

The Rt. Rev. Protopresbyter Joseph J. Pishtey

Funeral services for Protopresbyter Joseph J. Pishtey, the late Chancellor of the Orthodox Church in America, were held at Holy Trinity Church, Yonkers, N. Y., where Father Joseph was rector for 32 years, until his death on Nov. 2, 1972.

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Ireney arrived at Holy Trinity on Friday, Nov. 3 and served a panikhida in the church where the body was lying in state. On the following morning, the divine liturgy was served by Fr. Joseph Pishtey, Jr., son of the departed.

The solemn funeral service took place on Sunday evening, Nov. 5. It was presided over by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Ireney, in concelebration with Archbishop Kiprian of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania, Bishop Theodosius of Pittsburgh, Bishop Dmitri of Hartford and New England, more than 40 priests and several deacons. The next morning His Beatitude celebrated the divine liturgy, together with Archbishops Nikon and Kiprian, and Bishop Dmitri. The same day, Monday, Nov. 6, the burial took place at St. Tikhon's Monastery cemetery, South Canaan, Pa., where the body was met by Archbishop Kiprian.

During the services at Holy Trinity funeral eulogies were given by Fr. Alexander Schmemmann, dean of St. Vladimir's Seminary; Fr. Daniel Hubiak, secretary of the Metropolitan Council; Fr. Cyril Fotiev of the Holy Virgin Protection Cathedral, Fr. John Nehrebecki, dean of New Jersey, and Fr. Vadim Pogrebniak of Manville, N. J. At St. Tikhon's Monastery a sermon was given by His Eminence, Archbishop Kiprian.

In addition to the Holy Trinity parish choir, the Cappella Russian Male Chorus sang at the panikhida on Saturday night, Nov. 4. The choirs of St. Vladimir's and St. Tikhon's seminaries sang during the main funeral services on Sunday night and Monday morning.

A Life of Service

Father Joseph Pishtey spent his entire life in the service of the Orthodox Church in America. Born in Bridgeport, Conn. on April 6, 1899, the son of Joseph J. and Mary Pishtey, immigrants from Uhorschina, Carpatho-Russia, he received his primary education at St. Tikhon's Russian Orthodox Preparatory School in South Canaan, Pa. He then entered the seminary in Tenafly, N. J., graduating in 1921.

He married Susanna S. Padick on June 7, 1922 in Bridgeport, Conn., and served two years as choir director in the parishes at Olyphant, Pa. and Binghamton, N. Y. On June 16, 1924 he was ordained to the holy priesthood at St. Nicholas Cathedral in New York by Metropolitan Platon.

After serving briefly in Danbury and Hartford, Conn., Father Joseph was assigned pastor of SS. Cyril and Methodius Church in Terryville, Conn., where he proved himself not only a good shepherd of his own flock, but also an efficient administrator. Hence, the difficult assignment given him by Metropolitan Platon to protect, as dean of the Connecticut parishes, those properties which were then claimed by the schismatic "renovated"



group of the pseudo-bishop Kedrovsky.

Transferred to Old Forge, Pa., and then to Olyphant, Pa., and finally to Holy Trinity, Yonkers, N. Y., in 1940, Father Pishtey continued to assert his unusual talents at bringing Orthodox people together, win their confidence and communicate to them his own dedication and enthusiasm. Since 1946 he was secretary-treasurer of the Metropolitan Council and treasurer of the Board of Trustees of St. Vladimir's Seminary. He later became the corporate secretary of the latter institution. He played a leading role at innumerable church meetings and in church-related organizations. He served as national spiritual adviser of the Federated Russian Orthodox Clubs (1940), as spiritual adviser of the Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Mutual Aid Society, as president of the R.O.T.E. Fund. His efforts led to the acquisition of the Metropolitan's Residence in Syosset, Long Island. He was also the chairman of the Administrative Fund of the Pro-Cathedral.

Having been awarded all the honors and distinctions accessible to a priest, including the title of protopresbyter (1961), he was appointed Chancellor of the Russian Orthodox Church in America by the Council of Bishops (Jan. 16, 1964). In this capacity he was a member of the committee which carried on the negotiations on autocephaly in 1970, meeting with Metropolitan Nikodim of the Moscow Patriarchate in Geneva, Switzerland, Tokyo, Japan, and finally in New York.

Beloved by All

In the midst of all these activities, Father Joseph always remained a parish priest, a servant of the altar, primarily dedicated to God and his Holy Orthodox Church. His achievements as pastor of Holy Trinity were known to all his parishioners. Even the non-Orthodox recognized his merits as a religious leader in Yonkers: on May 5, 1968, the Catholic Youth organization awarded him a special plaque.

His soft and melodious voice will not be heard any more in our churches nor at the meetings of our councils and assemblies, but his spirit will be with us forever.

To Matushka Susanna, to Father Joseph J. Pishtey, Jr., to Mrs. Joseph Pishtey, Sr., and to the other members of the family, "The Orthodox Church" expresses its sincere condolences. Father Joseph's departure from among us is a loss not only for them, but for the entire Church.

May his memory be eternal!