



“He, being made perfect in a short time, fulfilled a long time; for his soul pleased the Lord” (Wisdom of Solomon, 4:13-14)

The Repose of Father Christian Doucet

*Founder and Rector of the Church of
St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco
in Meudon, Paris*

July 26, 2017 (Old Style)

During the night of July 25-26, 2017 (Old Style, commemoration of the Holy Virgin Martyr Paraskeve), Father Christian Doucet, a native of France and the father of seven children, reposed peacefully in the Lord at the age of fifty-six, just one year after his ordination to the Priesthood.

Father Christian was a lawyer, with a doctoral degree in Civil Law from the University of Paris, and a convert to Orthodoxy, having been baptized in 1996, following careful catechism, in a parish belonging to the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad.

That same year, he married the devout Catherine Bortoli, who is of Russian descent, with whom he was vouchsafed to create a “Church in the home,” redolent with spiritual fragrance, with a consistent and profound ecclesiastical life.

With the blessing of his spiritual Father, in the garden of his home he built a small Chapel dedicated to St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco, whose radiant pastoral presence in Paris during the 1950s left an



indelible impression. Father Christian also visited the Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina and formed spiritual bonds with the Fathers there.

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Following the Union, in 2007, of the majority of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad with the Moscow Patriarchate, Father Christian and several other faithful became increasingly aware of the corrosive effects of the spirit of ecumenism in their ecclesiastical surroundings.

Finally, Father Christian once again visited the Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina, seeking guidance from the Hierarchs.

With the blessing of our Holy Synod, it was decided to create a small missionary community under our Church's jurisdiction. To that end, Father Christian was ordained to the Diaconate on June 19, 2016 (Old Style), the Feast of St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco, at the Convent of the Annunciation, in London (which was founded by St. John),



and to the Priesthood the following day, at the Monastery of St. Edward the Martyr, in Brookwood, by His Grace, Bishop Ambrose of Methone, who speaks French.

By God's Providence, however, Father Christian was unaware at the time of his ordination that he had cancer. Despite his increasing fatigue and pain, he worked with admirable zeal for the consolidation of his small spiritual flock.

In the meantime, Bishop Ambrose and Archimandrite Father Glykerios (from the Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina and a native of France) regularly visited the newly-established community, which was distinguished by its piety and eagerness to learn. As the parishioners grew in number, the small chapel had to be enlarged twice.





On Sunday, June 19, 2017 (Old Style), commemoration of St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco, the parish celebrated its first Patronal Feast following the ordination of Father Christian. Despite the rapid deteriora-

tion of his health since the spring of 2017, Father Christian felt somewhat better, and was thus able to take part peacefully and joyfully in the Feast Day celebration, which was attended by some forty faithful from various regions. Everyone shared a sense of the Grace-filled presence of the Saint being honored.

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During this time, illness became for Father Christian a “path to perfection”: when the doctors informed him, following initial attempts at treatment, that his cancer was incurable, he accepted their diagnosis with peace of heart, and with faith in the judgments of God and in His Providence for his large family and his flock.

This evangelical approach to his tribulation was shared in full by Presbytera Catherine, such that, apart from their pastoral solicitude and activities, which they did not interrupt, they both became for those around them living witnesses of the ethos of the Gospel, which would continue to inspire, even after Father Christian’s death, all those who knew him.

The eve of his last day on earth, Father Christian, who was at his country home in Bussy-en-Othe, remained in prayer for two hours before the family’s Icon corner.

A few hours later, a clergyman belonging to our Synod, Father Georgios Mantaropoulos from Grenoble, visited him and imparted to him Holy Communion and performed the Mystery of Holy Unction, after which Father Christian peacefully gave his soul into the hands of the living God, Who had called him to the wondrous Light of His knowledge and love.

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The following day, Bishop Ambrose and Father Glykerios arrived in France, and on Thursday, July 28 (Old Style), they performed the fu-



neral service at Father Christian’s house, together with Father Georgios and Deacons Germain and Eugène, from the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (under Metropolitan Agafangel), with a large throng of faithful, relatives, friends, and acquaintances of the departed in attendance.

After the two-hour-long service, four of Father Christian’s five sons bore their father’s coffin to the village cemetery, where he was laid to rest.

His widow, Presbytera Catherine, once again gave a witness of Christian hope to all those present, dressed entirely in white, as were her two young daughters.

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May Christ our God, through the intercessions of St. John, grant rest to the soul of the departed Father Christian, and strengthen Presbytera Catherine and her children, as well as the members of the small community, that they may continue their journey toward the Kingdom of Heaven, “speaking the truth in love,” and bearing good witness to the hope of salvation in Christ.

