

Diocese of Great Britain and Western Europe announces a 'Diocesan Heritage Project' in the present centenary year of the Church abroad



At the initiative of its Ruling Bishop, His Grace Bishop Irenei of London and Western Europe, the Diocese is initiating a Diocesan Heritage Project, in order to foster a wider knowledge of individuals who have played a significant role in the foundation, establishment and life of the parishes of the Diocese of Great Britain and Western Europe over the past century.

In his Decree setting out the contours of the project to the clergy of the Diocese, Bishop Irenei extols the 'pious desire to preserve the memory of our forefathers, ancestors and teachers in the faith, who have laboured willingly under the yoke of Christ to establish the parishes of this God-preserved Diocese and maintain their strict and fruitful adherence to the life-giving commandments of Christ'. For this reason, His Grace continues, the Diocese will undertake a small labour 'to foster a knowledge and love, amongst those now and in the future struggling for their salvation in these lands, towards the pillars on which our local church has been founded.'

The project will collect detailed information on individuals from each of the

Diocese's parishes, who, over the course of its history, have made a profound mark on its life and exemplified the Orthodox heritage. 'These might be the founding priest,' His Grace writes, 'an ever-memorable spiritual father or confessor, a notable starosta or choir leader, etc.; but in any case they should be individuals whose mark upon the history of the parish is considerable and worthy of wide appreciation.' Additionally, newer parishes will record the Saints and significant figures in the history of the Church Abroad that have inspired the missionary zeal that undergirds their lives. These biographies, together with photographs and historical information about the parishes themselves, will be in due course edited into a trilingual (Russian, English and French) publication, published as part of the centenary commemorations of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia.

'In this manner, we seek to extol the virtuous lives of our forebears, who are examples for us of the self-sacrificial Life in Christ that we, too, must seek to exemplify in this world,' Bishop Irenei continues, 'and we will provide a means, through this small labour, to educate our children and future generations about those who have walked before them, in their own parish settings, the life of holiness to which all are called.'

Bishop Irenei has committed the initial phases of the project into the faithful care of the Vicar Bishop of the Diocese, His Grace Bishop Alexander of Vevey.

[Source](#)