



The Life of St John Kochurov, Hieromartyr
Missionary in America First Clergy Martyr of the
Russian Revolution

The Life of St John Kochurov

On October 31, 1917, in Tsarskoye Selo, a bright new chapter, full of earthly grief and heavenly joy, was opened in the history of sanctity in the Russian Church: the holiness of the New Martyrs of the twentieth century. The opening of this chapter is linked to the name of the Russian Orthodox pastor who became one of the first to give his soul for his flock during this twentieth century of fighters against God: Archpriest John Kochurov.

Father John Kochurov was born on July 13, 1871, in the village of Bigildino-Surka of the district of Danky in the Ryazan region, into a pious family with many children. His parents were the priest Alexander Kochurov and his wife Anna (Perehvalskaya). Father Alexander Kochurov served almost all his life in the Church of Theophany in Bigildino-Surka village in the Diocese of Ryazan from the time of his ordination on March 2, 1857, combining his years of service in the parish with the fulfillment of his obligations as a teacher of God's Law in the Bigildino public school. His example was imprinted in the conscience of his sons, and particularly John, the most spiritually sensitive of them. They regarded their father as a radiant image of the parish priest, full of deep humility and high inspiration.[1]

Fr John's upbringing, based on the remarkable traditions of many generations of the clergy and bound with the people's natural following after Orthodox piety, foretold that he would set out on the path of preparation for pastoral service. Father John's study (initially at Danky Theological School and afterward at Ryazan Theological Seminary) was marked not only with outstanding success in the mastery of theological and secular disciplines, but with remarkable examples of churchly piety which he demonstrated at a time when the everyday life of a provincial theological school was not always spotless in the moral sense.

The future Father John successfully graduated from the Theological Seminary in Ryazan in 1891. Having passed the entrance exams for the St Petersburg Theological Academy, he became a student at one of the best theological schools in Russia.[2]

During the time that Fr John studied at the St Petersburg Theological Academy, his inclination to regard theological education as a preparation primarily for future service as a parish priest became clearly defined. Already during his student days Fr John combined the possibility of his service as a parish priest with that of missionary activity, which he saw as the embodiment of the ideal of an Orthodox pastor. After his graduation from St Petersburg Theological Academy (1895) with the distinction of a true student, Fr John was sent to the Diocese of the Aleutians and Alaska[3] in accordance with his long-standing desire for missionary service.

Soon after his marriage to Alexandra Chernisheva, Fr John's arrival in Protestant America put him in touch with a life dissimilar in many respects to his accustomed life in Orthodox Russia. For his first sojourn in the U.S.A. Fr John arrived in New York, which with its mundane ways, was so different from the spiritual life of the Russian cities. Though he had not yet learned the English language, Fr John, thanks to the brotherly support of the New York Orthodox community (of modest size at that time) did manage to adjust himself to the life of the country, till then unknown to him, without any particular psychological or other complications. It must be noted that Church life in the Diocese of Alaska and the Aleuts was very different in character from that in other parts of the country, which was vast in its territory but rather small in the number of clergy. Specifically, the Russian Orthodox missions in Northern California, on the Aleutian Islands, and in Alaska had at that time already existed for about a hundred years, and Church life was conducted on a foundation of rather numerous parish communities which possessed significant financial resources. After several generations in America, the parishes had become accustomed to life in their new home. Orthodox life in the rest of the country, however, was only in its initial stages. It required a great

deal of evangelical activity by the clergy to create normal Orthodox parishes within the multinational and multi-confessional local population. It was precisely to that part of the diocese that Fr John was destined to be sent when he was ordained to the holy priesthood on August 27, 1895, by the Most Reverend Nicholas, Bishop of Alaska and the Aleuts.[4]

The beginning of Fr John's parish service was associated with the opening of an Orthodox parish in Chicago in 1892 by Bishop Nicholas. Assigned in 1895 by order of the Holy Synod to be a parish priest at St Vladimir's Cathedral in Chicago,[5] Fr John was put in touch with a parish life that was strikingly different from the Orthodox parishes in Russia, which were organized and rooted in a living tradition many centuries old.

Being a remote island of Orthodox Christian life, many hundreds of miles from the other scattered Orthodox parishes in North America, St Vladimir's Church in Chicago, and the Church of the Three Hierarchs in the town of Streator with which it was affiliated, required heroic labors from the young Fr John to be established in a proper way. Almost three years after its founding, the parish still had not managed to achieve full parish status.

Beginning his work at the parish of Chicago and Streator, which was rather small and multinational in its constituency, Fr John nourished these people, who represented a rather poor class of immigrants, in the Orthodox faith. He was never able to be supported in his work by a sound parish community with sufficient material resources at its disposal.

In an article written in December 1898, Fr John gave the following vivid description of the Chicago-Streator parish community: The Orthodox parish of St Vladimir's Church in Chicago consists of a small number of the original Russians, Galician and Hungarian Slavs, Arabs, Bulgarians, and Aravians. The majority of the parishioners are working people who earn their bread by toiling not far from where they live, on the outskirts of the city. Affiliated with this parish in Chicago is the Church of the Three Hierarchs in the city of Streator. This place, together with the town called Kengley, are situated ninety-four miles from Chicago, and they are famous for their coal mines. The Orthodox parish there consists of the Slovaks who work there who have been converted from the Unia.[6]

The unique characteristics of the Chicago-Streator parish community demanded of Fr John a deft combination of pastoral-liturgical skills, as well as missionary ones. These abilities would permit him not only to stabilize the membership of his parish community spiritually and administratively, but to enlarge his flock continually by means of conversions, or by the return to Orthodoxy of the ethnically diverse Christians living in Illinois. Already during the first three years of Fr John's parish service 86 Uniates and five Catholics were added to the Orthodox Church,[7] bringing the number of permanent parishioners up to 215 men in Chicago, and 88 in Streator. There were two functioning church schools affiliated with the parishes, with more than twenty pupils enrolled in them. The course consisted of Saturday classes during the school year, and daily classes during the school vacations.[8]

In his work, Fr John continued the best traditions of the Russian Orthodox Diocese in North America. He organized, in Chicago and Streator, the St Nicholas and Three Hierarchs Brotherhoods, which established a goal of setting up a program of social and material mutual aid among the parishioners of the Chicago-Streator parish, as members of the Orthodox Mutual Aid Society.[9]

Father John's abundant labors for the building of a healthy, flourishing parish life in the communities entrusted to him did not hinder him from fulfilling other important diocesan responsibilities that were laid upon him. So it was that on April 1, 1897, Fr John was appointed to be one of the members of the newly-created Censorship Committee of the Diocese of Alaska and the Aleutians to review texts in the Russian, Ukrainian, and English languages.[10] On May 22, 1899, Fr John was appointed Chairman of the Board of the Mutual Aid Society[11] by a decree of Bishop Tikhon of Alaska and the Aleutians, who had recently arrived in the diocese.

The varied labors of Fr John were soon rewarded; after just the first years of his pastoral service, he received awards of priestly distinction[12] from the Most Reverend Bishop Nicholas.

A significant obstacle to the normal functioning of the Church liturgical cycle at the Chicago-Streator parish was the condition of the buildings, which were unfit for the purpose. St Vladimir's Church in Chicago occupied a small part of a rented edifice located in the southwestern part of the city. On the ground floor of the house a wall separated the church from the kitchen and a room where an attendant lived. On the first floor there were several small rooms which were occupied by Fr John together with his family, and by the church Reader. The church of the Three Hierarchs in Streator employed the lobby of the Russian section of the Chicago World Exhibition[13] [the Columbian Exposition of 1892-Ed.].

The assignment of Bishop Tikhon, the future Patriarch of Moscow, to the Diocese of Alaska and the Aleutians on November 30, 1898, was especially significant for the resolution of problems of church life in the parish entrusted to Fr John.

Zealously fulfilling his hierarchal obligations, Bishop Tikhon in his first months as diocesan bishop had already managed to visit almost all the Orthodox parishes scattered throughout the vast territory of the Diocese of Alaska and the Aleutians, in an effort to discern the most fundamental needs of the diocesan clergy.

Arriving in Chicago for the first time on April 28, 1899, Bishop Tikhon gave his archpastoral blessing to Fr John and to his flock. By the next day he had already inspected a plot of land proposed as the site where the new church, so necessary for the parish in Chicago, would be constructed. On April 30, Bishop Tikhon visited the Three Hierarchs Church in Streator and presided at the Vigil service at St Vladimir's Church in Chicago. On the following day, after serving the Divine Liturgy, he approved the minutes of the meeting of the committee for the construction of the new church in Chicago, which was chaired by Fr John.[14]

The limited financial resources of the Chicago-Streator parish, where the people being ministered to were primarily poor, did not permit Fr John to begin construction immediately. And since more than five years had passed from the time of Fr John's arrival in North America, his great desire to visit his beloved Orthodox Russia, at least for a brief time, prompted him to submit an application to Bishop Tikhon requesting leave for the journey to his motherland.

Mindful of the needs of the parish entrusted to him, Fr John decided to use the vacation granted to him from January 15 to May 15, 1900, to collect money in Russia which would allow the Chicago parish to begin construction of the new church building, and of the first Orthodox cemetery in the city.[15] Successfully combining his journey to his motherland with raising significant funds for the parish, Fr John began the construction of the church soon after his return from leave. Bishop Tikhon arrived on March 31, 1902, for the ceremony of the laying of its foundation.[16]

With true pastoral inspiration, combined together with sober, practical record-keeping, Fr John managed to build the new church, which was completed in 1903. The church cost fifty thousand dollars, a very significant sum of money for that time.[17]

The consecration of the new temple, which was named in honor of the Holy Trinity, was performed by Bishop Tikhon, and it became a real festival for the whole Russian Orthodox diocese in North America. Two years later, in greeting Fr John on the occasion of his first ten years of service as a priest in the Church, the highest praise went to his careful pastoral labors in the construction of the Holy Trinity Church, which had become one of the most remarkable Orthodox churches in America. "The year has been filled with the most vivid of impressions, sometimes agonizing, sometimes good. A year of endlessly trying fund-raising in Russia, a year of sleepless nights, worn-out nerves, and countless woes; and here is the testimonial of your care: a temple made with hands, in the image of a magnificent Russian Orthodox temple, shining with its crosses in Chicago, and the peace and love not made with hands that are springing up in the hearts of your flock!" [18]

For his inspiring labors, Fr John was awarded the Order of St Anna (Third Class) on May 6, 1903 at Bishop Tikhon's recommendation.[19]

Zealously fulfilling his numerous obligations as a parish priest, he was the only priest there during the first nine years of his service in the parishes of Chicago and Streator. At the same time, Fr John continued to participate actively in resolving various issues in the life of the North American diocese. In February 1904, Fr John was assigned as a chairman of the Censor Committee of the Diocese of Alaska and the Aleutians, where he had already participated as a member of the council for seven years. [20] In June 1905, he was an active participant in the preparatory meetings of diocesan clergy, held in Old Forge [PA.] under the guidance of Bishop Tikhon, where issues were discussed in connection with preparation for the first Council in the history of the Diocese of North America and the Aleutians. It was in the solemn atmosphere of the sessions of this Council, on July 20, 1905, that Fr John celebrated his first decade of priestly service. The actual date of the anniversary was August 27.

In St Michael's Church in Old Forge, before a large group of diocesan clergy with the Most Reverend (now St) Raphael, Bishop of Brooklyn presiding, Fr John was awarded a gold pectoral cross, and the speeches offered a perceptive and thoroughly objective description of the whole period of Fr John's pastoral service in North America. "Directly after your study at seminary, having left the motherland, you came to this strange land to expend all your youthful energy, to devote all your strength and inspiration to that holy concern to which you were attracted in your vocation. A hard legacy was left for you: the church in Chicago was then located in an untidy church setting, in a wet, half-ruined building. The parish, with its loosely defined parish membership, was scattered over the huge city with a heterodox population torn asunder by the wild beasts. All that might fill the soul of a young laborer with great confusion, but you bravely accepted the task of selecting a precious spark from the pile of rubbish, to fan the sacred fire into a small group of faithful! You were forgetful of yourself: calamities, illnesses, the poor location of your house, with its ramshackle walls, floors, and cracks that gave open access to the outer elements, with destructive effects on your health, and the health of your family members.... Your babies were sick, your wife was not quite healthy, and bitter bouts of rheumatism seemed to wish to destroy your confidence, to exhaust your energy.... We greet you, remembering another of your good deeds, the performance of which is plaited as an unfading laurel in the crown of honor of your decade of sacred service: we have in mind here your sacrificial service in the office of Chairman of our beloved Mutual Aid Society, in the office of Censor to our enlightening missionary publishing house, and in extending our evangelical efforts, organizing the parishes in Madison [IL] and Hartshorne [OK]. To complete your tribute, let us mention another circumstance, which magnifies the valor of your labor and the grandeur of its results. The remoteness of your parish in Chicago has torn you from your bonds with your colleagues in America, depriving you during these years of the chance to see your brother-pastors.... You were bereft of that which, for the majority of us, adorns the missionary service through which we pass. How touching, and how great a degree of isolation was yours, is witnessed by the fact that you had to baptize your children yourself, because of the absence of the other priests around you.... Let this Holy Cross we present serve you as a sign of our brotherly love, and the image of our Lord's Crucifixion on it permit you to accept the hardships, misfortunes, and sufferings that are so often met with in the life of a missionary priest, and let it encourage you to more and more labors for the glory of the Giver of Exploits and the Chief Shepherd, our Lord Jesus Christ." [21]

Less than a year after the celebration of the tenth anniversary of Fr John's priestly service, the highest Church authority granted him one of the most honorable priestly orders, which deservedly crowned his genuine exploits in the Diocese of North America and the Aleutians. By order of the Holy Synod, Fr John was elevated to the dignity of Archpriest on May 6, 1906.

Now a new period in Fr John's service began. As one of the most respected archpriests of the Diocese, thanks to his outstanding pastoral work in his parish and in diocesan administrative activities, Fr John, at the initiative of Bishop Tikhon, who valued him highly, became more and

more deeply involved in resolving the most pressing issues of diocesan administration. In May 1906, Fr John was appointed Dean of the New York area of the Eastern States,[23] and in February 1907, he was destined to be one of the most energetic participants of the first North American Orthodox Council in Mayfield, which dealt with the rapidly increasing conversions within the Diocese of North America and the Aleutians in the Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church in America, which was the basis on which the Orthodox Church in America was later founded.

During the period 1903-1907, the Chicago-Streator parish, built by his labors, was transformed into one of the most self-sufficient and flourishing diocesan parishes. But however successful the external circumstances of Fr John's service in North America may have seemed, his deep, fervent homesickness for his beloved Russia, which he had only seen once for a few months' leave since he came to America, and the necessity of providing his three elder children with an undergraduate education in Russia, compelled Fr John to think about the possibility of continuing his priestly ministry in his native Russian land. A rather significant circumstance furthering Fr John's submission of an application for transfer back to Russia was the insistent request of his elderly and seriously ailing father-in-law, who was a clergyman of the Diocese of St Petersburg, and who dreamed of handing over his parish to the guidance of such a deserving priest as Fr John had shown himself to be. In accordance with his application, Fr John received a release from his service in the Diocese of North America and the Aleutians on May 20, 1907, whereupon he began preparing himself for his move back to Russia. The week before their departure, however, Fr John and his family had to bear some sudden startling news from Russia: Alexandra's beloved parent had succumbed before they could return.

In July 1907, leaving the Chicago-Streator parish which was so dear to his heart, and where he had given twelve years of missionary service, Fr John set out for the unknown future that awaited him in his motherland, where he would spend the rest of his priestly service.[24]

Fr John's return to Russia in the summer of 1907 signified for him not only the beginning of his service in the Diocese of St Petersburg, familiar to him from his student years, but it challenged him with the need to apply the pastoral skills he had earlier acquired in America in the field of theological education. By order of the St Petersburg Church Consistory, in August 1907 Fr John was assigned to the clergy of Holy Transfiguration Cathedral in Neva, and beginning August 15, 1907, he began to perform his duties as a teacher of Law in the male and the female gymnasia in Narva.[25] By order of the chief of the St Petersburg Area Educational Department, effective October 20, 1907, Fr John was confirmed in his service in the male gymnasium as a teacher of God's Law [this Russian term refers to the totality of Orthodox teaching - Ed.] and was a hired teacher of the same subject in the female gymnasium of Narva, which became the main sphere of his Church service for the next nine years of his life.[26]

The common way of life in small, provincial Neva, where the Russian Orthodox inhabitants made up scarcely half the population, reminded Fr John, in some measure, of the atmosphere familiar to him in America, where he performed his pastoral service in a social environment permeated with heterodox influences. However, the circumstances of his work as a teacher of God's Law in two secondary schools where the Russian cultural element and Orthodox religious ethos indisputably dominated, permitted Fr John to feel that he was breathing an atmosphere of Russian Orthodox life reminiscent of his childhood.

In those years, Father John's teaching load usually consisted of sixteen hours a week in the male gymnasium and ten hours in the female gymnasium. This required of him a fairly significant effort, taking into account that to teach God's Law in the different classes, because of the breadth of the subject, a teacher had to be familiar with various matters of theological as well as of a mundane character.[27] However, inasmuch as the twelve years of his labors at the Chicago-Streator parish had transformed Fr John from an inexperienced beginner into one of the most authoritative pastors in the diocese, his nine years service of teaching God's Law (not marked by any spectacular events, but filled with concentrated work in imparting spiritual enlightenment) was one in which Fr John

became a most conscientious practical Church teacher and learned Orthodox preacher. After just five years of teaching Divine Law in the Neva schools, Fr John was awarded the Order of St Anna (Second Class)[28] on May 6, 1912. Four years later, Fr John's achievements in the field of theological education were recognized by his award of the Order of St Vladimir (Fourth Class) which (added to his numerous Church and State awards) gave the deserving archpriest the right of receiving the title of nobility.[29]

The manifest successes of Fr John in his activity as a teacher during all these years were supplemented by his joy at the fact that all of his four elder sons, while studying in Neva gymnasium, had the opportunity to receive their spiritual upbringing under his immediate guidance. [30]

However, along with undeniable advantages of this new period of the pastoral service of Fr John, after his return to his fatherland following many years of absence, there still existed a circumstance which could not help but burden the heart of such a genuine parish pastor as Fr John was for the whole of his life. Being only attached to the Holy Transfiguration Cathedral in dreamed, and not being a member of its staff clergy, Fr John, because of the peculiarity of this situation, on account of his fulfilling his duties as a teacher of Gods Law at the gymnasium, was deprived not only of the chance to lead, but even to participate fully in the parish life of Holy Transfiguration Cathedral in Narva. Only in November of 1916, by order of the St Petersburg Church Consistory, was Fr John assigned as a parish priest to the vacant second position at St Catherine's Cathedral in Tsarskoye Selo,[31] whereby his dream of resuming service as a parish pastor in the motherland was fulfilled.

Tsarskoye Selo, which had become the remarkable incarnation of a whole epoch in the history of Russian culture, happily combined in itself the qualities of a quiet provincial town with those of the resplendent capital of St Petersburg. St Catherine's Cathedral occupied a special place in the town; of the parish churches there, which were predominantly parishes of the imperial court and of the military, it was the largest. In becoming a member of the clergy at St Catherine's Cathedral, and taking up residence there together with his matushka and five children (the oldest son, Vladimir, was at the time fulfilling his military service),[32] Fr John received, at last, his longed-for chance to be immersed fully in the life of a parish priest in one of the most notable churches of the St Petersburg diocese. Having been warmly and respectfully received by the flock of St Catherine's, Fr John, from the first months of his service there, showed himself to be zealous and inspiring not only as a celebrant of the divine service, but also as an eloquent and well-informed preacher, who gathered under the eaves of St Catherine's Cathedral Orthodox Christians from all around the town of Tsarskoye Selo.[33] It seemed that so successful a beginning of parish service at St Catherine's Cathedral would open for Fr John a new period in his priestly service. In this period, Fr John's pastoral inspiration and sacrificial demeanor, so characteristic of him in his former activity, might be combined with the daily routine of the outward conditions of his service and with the spiritual and harmonious personal relationships between a diligent pastor and his numerous pious flock. But the cataclysms of the February Revolution that burst out in Petrograd just three months after Fr John's assignment to St Catherine's began little by little to involve Tsarskoye Selo in the treacherous vortex of revolutionary events. br>

The soldiers' riots that had taken place in the military headquarters at Tsarskoye Selo already during the first days of the Revolution, and the imprisonment of the royal family at Alexandrovsky palace over a period of many months, brought the town to the attention of representatives of the most extreme revolutionary elements. These circles had propelled the country toward the path of civil war, and eventually, complete internal political division, the beginnings of which lay in Russia's participation in the bloodshed of World War I. These developments gradually changed the quiet atmosphere of Tsarskoye Selo, diverting the inhabitants' attention, day by day, from the conscientious fulfillment of their Christian and civil responsibilities to Church and fatherland. And during all these troubled months the inspiring message of Fr John continued to sound forth from the ambo of St Catherine's Cathedral, as he strove to instill feelings of reconciliation into the souls of the Orthodox Christians of Tsarskoye Selo, calling them to the spiritual perception of their own

inner life, so that they might understand the contradictory changes taking place in Russia.

For several days after the October 1917 seizure of power by the Bolsheviks in Petrograd, reverberations from the momentous events happening in the capital were felt in Tsarskoye Selo. Attempting to drive Gen. Paul Krasnov's Cossack troops, which were still loyal to the Provisional Government, out of Tsarskoye Selo, the armored groups of the Red Guard (the soldiers and sailors supporting the Bolshevik upheaval) were on their way from Petrograd.

On the morning of October 30, 1917, stopping at the outskirts of Tsarskoye Selo, the Bolshevik forces subjected the town to artillery fire. The inhabitants of Tsarskoye Selo, like those in all of Russia, still did not suspect that the country was involved in a civil war. A tumult erupted, with many people running to the Orthodox churches, including St Catherine's, in hopes of finding prayerful serenity at the services, and of hearing a pastoral exhortation from the ambo pertaining to the events taking place. All the clergy of St Catherine's Cathedral eagerly responded to their flock's spiritual entreaties. A special prayer service, seeking an end to the civil conflict, was offered beneath the arches of the church, which was jammed with worshipers. Later, the dean of the Cathedral, Archpriest N. Smirnov, with two other priests, Fr John and Fr Steven Fokko, reached a decision to organize a sacred procession in the town, with the reading of fervent prayers for a cessation of the fratricidal civil strife.

For several days, the newspaper All-Russian Church Social Messenger presented the testimony of a certain Petrograd newspaper correspondent describing the events which had taken place, as follows: "The Sacred Procession had to be relocated under the conditions of an artillery bombardment, and notwithstanding any predictions it was rather crowded. The lamentations and cries of women and children drowned out the words of the prayer for peace. Two priests delivered sermons during the procession, calling the people to preserve tranquility in view of the impending trials. I was fortunate enough to understand clearly that the priests' sermons did not contain any political tinges."

"The Holy Procession lingered. Twilight changed into darkness. Candles were lit in the hands of the praying people. Everybody was singing."

"Precisely at that time the Cossacks were withdrawing from the town. The priests were warned about it. 'Isn't it time to stop the prayers?' 'We shall carry our duties to completion,' they declared. 'These have departed from us, and those who are coming are our brothers! What kind of harm will they do us?'"[34]

Wishing to prevent an outbreak of fighting in the streets of Tsarskoye Selo, the Cossack leadership began to withdraw troops from the town on the evening of October 30, and on the morning of the 31st the Bolshevik forces entered Tsarskoye Selo, encountering no opposition. One of the anonymous witnesses to the aftermath of these tragic events wrote a letter to the prominent St Petersburg Archpriest F. Ornatsky, who himself was destined to receive martyrdom at the hands of the godless authorities. The writer told in simple but profound words of the passion-bearing that became Fr John's destiny. "Yesterday (on October 31)," he wrote, "when the Bolsheviks entered Tsarskoye Selo with the Red Guard, they began to make the rounds of the apartments of the military officers, making arrests. Fr John (Alexandrovich Kochurov) was conveyed to the outskirts of the town, to St Theodore's Cathedral, and there they assassinated him because of the fact that those who organized the sacred procession had allegedly been praying for a victory by the Cossacks, which surely was not, and could not have been, what actually happened. The other clergymen were released yesterday evening. Thus, another Martyr for the Faith in Christ has appeared. The deceased, though he had not been in Tsarskoye Selo for long, had gained the utmost love of all, and many people used to gather to listen to his preaching."[35]

The Petrograd journalist mentioned earlier reconstructed a terrifying picture of Fr John's martyrdom and its aftermath, ascertaining these details: "The priests were captured and sent to the headquarters of the Council of the Workers and Soldier Deputies. A priest, Fr John Kochurov, was trying to protest and to clarify the situation. He was hit several times on his face. With cheers and yelling the

enraged mob conveyed him to the Tsarskoye Selo aerodrome. Several rifles were raised against the defenseless pastor. A shot thundered out, then another, after which the priest fell down on the ground, and blood spilled upon his cassock. Death did not come to him immediately... He was pulled by his hair, and somebody suggested, Finish him off like a dog. The next morning the body was brought into the former palace hospital. According to the newspaper The Peoples' Affair, the head of the State Duma, and one of its members, saw the priest's body, but his pectoral cross was already gone...."[36]