

# THE HARMONY OF MONARCHY AND RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY

The Formula for Success of  
Grand-Prince Saint Vladimir, Equal-to-the-Apostles,  
in the Creation of Holy Russia  
a Thousand Years Ago

Presented at a Gala Banquet in honor of the Nameday of

**H.I.H. GRAND DUKE WLADIMIR OF RUSSIA**



THE 375<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE HOUSE OF ROMANOFF  
AND THE MILLENNIUM OF CHRISTIANITY IN RUSSIA

Lakewood, New Jersey  
29 July 1988

by  
Professor Richard V. Desrosiers  
University of New Hampshire  
(now *The Very Reverend Father Constantine Desrosiers*)

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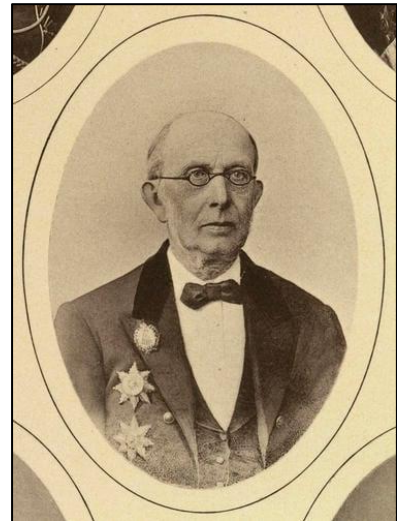
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\* Indicates see glossary

## TEXT OF THE SPEECH

Your Imperial Highnesses, Your Eminence Metropolitan Vitaly, Most Reverend Archbishops, Right Reverend Bishops, Reverend Fathers and Members of the Clergy, Russian Patriots and Friends of Holy Russia, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In his *Reflections of a Russian Statesman*<sup>1</sup> the great and prescient Procurator of the Holy Synod Konstantin Petrovich Pobedonostsev often repeats the premise that “that which is founded on falsehood cannot be right.” By way of illustration he cites the example of Ptolemaic astronomy which for many centuries taught that the earth was the flat center of the universe, about which all of the heavenly bodies gravitated: “The earth,” writes the Great Procurator, “seemed so infinitely vast that no other center could be conceived.” While noting the obvious, namely, that from the time of Copernicus science has correctly readjusted its basic outlook on the universe, recognizing the sun as the center of our solar system, in the field of philosophy from which flow our ethical and political principles, modern man continues narcissistically to see himself as the focal point whether we are dealing with traditional western liberals, or classic Marxists, or modern communists, or romantics in the tradition of Tolstoy or the sensualists following Freud, or simply unthinking Yuppies whose bible is the *Wall Street Journal*. All of them simply fail at this most important point to recognize the TRUE and EVER-EXISTENT Sun of the universe Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ, Who by His unwaning Light from the empty tomb of Pascha morning shines upon us, assuring us that man is indeed the center of creation precisely because Christ is the God Man.



Konstantin Pobedonostsev  
(1827-1907)  
One of a series of photographs  
of Russian government  
ministers taken at the time of  
the coronation of Nicholas II,  
Emperor of Russia in 1896.  
*Public domain*

It is always essential for us as Orthodox Christians to remember this observation of the great Pobedonostsev but at no time more so than in this year of the great millennium of Holy Russia. As this memorable year of jubilee blossoms in the full brightness of summer and reaches the Feast of Vladimir the Great, the Apostle of Russia, the average American might quite understandably ask us why we anti-Communist Russians and Orthodox Christians are celebrating when everything is so stacked against us. Just a few weeks ago the fresh new Soviet leader Gorbachev entertained with great political success, and with his undeniable charm

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<sup>1</sup> K.P. Pobedonostsev, *Reflections of a Russian Statesman*, translated from Russian by R.C. Long, Grant Richards publisher, London, 1898, p. 32 et passim.

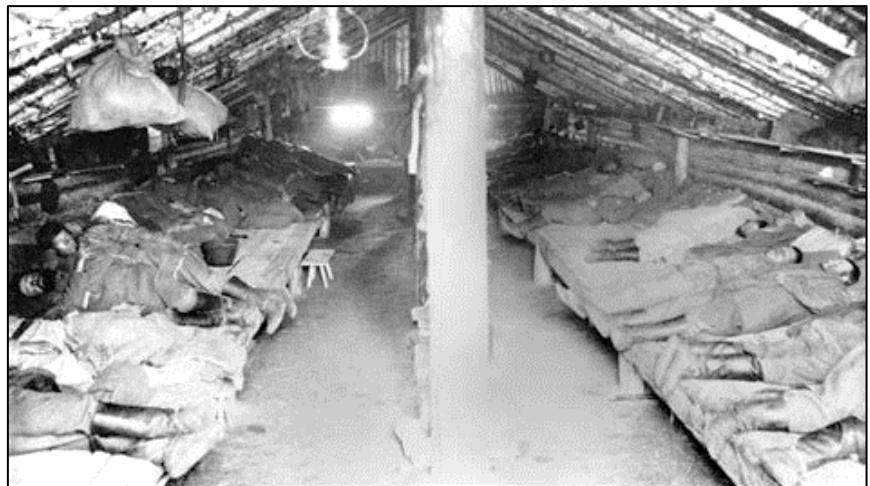


U.S. President Ronald Reagan (left) and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev at the Reykjavik summit in Iceland, October 1986.  
Ronald Reagan Library

wrung the recognition of respectability from the most conservative, anticommunist President the American people have elected in more than fifty years.<sup>2</sup>

From every side euphoric Americans assure each other, trying eagerly to convince one another that a peaceful and safe future lies ahead, that they, meaning the Soviets, are becoming more like us, while we become more like them. That thoughtless phrase has been repeated over and over again by naïve Americans from the time of those tragic and traitorous days that inaugurated a false peace at the end of World War II, consigning entire countries to the cruelty of communism and forcibly repatriating two to three million Russians to certain death or the living death of Stalin's labor camps. Now four decades later this stupid sentiment seems to be winning the field for want of meaningful opposition in a vacuum of American foreign policy, a renewed interest

in domestic problems, and the easy road of hoping for what, alas, is impossible. To be sure, there are now hopeful signs in Russia which no one of us here will dare to deny. There is no doubt anymore that both the Russian people and the Spirit of Holy Orthodoxy among them cannot be crushed either by the forgetfulness of time or the brutality of persecution. Whatever will happen in Russia, the fact remains that Marxist-Leninist Communism cannot be reformed. Like any form of madness or disease, it can only be safely extirpated and destroyed. The prospect, furthermore, of mingling western liberalism and soviet socialism, in the context of the ever growing technical and scientific potential for population control on the part of government, ought to inspire any reasonable person with great apprehension, if not downright teeth-chattering fear for the future.

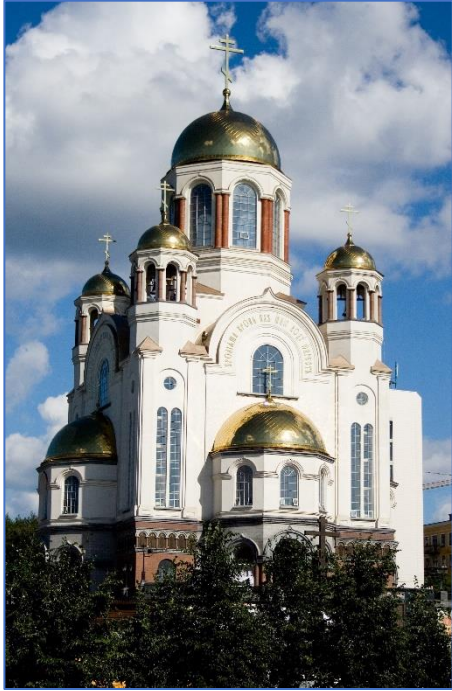


Interior of a Stalin labor camp on Lake Baikal.

*Public domain*

Yes, the question may be asked us: why are we celebrating when we are so far from winning? It is also essential for us further to recall that this great year of Holy Russia's millenary will this very July 4/18 coincide with the seventieth anniversary of the satanically inspired regicide of Ekaterinburg. For seventy years the brutality of this brazenly anti-Christian and anti-Russian atrocity cries out for justice in a world, too callous to care, too selfish to believe, too lazy to

<sup>2</sup> The author is referring to Ronald Reagan, Republican, held office from January 1981 through January 1989



Church on the blood, Ekaterinburg, built on the spot where Tsar Nicholas II and his family were martyred in the basement of the Ipatiev House.

*Public domain*

remember that the Soviet system of Gorbachev that supposedly is becoming just like ours was born in blood so cruelly, so hatefully to all that civilized man holds sacred. How then are we to answer the smug modern critic who seems especially today so beyond being able to be refuted when he tells us that soviet communism is here to stay, welcomed by the post-Christian Western world that continues to be heedless of soviet atrocities, even the murder of the Imperial Family, the tragedy that marked, it would seem, the real end of Holy Russia, long before the millennium could be reached which we vainly are attempting to celebrate?

We are indeed powerless to refute him as long as we remain Ptolemaic, keeping our eyes fixed exclusively on earthly political events. But rather, like Copernicus, let us fix upon the Sun of the Center, remembering the Mystery of Christ Our Divine Saviour working through the Holy Spirit within human history. Only seven years ago our Holy Russian Orthodox Church in Exile, fearlessly, in defiance of Her own weak position in the world, proclaimed the glorification of the Emperor-Martyr Nicholas II and his August Family at the head of the countless millions of the New Martyrs of Russia. You all remember the Israelites of

old how their sorrow was turned to joy by the Hand of Christ, Who broke the tyranny of Babylon by bringing to power the Great King Cyrus the Great of Persia. Later in the thirteenth century of the Christian era, after the Venetians and Crusaders had held the imperial city of Constantinople for over sixty years, again by the Grace of God, the political situation changed and the Orthodox Empire was restored not after a battle but rather a pious, humble, and contrite procession into an empty and abandoned capital.

To view some treasures of Constantinople taken by the Venetians, visit:

<https://smarthistory.org/byzantine-art-and-the-fourth-crusade/>

<https://romeonrome.com/2014/10/2014-venice-and-the-treasures-of-the-4th-crusade/>

But let us not dwell on these obvious and often-mentioned precedents. Do you realize that the year 1988 marks a third, more ancient and almost forgotten event? Two thousand years ago, in 12 B.C., the first Roman Emperor Caesar Augustus\* assumed the title and office of Pontifex Maximus\*, making himself the head of the Roman state religion. It is historically interesting to note that this office of Pontifex Maximus had existed from the earliest days of Rome, that during the five centuries of the Roman Republic it was filled by political election, that in 63 B.C., when Augustus' father Julius Caesar had been elected Pontifex Maximus, the electoral process had been dreadfully and scandalously compromised by bribery. Yet on March 6, 12 B.C. when the Emperor Augustus became Pontifex Maximus, there was great solemnity and great

unanimity. In the *Res Gestae*<sup>3</sup> Augustus writes that “so great was the multitude that flocked to my election from all over Italy that no such gathering in Rome had heretofore been recorded.”<sup>4</sup> What a great change for the better in just fifty-one years!

But you are probably asking yourselves why this bimillennial of the Emperor Augustus becoming Pontifex Maximus is of interest to us here today. Is it of no relevance save for the very striking coincidence that this Augustan bimillenary occurs at the same time as the millennium of Christianity in Russia? Let us not forget that of all pagan Roman Emperors Augustus alone is mentioned several times in a very favorable light in the services of the Orthodox Church, specifically in recalling the Birth according to the flesh of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ at the very time when Augustus had brought peace, order, and unity to the worldwide empire of Rome. Amid the Stichera\* of the vespers for Christ’s Holy Nativity we hear the hymn of Cassia [Kassiani] the Nun: “When Augustus reigned alone upon the earth, the many kingdoms of men came to an end: and when Thou wast made man of the pure Virgin, the many gods of idolatry were destroyed.”<sup>5</sup> Thus, as the reign of Augustus provided the historical and political context for the Nativity of Christ, so it has happened in God’s Providence that Augustus’ becoming Pontifex Maximus took place exactly a thousand years before Russia’s baptism into Christ.



Augustus Caesar portrayed in the Augustus of Prima Porta, white marble (early 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D.), Vatican Museum.

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Kassiani was a participant in the "bride show" for the young Emperor Theophilos, arranged by the Empress Dowager Euphrosyne. Although smitten by her beauty, he did not like his dialogue with her and passed her over. She founded a convent in Constantinople and became its first abbess. Theophilos was an iconoclast and later had Kassiani scourged for her defense of the icons. But she never backed down and remained outspoken, with her quote admonishing us today: "I hate silence when it is time to speak." She wrote many hymns still used in the Orthodox Church, the most famous of which is the Hymn of Kassiani, chanted at matins on Holy Wednesday.

Saint Kassiani (810-865)



<sup>3</sup> *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*: “The Deeds of the Divine Augusti”, 35 paragraphs written by Augustus, of his achievements, engraved on two bronze pillars in front of his mausoleum.

<sup>4</sup> *Res Gestae Divi Augusta* 12; Cf. Cambridge Ancient History, X, p.p. 152, 479.

<sup>5</sup> *The Festal Menaion*, translated from the original Greek by Mother Mary and Archimandrite Kallistos Ware, Faber and Faber, London. 1977, p. 254.



Roman silver Siliqua  
(silver coin) of emperor  
Gratian.

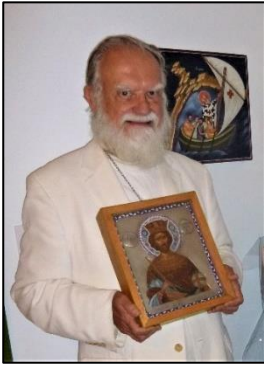
After the death of the Emperor Augustus all subsequent Roman Emperors held the title of Pontifex Maximus until the year 381 when the Emperor Gratian, a Christian ruler, resigned this office, giving it to the Bishop of Rome. To this very day the Roman Popes are called Pontifices Maximi, making the title of Pontifex Maximus probably the oldest religio-political title still in use in the world today. But my purpose is not to discuss this phenomenon or to dwell upon the Popes. More basic than any of these considerations is the political effect of this event upon all of subsequent European history.

The Emperor Augustus' assumption of the title of Pontifex Maximus marked the culmination of his constitutional reforms whereby the old Roman Republic, for over a hundred years beset by ever more frequent outbreaks of unconstitutional radicalism and civil strife, found lasting peace, the three hundred years of the Pax Romana\*, in a steady evolution to the monarchy of the Roman Empire. This new monarchy would last for almost a millennium and a half, in the process inspiring and giving birth to the traditional legitimate monarchies of all of Europe.

By the year 12 B.C. the Emperor Augustus had already gained autocratic authority over the Republican machinery of government, had secured control of the undisciplined proletariat of the City of Rome by assuming the sacrosanct powers of the Plebeian Tribunes\* and, most important of all, had come to hold in perpetuity proconsular imperium\* over both the provinces and the standing armies that controlled them.<sup>6</sup> The final step completing the transition to monarchy was the Emperor's election to the ancient religious office of Pontifex Maximus.

By this constitutional act there was created a unity of authority in the hands of the Roman Emperor which covered political and religious matters. This unity at first worked to the disadvantage of the new Christian Church as Christians were forced to suffer persecution after

<sup>6</sup> *Cambridge Ancient History*, Vol. X: *The Augustan Empire 44 B.C.-A.D. 70*, pp 119-143; M. Cary, *A History of Rome Down to the Reign of Constantine*, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1957, pp. 473-480: From 31 until 27 B.C. Octavian, as the future Emperor Augustus was then known, controlled the Roman state by the unconstitutional Imperium of the Triumvir and by his annual re-election as Consul. On January 1, 29 B.C. his *Acta*, involving his settlement of the Roman provinces of the East, were accepted in toto\* by the Senate (C.A.H. p. 121). In 28 B.C. he was given the title of Imperator\* or Supreme Commander of the armies (C.A.H. p. 123) and that of Princeps\*, which indicated his primacy of authority, if not imperium (C.A.H. p. 132). The birthday of the new Augustan regime was January 13, 27 B.C., when a ten-year command over the strategic provinces of Spain, Gaul, and Syria was conferred upon him. Three days later he was given the quasi-religious title Augustus as a Praenomen\* or first name (C.A.H. p. 128). He had also complete control of Egypt as his personal property. In 23 B.C. Augustus was granted his most monarchical powers, whereby he could control on a permanent basis the entire Roman government: A. the Tribunician Power\*, granting him veto over limit of time and with which he could control all provinces and armies (C.A.H. p. 136). B. the Maius Imperium\* to which there was no limit of time and with which he could control all provinces and armies (C.A.H. p. 136).



Father Constantine during Bright Week, with his magnificent icon of his patron, Saint Constantine the Great.



persecution, primarily for the fact that they could not accept, even for political considerations, the concept of worshipping the Emperor as a god. By the time, however, of the Emperor-Saint Constantine the Great, it was precisely this now three-hundred-year-old Roman tradition of imperial control in religious affairs that permitted the swift

triumph of Christianity in the Empire by no other development than the personal conversion of the emperor himself. One year after the Miracle of the Cross in the Heavens and the victory of the Milvian Bridge, in 313, with the Edict of Milan, the Emperor-Saint Constantine was easily able to make Orthodox Catholic Christianity the second official state religion of the Roman Empire.



St. Photios (810-893), baptizing the Bulgarians.

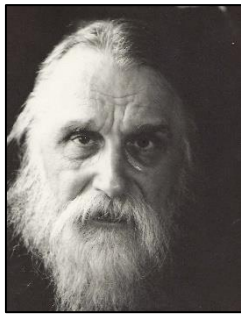
*Public domain*

This Roman imperial tradition continued, and events almost exactly repeated themselves when Russia was converted to Christ. Again there was no political movement or campaign that brought Russia to become Christian. To be sure there had been missionary activity among Slavic nations dating back to Saints Cyril and Methodius. There had also been the realistic policy of imperial support for the Christianizing of Russia which originated with the Holy Patriarch Saint Photios the Great, shortly after the unsuccessful attack upon Constantinople in 865 by the lieutenants of Riurik, the Varangian Russian generals Askold and Deir. Finally, Saint Olga Equal-to-the-Apostles, the widow of Grand Prince Igor, provided the example of both piety and courage which brought many in the still pagan city of Kiev to become Christians. Yet it remains the personal decision of her grandson, the Grand Prince



Equal-to-the-Apostles St. Olga.

Vladimir, who was able to make his own conversion a signal for the baptism of the Russian nation.

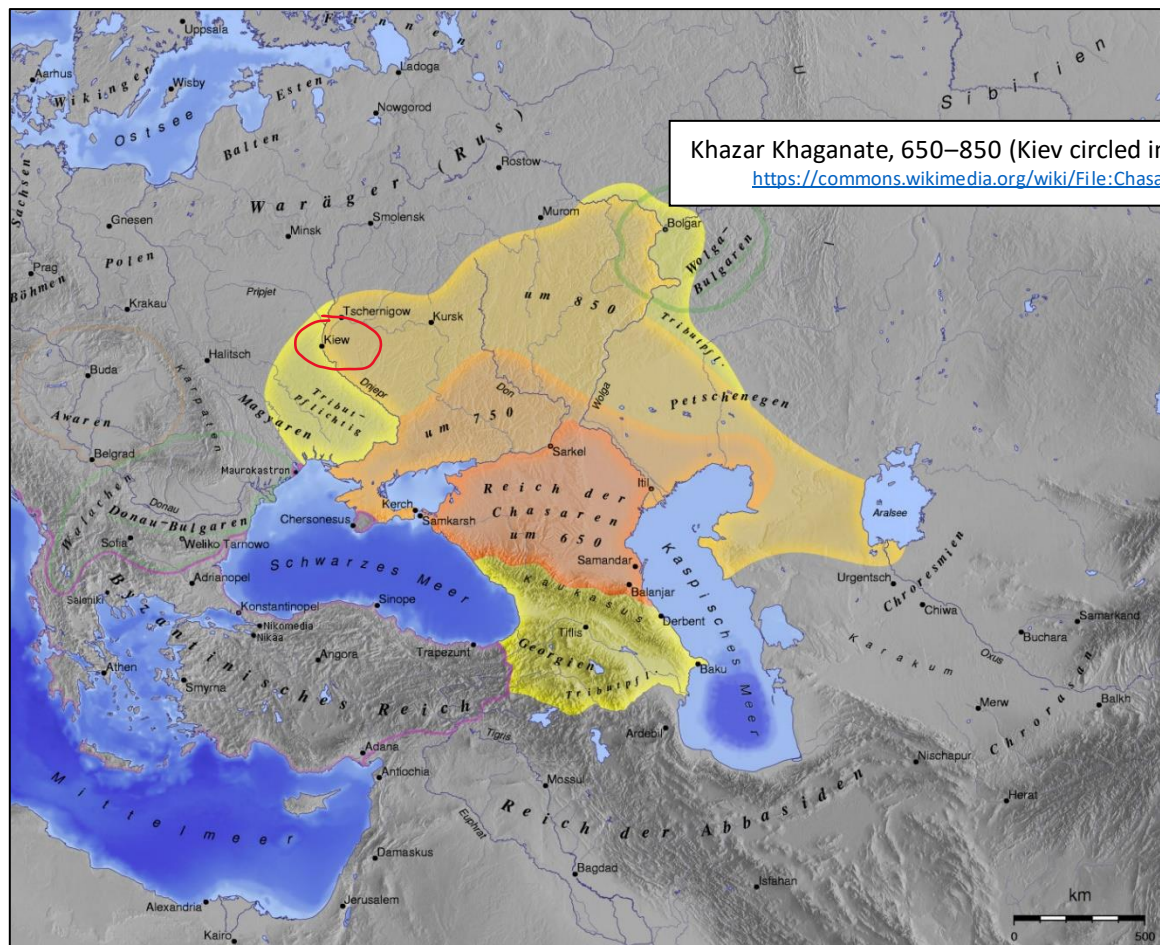


You all know the story of Saint Vladimir's conversion, how it falls into several phases. His first step was to recognize that the Russians really no longer believed in the religion of Perun\*. As the late Archbishop Andrei of Novo-Diveevo Convent puts it: "[The Russians] actually had no religion at all."<sup>7</sup> Saint Vladimir then consulted the

Archbishop Andrei of Novo Diveyevo.  
original photo at  
Queen of All Skete, Virginia

Germans about the dogmas of what would become Roman Catholicism, the Bulgars about Islam, and the Khazars about their newly adopted Jewish

religion. I never fail to feel joy and excitement every time I hear or I read of the emissaries of Saint Vladimir to Constantinople, how they confessed that they could not distinguish whether they were in heaven or on earth, so beautiful were the Divine Services of the Orthodox Church. In a very spirited talk in honor of Russian's millennium given on March 5<sup>th</sup> of this year to a group of prominent citizens of Palm Beach, Florida, His Imperial Highness the Grand Duke



Khazar Khaganate, 650–850 (Kiev circled in red)

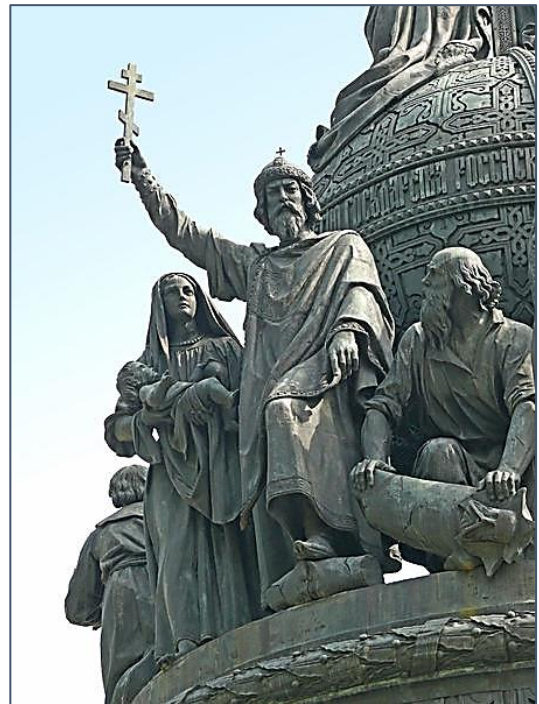
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chasaren.jpg>

<sup>7</sup> Archbishop Andrei, "Sunday of All Saints of Rus," *The One Thing Needful*, Novo-Diveevo Convent, Spring Valley, New York, 1979, p. 72.

Vladimir of Russia asked the very striking question. What would have been the historical results, had Saint Vladimir decided to embrace the Moslem religion? The entire history of Russia would have been radically different and would have taken on an essentially Asiatic character, not unlike the Iranians who had earlier been forcibly converted to Islam from Zoroastrianism, or the Mongols and Turks who were later to threaten Christian Europe. What would have been the results for Holy Orthodoxy, facing from Greek lands the hostility of the Papacy dominant to the West in Europe, with the Mohammedan threat posed to the Slavic north as well as to the Saracen east and south? Probably earlier predictions of the coming of the anti-Christ at the fall of Constantinople would not have proved to be false alarms.

Let us also recall that Islam was not the only religious option available to Grand Prince Vladimir. Earlier, about the year 740, the Khagan of the Khazars had accepted Judaism as the state religion of their empire which had prior to 862 controlled Kiev, dominated the valleys of the Dnieper and the Volga, and controlled the northern coasts of both the Black and the Caspian Seas. If Saint Vladimir had chosen to become the ally of the Jewish Khazars instead of the Byzantine Roman Empire, again the Orthodox Christians later under the Turkish yoke for five centuries would have had no mighty Russian protector to the north. We can only speculate, as we review the history of the twentieth century and the present conflicts, especially in the Middle East, what the modern world situation would be today with a Russian people Jewish both by heritage and religion. Such speculation, however, at base would at once conclude that, as bad as the situation is today, it could still be much worse for the cause of Holy Orthodoxy and for the few Orthodox Christians that would remain on earth, had not the Providence of Our Lord moved Saint Vladimir to become the Apostle of Holy Russia.

Let us examine the specific political context in which Saint Vladimir's conversion to Holy Orthodoxy was consummated. In 988 the great Byzantine Roman Emperor Basil II was in a desperate situation. He was the legitimate Orthodox Emperor, his Macedonian Dynasty having held the imperial throne for more than a hundred and twenty years. His rule, however, was threatened simultaneously by two pretenders, Bardas Phokas, the nephew of the Emperor Nicephorus II, who controlled the European side of the empire, and Bardas Sklerus who held the Asiatic side. As both pretenders made common cause, on September 14, 987, Phokas proclaimed himself Emperor. The great Russian Byzantine historian George Ostrogorsky describes the situation as follows: "Only external aid could save him [Basil II] from ruin." He appealed to the Grand Prince Vladimir who sent the



Vladimir the Great on the Millennium of Russia monument in Novgorod.

Дар Ветер, CC BY-SA 3.0

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Varangian Druzhina\* which saved the situation at the eleventh hour. Led by the Emperor Basil II in person, the valiant Varangians crushed the rebels at Chrysopolis. On April 13<sup>th</sup> of the next year Bardas Phokas was again defeated at Abydos and died at the end of the fight, probably of a heart attack.<sup>8</sup> Thus Saint Vladimir saved the legitimate Roman Emperor who, in turn, would prove to have a most glorious reign, conquering Bulgaria and the Balkans south of the Danube. Never again would the Orthodox Roman Empire be so great and powerful. This last grand opportunity was afforded by the aid of Russia, soon to become Christian, a historical hint that she would also in a few centuries be destined to become the Third and Final Rome.



Clash between the armies of Bardas Skleros and Bardas Phokas at Pankaleia, miniature from the Madrid Skylitzes.

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As a reward for his service Saint Vladimir had been promised in marriage the sister of Basil II, the Princess Anna Palaiologina. Again this represents a historical first, for never prior to 988 had a Byzantine Roman Princess, a Porphyrogenita\*, “one born in the purple”, been allowed to be given in marriage to a foreign ruler.<sup>9</sup> This unique honor, accorded to Kievan Rus, made it necessary that Saint Vladimir accept Christian Baptism as soon as possible, for his status as a pagan stood as the only real impediment to this glorious marriage. When Basil II, realizing that the internal threat to his rule had passed, hesitated to send his sister to her promised husband, Saint Vladimir made his point by force of arms, putting the City of Cherson under siege. Cherson (not Kherson) was the Byzantine Roman capital of what is today known as the Crimea. For Saint Vladimir the victory was easy, for a Greek sympathizer had secretly informed the Kievan Grand



Anna was the daughter of Byzantine Emperor Romanos II and Empress Theophano, and sister of Emperors Basil II and Constantine VIII. She was a Porphyrogenita, a legitimate daughter born in the special purple chamber of the Byzantine Emperor's Palace.

Prince of the location of a subterranean network of water pipes essential for sustaining the besieged city. The ancient Kievan chronicle of Nestor

tells us that, when Saint Vladimir realized the ease with which he would win the city and with it

<sup>8</sup> George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*\*, translated by J. Hussey, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1969, p. 304. Cf. also *Cambridge Medieval History IV*, Part I, p. 496 and A.A. Vasiliev, *History of the Byzantine Empire*, the University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, Wisconsin, 1958, I, p. 323: “It is not known exactly whether Russia’s conversion to Christianity took place in 988 or 989. Some scholars accept the former, others, the latter.”

<sup>9</sup> \* Ostrogorsky, p. 304. The granddaughter of the Co-Emperor Romanus I Lecapenus was married to Tsar Peter of Bulgaria and a relative of the successful usurper the Emperor John I Tzimiskes, also married the Holy Roman Emperor Otto II but both of these princesses were not Porphyrogenitae and did not belong to the legitimate Macedonian Dynasty.

his imperial bride, he fell to his knees thanking Christ and attributing the victory to His Divine Providence.

Herein lies the essence of our formula for success. At the base of all this activity stands Saint Vladimir's trust in God, his readiness to see the hand of the Savior in political and military events. Note also his balance and his humility. He negotiated to acquire his high-born bride and took to arms to carry his claim. At the same time he maintained a prayerful attitude and was clearly ready to bow before the Will of God. We also must maintain the balance of effort and prayer, recognizing at once the Christian Truth that prayer overcomes all obstacles but at the same time working humbly and positively, remembering the words attributed to the great eighteenth century statesman Edmund Burke, that for the triumph of evil nothing more is required than that good men idly do nothing. This is indeed the hard lesson we have learned from the success of Lenin and his industriously evil minority.

We must also learn from the example of the Emperor Augustus the basic requirement of unity and solidarity in order to win, avoiding, if at all possible, the rancor and arid thrill of divisiveness. Let us always admit that the essence of Russia's unity and former greatness is always Holy Orthodoxy, remembering the message of the great Russian writer Feodor Dostoyevsky:

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"And, perhaps, the most momentous pre-ordained destiny of the Russian People, within the destinies of mankind at large, consists in the preserving in their midst the Divine Image of Christ in all its purity, and when the time comes in the revelation of this image to the world which has lost its way!"<sup>10</sup>

On the other side there is the danger of forgetting and despising the reality of both history and politics. How can we deny the indispensable debt of the Orthodox Church and Faith to the Christian Monarchy of Russia? The ancient ideal of the Third Rome allowed Russia to preserve the purity of her Faith. In times of crisis, great Russian Princes and Tsars saved the Orthodox Church. If Saint Alexander Nevsky had been more of a politician and less of a Christian, he would, like Prince Daniel of Volhynia, have made common cause with the Swedes and the



Teutonic Knights against the Mongols. The sad and inevitable result would have been a compromising political church-union with the West. Later Tsar Ivan III the Great accepted as his bride the niece of the last Byzantine Roman Emperor. He realized that

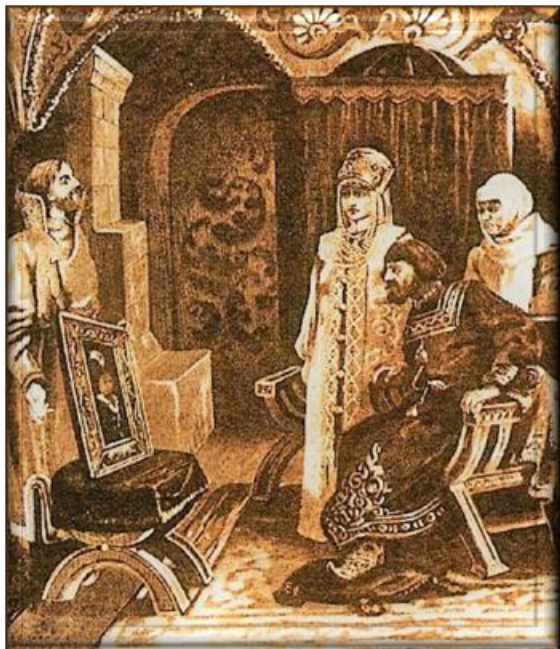
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Ivan was the first Russian ruler to style himself "tsar", albeit not as an official title. After marrying Sofia Palaiologina in 1472, he adopted the double-headed eagle on his coat of arms (*left*) and began to consider the idea of Moscow as the third Rome. He reigned for 43 years.

*Public domain*

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<sup>10</sup> Feodor M. Dostoyevsky, *The Diary of a Writer*, translated and annotated by Boris Brasol, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1949, I, p. 63.



Ivan Fryazin, sent by the Papal court, showed to Ivan III the portrait of Sophia Palaiologina.

by Viktor Muizhel  
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1598 to 1613. The failure that ignited this sad epoch of Russian history was the loss of the legitimate monarchy which until then had been preserved from the time of Saint Vladimir. Just as when Saint Vladimir providentially thrust the new rising power of Kievan Rus into the center of political turmoil within the Byzantine Roman Empire, saving the legitimate Emperor Basil II from the threat of two pretenders, so Russia, at the dawn of the seventeenth century was beset by pretenders, not two but rather four or five False Dimitris claiming to be the martyred Passion-Bearer Tsarevich Dimitri or his sons.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> *The Encyclopedia Britannica*. 11<sup>th</sup> edition (1910). Article by R.N. Bain, VII, pp. 983-984. The 1<sup>st</sup> False Dimitri attained the highest level of success of them all. The grandson of a Galician Boyar\*, his real name was Yuri Otrepev. His claim to the throne of Russia was supported by the Polish magnate Yuri Mniszech, so he converted to Roman Catholicism on April 17, 1604 and was presented to the Papal Nuncio Rangoni. The 2<sup>nd</sup> False Dimitri, nicknamed "The Thief of Tushino," was either the son of a priest or a converted Jew. In 1608 he defeated Tsar Basil Shuisky at Balkhov and secretly married the widow of the 1<sup>st</sup> False Dimitri, Marina Mniszech. As King Sigismund III pressed his own claims to the Russian throne and advanced on Moscow, the Poles discarded The Thief of Tushino. He fled to the Ukrainian region where he found considerable support, but in a half-drunk state was killed by a Tatar that he had flogged. The 3<sup>rd</sup> False Dimitri, nicknamed "The Thief of Pskov," also known as the Deacon Siderka, was accepted as legitimate by the Cossacks on March 2, 1612. He later fled from Pskov, was caught, sent to Moscow, and executed, probably by the Polish forces of the Prince Władysław who controlled the Capitol until the fall of

the Princess Sophia Palaiologina had been sent to him by the Pope in 1472 but stoutly refused to let this alliance work to fulfill the Pope's aim in proposing it. Had he been less pious and more practical, again the results could have been painfully different for the Orthodox Church in Russia.

This essential need so traditional and uniquely Russian for a clearly expressed and unflagging unity of purpose between the Orthodox Church and the Orthodox Monarchy can particularly be drawn from the successes, the failures, and the final triumph during the Time of Troubles\* from



Marriage of Ivan III to Princess Sophia Palaiologina, 1472.

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The Death of Tsarevich Dimitri of Uglich in 1591.  
by Pavel Pleshanov  
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Instead of the saving alliance with Saint Vladimir that the Emperor Basil II had enjoyed, there stood the menacing might of Poland and the hubristic adventurism of its King Sigismund III who encouraged the false Dimitris as the stalking-horses of his own ambition.

The Russians themselves were particularly vulnerable, when we consider the tragic failures of Tsar Boris Godunóv and the treasonous regicide of his son Tsar Feodor II in 1605. The two Godunóv Tsars lacked strength precisely because they did not have a legitimate link to Russia's ancient Princely Dynasty. In an unsuccessful plot which reminds us of the program carried out by Lenin right after his seizure of power in the October Revolution, the first False Dimitri plotted to reach his political and religious ends by decapitating the Russian People, by slaughtering in one coup the Boyars who constituted the aristocratic class of Old Russia. It was planned for May 18, 1606. The Pretender had invited the

Boyars and court dignitaries to a display of maneuvers by his Polish troops who had secret orders to kill specific Boyars and to prevent a patriotic reaction by opening fire directly on the people of Moscow.

(right) Boris Godunóv ruled the Tsardom of Russia as regent c. 1585-1598, and then as tsar from 1598 to 1605. After his reign, Russia descended into the Time of Troubles.

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The plan misfired, for on the day before its execution, the Muscovites revolted and the False Dimitri was killed by an angry crowd whose patriotic leader, Basil Shuisky, was proclaimed Tsar. Shuisky was a male-line descendant of the Great Rurik, 20 generations removed.

(left) Tsar Basil Shuisky.  
Public domain

1612. The 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> False Dimitris claimed to be the sons of "The Thief of Tushino" and were killed in 1610 and 1613 respectively.



False Dimitri I takes an oath of allegiance to Sigismund III, by Nikolai Never (1874)

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It is essential for us today to examine the actions and policy of the Russian Church during this ongoing crisis. The first False Dimitri was something of a Rasputin-like figure. He chose Ignati to be Patriarch of Moscow<sup>12</sup>, as he plotted both to rule in Russia as the puppet of Poland and to subject the Orthodox Church to the Pope. In the wake of the popular uprising that swept him away, his puppet Patriarch was deposed, defrocked from the priesthood, and reduced to the rank of a simple monk, and sent to the Chudov Monastery for censure and penance. Metropolitan Makari of Moscow in his *History of the Church*<sup>13</sup> emphasizes that, in condemning this treacherously Polonizing Patriarch, the Russian Church made no mention of politics, or even the fact that Ignati had been elected by the power of the False Dimitri, in an irregular manner, and had taught heretical doctrines. Rather he was defrocked on strictly canonical grounds for having given Holy Communion and married the Polish woman Marina Mniszech to the False



(left) Patriarch Hermogen [Hermogenes] refusing to bless the Poles, painting by Pavel Chistyakov (1860). Hermogen served as Patriarch from 1606 to his death in 1612. He inspired the uprising that put an end to the Time of Troubles. After he cursed the Roman Catholics, he was imprisoned at the Chudov Monastery, from which, when he heard of the volunteer army gathered by Kuzma Minin and commanded by Prince Pozharsky, he blessed them from afar. Upon this action, he was beaten and starved to death.

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid. p. 984, The account of R.N. Bain styles patriarch Ignati by the name of Isidore and notes that he was a Greek. Bain bases his account on Sergyei Solovev's *History of Russia* (Russian) Vol. VIII (Saint Petersburg, 1857).

<sup>13</sup> *Historia Ruski Tzerkve* (Russian). (Saint Petersburg, 1881) Vol. X, p. 122.

The Polish-Catholic noblewoman Marina Mniszech, known in Russian lore as "Marinka the Witch".

*lithograph by  
Jean-François  
Villain, Public  
domain*



Dimitri without first having received her into the Orthodox Faith by Holy Baptism. The fate of Patriarch Ignati should serve as a warning and example for the hierarchs of the official Church of Moscow today who, following the example of the late Metropolitan Sergei, have capitulated the Church of Russia to the atheists that rule the Soviet state.

It was the Russian Orthodox Church that aroused the Christian population and crystalized a unified opposition to the threat of Polish domination. The center of resistance was the great monastery of the Holy Trinity of Saint Sergius of Radonezh,

and it successfully withstood a sixteen-month Polish siege. Its Abbot Dionysi and the new patriarch Germogen [Hermogenes] wrote letters to be read in all churches, calling upon all Russia to restore both the House of the Most Holy Mother of God and to vindicate the sovereignty of Moscow. For his heroism, Patriarch-Saint Germogen, like Patriarch-Saint Tikhon in our own century [20<sup>th</sup>], died a martyr's death in prison, starved by the Polish overlords of Moscow.



Siege of 1608–1610: Orthodox monks led by the chronicler Avraamy Palitsyn defended the Holy Trinity St. Sergius Monastery against Polish troops from September 1609 – January 1611. In the 1550s, a wooden palisade surrounding the monastery was replaced with stone walls with 12 towers, which helped in withstanding the Polish-Lithuanian siege. To this day there exists a shell-hole in the cathedral gates, preserved as a reminder of Władysław IV's (King of Poland, Grand Duke of Lithuania) abortive siege in 1618.

*Painting by Sergey Miloradovich, Public domain*

It must also be emphasized that while the inspiration for the saving of Russia at this time came from the Church, its success depended upon the clear message that Russia could be unified and made strong by the restoration of the ancient, truly Russian, monarchy bolstered by ties of blood and Faith to the Dynasty of Saint Vladimir. To this clear call the Russian people responded with courage, so that it can be said, that, as the Church saved the state by her loyalty, the ancient ideal of the Orthodox Russian monarchy saved the Church from heretical compromise and subjugation to the Papacy.

By 1612 the tables had turned. In the face of Russian unity, it was now the Poles who were disunified, with King Sigismund III, his son Władysław, as well as the second and third False Dimitris claiming the throne. Russian unity under the banners of Holy Orthodoxy and the legitimate monarchy could not but be victorious. A common cattle dealer of Novgorod by the name of Kuzma Minin organized a popular militia for national liberation which under the aristocratic leadership of Prince Pozharsky relieved Moscow, driving out forever the threat of Polish domination.



Kuzma Minin (right) with prince Dmitry Pozharsky. Painting by Mikhail Scotti (1850).

*Public domain*

In contrast to the riotous and democratic failure of 1606 which brought the and ill-starred Basil Shuisky to the throne, a new Zemski Sobor\* was held to choose a new Tsar. Contrary to popular misconceptions in our own time and within our emigration, the great and healing Zemski Sobor of 1613 did not so much express the Will of Russia in electing a candidate for the throne but rather reflected the Mind and Judgment of Russia, diligently searching out a truly Orthodox and pious Prince with a most legitimate right of blood to be crowned Tsar of All the Russias. This lesson of legitimacy learned in so much blood and chaos in the seventeenth century must not be forgotten in the twentieth century when the troubles overwhelming Russia in time and terror have reduced by comparison her seventeenth century troubles with the result that they appear to us as but trifles in a romantic interlude.

Tsar Michael I was crowned on July 11, 1613, so that this year marks yet another noteworthy anniversary, the three hundred and seventy-fifth year of the Romanov Family as the sovereign



Tsar Mikhaíl Fyódorovich  
Románov crowned on his  
17<sup>th</sup> birthday, July 21,  
1613

*Public domain*

Dynasty of Holy Russia. It is amazing and significant that these three Russian anniversaries that we commemorate in 1988, the Baptism of Russia a thousand years ago, the imperial sovereignty of the Romanov Dynasty and the tragic regicide of Ekaterinburg all took place in July. It is, furthermore, mystically amazing and not a little bit frightening that all three occur in July and that July is the month par excellence of revolutions. One at once recalls the terrible French Revolution of 1789 and its echo in 1830 which not only broke the legitimate rule of the Kings of France but also kindled anti-monarchist fires all over Europe. A direct and dreadful echo of Bastille Day occurred in our own time with the regicide on July 14, 1958 of the Hashemite King Faisal of Iraq.

Our apprehension, however, must be tempered by optimism for the month of July was named after the great Roman general and statesman Julius Caesar whose murder on the Ides of March of 44 B.C. marked the final failure of the Roman Republic. Because July has thirty-one days, so does August, the month named after the great Emperor Augustus whose constitutional reforms inaugurated monarchy for two thousand years in both the Roman Empire and throughout all of Europe. Thus it all comes together mystically in this year and in this month. Let us then take courage for unlike July, August, named after the Emperor Augustus, commemorates not revolutions but on its thirtieth day marks the birth of His Imperial Highness Grand Duke Wladimir of Russia, who in our seemingly endless time of troubles leads us by his example of faithfulness, courage, and personal sacrifice. As long as I have been alive, minus two months, His Imperial Highness has borne this burden against the threat of assassination, in the face of world ridicule but with the firm consolation of both Russian History and the Orthodox Christian Faith.

While others can celebrate anniversaries and jubilees with satisfaction, looking back proudly on what has been accomplished, it is the heavy lot of the Russians today not only to remember and celebrate but also to begin the whole thing over again. We need a new Saint Vladimir to restore and reconstruct. Psalm 90 (verse 4) rings with the words: "For a thousand years in Thine Eyes, O Lord, are but as yesterday that is past and as a watch in the night." The first verse holds the key: "Thou, O Lord, hast been our refuge unto generation and generation."

As we celebrate the millennium of Holy Russia, let this be our prayer and our hope. Let us remember how Aeneas suffered exile from Troy only to lay the seeds in Italy of future Roman greatness a thousand years later. Let us not forget the Emperor Augustus whose watchword two thousand years ago was unity. Let us imitate the Faith and Courage of the two great Equals of the Apostles, Saint Constantine and Saint Vladimir, looking for find a leader like them in our own time whose work will last again a thousand years. Let us admire both the pure Orthodoxy and the political sagacity of Prince-Saint Alexander Nevsky and Tsar Ivan II the Great. Let us try to emulate with tears and sincerity of heart the soul-cleansing repentance of the Tsars, Ivan IV the Stern and Boris Godunóv. Let us also take example from the piety of Patriarch-Saint

Germogen, the initiative Kuzma Minin, and the courage of Prince Pozharsky. Let us not deny the value of the vigor and achievement of the Emperor Peter the Great, the glory and idealism of the Emperor Alexander I, the courage and determination of the Emperor Nicholas I. Let us feel the concern for the poor, the abandoned, the weak and persecuted that fired the breasts of the martyred Emperors Paul I and Alexander II. Let us know how to show the prudence and firmness of the Emperor Alexander III as well as the heroic devotion of the Emperor-Martyr, Nicholas II who always preferred the welfare of all in Russia to his own honor and safety.

Let us go forth to celebrate Holy Russia's glorious millennium like the Imperial Army of old with "С нами Бог, разумейте языцы, и покаряйтесь: Яко с нами Бог" (God is with us: understand ye nations and submit yourselves: for God is with us!) resounding in our hearts. At the same time let us not be ashamed to sing "Боже, Царя храни!" (God save the Tsar). And always let us be ready with loud voice and hope unflagging to raise both glass and heart to the toast "вечная слава России" (Undying Glory to Russia!).

Thank you.



**Б**оже, царя храни,  
сильный державный,  
царствуй на славу,  
на славу нам.

**Ц**арствуй на страх врагам  
царь православный.  
Боже Царя, Царя храни.

**G**od save and shield the Tsar,  
Mighty and sovereign,  
Rule in glory, rule for our glory.

**R**eign to the fear of our foes  
Our Orthodox Tsar.  
God keep and shield the Tsar.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR:



Richard Victor Desrosiers (the future Father Constantine) was born at Saint Joseph's Hospital in Nashua, New Hampshire on July 6, 1938 (June 23 on the Orthodox Church calendar, the Feast of the Vladimir Icon of the Mother of God). He was reared in a modest two-story rowhouse in the small town of Greenville, New Hampshire, located on the high waterfall of the Southegan River. Although Greenville is less than seven square miles, the waterfall powered mills and the town became a prosperous manufacturing center of cotton and wool textiles. The factories are now closed, but the quaint town is still dotted with beautiful Queen Anne style houses and finely crafted brick buildings that are a testimony to its past.

Richard's father, Joseph Arsène Desrosiers, was of French-Canadian background. He served as a police officer, until every adult in the town of Greenville took the U.S. Government Civil Service Test and he earned the highest score. This enabled him to assume the job of Postmaster of Greenville. Richard's mother, Louise, was born in the Bavarian Forest town of Grafenau, in Germany. Richard was the eldest child and had a brother, Thomas. His devout Catholic parents instilled a deep religious piety in their children.

His mother had a disciplined German nature and was strict with the boys, insisting they practice self-discipline, obedience, exercise and study. On one of their frequent long walks, it is she that told Richard his personality was well suited to be a professor.

Richard attended high school in Berthierville, Quebec, Canada, at the renowned school "College Saint Joseph", an all-boys academy run by Catholic brothers and clerics of the Order of



College Saint Joseph, from a 1927 postcard

Saint Viateur. Although his father wanted this fine education for his son, he once said that the \$60 a month fee (which covered room, board and tuition) was very expensive.

It is significant that the circumstances of his upbringing enabled Richard, by the time he completed high school, to have a working knowledge of French and German in addition to his native English (and later as

Professor of Classics at University to teach classes in Greek and Latin, as well as in English translation). After graduating high school, he went to Boston College where the expense became even greater -- \$1,000 a year. Although he had a scholarship that provided \$250 a year, this was still a burden on his father, who said it was time that Richard help support himself. And so, he obtained a job at a bookstore in Boston where he worked for four years, until he graduated in June of 1960. At graduation, he was presented with the Theology Award for his term paper on the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom, for which he was presented with \$100, which he gave to his father.

At Saint Joseph's, he attended daily Mass, High Mass on Sundays, vespers on Sunday evening, and other occasional prayer services. In Boston, however, he found that the majority of Irish Catholics did not have this level of observance. Also, at this time he followed closely the proceedings of Vatican II. Disappointed with the churches and the direction of liberalism the Roman Church was taking, a friend mentioned that Cardinal Cushing had just opened Our Lady of Kazan Russian Catholic Church, that it was different and more traditional, and suggested that he attend a service.

Upon entering the Kazan Church for the first time, he was struck by its beauty and the mosaic icons on the iconostas. Offering a frequent number of services throughout the week, it quickly became his home parish, and he joined the choir. No Russians attended, but the priest, Father John Mowatt, insisted that the choir learn Slavonic as he believed it would lead Orthodox Christians to attend and result in their becoming Catholic. They somewhat surreptitiously commemorated the Pope of Rome as the Western Orthodox Patriarch. For some time, Richard truly believed that the Russians would become Catholic, but as Vatican II progressed, his spiritual world began to fall apart and the Church that he knew began to deteriorate: the Latin Mass ended, monks left their vows, nuns married, guitar Masses prevailed, there was disorder and liberalism everywhere, a revolution in the Church. He recalls: "I began thinking, how is it these Russians that are under persecution, many of them escaping from being turned back over to Stalin's armies by the allies, maintain such a piety and yet the Catholics living in freedom are becoming so impious?"

During this time in Boston, as he studied Slavonic, more and more he was drawn to Russia. He met Countess Nina Georgievna Mouraviova, who took under her wing the pious young man. Every Thursday, he visited her home for tea, and she taught him Russian language, culture, and many things about Russian history. They studied one emperor every Thursday.

In the meantime, he graduated from Boston College, majoring in Latin and Philosophy with minors in Greek and Theology, and moved on to graduate studies at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. There, he took a course offered by the eminent scholar of ancient Macedonian epigraphy, Professor Charles Epton. The course was a year-long study of the first Christian Emperor, Constantine the Great. He read (in Latin) the works of the early Christian author Lactantius, known as the "Christian Cicero," and who was a close advisor to Emperor Constantine, helping guide his development of religious policy. Then they studied Eusebius'

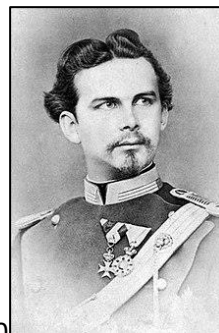
Ecclesiastical History and his Panegyric on the Emperor Constantine written shortly after the Emperor's death.

To Richard, a deep-thinking man, these works were like a doorway, helping him to see and confront the problems he was facing in his own spiritual development. "In reading *The Ecclesiastical History*, Eusebius called it 'the Great Church', and that meant it was not some sect," recalls Father Constantine. "I realized that Rome was the first in rank not because of the Apostle Peter, but because that was where the emperor resided, according to the Council of Nicaea in 325. I began to think, 'Where is that church today? Is it the Orthodox, or the Catholic Church? I began to be convinced that it was the Orthodox Church'."

Richard graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 1961 with a master's degree in Classics. His time at the University of Wisconsin was beneficial in many ways, as he was finally convinced of the truth of Orthodoxy, and at age 27, on the Feast of the Entry of the Mother of God into the Temple in 1967, he was baptized Orthodox, taking the name Constantine. His godfather was the Very Reverend Father Roman Lukianov (of blessed memory), the rector of Holy Epiphany Russian Orthodox Church in Roslindale, Massachusetts. At last, he had found the spiritual peace and fulness of the Christian Faith that he had so long sought.

Within a short while he proceeded to his next educational venue, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. There he obtained various professional employments during this time, serving as a University of New Hampshire lecturer, and as a teaching assistant for Latin both at the University of Wisconsin (1960-62) and UNC Chapel Hill (1962-65). He was awarded a Ph.D. in Classics from the University of North Carolina in 1969.

Following graduation, he quickly was accepted as an Associate Professor at the University of New Hampshire in Durham, where he co-founded the Classics Department and taught Roman and Greek language, literature, religion and culture for 40 years. The University also appointed him an advisor for pre-law students.



King Ludwig II  
of Bavaria,  
the castle-  
builder,  
c. 1874

Relevant to his Baptism in the Russian Orthodox Church, Father Constantine shares an interesting memory of Anton, his German grandfather on his mother's side.

Anton had been in charge of a prison camp for Russian soldiers during WWI. When the war ended, the prisoners beseeched him to go to the government of the new republic and ask if they would give the camp to the prisoners so that they would not be repatriated to what was now Lenin's Bolshevik government.

This posed a problem for Anton, for he was a staunch monarchist of the Kingdom of Bavaria that was formed in 1805, and its Wittelsbach royal family which dated back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century. He resented that Woodrow Wilson had been successful with the Treaty of Versailles which ended the kingdom and formed a republic. But as much as he loathed to deal with the new government, he heard the real human pleas of these Russian Orthodox soldiers and setting aside his principles, he pled their case and succeeded.

Father Constantine mused that in appreciation for this act of kindness which permitted these Orthodox Christians to worship in peace, Christ granted him, Anton's grandson, the grace to become a Russian Orthodox Christian.

Professor Desrosiers was always trying creatively to instruct people in the long history of Russia, being often an ally of America. In 1983, he planned a conference on the world's monarchies to be held at the University, which was to cover a variety of kingdoms. According to (then) Professor Desrosiers, "Everyone was excited because it was something new, and I oversaw the planning of the event. As things began to come together, the conference took a different direction. Since it was the 2,000th anniversary of the Ludi Saeculares<sup>14</sup> games (in 1983) reinstituted by Rome's first emperor, Caesar Augustus in 17 B.C., perhaps this first year of this conference should be a celebration of the Emperor Caesar Augustus and the Emperor Nicholas II of Russia. An article about the conference then appeared in *The Boston Globe*, and much to my delight, it somehow turned into a celebration of monarchy in Russia."

After his retirement in the year 2000, he devoted more time to his church, serving two terms (a total of 14 years) as starosta (warden) of Holy Epiphany Church in Roslindale, and later in the same function at the newly created church of St. Xenia of St. Petersburg in Methuen, Massachusetts. He later became a deacon, on the feast of St. Lawrence the Deacon, in 2009. In time, the First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, His Eminence Metropolitan Hilarion of thrice-blessed memory, told him he had been retired long enough and it was time for him to start a new career, and ordained him to the holy priesthood on September 26, 2010 (Sept. 13 on the Church calendar), the feast of the Commemoration of the Founding of the Church of the Resurrection (the Holy Sepulcher) at Jerusalem in 335.

In 2018, Father Constantine was the honoree of the New Hampshire Classical Association, for having served as president and then secretary for 30 years. One of the speakers of this



(l-r) Professor Constantine Desrosiers (AKA Father Constantine) with H.I.H. Grand Duchess Leonida and H.I.H. Grand Duke Wladimir, who bestowed upon him the honor of Knight of the Order of Saint Michael the Archangel.

event was one of his former students, New Hampshire's (now retired) Secretary of State, Bill Gardner, who said that he esteemed Professor Desrosiers' deep knowledge of history and government.

Professor Desrosiers had also served a term as president of the Classical Association of New England at Dartmouth College. To encourage the study of Latin in high schools in New Hampshire, he energetically went to many schools and gave presentations to the students about the value of learning Latin. Some of these students went on to become his students

in University and later Latin teachers themselves in various high schools.

<sup>14</sup> The games marked the end of a saeculum, considered the longest possible length of human life, either 100 or 110 years, and the beginning of the next, and involved three days of sacrifices to Roman gods, entertainments and feasting.

In 1990, he was inducted as a Knight of the Order of Saint Michael. He was knighted by the Grand Duke Wladimir Kyrillovich (reposed in 1991), who became heir-apparent to the throne of Russia in 1938, as he was the great-grandson of the Emperor Alexander II and also of Queen Victoria, and first-cousin of Tsar-Martyr Nicholas.

After Father Constantine's father passed away at age 62, he became even closer to his mother, Louise, helping support and take care of her. Prior to her repose in 1982, she converted to Orthodox Christianity, taking the name Elizabeth for the New-martyr of Russia, St. Elizabeth Feodorovna.

In 2022, with the written testament of His Eminence, Metropolitan Hilarion of thrice-blessed memory, the Church's new chief hierarch and loving pastor, His Eminence, Metropolitan Nicholas, elevated Father Constantine to the rank of Archpriest. Now Father Constantine, in 2023, is assigned as second priest at Saint Xenia's Orthodox Church in Methuen, Massachusetts, and as second priest at the Holy Protection of the Mother of God Russian Orthodox Mission in North Port, Florida. He also serves the Queen of All Skete.



Those who know him appreciate his unique way of thinking: his sharp and insightful mind is able to thread a needle through the eye of history, connecting ancient dates with present events. And those who have the great blessing of availing themselves of his priesthood acclaim his attributes of being a tireless, self-sacrificing and conscientious priest, and a faithful son of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (since his conversion to Orthodoxy, he has never been a member of any other Orthodox jurisdiction). He always has time for everyone, and even at age 84, maintains a great flexibility to go with God's will, which he can discern due to his purity of life, zealous spirit, and life of deep prayer.

Father Constantine in his kelia as a guest of the Saint Nicholas Podvorie of the Uspensky Convent, Perm, Russia, Bright Week 2019.

*Written by Mother Andrea*



## GLOSSARY

- Augustus:** A title bestowed first upon the Emperor Octavian, who henceforth was known as Augustus, meaning “majestic, sacred, grand”.
- Boyar:** The title of a noble class of advisers and landowners, the highest rank of feudal nobility in Kievan Rus' and other areas, second only to the ruling princes. Various etymological theories have been present, all deriving from “rich”, “cattle owner”, “fight/battle” or other similar roots. Boyars often wore taller hats, as the taller the hat in ancient Slavic culture, the higher the rank of the individual.
- Druzhina:** In medieval Kievan Rus', a druzhina was a fellowship of advisors to a Slavic chieftain or prince. The word comes from the Slavic “друг” (drug), meaning “companion, or friend”. The druzhina helped with administration of a province as well as military might. The first druzhina were the Varangians, in the 9th century. In time, they evolved into two groups: the boyars who were the closest advisors, and the common soldiers. The prince provided financial support, although members could leave and enter the service of another prince. The result of this was the prince was beholden to reward his druzhina with wages, booty, sharing tribute, and eventually giving them land.
- Imperator:** Supreme commander of the Roman Empire, in whose name victories were won.
- Imperium:** In ancient Rome, a chief military command conferred upon an individual by law, granting the authority to command the national military forces.
- in toto:** In entirety
- Maius Imperium:** A Latin term meaning having the greatest power. Augustus was given the title imperius maius proconsulare in 23 B.C.
- Pax Romana:** A Latin term meaning “Roman peace”, referring specifically to a 200- to 300-year period beginning with Emperor Augustus. This was a golden age of Rome, with order, stability, prosperity, and power.
- Perun:** In Slavic mythology, Perun was the highest god of the pantheon, mainly associated with fire but also with sky, thunder, lightning, storms and other things. He was the lord to whom animal sacrifices were made.
- Plebeian Tribunes:** Established ca. 495 B.C. to represent the plebeians (common citizens) of Rome to the Senate. They provided a check on the power of the Senate and held the power to propose legislation and to veto actions of consuls to protect the class of plebeians. An assault on a Plebeian Tribune was punishable by death. In

Imperial Rome, the power of the Plebeian Tribune was granted to the emperor and the office lost most of its functions.

**Pontifex Maximus:** “Supreme pontiff”, which was originally a religious office held by the chief high priest of ancient Rome. The Emperor Augustus subsumed this into the person of the emperor, making him both a religious and governmental figure and instilling in him all power of the Empire. Emperor Gratian changed this to Pontifex Indyltus, or “honorable pontiff”, transferring the Pontifex maximus title to the Bishop of Rome, which has continued to this day.

**Porphyrogenita:** “Born in the purple”. In the Byzantine Empire, this term described one who was born after the father became emperor. A child born before he ascended the throne would not be Porphyrogenitus. In this time, Tyrian purple was a very expensive dye and there were laws prohibiting commoners from wearing the color as it was reserved for nobility. There was a special room in the Imperial Palace at Constantinople, the walls of which were covered entirely in porphyry, where reigning empresses gave birth, thus creating the term, “Born in the purple.”

**Praenomen:** The first name of a citizen of ancient Rome.

**Princeps:** A Latin word meaning “the first”, or “foremost”. Used as a title in the Roman Republic for the leading member of the Senate, then was adopted by Augustus as an unofficial title. The term “Prince” derives from Princeps.

**Stichera:** Plural of Sticheron. A hymn of a certain melody and genre in the Eastern Orthodox tradition, sung at vespers or matins after a psalm or Scripture verse.

**Time of Troubles:** A fifteen-year period in Russian history, from 1598 to 1613. It was a time of political crisis, anarchy, lawlessness, famine, occupation, war and conflicts. It began with the death of Feodor I (feeble son of Ivan IV Grozny) and lasted until the Zemsky Sobor elected Michael I of the house of Romanov to the throne.

**Tribunician Power:** Refers to the rights of ancient Rome’s Plebeian Tribunes, and after Emperor Augustus to the same privileges claimed by the emperor. This included sacrosanctity, meaning personal inviolability while they held the office, thus conferring a penalty of death against anyone who would assault a Plebeian Tribune.

**Zemski Sobor:** An occasional Russian parliament of the 16-17<sup>th</sup> centuries

## INDEX OF PERSONS

### Aeneas

In mythology, he was the son of the Greek goddess Aphrodite and the Dardanian prince Anchises. His father was a cousin of King Priam, the last King of Troy. In Virgil's Aeneid he is portrayed as an ancestor of Romulus and Remus and one of the few Trojans who managed to flee Troy. This group, known as the Aeneads, landed in Italy and became progenitors of the Romans. Aeneas was the first hero of Rome.

### Emperor Alexander I

(1777–1825)

Emperor of Russia from 1801, eldest son of Emperor Paul I. He succeeded to the throne after his father was murdered and ruled Russia during the Napoleonic Wars. An enduring legend is that he faked his death and retired to Siberia, becoming the Staretz Fyodor Kuzmich and living in a modest house protected by the Imperial Chancery.



*left Staretz Fyodor Kuzmich, right  
Emperor Alexander I*

*Public domain*

### Emperor Alexander II

(1818–1881)

Emperor of Russia from 1855, eldest son of Nicholas I. He is known as Alexander the Liberator for having emancipated the serfs. He also imposed military service, abolished corporal punishment, and encouraged university education. He backed the Union during America's Civil War and sent warships. He also sold Alaska to the United States. He quelled numerous uprisings and was assassinated.

*Emperor Alexander II*

*Public domain*



### Emperor Alexander III

(1845-1894)

Emperor of Russia from 1881, 2<sup>nd</sup> son of Alexander II. He believed in total autocracy of the Emperor. He insisted that all Russia spoke the same language and had the same religion – Orthodox Christianity. On his deathbed, he was brought Holy Communion by St. John of Kronstadt.

*Emperor Alexander III*

*Public domain*



### Saint Alexander Nevsky

(c. 1220-1263)

In Kievan Rus', he was Prince of Novgorod and Kiev, and Grand Prince of Vladimir. He earned the name "Nevsky" when at age 20 he defeated a vast army of invading Swedes at the Neva River. He was victorious in battles against the Teutonic Knight Crusaders, Germans, Lithuanians and Finns. He is emperor's national hero of Russia.

### Archbishop Andrei of Novo Diveyevo

(1893-1978)

He studied engineering but was unfulfilled and became a priest during Soviet times. Elder Nectarius of Optina reposed under his epitaph. After persecution and imprisonment, he

moved to New York and founded Novo Diveyevo Convent and a home for the aged. He served as spiritual father of Metropolitan Philaret.

### Princess Anna Porphyrogenita Romanovna

(963–1011)

The daughter of Byzantine Emperor Romanos II and sister of Co-Emperors Basil II and Constantine VIII. She was a Porphyrogenita, born in the special purple chamber of the Palace. Basil II negotiated her hand in marriage in exchange for military aid from Vladimir of Kiev. Vladimir sent 6,000 Varangian soldiers and demanded baptism to Orthodox Christianity. Anna was an active participant in the Christianization of Russia.

Tsarina Anna Porphyrogenita Romanovna

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### Askold and Dir

(mid-9th–c. 882)

Varangian lieutenants of Rurik sent to invade Constantinople in 865. Unsuccessful, they retreated to Kiev, where they seized power and collected tribute. They were overthrown by the regent Oleg, who then placed over the Kievans the legitimate princely child of Rurik, Igor.

### Emperor Caesar Augustus

(63 B.C.—14 A.D.)

Also known as Octavian, his great-uncle Julius Caesar named him as his heir. He is one of the greatest leaders in history, forming the Roman Empire and ushering in the pax Romana. The Senate conferred upon him the title of augustus as a title of religious authority, which has since been used by all emperors. In 12 B.C. he assumed the title of Pontifex Maximus, fusing in the person of the emperor the highest religious figure with the highest political rank, bestowing incredible power.



Bust of Augustus as pontifex maximus  
1st century BC

Author Vicens Valcárcel Pérez

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augustus#/media/File:Augustus\\_com\\_a\\_%22Pontifex\\_maximus%22\\_\(detall\)\\_ \(finals\\_s.\\_I\\_aC\).Museu\\_Nacional\\_Rom%C3%A0\\_\(Palau\\_Massimo\).Roma.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augustus#/media/File:Augustus_com_a_%22Pontifex_maximus%22_(detall)_ (finals_s._I_aC).Museu_Nacional_Rom%C3%A0_(Palau_Massimo).Roma.jpg)

### Bardas Phokas

(c. 940–989)

Byzantine general and nephew of Emperor Nikephorus II. Phokas was engaged in three revolts for and against the ruling dynasty. The first was against his cousin, Emperor John I Tzimiskes, for reducing his family's influence, a revolt which led to Bardas' exile. In the second, he was brought out of exile to help quell a revolt against imperial authorities. In the third, he attempted to seize imperial power for himself, which was when Emperor Basil sought aid from Vladimir of Kiev. Bardas fell off his horse and died.

### Bardas Skleros

Skleros made a name for himself when he defended Constantinople against Sviatoslav I of Kiev in 970, and became an advisor to his brother-in-law, Emperor John I Tzimiskes. When John died, Skleros aspired to replace him as emperor but was not selected and stirred up a rebellion against Emperor Basil II. He was seriously wounded in battle and the rebellion ended.

### Emperor Basil II Porphyrogenitus

(958 – 1025)

Basil was a great administrator and filled the treasuries, enabling his successors to survive for decades because of his work. One of his most significant dealings was to marry his sister, Anna Porphyrogenita, to Vladimir I of Kiev. The result was an exchange of military support which formed the Byzantine Varangian Guard. This marriage also led to Kievan Rus being baptized into Orthodox Christianity.

### Emperor-Saint Constantine the Great, Equal-to-the-Apostles

(272—337)

He is known for rebuilding the strategically located city of Byzantium as the magnificent triumph of Christianity, known as the “New Rome”.

He is also known for seeing a Cross in the sky, with the inscription “By this sign thou shalt conquer”, and he made a standard bearing the chi-rho to be carried in the victorious Battle of the Milvian Bridge. In 313 he signed the Edict of Milan with his co-emperor Licinius, which changed policies towards Christians, but Licinius renewed persecutions and Constantine took up arms and defeated him, becoming sole emperor of both East and West. He personally convoked the Council of Nicaea in 325.

St. Constantine the Great.  
fresco by Manuel Panselinos,  
Protaton, Mount Athos, *Public domain*



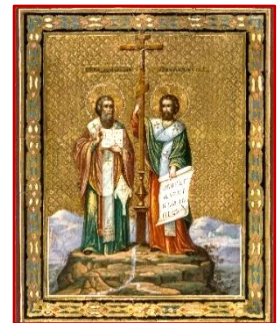
### Copernicus

(1473—1543)

A Prussian Renaissance mathematician, astronomer, and Catholic canon. He wrote a book that set forth a model of the universe with the sun at its center, rather than the earth – a major scientific event. It was banned by the Catholic Church until 1835.

### Saints Cyril and Methodius

Cyril (826–869) and Methodius (815–885) were brothers who are known as the “Apostles to the Slavs” and “Equal-to-the-Apostles”. They were sent as missionaries by Emperor Michael III and Patriarch Photios to Moravia at the request of Prince Rastislav. They were successful at bringing the Slavs to Orthodoxy because they developed the Glagolitic alphabet, the first to be used for the Slavonic language, into which they translated the Gospels and liturgical texts.



St. Cyril and Methodius,  
Russian icon, c. 1880

### King Cyrus the Great of Persia

Known for respecting the religions of the lands that he conquered, he is responsible for the return of the Israelites from Babylonian captivity to Israel. In the Hebrew Bible, Isaiah 45:1, it is attested that God anointed Cyrus for this task, that the Jews could rebuild Jerusalem.

### Prince Daniel Romanovich of Volhynia

[1201 – 1264)

Son of Galician ruler Roman II Mstyslavich, Daniel was King of Ruthenia. At age four he went into exile with his mother, Anna of Byzantium, and renounced his claims to the throne of Galicia

but at age 20 regained the throne. He was forced by the Golden Horde to accept Mongol overlordship. He then compromised his Orthodox Christianity through a union with Rome to fight the Mongols. But the Pope didn't send an army and he had to concede to the Horde so they would not assault the towns.

### **Martyred Passion-Bearer Tsarevich Dimitri**

(1582—1591)

Dimitri Ivanovich was the youngest son of Ivan IV and his 7<sup>th</sup> wife Maria Nagaya. Ivan was succeeded by Dimitri's older brother, the weak Feodor I, and the country was governed by a regency council headed by Boris Godunov. Godunov sent Dimitri and his mother to Uglich, where Dimitri died under mysterious circumstances.

When Tsar Feodor died childless, Dimitri, the only other Rurikid heir, was also dead, and Godunov claimed the throne. While some believed that Godunov got rid of Dimitri to clear the way for his own succession, most likely Dimitri stabbed himself in the throat during an epileptic seizure while playing with a knife.



St. Dimitri of Uglich

### **False Dimitri I**

He claimed to be the son of Ivan IV, stating he had escaped an assassination attempt at age eight. When Tsar Boris Godunov suddenly died and the boyars staged a coup, killing Tsar Feodor II and his mother, False Dimitri I's triumphantly entered Moscow and was crowned Tsar, reigning for one year.

His downfall was his marriage to the Polish Catholic Marina Mniszech, who refused to convert to Orthodoxy which enraged the populace. Ten days later, the Kremlin was stormed and Dimitri captured, murdered, burned, and his ashes fired from a canon towards Poland.

False Dimitri I.

Wikimedia commons, *Public domain*,  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Dymitr\\_Samozwaniec.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Dymitr_Samozwaniec.jpg)



### **False Dimitri II**

In 1607, False Dimitri II appeared on the scene, with Polish aid. He set up camp outside Moscow, in Tushino, and Marina Mniszech claimed it was her husband, False Dimitri I, who had escaped the palace coup. His unsuccessful attempt at Tsardom came to an end in December of 1610, when in a drunken state, he was shot and then beheaded by a Tatar princeling whom he had flogged.

### **False Dimitri III**

The last of the pretenders claiming to be the youngest son of Ivan IV, Tsarevich Dimitri. He was supposedly a church deacon who suddenly, in the town of Ivangorod in March of 1611, proclaimed that he was Tsarevich Dimitri Ivanovich. Within a year he was seized and executed.

### **Feodor Mikhailovich Dostoyevsky**

(1821–1881)

Highly influential Russian novelist and journalist, with his works translated into 170 languages. His literary works cover philosophical and religious themes and explore the human condition in 19<sup>th</sup> century Russia. He is regarded as one of the greatest novelists of all time.

### King Faisal II of Iraq

(1939—1958)

It was believed the Hashemites descended from Hashim ibn Abd Manaf, great-grandfather of Muhammed. When Faisal's father died in a car crash, he became King at age three under a regent uncle. During the 14 July Revolution, a coup d'état overthrew the monarchy and executed Faisal, ending the monarchy in Iraq, which then became a republic.

### Tsar Feodor I Ivanovich

1557-1598

The feeble-minded son of Ivan IV the Terrible and his first wife, his mother died when he was age three. He had no interest in politics but when Ivan killed his older brother in a fit of rage, he became heir to the throne, which he ascended in 1584. His wife's brother, Boris Godunov, became regent. Feodor died childless.

Tsar Feodor I Ivanovich

<http://www.pecherskiy.nne.ru/history/dates.php>

Collection of Kremlin Armory  
Public domain



### Saint Germogen, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia [Hermogenes]

(c. 1530 – 1612)

He inspired the uprising that put an end to the Time of Troubles. Tsar Basil IV helped him to become Patriarch. When Basil was dethroned and the Poles took control, Germogen opposed enthroning Władysław IV unless he converted to Orthodoxy. He was imprisoned in the Chudov Monastery, and when he blessed the Orthodox volunteer army of Kuzma Minin and Prince Pozharsky, he was beaten and starved to death. He was glorified by the Russian Orthodox Church in 1913.

### Tsar Feodor II Borisovich Godunov

(1589 – 1605)

Son and successor of Boris Godunov, he was tsar for only one month, at the beginning of the Time of Troubles. While prepared from childhood for tsardom, he endured an atmosphere of treachery, with envoys of False Dimitri I demanding his removal and boyars who would not swear allegiance to him. They seized the Kremlin and killed Feodor.

### Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev

(1931—2022)

Served as the 8<sup>th</sup> and final General Secretary of the Soviet Union, from 1985 until its dissolution in 1991. His policies of glasnost and perestroika (openness and restructuring) undermined the one-party state. While he did not aim to break up the Soviet Union, after an unsuccessful coup in 1991, the Union dissolved and he resigned the presidency. He is one of the most significant figures of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### Emperor Gratian (Flavius Gratianus Augustus)

(359-383)

In 375 he became sole ruler of the West. He signed the Edict of Thessalonica making Christianity the legal religion in the Empire. He was influenced by St. Ambrose of Milan. He refused the title Pontifex Maximus and ceded it to the Bishop of Rome.

### **Tsar Borís Fyodorovich Godunóv**

(1552 –1605)

Ruled the Tsardom of Russia as de facto regent of Feodor I, and then as the first non-Rurikid tsar from 1598 to 1605. At the beginning of his reign as Tsar, Russia descended into the Time of Troubles.

His career began as a member of Ivan IV's secret oprichnik police, and Godunóv's sister married the Tsar's 2<sup>nd</sup> son, Feodor, at which Godunóv was promoted to boyar. On his deathbed, Ivan placed Godunóv on a council to guide Feodor I. When Feodor died childless and the Rurik Dynasty came to an end, a Zemsky Sobor elected Godunóv Tsar.

Godunóv did much in his rule, but his paranoia caused him to persecute perceived enemies as traitors, which increased the boyars' hatred of him. At the same time, weather conditions brought on a famine (caused by ash clouds of a volcano eruption in Peru, unknown to the Russians). Epidemics resulted and chaos erupted. The people blamed the Tsar and boyars.

He died after a stroke. His only son, Feodor II, succeeded him but in less than a month was murdered, along with Boris' widow, by the enemies of the Godunóvs.

### **Ignati, Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia (Ignatius)**

(1540–1620)

Of Cretan descent, in 1605, Ignati was elected 2<sup>nd</sup> Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia to replace Saint Job the Patriarch, who was exiled for refusing to acknowledge False Dimitri I. Ignati performed the coronation of False Dimitri I and his wife Marina Mnischev. After False Dimitri I was assassinated, Tsar Basil IV had Ignati removed and confined in the Chudov Monastery, and then installed Germogen as Patriarch. When the Poles invaded Moscow, Tsar Basil was deposed, Ignati supported False Dimitri II and was called back as Patriarch, and Germogen was imprisoned for calling the Russians to arms. Ignati tried to flee Russia and was captured by King Sigismund III Vasa, who thought he might be a pawn one day and settled him in Lithuania. Ignati converted to the Unia. Due to his support of the False Dimitris and his apostasy, he is not counted among legitimate patriarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church.

### **Grand Prince Igor Rurikovich**

(c. 870—945)

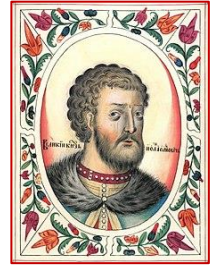
Igor was the son of Rurik, founder of the Dynasty that ruled Kievan Rus'. On his deathbed, Rurik bequeathed his realm to a kinsman, Oleg, and entrusted young Igor to his care. Oleg set out with warriors and slew Askold and Dir who had been sent by Rurik to take Constantinople but failed and retreated to Kiev where they collected tribute. Oleg set Igor, the rightful ruler, over the people and moved the capital to Kiev, marking the beginning of Kievan Rus'. He persuaded the Slavic tribes to pay tribute to him rather than the Khazars, aiding in the growth of the new state. Later in life, Igor besieged Constantinople twice. Greek fire destroyed part of his fleet, nevertheless, he made a favorable treaty with Emperor Constantine VII.

In 945, Igor was murdered while collecting tribute from the Drevlians. Igor's widow, Olga, avenged his death by killing the Drevlians. Igor's son by Olga, Sviatoslav the Brave, continued the Dynasty and went on to sire Vladimir the Great.

### **Tsar Ivan II Ivanovich the Fair**

(1326 – 1359)

After his brother Simeon the Proud died of the Black Death, he succeeded him as Grand Prince of Moscow and Grand Prince of Vladimir. While not as successful as his father, Ivan I, in terms of territorial expansion, he was able to annex certain areas southwest of Moscow and continue with the policy of uniting Russian lands. Because of the strife among the Golden Horde, he toyed with the idea of ending allegiance to the Mongols and allying with Lithuania, but he abandoned that idea.



Tsar Ivan II  
Ivanovich

### **Grand Prince Ivan III Vasilyevich, the Great**

(1440–1505)

Grand Prince of Moscow and the Sovereign of all Rus'. He vastly expanded the territory of Moscow. He refused to pay tribute to the Tatar Khan, who campaigned against him unsuccessfully, and the Golden Horde fell apart.

With his first wife Ivan had a son who died young. The succession should have gone to his grandson, Dimitri. When Ivan's wife died, the Pope suggested Ivan marry Sophia Palaiogina, niece of the last Byzantine Emperor, who was sheltered at the Vatican. The Pope anticipated she would bring Rus' under Rome's jurisdiction, but this did not happen. Ivan and Sophia wed and she bore a son, Vasily III. At this, Ivan proclaimed Vasily III his successor and had Dimitri imprisoned where he died childless.

Through marriage to Sofia, he made the double-headed eagle Russia's coat of arms and adopted the idea of Moscow as the third Rome.



Grand Prince Ivan III

### **Tsar Ivan IV Vasilyevich Grozny**

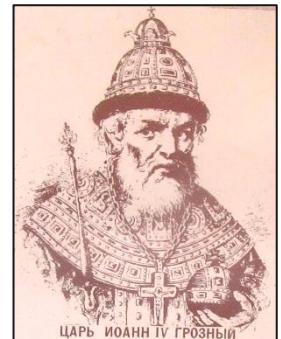
(1530—1584)

Grand Prince of Moscow from 1533. The epithet "Grozny" is not associated with "terrible", but rather with "formidable".

At age three, his father died and his mother became regent, but when he was eight, she died and boyars became regents. At sixteen he was crowned the first Tsar of All Russia.

Ivan had episodic outbreaks of rage, one of which resulted in him killing his son and heir, Ivan, of which he immediately repented. However this also meant that his younger and mentally feeble son Feodor became his heir.

The first part of his reign was successful, bringing Russia from a feudal state to an emerging power. He conquered the Khanates enlarging Russia into Siberia, established an army, formed the Zemsky Sobor, developed trade, introduced Russia's first printing press, and undertook building projects. The latter half of his reign was shadowed by a 24-year war with Sweden, Poland, Lithuania and the Teutonic Knights, with drought, famine, blockades, plague, and his brutal Oprichnik police. It is claimed that he died in a chess game, however, an examination of his remains centuries later revealed high mercury levels, indicating he was probably poisoned.



### **Saint Kassiani the Nun (Cassia)**

(810-865)

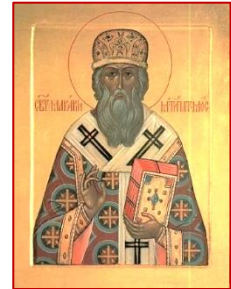
Kassiani was a participant in the "bride show" for the young Emperor Theophilos, although she was passed over. She founded a convent in Constantinople and for her defense of the icons was scourged. But she remained outspoken and her famous quote admonishes us today: "I hate silence when it is time to speak." She wrote many hymns still used in the Orthodox Church, the most famous of which is the Hymn of Kassiani, chanted at matins on Holy Wednesday.

### **Saint Makari, Metropolitan of Moscow (Macarius)**

(1482 – 1563)

Upon his father's death, he and his mother both entered monasteries. In 1523, he met Grand Prince Vasili III of Moscow. He was one of few clerics who supported Vasili's divorce from his barren wife and blessed his 2<sup>nd</sup> marriage. Thanks to the support of Prince Andrey Shuisky, Makari was elected Metropolitan of Moscow and all Rus in 1542. He became a close adviser of Ivan IV Vasilievich, arranging his coronation as the first to be called "Tsar of All the Russias".

In 1988 he was glorified by the Church of Russia.



Saint Makari,  
Metropolitan of  
Moscow

### **Tsar Michael I Fyodorovich Romanov (Mikhail)**

(1596—1645)

He was distantly related to the last Rurikid Tsar Feodor I through a great aunt, and through marriage was a great-nephew-in-law of Tsar Ivan IV. Michael's father became Patriarch Filaret, and his mother a nun. Part of Michael's appeal to the Zemsky Sobor which elected him was that Tsar Boris Godunov had exiled the boy, and his father was in captivity in Poland, which ignited the Russian patriotic mood.

Michael was brought out of exile in the Ipatiev Monastery and crowned on his 17<sup>th</sup> birthday, becoming the first tsar of the Romanov Dynasty. This marked the end of the Time of Troubles.

His first action was to rid the land of the occupiers Sweden and Poland. He obtained his father's release from Polish captivity. By the end of Michael's reign, Russia had seen the greatest territorial expansion in its history, extending from the Ural Mountains to the Pacific.

Michael's first wife died and his second, Eudoxia, bore the future Tsar Alexis.

Tsar Mikhail I Fyodorovich  
Romanov

1913, 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the  
Romanov Dynasty.

*Public domain*



### **Kuzma Minin (Kuzma Minich Zakhariev-Sukhoruky)**

(late 1570s—1616)

He was a meat trader in Nizhny Novgorod. During the Polish invasion in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, he was trusted to manage funds to raise a volunteer army, which he did, and which was commanded by Prince Dmitry Pozharsky. Because of the success at clearing the Moscow Kremlin of Polish forces in 1612, he was made a nobleman by Tsar Michael I Romanov. He is a national hero.

### **Marina Mnischev**

(c. 1588–1614)

She was a Polish noblewoman who became Tsarina of Russia during the Time of Troubles, marrying False Dimitri I in a Roman Catholic wedding attended by king Sigismund III Vasa. The goal was the conversion of Russia to Roman Catholicism. Marina was crowned by Patriarch Ignati, but within ten days, Dimitri was killed in a coup and Marina imprisoned. After rejecting her title, she was returned to Poland. Her father arranged a marriage to False Dimitri II, who also was killed. Once Michael I Romanov was elected Tsar, Marina fled with her 3-year-old son, but was captured and the boy executed. She died in prison.

Russian lore casts her as “Marina the Witch”, who cursed the Romanov family, which began at the Ipatiev Monastery and ended with the murder in 1918 of Tsar Nicholas II and his family in the Ipatiev house.

### **Saint Olga, Equal-to-the-Apostles**

(c. 890—969)

A Varangian by birth, she was married to Igor I, prince of Kiev and son of Rurik, founder of Russia’s ruling Rurik Dynasty. After her husband was murdered by the Drevlians, her son Sviatoslav was too young to rule and she became regent, making her the first recorded female ruler in Russia.

With the support of the army and the respect of her people, she became a powerful ruler. She was the first member of Kiev’s ruling family to convert to Orthodox Christianity. She was baptized with the Christian name Elena circa 957 in Constantinople with Emperor Constantine VII as her sponsor. Her son Sviatoslav did not convert but he agreed that no Christian in his realm would be persecuted. Her grandson, Grand Prince Vladimir, was converted and brought the Russian kingdom to Orthodox Christianity.

In 1547, the Russian Orthodox Church glorified Olga as the first Russian saint.

### **George Ostrogorsky** (Georgiy Aleksandrovich Ostrogorskiy)

(1902 – 1976)

Born in the Russian Empire, he learned Greek at an early age. He received a doctorate from the University of Heidelberg and moved to Serbia, and became chair for Byzantinology at the University of Belgrade's Faculty of Philosophy. His interests focused on Byzantine peasantry, theology, imperial ideology, and Byzantine-Slavic relations, especially in the Balkans. Under his wing, the institute became a leading world center of research in the field of Byzantinology.

### **Princess Sophia Thomanovna Palaiologina**

(ca. 1449 – 1503)

Byzantine princess of the Palaiologos family and Grand Princess of Moscow as the 2<sup>nd</sup> wife of Grand Prince Ivan III. Through her eldest son, Vasili III, she was the grandmother of Ivan IV, the first Tsar of Moscow and All Russia.

Her father was brother of the last Byzantine Emperor Constantine XI Palaiologos. After her parents died the Pope adopted her. When she was 17, the Pope arranged her marriage to the widower Ivan III, hoping to bring Russia under Rome’s jurisdiction. Ivan agreed to the marriage, but could not be present at St. Peter’s Basilica for the ceremony, and a proxy served as a stand-

in. Sophia received a large dowry and set off for Russia. The Pope's plan failed, as she returned to her Orthodox roots and the Papal Legate was not permitted to enter Moscow carrying the Latin cross. A formal wedding ceremony took place in the Dormition Cathedral in Moscow.

Her son Vasili III was crowned by Ivan as Grand Prince and co-ruler, forging the imperial connection to the Byzantine imperial dynasty.

### **Emperor Pavel I Petrovich**

(1754 – 1801)

Emperor of Russia from 1796 until his assassination. The only son of Peter III and Catherine the Great. Within a half-year of Peter's accession to the throne, Catherine staged a successful coup and Peter died shortly thereafter. Paul was too young to reign. When he turned 18, he should have acceded the throne, but Catherine prevented this and plotted to exclude Paul from succession in favor his son, Alexander. She suffered a stroke and died and Paul became Emperor.

He was beloved by the peasants, who considered him their protector. He dictated that serfs could only labor for their overlords three days a week, and never on Sundays. He lowered bread prices and made higher taxes on luxuries consumed by the rich. He hoped to reconcile the disparities between the rich and the poor.

With the alleged support of the British ambassador, a group of dismissed officers plotted and carried out his assassination. His son Alexander knew of the plot, but never thought it would entail his murder.

Although he is not officially glorified by the Russian Orthodox Church, there are many who venerate him as a saint.



Emperor Paul I.  
by Vladimir Borovikovsky,  
1800

*Public domain*

### **Emperor Peter I the Great**

(1672–1725)

He initiated a cultural revolution in Russia, which led to the modernization of the country and dramatically transformed it into a major European power.

Through wars, he opened ports on the Baltic Sea. He formed an Imperial Navy and built Russia's first ships; developed the economy by improving industry and expanding trade; built Russia's first university; and founded the city of Saint Petersburg to be his capital, which remained so until 1918.

Emperor Peter I  
the Great

Oil on canvas, by Paul  
Delaroche, c. 1838,  
*Public domain*

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter\\_the\\_Great#/media/File:Peter\\_der-Grosse\\_1838.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_the_Great#/media/File:Peter_der-Grosse_1838.jpg)



### **Patriarch Saint Photios I the Great**

(c. 810–893)

Ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople from 858—867 and 877—886. One of the most educated men of his time and possessing a vast library, Photios was perhaps the most influential church leader of Constantinople since the time of St. John Chrysostom in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> century. He was a main figure in the conversion of the Slavs. He was glorified as a Saint in 1847.

### **Konstantin Petrovich Pobedonostsev, Procurator of the Holy Synod**

(1827–1907)

Russian jurist and adviser to three Tsars, he made a significant contribution to Russian civil law and is regarded as one of the greatest European jurists of the 19th c. In the reign of Alexander II he became Ober-Procurator of the Holy Synod, a lay Russian official who supervised the Russian Orthodox Church.

He became instructor for the future Tsar Alexander III and when Alexander came to power, Pobedonostsev became one of the most influential men in Imperial Russia. In his writings he emphasized the need to unite Russia spiritually and secularly under Orthodox Christianity.

After Alexander III's death, he lost influence and retired from public life.

### **Prince Dmitry Mikhaylovich Pozharsky**

(1577 – 1642)

A Russian prince renowned for his military skills, he formed, with merchant Kuzma Minin, a Volunteer Army in Nizhny Novgorod. Their struggles resulted in Russian victory at the Battle of Moscow in 1612, and the Polish-Lithuanian occupation of Russia ended. He earned the title of Savior of the Fatherland.

### **Claudius Ptolemy**

(c. 100—c. 170)

Roman astronomer and geographer, he developed a geometric model that predicted the position of the planets based on the sun, moon and stars having the earth at their center. This was dogmatically asserted in Western Christianity until eventually replaced by the Sun-centered system of Copernicus. When one is called "Ptolemaic", it means they are fixated on earthly things as the center of the universe, rather than opening their mind to the greater things beyond the earth.

### **Great Rurik**

(d. 879)

Varangian chieftain of the Rus' and founder of the Rurikid Dynasty. In 860, he was driven out of the East Slavic and Finnic tribal areas where they refused to pay tribute. However shortly thereafter those tribes fought so much among themselves they invited him back to Novgorod to reestablish order and rule over them. His progeny ruled until the deposition of Tsar Basil Shuisky in 1610. Through marriage, the Romanov Dynasty claimed a link to the Rurikids. After Rurik's death, his kinsman Oleg became regent for his son Igor, who was too young to rule. It was Oleg who moved the capital to Kiev, founding Kievan Rus'.

Great Rurik



### **Metropolitan Sergius of Moscow** (Stragorodsky, Sergei)

(1867—1944)

Seventeenth Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia. Elevated to metropolitan by Patriarch Tikhon, he was jailed several times and had been involved with the Living Church schism, but he repented and was forgiven by Patriarch Tikhon. Following the death of Tikhon and the

imprisonment of Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsy, the patriarchal locum tenens, Sergius assumed the role of locum tenens. He tried to reconcile with the Bolsheviks to stop the persecution of the Church. To this end he signed a Declaration in 1927 that pledged loyalty of the Church to the regime. This became his downfall and a controversy that continues to this day.

### **Tsar Basil Shuisky (Vasili IV Shuisky)**

(c. 1552–1612)

After the murder of False Dimitri I, Shuisky became Tsar during the Time of Troubles. He was the last member of the Rurikid dynasty to rule.

Eventually, he was deposed by the boyars and sent to Poland where both he and his brother died as prisoners in 1612. With no heirs, the House of Shuisky became extinct. The Romanov Dynasty recognized Basil Shuisky as a legitimate tsar and obtained his remains from Poland, laying him to rest in the Archangel Cathedral in Moscow.

### **King Sigismund III Vasa**

1566 – 1632

King of Poland, Grand Duke of Lithuania, King of Sweden, Grand Duke of Finland. Sigismund proactively involved himself in the affairs of neighboring countries. When Feodor I of Russia died, the Godunóv Tsars came to power, and the Time of Troubles began leading to the False Dimitris, Sigismund invaded Russia with the goal of imposing Roman Catholicism. He manipulated the False Dimitris, and his son Władysław IV was proclaimed Tsar at one point. But his success ended in a fiasco, with 5-million Russians dying in a 15-year period from war, famine, and Sigismund's politics. Finally, Kuzma Minin and Prince Dmitry Pozharsky launched an uprising and cleared the land of the foreign intruders, establishing the legitimate Tsar Michael I Romanov on the throne of Russia and bringing peace.

### **Saint Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia and Enlightener of North America**

(1865–1925)

The son of a rural priest, he became a monk and was sent to America in 1898. He helped establish the church in America creating a Diocese, building churches and founding a monastery, translating liturgical texts into English, and writing a catechism.

He returned to Russia in 1907 and in 1917 was elected Patriarch. When the Bolsheviks took control, Tikhon openly condemned the slaughter of the Tsar. For his outspokenness on the confiscation of church property, he was imprisoned and tens of thousands of believers were killed. He was released in 1923, but his tribulations wore on him and he became ill. He checked into a hospital in 1924, where he reposed amid rumors that he may have been overmedicated intentionally.

In 1989, Patriarch Tikhon was glorified by the Church of Russia.

Patriarch-St. Tikhon



### **Vladimir I Sviatoslavich the Great, the Apostle of Russia (Volodymyr)**

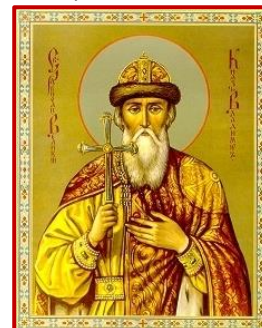
(c. 958-1015)

Prince of Novgorod, Grand Prince of Kiev, and ruler of Kievan Rus'. Son of the Rurikid dynastic Prince Sviatoslav I of Kiev, and grandson of St. Olga of Kiev. Vladimir began his rule as a pagan conqueror. After his father's death, he expanded the realm and fortified the frontiers.

Vladimir realized that other belief systems existed and wanted to find the truth, so he sent envoys to explore other faiths. After meeting with Muslims, Jews and Latins, they returned from the church in Constantinople and reported that "We no longer knew whether we were in heaven or on earth."

When Byzantine Emperor Basil II needed aid, Vladimir sent 6,000 Varangian soldiers in exchange for Basil's sister in marriage, the prized porphyrogenita Anna Palaeogina. Vladimir also demanded that they baptize him Orthodox. When he married Anna, the Byzantines bestowed the title of Caesar (Tsar) upon Vladimir, as he married into the Imperial family.

After his baptism, he destroyed all the pagan statues that stood in Kievan Rus' and replaced them with churches. He and Anna together began the magnificent conversion of his entire kingdom.



Saint Vladimir I the Great

### **His Imperial Highness the Grand Duke Wladimir Kirillovich of Russia** (1917–1992)

Head of the Imperial Family of Russia from 1938 to his death, The only son of Grand Duke Cyril Vladimirovich and Grand Duchess Viktoria Feodorovna.

After the Russian Revolution his family fled to Finland, Germany, then France. His father proclaimed himself Curator of the Russian throne and assumed the title of Emperor and Autocrat of all the Russias, granting Wladimir the title of Tsarevich and Grand Duke.

After refusing to call on Russian émigrés to support the Nazi's war against the Soviet Union, he and his family were sent to a concentration camp. When Germany was defeated, Wladimir feared capture by the Soviets and moved to Austria and then Spain. He married Princess Leonida Georgievna Bagration-Moukhransky of Georgia in 1948. They had a daughter, Maria, whom he named "curatrix of the throne".

When Grand Duke Wladimir died in 1992, he was buried in the Romanov's Peter and Paul Fortress in St. Petersburg, the first Romanov to be buried there since before the revolution.

### **Władysław IV Vasa** (1595–1648)

King of Poland, Grand Duke of Lithuania and claimant of the thrones of Sweden and Russia. Eldest son of Sigismund III Vasa.

Władysław was elected Tsar of Russia by the council of Seven Boyars in 1610 who overthrew the last legitimate Rurikid Tsar Basil Shuisky. The Polish had captured Moscow, but Władysław did not assume the throne because the boyars demanded that he convert to Orthodoxy. Sigismund, who had hoped to convert Russia to Catholicism, would not agree to this and hostilities were resumed.

