolshevik total. In all some 600 bishops, 40,000 priests, 120,000 monks and nuns, and millions of laypeople were martyred for the Orthodox Faith in Russia in the five decades after 1918.<sup>5</sup>

As I acquainted myself with the internal debate within ROCOR over reconciliation with the Moscow Patriarch, the testimony of a ROCOR priest from California who had familiarized himself with the situation in Russia impressed me deeply, largely because his observations agreed with my own impressions of the Church in Russia, but most of all because he spoke as the descendant and representative of innumerable martyrs of Communist persecution. Writing in 2004, he argued for reconciliation with the Patriarch of Moscow:

In 1994, the nature of the fruits being brought forth by the tree of the Moscow Patriarchate were still difficult to discern.

Ten years later, these fruits are clearly seen—and there is no doubt that these fruits are good and even more than good, and, since our Lord said that an evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit—then the tree itself must be good.

The fact of the matter is that remarkable religious renaissance is taking place in Russia—something to which I can attest as a witness.

After the conclusion of the joint meeting of the two Commissions [formed to negotiate of restoration of unity between ROCOR and the Moscow Patriarchate], I stayed in Moscow for several days, living at the Sretensky monastery.

On Saturday, June 28, the Vigil began at 6:00pm and ended at 9:30. After that, I was invited to a small supper in the brotherhood's dining room, then went to my room for a brief rest.

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<sup>5</sup> Srdja Trifkovic, "New Martyrs of the East and Coming Trials of the West" <http://www.orthodoxytoday.org/articles6/TrifkovicMartyr.php> [accessed February 23, 2008].

At twelve midnight, hundreds of parishioners gathered outside the Sretensky Monastery, where they and the brethren of the monastery were taken by bus to the Christ the Savior Cathedral, where the Tikhvin Icon of the Mother of God was.

The monastery, as all monasteries and parishes in Moscow, had been assigned a particular time slot to serve moliebens [prayers \*\*] and akathists [prayers to the Mother of God] before the Tikhvin Icon. The Sretensky Monastery's time slot was 1:00 am - 5:00 am on Sunday morning.

It was an amazing sight, as throughout the night, thousands of people were streaming into the enormous Cathedral to venerate the icon, young and old, in two rapidly moving files. Three in the morning—four in the morning—the lines never stopped. For four days, day and night, this continued.

We left the Cathedral around five in the morning, got back to the monastery at 5:30, just in time for morning prayers and the rule before Communion. The early Liturgy started at 7:00am; the later one at 10.

At 4:00 pm, the buses were back. The brethren and parishioners of the Sretensky Monastery (and I, as their guest) were taken back to the Christ the Savior Cathedral, where 1,200 clergymen were arrayed to participate in the Procession of the Tikhvin Icon around the Christ the Savior Cathedral and then on, down the Kremlin embankment, and up past St. Basil's Cathedral and across the Red Square to the Church of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God.

Over 250,000 people participated in this procession, which lasted four hours.<sup>6</sup>

What this descendant of the martyrs of the Russian catacombs described perfectly harmonized with my own observations. It rekindled a burning desire within me to understand the nature of the fire that still burns in the souls of millions of Russian believers—a fire that 70 years of brutal communist persecution has not been able to put out.

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<sup>6</sup> Protopriest Alexander Lebedeff, "It Is Time To Know Our History," [http://www.russianorthodoxchurch.ws/synod/engdocuments/enart\\_prlebedevresp.html](http://www.russianorthodoxchurch.ws/synod/engdocuments/enart_prlebedevresp.html) (8-28-08).

