

# ***Unpublished Letters of the Holy Hierarch St. Luke of Crimea***

Translated by: *Silviu Podariu*

*"When the Church will no longer be persecuted, all things will be made ready for the coming of the Antichrist" – St. Luke of Crimea*

## **INTRODUCTION**

One should give thanks to the Holy Trinity for the great benefit granted to us, the unworthy ones, in these hard times of ever-deepening darkening of the world, to hear words that are truly filled with power and comforting, fruit of the cleansing and awakening grace of His chosen ones that He granted to us in our times, which are increasingly richer in words and yet poorer in Spirit.

We post here the correspondence that had been kept between *Staretz* Selaphiel of Siberia and a faithful youth of our country until the time of his death in January of 2007; a task made possible through the accounts given by his Romanian spiritual apprentices. But since Father Selaphiel himself had in his youth kept correspondence with the holy Hierarch St. Luke of Crimea, to whom he was an apprentice and a true follower, he offered our brother the priceless blessing of sharing with him these unpublished letters that he received from the holy "silver-less"<sup>1</sup> doctor at the closing of the forties of last century. We are therefore happy to make these testimonies (which are of great relevance to our era) public to the readers of our site for the first time. Our hope is that, God willing, these will also be officially published in the near future as part of the Saint's *Life* (biography).

A note from the web owners of <http://www.razbointrucuvant.ro>

### ***Important Note***

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<sup>1</sup> He would accept no "silver", i.e. payment. – *Ed. Transl.*



### FIRST LETTER

Serghei, my child,

You were saddened because I did not take you with me to Moscow and Tashkent where I went at the request of the local medical professors. It is true that I had promised this to you, but I haven't kept my promise.

It is however better for you, my child, to make obedience in this matter. I do not mean to hurt your feelings, but I am writing these words to let you know that wherever I went I always had someone on my tail who followed me; an agent who would make note of whom I met with and whom I spoke with. For this reason, I wished to protect you.

Dearest Serghei, you write that you missed me. On my work desk I keep the photo we took this summer together with protopresbyter fr. S., brother Toma and you. When I look at that picture I feel closer to you. And you should know that every night I pray for you and that our steps meet invisibly and mystically. They are steps of meditation ... of prayer.

*Seriojka*, I still give medical advice, I still perform a little surgery; but the people need me. Now that I have reached old age, thank God, I have more time for prayer. I loved medicine but sometimes I felt that it may have been better had I not been a physician. I felt that with every sick man who humbly stepped into my office, or who was taken to the operating room for me to operate on, Christ would reveal Himself in that man's suffering and despair. Medicine, like all branches of science, requires much sacrifice. Only the Lord will judge if I performed my work well...

*Seriojka*, my dear child, bear in mind that all the events of our lives are part of God's *oeconomia* that remains unknown to us in its detail. Now we may not comprehend the reasoning behind the clues, but one day we will. Now we feel treated unjustly, tricked, trampled upon, mocked at, etc. Later, we will understand that we were in a position to earn one great benefit from every situation: the humble *logismos* (humility); from every situation, my dear child.

"I was humbled and He saved me", says the Psalmist.

*Seriojka*, I am awaiting your visit. You are bothered by that knee wound you've had since the war. Do not apply sour cabbage leaves on it again or you will get an infection. Use bandages instead with sanitary alcohol or strong vodka. If sanitary alcohol cannot be found, cover the wound with something clean and make the sign of the Holy Cross on it with holy oil. Do not despair. If you do not get a fever it's nothing serious. But do not tarry. Come on February the 1<sup>st</sup> ... I will do the surgery myself, if necessary.

In the evening, when all is covered with snow and the sky stands still from the frost, the stars shine, sparking in astonishment up in the sky. Up there our brothers are found; our innocent brothers who were killed in the war and the martyrs of the Lord who died in the concentration camps.

*Seriojka*, soon, soon we will all meet again.

I embrace you in the Lord,

+Luca Voino lasenetski  
January 12, 1949

## SECOND LETTER

Dear brother in the Lord Serghei, may the Lord bless you!

You don't need to keep asking for my forgiveness for daring – as you say – to secretly leave that pack of better quality cloth for vestments at the brotherhood for me, hoping that I would have a more respectable-looking cassock and under-cassock made. Maybe I will do this for the love you show me, my dear child. But if I do have it made, know that I will demand to wear it only at my funeral, because even though the clothes I wear are old, they are clean nonetheless, and they do not make me feel ashamed for wearing them.

My meeting with you and your brotherhood made me very happy, because I saw that in these terrible, atheistic times, where they attempt to smother and crush the word of God from people's chests, it still brings forth fruits, often bountiful fruits, in the hearts of those who are ready to receive it.

You told me that you lived through this war and that during its course you lost your

best friend, Iura Konstantin Andreevich. Do not be saddened, for the Lord took him near Himself in order to let him live fully in His light. This was the will of the Lord. You will meet again, dear Serghei; you will all meet again some time, after many years, after I have turned to earth and dust... Now you have brother Toma. I remember him; he used to help me at the altar as sacristan together with Modest and Dimitri. Toma is a sensitive and delicate man, a noble soul; take care of him as he appears to be kind of sickly. Forgive me, what can I do, [it is] my professional medical self [talking here]...

You must seek now to get as close to the Lord as possible through prayer and asceticism. Keep your current ascetic rule (*canon*) that was prescribed by your spiritual Father, and try to feel God's presence.

Do whatever is necessary to experience Him, to place Him in your heart. Let your heart melt,

Serghei my child, from the touch of grace every time that you realize how much the Lord



loves you and how He has protected you from death. Not only from the death of the body, but more importantly from the death of the soul, from losing your self in the filth and in the calamity brought about by demons in the minds of men, particularly in times of war.

Let the most sweet Jesus be in your thoughts all the time; a safe haven to which you will return time and again... Also do not hesitate to call His Most-Holy Mother for help too and to remember her name at times of adversity; and not only then.

Oh, Serghei my child, look; we do not know what times are coming. My sight is gradually getting worse over time. It is a true miracle that nowadays, when apostasy is the food of men, there are still people found who spit it out of their mouths, instinctively, as if it were poison, looking instead for the true and living nourishment: the word of God. You have decided to offer your life to the Lord, be it in a monastery or not. So be it; I give you my blessing for this [endeavour]; and years later, when I will have turned to dust, it will be your turn to bless others who feel this calling, this charism. For not everybody can understand the state of virginity. Only those unto whom it has been granted to understand, either through some past bitter experiences or through deliverance from quick and terrible temptations, such as deliverance from sudden death.



You will see, my dear child Serghei that good times will come too, when churches will be erected once again, books written and hymns lifted to the heavens; **but Spirit-bearing elders will be so few, that many will seek them with much fervour.** What will there be [in those times]? **Great spiritual poverty... But the one who desires the Lord in those times and who fights to keep his soul and body undefiled, will find great retribution. Truly great... But I will not be alive then; you, however, will live to see [these times].**

Serghei, do not cease from reading spiritually edifying books; even though they are so rare to find [these days]. Your habit of taking Toma along with you to the woods and to read the Scriptures there or to read excerpts from the works of St. John Chrysostom is beautiful. Strengthen yourselves in the Spirit, encourage one other, do not allow the evil one to accomplish his work on one of you without the other one noticing it. If you will be as one, Christ will shield you with much grace, and, little by little, you will taste the suffering for Christ which cleanses the soul.

Serghei, my son, do write to me again and maybe I will write back. I do not promise, though, because I cannot see well with these eyes; although I enjoy our correspondence. I am keeping you in my prayers...

Walk this road with courage; with much courage. Give your heart to the Lord and He will pour all the vitamins and all the energy it needs in it in order to sustain you from falling. Let nothing ever seem difficult to you.

There is Someone Else, dear brother, who steers this universe, and not the men of power of this world, not them... Courage, courage beloved Serghei! Look up and you will see the Lord: whenever you will cry, whenever you will search fervently, whenever you will perhaps even suffer; and you will see how He is offering you the wreath with His loving and comforting hand...

With much love,

+ Luca Voino-Iasenetski.

April, 1949

### THIRD LETTER

My dear child Serghei,

Why are you saddened? Why are you shedding tears? Why is your heart bleeding such as I have never felt it bleed before?

This way, you give the enemy rights to hit you harder...

You write to me with tears from the heart that the situation has become worse in the village where you live and that you are all required to show up every month at the NKDV office to give an account of those activities of yours that are "of a mystical nature" [*transl. note: of Serghei and of brother Toma*]. They have sensed something. Moreover, you write that one of those officers has attempted to entice you to write a secret report on everything that brother Toma is doing: who he meets with, where he goes, if he goes missing from the village etc. You say that you'd better get shot than do such a thing.

You did very well to refuse. No, do not be afraid, they have no way of forcing you to do such a thing; and if they saw you reject them with resolution of heart they will perhaps attempt to entice you one last time, maybe offering you money, but then they will let you be. I know them...



My beloved child, you write that your heart thirsts and aches for you to enter a monastery but that you have no conviction for which way to go. But I am telling you: this is only the beginning of the end. Good times will come for the Church, all these things will come to pass; **but the thirst for spiritual guides and for fellow brothers who do not seek their own will but the Lord's, will be great.**

**When the Church will no longer be persecuted, all things will be prepared for the coming of the Antichrist. You, Serghei, will live to see those times. In those times, people will immerse themselves in ever greater sins, the likes of which have not even been conceived yet, and they will do them with a smile on their lips, as signs that represent a freedom which we now lament that we do not possess...** Do not misunderstand me. I bear in my body the wounds from the dedicated defenders of Communism: the things I saw, the things I heard, the suffering

I saw in the places I've been to in this life; only God knows these. My pain is smaller, much smaller...

Yet, do not allow more sadness into your heart than is necessary. Perhaps the Lord will accomplish your dream or maybe you will live the rest of your life in this small house.

Turn your own heart into a monastery. Strike the *semandron* (monastery bell) there, call for a vigil there, incense there and whisper prayers without stop. The Lord has given you brother Toma. Strengthen him, talk about your ideals, about what you read in the holy books.

My heart, Serghei, pay careful attention on what I am about to tell you. The more you communicate spiritual matters with those who accept these things naturally, the more you will be delivered from sadness.

And do not forget that every letter I write to you is a declaration of love. I am with you. And the Lord is with us.

Christ is in our midst.

+Luca Voino Iasenetski.

April 29, 1949.

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