



The deanery in Scandinavia

THE DEANERY OF SCANDINAVIA INCLUDES THREE COUNTRIES: SWEDEN (STOCKHOLM, 9.5 MILLION INHABITANTS), NORWAY (OSLO, 5 MILLION INHABITANTS) AND DENMARK (COPENHAGEN, 5.5 MILLION INHABITANTS). THE MAIN PARISHES ARE IN STOCKHOLM, ÖVERKALIX (IN NORTHERN SWEDEN), OSLO AND COPENHAGEN. THE PARISH IN STOCKHOLM IS THE OLDEST ORTHODOX RUSSIAN PARISH NOT ONLY IN SCANDINAVIA BUT IN THE WHOLE OF EASTERN EUROPE. IN 2007 IT WILL CELEBRATE ITS 400TH ANNIVERSARY IN THE TERRITORY OF STOCKHOLM. IT IS ALSO THE BIGGEST ONE WITH ABOUT 1500 PARISHIONERS. WITHIN THE DEANERY THERE ARE ALSO MANY SMALL COMMUNITIES SERVED BY THE CLERGY FROM THE LARGER PARISHES. WE ALSO HAVE TWO SMALL MONASTIC COMMUNITIES IN SWEDEN AND IN NORWAY.

SWEDEN

THE PARISH OF THE TRANSFIGURATION – STOCKHOLM

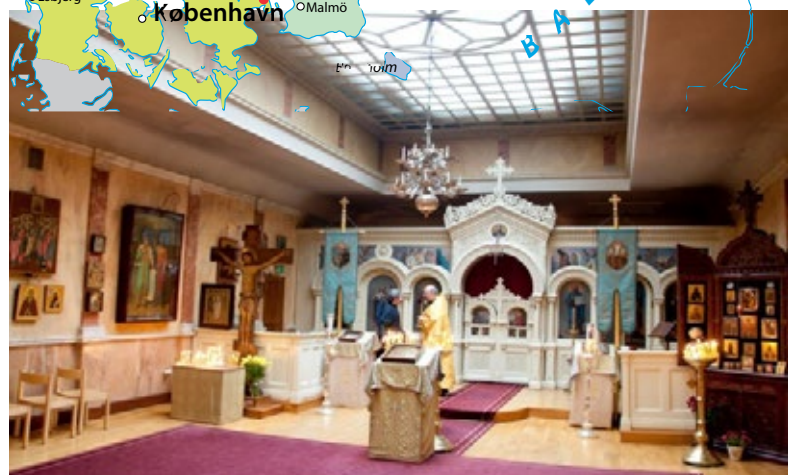
History

The Parish of the Transfiguration of the Lord in Stockholm was the first Russian Orthodox parish to be founded outside Russia, 400 years ago. Since its foundation, the parish has never left Stockholm, even though it has moved location many times within the centre of the town before finding in 1907 its current place in Birger Jarlsgatan 98.

At this address the first priest was **Fr. Pjotr Rumjantsev**. **Bishop Stéphane Timtchenko** succeeded him, followed by **Archimandrite Matias** Norström of blessed memory. After the death of Archimandrite Matias in 2005, **Fr. Angel Velitchkov** became the rector of the parish. He had been connected with the parish for several years. He is a former student of the Institute of St Serge. Recently he has been nominated Dean of Scandinavia by Archbishop Job of Telmessos. The history of the parish was marked by the ministry of **Protodeacon Vladimir Liling** who celebrated in the parish for 30 years until his death in 1979. During his first official visit to Stockholm on 19th August 2014 Archbishop Job ordained as **deacon Alexandre Djukic**, a young theologian who studied in the Institute of St Serge.

Mission

By the providence of God, since the 1930s the parish of Stockholm has continued its Orthodox mission in the West under the omophorion of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople through the intermediary of the Archbishop of Paris. While preserving the spiritual, liturgical and cultural richness of the



Russian Orthodox tradition, we still hold a pan-orthodox spirit embodying our faith in one Ecumenical and apostolic Church.

There are around 1500 parishioners today from at least 14 different countries: Russians, Swedes, Finish, Ukrainians, Georgians, Greeks, Byelorussians, Polish, Serbs, French, English, Bulgarians, Romanians, Latin-Americans. Mostly we use Russian and Swedish languages, and Slavonic as a liturgical language. But we often also speak in French, English, Greek, Serbian and Georgian. Next to the church we have a room in which we organise meals, a Sunday school for the children, and two groups for theological discussion, one in Swedish and one in Russian.

The communities outside Stockholm

Linked to the central parish in Stockholm there are also communities in **Uppsala, Göteborg, Örebro, Linköping** and **Vavd**. A new skete of the Holy Cross has been established in Vavd, inhabited by Sister Johanna, a Swedish nun. For years the number of nuns in the skete has not grown; but developed thanks to the faithful who come to all the liturgies and help with the practical life, thus forming a community.

In the past there were small communities in Lund and Boros. But during the last twenty years the situation of Orthodoxy in Sweden has changed a lot. The old Russian communities have undergone a deep restructuration and have spread throughout the country in a different manner. Other dioceses have founded their own parishes here and there. For these complex reasons it no longer is necessary to go to Lund and Boros.

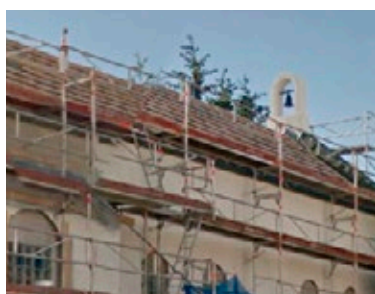
Another priest of Swedish origin is part of our Deanery in Sweden: Fr. Bengt Hagström living in Göteborg. Unfortunately a long illness prevents him from celebrating the Holy Liturgy alone in the city's community.

THE PARISH IN ÖVERKALIX

Also dedicated to the Transfiguration of the Lord, this parish was founded in 2005 by **Fr. Benedict Pohjanen**, a well known contemporary writer and editor, who converted to Orthodoxy and was ordained by Archbishop Gabriel of blessed memory. The parish is small, but it is growing rapidly and is very important for the Orthodox testimony in the north of Sweden. It has become a spiritual and uniting centre for the Russians as well as for the Swedish in search of the origins of the Christian tradition. It also offers a spiritual support for numerous immigrants.



NORWAY



THE PARISH OF ST NICHOLA – OSLO

Founded in 1931, it was the first Orthodox parish in Norway, and the second one in Scandinavia, after the parish in Stockholm. Archimandrite Thérapont Hümmerich, of Swiss origin, an Orthodox convert, was a leading figure of the parish. He was the rector between 1952 and the end of the 1970s. Since then Archimandrite Johannes Johansen is responsible for the parish of Oslo as well as for the communities of Bergen, Stavanger and Neiden. He is also the higoumen of the skete of St Tryphon of Pechenga in Hurdal.

The parish used the crypt of a Norwegian church in the centre of Oslo until 2003. It was then that the parish built its own church at the following address: Tvetenveien 13, Teisen, Oslo. Since 2013, this church has been undergoing reconstruction and enlargement works. For this reason the services are being held provisionally in the previous location (Kirkevn. 84, Oslo).



SAINT ALEXIS OF UGINE 1934 – 2004 – 2014

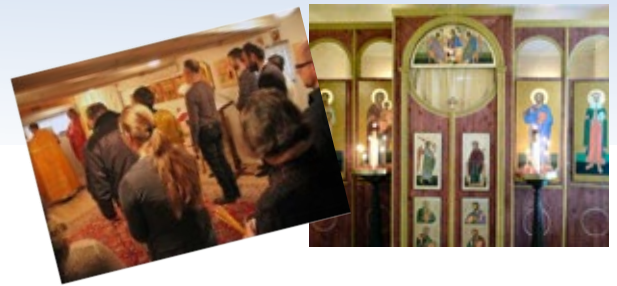
Eighty years have passed since Saint Alexis Medvedkov, archpriest of Ugine, reposed. His life went on unnoticed by most of his contemporaries. But our Lord revealed his sainthood when his body was discovered incorrupt 22 years after his death. Little by little we learn more about the spiritual achievements of his life; we receive testimonies about his place of birth, his parents, his studies, his life as a priest not far from Saint-

Petersburg, the years he passed in Estonia, his arrival in France, his four years in the city of Ugine, the sufferings he endured in his family life, the difficulties he encountered in his parish, his illness, the generous help he has extended to many people who have prayed to him ever since he died. For example, recently he spoke to someone who was enduring difficult times, and said to him: "Why don't you ask for my help?" the revelation deeply changed this person's life.

Yet another surprising event occurred, made possible only because Saint Alexis interceded with our Lord: the church in Ugine was to be destroyed: it was in a very bad state, the Russian community has long been scattered and the city administration wanted to extend the neighbouring carpark. But instead, by 2004 the church was restored. This was made possible thanks to the good will of several persons who were neither Russian nor Orthodox: in 4 years they restored the shanty formerly donated by the factories to the Russians for their church services. Since then their dedication has not diminished, and the church has been maintained. The official aim was a cultural one: to keep the memory of the 2000 Russians who worked in the metallurgical factories, and to get the Ugine inhabitants to know about their faith and their traditions. However the church is now visited not only by tourists, but also by a great number of pilgrims and services are held several times a year. On August 22nd, name day of Saint Alexis, our Archbishop Job together with Bishop Nestor celebrated the Divine Liturgy in the church of the monastery of the Protection of the Mother of God in Bussy-en-Othe, where the saint's remains have been laid to rest. Many faithful took part in the Liturgy, among them two boys whose patron is Saint Alexis of Ugine. During his homily, Archbishop Job underlined that above all Saint Alexis was a man of prayer and that he loved celebrating the offices in his church; by his own prayer he remained in constant relation with God, enabling him to bear through all the ordeals of his life: this makes him an example for us to follow.

On September 6th, Archbishop Michael of Geneva and Bishop Nestor celebrated together the Divine Liturgy in Ugine. Unfortunately Archbishop Job was not able to be present. The church, first dedicated to Saint Nicholas, is now also dedicated to Saint Alexis. It is indeed for love of Saint Alexis that so many people gathered in the small church coming from various places: the Alps, Paris, Bussy-en-Othe, and Geneva, other parts of Switzerland, Italy, and Russia. There were even two hermits who came from Mount Athos: one of them had been a member of the parish founded by Saint Alexis in Estonia. Indeed, God is wonderful in all his saints

In Norway there are two other canonical priests in our Archdiocese, Frs. Olav and Christoffer. The rector of the parish of Oslo has been assisted for many years by Hierodeacon Seraphin.



DENMARK

THE PARISH OF THE PROTECTION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD – COPENHAGUE

In this country, there is a parish in our deanery which is relatively new but very active and important. In the beginning, back in 2002, there was only one community founded under the large parish of Oslo. In 2005, with the blessing of Archbishop Gabriel and by the zeal of **Fr. Paul Sebbelov** this community became a parish dedicated to the Protection of the Mother of God, with its own church and regular services. Very recently, the parish has obtained a new premise in the central part of Copenhagen. It will open its doors very soon. Using the Russian liturgical tradition, Fr. Paul's parish generally celebrates in Danish, witnessing to the importance of Orthodoxy in this country.

The parish has two deacons: **Lazare Christensen et Irakli Tsakadze.**

The current address is:

Guds møders Beskyt telse

Blomster vænget 10 2800 Kgs. Lyngby

Danemark



PASTORAL VISIT - STOCKHOLM



FROM THE 18TH TO THE 20TH OF AUGUST ARCHBISHOP JOB MADE HIS FIRST PONTIFICAL VISIT TO THE PARISH OF THE TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD IN STOCKHOLM. THE CULMINATION OF THIS VISIT WAS THE 19TH AUGUST, THE PATRONAL FESTIVAL. THE ARCHBISHOP, ACCOMPANIED BY DEACON IVAN DROBOT, CONCELEBRATED THE DIVIN LITURGY WITH MANY PRIESTS, DEACONS AND FAITHFUL. DURING THIS SOLEMN SERVICE, ARCHBISHOP JOB TONSURED AS A READER THE PARISHIONER ALEXANDRE DJUKIC, WHO HAD BEEN A STUDENT AT THE INSTITUTE OF ST SERGE. HE WAS THEN ORDAINED AS DEACON.

AFTER THE LITURGY AND THE MEAL, ARCHBISHOP JOB ASSEMBLED THE MEMBERS OF THE CLERGY PRESENT OF THE DEANERY OF SCANDINAVIA.

ON THE 20TH AUGUST HE HAD THE OCCASION TO MEET WITH TWO OTHER ORTHODOX BISHOPS IN STOCKHOLM – THE NEW GREEK METROPOLITAN KLEOPAS OF SWEDEN AND ALL SCANDINAVIA, AND THE SERBIAN BISHOP DOSITEJ OF SCANDINAVIA AND GREAT BRITAIN.

ON THE SAME DAY IN THE AFTERNOON THE ARCHBISHOP, ACCOMPANIED BY THE NEW DEACON ALEXANDER AND THE RECTOR OF THE PARISH FR. ANGEL VELITCHKOV, WENT TO VISIT THE SKETE OF THE HOLY CROSS IN VAVD. SISTER JOHANNA WHO LIVES THERE GAVE ARCHBISHOP JOB A WARM WELCOME AND HE GAVE HER HIS BLESSING.

*Account:
Many years ago Archimandrite Job came to our parish when he was accompanying Archbishop Gabriel on his visit. Archbishop Gabriel gave all his attention to the parishioners, just as His Eminence Archbishop Job did on his recent visit.*

The arrival of the bishop is a very important event. For those of us living on the edge of the Exarchate, meeting the bishop is always a fulfilment of Orthodoxy, a way to regain the sacred, the piety, to get nearer to the mystery of grace. The Archbishop's visit also requires to fulfil a multitude of practical tasks. Naturally no one in the parish is used to them. For example, last time we vested a bishop seven years ago. This time it was Fr. Deacon Yohan who undertook the task seconded by young ones we called subdeacons. The priests of our Scandinavian deanery led by our Dean Archpriest Angel cocolebrated with His Eminence Archbishop Job. Such an assembly gladdened the hearts of the faithful on the day of the patronal festival of the Transfiguration of the Lord. As a souvenir of prayer Archbishop Job distributed icons of St Alexander Nevsky, reminding us of the link with the cathedral of the Archdiocese.

The communal meal which followed the solemn celebration was the material crowing of the spiritual feast. A specific chapter of Archbishop Job's visit was the ordination to the diaconate of Alexandre, a member of our choir. The unity of the body of Christ was felt in the exchanges between the choir and the clergy during the ordination and later, especially in the "axios" sung by the whole parish and the choir.

Archbishop Job promised to come back every year to celebrate our patronal festival.

May God hear him!

Reader Jura Gourman



FEAST AT THE SAINT SILOUAN MONASTERY



On September 24, under a nice summer sun, the Monastery of Saint Silouan in St-Mars-de-Locquenay (Sarthe, France), as every year, was celebrating its patron saint. Many priests from parishes of the West and Paris had joined Archbishop Job and the Monastery's hegumen, Father Symeon, to concelebrate and venerate Saint Silouan with many members of the congregation and friends of the monastery.

A few sisters from the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God, recently settled in Bois-Salair in Mayenne (France), attended as well.

The Catholic Bishop of Le Mans, Mgr Lesaux, accompanied by his Vicar General, had wished to show by his presence his attachment to the monastery.

The pontifical Liturgy took place in a serene and praying atmosphere, inspired by the nuns choir, and the support of several lay singers. During his homily, His Eminence Job reminded of the relevancy of Saint Silouan's spirituality in our times. After the ceremony, he shared his joy to be in this monastery, dear to his heart, amidst such a large congregation. He also thanked Mgr Lesaux for his support, wishing that some day our churches would be able to celebrate under restored unity.

The nice weather allowed for everyone to sit outside for a joyful agape meal, a perfect opportunity, after communal prayer, to greet one another and exchange news with friends. And also, the pleasure to meet the municipality representatives, the mayor and several council members, who had wished to accept the monastery's invitation.

Let us wish the Saint Silouan Monastery « Many Years » et many other feasts, in our Lord's joy and prayer. May it remain for all Western Christians, Orthodox, but also Catholic and Protestant, a haven for contemplation and peace, a « beacon » of the Orthodox Tradition.



Archbishop Job and Hier. Syméon bigouméne

