

SYNTAXIS ARCHIVE SERIES: COLLECTION 1, VOL. 1

ARCHPRIEST
ALEXIS TOTH

VOLUME ONE
LETTERS, ARTICLES, PAPERS
AND SERMONS

translated and edited by
GEORGE SOLDATOW

SYNTAXIS PRESS
BOX 404
CHILLIWACK, B.C.
V2P-6J7 CANADA

ARCHPRIEST ALEXIS TOTH

Selected
Letters, Sermons, and Articles

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Library of Congress Catalog Card No. 78-52665

ISBNs: 0-913026-93 (USA); 0-919672-15-9 (CAN)



МИТРОФОРНЫЙ ПРОТОІЕРЕЙ АЛЕКСѢЙ ГЕОРГІЕВИЧЪ ТОВТЪ.

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List of Abbreviations

APV - Amerikanskii Pravoslavnyi Viestnik

AARDM - Archives of Americans of Russian Descent in Minnesota

This collection originally established in 1975 to fill a gap in major collections in the state is privately funded and maintained. First including only documents and manuscripts and secondary source materials by and about Russian immigrants to the state it soon grew to include also materials of Ukrainians, Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians and Armenians in varying quantities. Some of these materials are unique and can be found no where else in the United States or the world.

ARV - Amerikanskii Russkii Viestnik

PR - Pricarpatskaia Rus', Sbornik, Connecticut, 1970.

SNCA - St. Nicholas Cathedral Archive - presently located at the Immigration History Research Center, University of Minnesota.

PREFACE

Among Orthodox Church archives and private collections in the United States is the correspondence of Father A. Toth with Bishops Nicholas and Tikhon, and other clergy of the Orthodox and Uniate Churches. This correspondence covers the period 1893-1909. Most of the letters are published for the first time and are unknown to researchers of Russian and Carpathian immigrant history. The letters are authentic; although they come to the reader in translation. The style and phraseology, both characteristic of Toth, were kept where possible. For these reasons, they can be regarded as works of his pen-written during the time of the Ruthenian¹ people's struggle to return to the church of their forefathers.

The wording of most of Father Alexis' letters is careless, sometimes even obscure, with mistakes in spelling and omission of

¹To understand the internal conflicts among these immigrants and their priests requires some knowledge of their history. These immigrants became known in the United States as "Ruthenians", a term which medieval Latin sources usually applied to western groups of Eastern Slavs. The Poles called the territory of these people Polonia Minor (Little Poland) and the Russians called it Malorussia (Little Russia). It is also known as Russia Rubea (Red Russia) in memory of the blood shed against Mongolian invaders in the 12th-14th centuries. In the 17th century the old name Ukraine (borderland) which dates at least from the 12th century, acquired a special meaning when the eastern territories around Kiev became the center of a new national life under the leadership of the Cossacks. However the term Rusini was used in Rome beginning in the 16th century to identify Roman Catholics of the Byzantine Rite in Eastern Europe, and was not the name of a nationality. (Victor J. Pospishil, Interritual Canon Law Problems in the United States and Canada, Chesapeake City, Md., 1955. p.15). Only with the rise of national consciousness late in the 19th and early in the 20th centuries were such names as Byelorussians, Ukrainians, Slovaks, and others adopted. When these people came to the United States, they were unsure of their national identities. The parishes that were established were of parishioners of different areas and the priests were from different regions. Their interests did not unify them. After World War I, the term Ukrainians was used by people from southern Russia, Austrian Galicia and Bukovina while the name Rusin was acceptable to most of the descendants of the immigrants from Hungarian Trans-Carpathia. However Father Alexis usually refers to all these people by the same name: Russians. The same thing was done during this time by those who published Amerikanskii Russkii Viestnik and by Father G. Hrushka in referring to the newspaper Svoboda, organ of Russkii Narodnyi Soyuz.

words. These mistakes may be partially attributed to his imperfect knowledge of Russian and to his mixture of the Carpathian dialect with Russian. Therefore, many mistakes and defective, even unintelligible, phraseology are to be found in his letters. One may also conclude from the wording of the letters that Toth wrote them in haste, expressing his thoughts in the first words that came into his mind.

These letters, translated into English, are published with some alteration of the text. In some places the incorrect phraseology, as well as the grammatical mistakes, could not be preserved in translation without losing Fr. Alexis' meaning. Where possible, the original punctuation marks and paragraph structure have been preserved. The dates enclosed in brackets do not appear in the original letters but have been determined by the sense of the letters and by other indications. The spelling of personal names sometimes varied from letter to letter; where variances occurred, the name has been standardized by the way it appeared in print in a court record, a newspaper or other printed material. Complete personal names are retained as much as possible but in some instances, because of Father Alexis' critical remarks, only the initial of a family name has been given. The letters are printed in chronological sequence. It was often necessary to add some additional material in the form of footnotes to further illuminate Fr. Alexis' activities.

Selected articles by Fr. Alexis also appear here, in the belief that although published a long time ago, the problems that they deal with are still in existence today. The articles are also translated from Russian. The text was followed as closely as possible, retaining the long sentences and somewhat confused phraseology often characteristic of Fr. Alexis' writings. To have eliminated these, and to have translated the whole freely in a different style would have destroyed the character of his writing.

Subsequent volumes of this work are still in the process of being collected, translated and compiled. I will present a detailed bibliography and express my indebtedness to the people who made this publication possible in the final volume of this work.

The editor

INTRODUCTION

Americans of Slavic descent make up one of the most numerous groups of immigrants in the United States. It is impossible, because of statistical difficulties, to definitely determine how many people of Slavic descent there are in the United States, but it is estimated that there are 20-25 million. About 65% of the Slavic immigrants emigrated from the former Austro-Hungarian Empire, the rest came from Germany and Russia. When the Slavic immigrants came to the United States, the political and cultural foundation of the country was already established. They came during the industrialization of the country and were a cheap labor force for the factories and mines. They often came with no money, they were uneducated and took any job. Naturally the Anglo-Saxons, who were on a higher material and cultural level, continued to direct all areas of life and the Slavs did not compete with them but were looked upon only as an unavoidable evil.² The majority of the Slavs who came to the United States were Uniates and Roman Catholics. At the end of the nineteenth century, the American Roman Catholic Church was the strongest church in learning institutions, financial means, and membership,³ but it was divided into two ideological camps, Conservatives and Progressives (Americanizers). The former found that the republican form of government did not conform to their religious teaching. They were against the introduction of changes in the church in order to attract Protestants. The latter believed that the republican form of government only encouraged the rule of the majority.

The idea of Americanization was conceived by Issac Thomas Hecker (1819-1888), a former Protestant who became a Roman Catholic priest and developed a program for the conversion of American Protestants to Roman Catholicism. His plan called for making the Catholic Church more attractive to persons of Protestant persuasion by Americanization. He did not object to Papal authority but rejected the emphasis on unqualified obedience and dependence and placed it instead on independent thinking and personal initiative. He wanted to introduce the qualities which made America great into the practice of the Roman Catholic Church.

The Roman Catholic Church in the United States was under the direct jurisdiction of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith until 1908. Both Catholic groups

²Frank Julian Warne, Ph.D., The Slavic Invasion and the Mine Workers, Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott and Co., 1904. Also: Mary Burkley Erb, While America Sleeps Foundations Crumble, Washington, Goetz Co. Press, 1966.

³In 1900, there were 12 million members or 15.78% of the total population of the United States.

sought a Papal decision in the question of Americanization. The principal supporters of Americanization were Cardinal Gibbons of Baltimore, and Archbishop John Ireland of St. Paul, Minnesota; in the Conservative camp was Archbishop Michael Corrigan of New York. In Rome, the Conservatives found sympathy to their demands. Bishop John Purcell of Cincinnati, for example, demanded that Roman Catholics should be exempt from taxes that supported non-Catholic schools, while other Conservative clergy were against the separation of church and state.

American Roman Catholics also differed in languages and customs. The leaders of Americanization made clear to Cardinal Ledochowski, President of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, that it was necessary to unite the Roman Catholics in customs and language by the use of English for everything except the liturgy, and that this, according to the "Americanizers" would bring the Church a great future in the United States. Therefore Americanization was accepted and introduced in schools, churches and affiliated organizations.⁴

There was strong German resistance to Americanization, and over protests by Gibbons, Ireland, and Bishop Keane, the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith in 1887 sanctioned independent German parishes in the United States and favored some of their other demands.⁵ Another conflict occurred between the Church and the Poles, who separated from the central Roman Catholic Church, and created the Polish National Catholic Church with headquarters in Scranton, Pennsylvania. The Uniates, who were originally not Roman Catholics, were put under the jurisdiction of Latin Rite bishops in the United States, a violation of an agreement between the Uniates and Rome. Slavic people who came to the United States from "Austro-Hungarian German tyranny" in search of freedom and livelihood, wanted the church to be a tie to their homeland. There they wanted to meet people who shared their longings and their customs. Understandably they immediately protested the appointment of clergy who not only did not speak their language or know their traditions, but who even looked down on them.

Before coming to the United States, the Slavs from the Balkans and the Carpathian mountains had, with historical justification, formed an image of a rich and mighty "Russian brother". Since the early 18th century, Russia had played a large part in the protection and liberation of some Slavic and Orthodox countries from Moslem sovereignty. Russia also supported Orthodox Churches in other countries, and by its existence gave confidence and encouragement to the Slavs. There is even a joke about the Montenegrin people who said to a potential enemy, "Do not dare to bother us, for we are 200 million-200 thousand Montenegrins and 199,800,000 Russians." This illustrates the

⁴Budapest Hirlap, no. 94, April 4, 1897.

⁵Newman D. Eberhardt, A Summary of Catholic History, II, St. Louis, 1962, p.678.

feeling of unity and support among these peoples.

The Slavs were confident of the support of the Great Russians even in the United States where they found themselves free and able to talk impudently to their former Austro-Hungarian masters. The first large conflict between the Slavs and the Roman Catholic church authority occurred in Minnesota, the center of Catholic Americanization, where a Uniate parish headed by its priest Father Alexis Toth refused obedience to Archbishop Ireland. In their conflict, the Carpatho-Russians sought allies and sent an envoy to the Russian Orthodox bishop in San Francisco. As a result, without any initiative on the part of the Great Russian Orthodox, and even with a lack of interest on their part (Bishop Vladimir sent the envoy to the Roman Catholic bishop in San Francisco), the Uniates in Minneapolis were eventually accepted into membership in the Russian Orthodox Mission in America.

Other Slavs in the United States, also unhappy with Roman Catholic demands, learned of this occurrence and a movement for union with the Great Russian Orthodox began. The Orthodox clergy in the United States received complaints from all over about the "Irish clergy". This was completely unexpected and the Russian Orthodox were not ready for it. The Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church had not appropriated any significant sum for its Mission in the United States and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Russia also did not give much assistance to Slavic organizations in the United States. Until 1916, more than half of the funds appropriated for the Mission was spent on the support of schools and orphanages in Alaska.⁶ However in spite of apathy on the part of the Great Russian Orthodox, legends were created about the strength and wealth of their Mission. When the Great Russians gave any help, it was many times multiplied in the imagination of their supporters as well as their detractors. Some of these legends still exist and will be dispelled by the letters of Father Alexis. One of the misleading ideas was a tale citing material interest as the motivation behind Uniate clergy converting to Orthodoxy. The newspapers of Austro-Hungary wrote that the Russian Mission in the United States gave a yearly salary of 3000 rubles to clergy who converted from Unia to Orthodoxy!⁷ This was not done by the Orthodox Church; the true salary is mentioned in Father Alexis' letters and documents. From these letters, it is obvious that the support of a church and its priest continued to be the responsibility of the Uniates converting into the jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church. The same newspapers, however, had to acknowledge "special reasons" motivating such conversions.

North American English bishops succeeded in achieving an

⁶In 1906 the Sitka Cablegram published an article with the lead, "Out of nine cities in the west, seven lack public schools. Children are taught by Russian clergy."

⁷Budapest Hirlap, no. 94, April 4, 1897.

agreement with the Roman Curia: 1. every married Greek Catholic priest would be recalled from America; 2. all Greek Uniate churches and church property would be registered in the name of the Catholic bishop; and 3. all priests who were ordained by the Greek Catholic Church would no longer be accepted in America....

The Austro-Hungarian newspaper acknowledged the fact that Rome did not keep its part of the agreement with the Uniate Church.⁸ As the newspaper continued,

It must be remembered, that the expansion of the Great Russian Orthodox Church is nothing else but the expansion of the Russian Politic. When these people return home, -and they are getting ready for that, otherwise they would not send their savings to their homeland, then a solid connection will be established between the northeast Carpats and Moscow, and it is horrible to think what consequences such a connection will have for Hungary.⁹

The influence of the Russian Orthodox spread among the Slavs in the United States because of these "special reasons", the violation of the agreement by the Roman Catholics. The author of the article also noted that for the Slavs only one road remained; to seek protection from the Great Russian Orthodox, who were closer to them than other nations, in language and traditions. He also warned the government of the Hapsburg Empire that: "...when these Ruthenians come home. Then the political direction will point them toward not 'Pest and not Vienna, but St. Petersburg as is also occurring on the Balkan Peninsula...." The author does not condemn the Slavs; he sees the reason for their stampede "to the Russians" from the tyranny of Archbishop Ireland of St. Paul, and the Roman Catholic Church, and with bitterness he exclaims: "...this conversion is progressing fast, it is possible, that in a few years all American Slavs, that is; Ruthenians, Slovaks, Czechs, Croats, Wends, -will be converted to Orthodoxy...." In the conclusion of the article, the author expresses hope for an increase in financial assistance from the Austro-Hungarian Empire for the fight against Orthodoxy in the United States. Earlier the same newspaper warned,

In the United States of America now live almost one half million Hungarian Slavs. Among them were not more than two

⁸The agreement was that the Uniates would be under the jurisdiction of Rome but would keep their bishops, married clergy, their ceremonies and traditions and the old Julian calendar and could use their national languages in services instead of Latin.

⁹Budapest Hirlap, no. 94, April 4, 1897.

or three of the Eastern Orthodox religion, and now big Orthodox parishes are being established...the schism expands horribly fast even among 100,000 Hungarian Ruthenians.... Many priests, broken down in the hopeless fight against schism, have surrendered and are preparing to return to Hungary. The kind of mood these conditions create among our brother Slovaks and Ruthenians can be seen in this; the creators of the American Slovak Political Committee sent to President Faure of the French Republic the following telegram during the visit of the Russian Czar to Paris; "...Say to our brother Nicholas II, the Czar of Russia, that one half million American Slovaks, congratulate him and request that he would free the Slovaks living in the Tatra Mountains and would destroy the soulless Hungarians...."¹⁰

The author of the article says that Pan-Slavic tendencies were the reason that the Austro-Hungarian government watched the Slovaks and Ruthenians in the United States.

Many such excerpts can be taken from newspapers and magazines of this time and all of them warn of the Russification of the Slavs who had emigrated from the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It is a curious thing that in all of these articles, the authors request "protection" for Unia from the Roman Catholics who persecuted Unia, broke agreements made with the Uniates and who forced them to escape to the United States.

European governments tried to strengthen their influence in the United States by establishing various services for the immigrants; for example creating schools and organizations for them and giving legal aid. Russia did not succeed in doing this in the United States. Most of those who called themselves "Russians" were not, as for example the colony in Minneapolis, which was composed of immigrants from two villages in the Carpathians, a region which for centuries was not united with Great Russia but whose inhabitants still felt that they were Russian in nationality. However the Russian government was not far-sighted and did not concern itself with far-reaching help to the Slavs in the United States; even the insignificant help which they gave, stopped during World War I. But even during the short time between the arrival of the Slavs in the United States and the beginning of World War I, with no effort on the part of the Great Russians or the Russian Orthodox Church, the government in St. Petersburg could have had a great influence on the Slavs in the United States. Had more help been given the Slavic immigrants, it is possible that there would no longer be any Unia in the United States today. But help did not come; only a few clergymen came to the United States from Russia, to the Orthodox Mission; there was a lack of missionaries and money. The clergymen who came to the United States, according to various documents,

¹⁰Budapest Hirlap, no. 394, 1896.

were trying to unite all the Orthodox people into one diocese, and to possibly even create an Exarchate in the United States;¹¹ and in their letters they expressed opinions which contradicted the Russification of Slavs in the United States theory. At the Minneapolis seminary and at parish schools even the nationally oriented subject of "Little Russian Literature and Culture" was taught.

The Slavs who came to the United States found themselves between two poles, one faction turning toward Russia and the other leaning toward Austro-Hungary and Germany for support. These aspirations remain even today but the myths and programs against the Russians and against Orthodoxy were created at the end of the 19th and in the beginning of the 20th centuries. Father Alexis fought for the rights of the Slavs in the United States and against such propaganda. Already in the 1890's he warned the Slavs that Unia would not long survive in the United States, that it would be forcibly absorbed by the Roman Catholic Church.¹² Today we see Father Alexis' prophecy fulfilled.¹³

Father Alexis and other Slavs who had not emigrated from the Russian Empire could not understand that Russia during this time had its own difficulties and thus, even if willing, could not have supported the Slavs too much. But in spite of these misconceptions about Russian affairs, some of Father Alexis' ideas about the organization of church and parish are very well thought out. He told what he believed and thought. He did a great service for the Orthodox Church in the United States. When he came to Minneapolis, there was only one Orthodox parish in the continental United States, in San Francisco. Under his apostolic guidance seventeen Orthodox parishes were established in the United States; many other parishes and clergymen requested his advice. For his apostolic achievements he received

¹¹"Amerikanskii Pravoslavnyi Exarchat", Amerikanskii Pravoslavnyi Viestnik, v.9, no. 5, February 1-14, 1905, pp. 51-53.

¹²In the mid 1930's the Uniates revolted against the suppression of their church rights by Latin bishops and assembled at a Church Council in Pittsburgh on February 6, 1936. They elected as their administrator Father Orest Chornock. On November 23, 1937, they elected him Bishop Nominee and on September 18, 1938, he was ordained as an Orthodox Bishop by 3 Metropolitans in Constantinople. With him about 40 Uniate parishes in North America separated from the Roman See. There were several more, less significant separations from the Roman Catholic Church in the United States but the first separation was made by Father A. Toth whose doctrines led the people to religious freedom.

¹³Those Uniates who remained with the Roman Catholic Church in the United States lost their rights and no longer differ from Latin Rite Catholics.

the name of "Bat'ko (Father) of American Rus'" Orthodoxy. The publication of his letters and articles now, when the United States recently celebrated its 200th anniversary, will fill a gap in American ethnic historiography, in this country, where ethnic groups played such a large role in its foundation. Each group brought something distinctly its own, something very important, which made it possible to build this nation. At a time of religious confusion and doubt, the Russians supported the unification of the United States into one Orthodox diocese of differing nationalities including Ukrainians, Serbians, Syrians, and Greeks, and contributed to the strength of the religious foundation of this country. All Orthodox people brought to the United States the best which they could bring-the Christianity of the Seven Ecumenical Councils.

The editor



О П Р И Ч Т Ъ О З Н А Ч Е Н

Кто именно, гдѣ родился, изъ какого звѣнія происходить, гдѣ и чѣмъ окончилъ, когда и въ какъ въ какой чинъ произведенъ, и въ какой мѣстѣ: какія проходилъ и проходилъ особенныя должности, когда чѣмъ былъ награжденъ, и кого имѣетъ въ семействѣ.

Годы.

Мѣсяцы
и
числа:

Настоятельно прошога - Прошое реди
Алексийъ Теорисъ Павличъ - дворян-
скаго звѣнія - родился въ Угрии 1854г.
Марта 18дня н.с. Прошомъ курсъ нормаль-
ной школы 1863-65г. — Гимнази 1865-72г.;
— Московскій факультетъ 1874-77г. 1873года
исполнилъ подполковничью службу по вѣнскому.
1878года, августа 18дня рукоположенъ въ санъ
Свещеника и назначенъ въ вѣнскомъ Свещеникомъ,
что и проходилъ до 1879года-
5мая, сего же года и мѣсяца, и дня назначенъ
директоромъ и секретаремъ Епископскаго
оклада, на каковой должности состоялъ
до 1881года. 1881года назначенъ профессоромъ
Керковнаго права и церковной исторіи при
Прагской семинаріи; — въ то же время
состоялъ и каменителемъ въ индустриальной
школе. Эти двѣ должности
занималъ до 1889года. — 15 ноября 1889года
прѣехалъ въ С. Америку; въ Миннеаполисѣ,
Миннесота за настоятелемъ прошога, какъ
Училищскій Свещеникъ. 25 марта 1891года
проехавъ съ своимъ прошога въ Св.
Православной церкви. 1893года съобразивъ
завать прошога въ Виннесъ-Баръ, и сюда
переведенъ настоятелемъ того же года
3 марта.



О П Р И Ч Т Ъ О З Н А Ч Е Н

| <p>Кто именно, гдѣ родился, изъ какого звѣнія происходить, гдѣ и чѣмъ обучался, когда и гдѣ въ какой чинъ произведенъ, и каковыя имѣетъ: канія проходилъ и проходитъ особыя обязанности, когда чѣмъ былъ награжденъ, и когда имѣетъ въ семействѣ.</p> | <p>Годы.</p> | <p>Месяцы и числа.</p> |
|---|--------------|------------------------|
| <p>Въ 1892 году награжденъ Габсбургскими орденами Императорскимъ и Австрийскимъ. 23 июня 1893 года возведенъ въ санъ Протоіерея. 31 дек. 1896 года награжденъ Благословенной Евангелией. 1896г. Октябръ 19 дня награжденъ Императорскимъ Орденомъ Св. Анны третьей степени. 1900г. Юня 30 дня - Императорскимъ Орденомъ Св. Анны второй степени. 1903г. Юля 17 дня - Императорскимъ Орденомъ Св. Владимира четвертой степени. 1906г. Сент. 18 дня - Императорскимъ Орденомъ Св. Владимира третьей степени. 1907 года - Памией и 21 марта 1903 года - Митрой.</p> <p>Получаю содержаніе изъ Северо-Американскаго Духовнаго Управленія # 9240.</p> <p>Вдовъ. Въ семействѣ никого не имѣю.</p> <p>Притѣри А. Т. Тотн</p> | | |

Autobiography of Father A. Toth¹⁴

The pastor of the parish, Archpriest Alexis Georgevich Toth was born in Hungary on March 18, 1854¹⁵ new calendar, of a gentry family. He finished the course of primary school in 1863-'65, gymnasium in 1865-'72, theological department in 1874-'77. In 1873, he had the necessary military duty. In 1878, on April 18, he was ordained to the order of priest and appointed as second pastor, fulfilling this duty until 1879, May 5; in the same year, month, and day he was appointed as business clerk and secretary of the bishop, in whose service he was until 1887. In 1881 he was appointed as a professor of church law and church history at Priashev Seminary and was at the same time working as catechist in an industrial school. He fulfilled both of these duties until 1889; on the 15th of November of 1889 he came as a Uniate priest to North America; to Minneapolis, in the state of Minnesota as the pastor of the parish. On the 25th of March, 1891, he was with his parish reunited with the Holy Orthodox fold. In 1893, he organized the parish in Wilkes-Barre and was transferred here as the pastor in the same year, on the 3rd of March.¹⁶

In 1892, he was decorated with the side adornment, honorary head piece kamilavca, and with the cabinet cross. On the 23rd of June, 1893, he was elevated to the order of Archpriest. On the 31st of December, 1896, he was awarded with a written blessing. On October 19, 1896, he was decorated with the Imperial Order of St. Ann, Third Class; on June 13, 1900, with the Imperial Order of St. Ann, Second Class; in 1903, June 17, with the Imperial Order of St. Vladimir, Fourth Class; on

¹⁴This was taken from the front of a church record book, Wilkes-Barre, 1909. (AARDM)

¹⁵Some sources give the birthdate as March 17, 1853 (Svit, v. 78, no. 3, June, 1975). In St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly, v. 16, no. 3, 1972, the date is March 14, 1853. The date given in this text is in Father Alexis' handwritten autobiography, with his own signature.

¹⁶Through Father Alexis' untiring efforts, the Holy Resurrection Russian Orthodox Church in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., and St. John the Baptist Russian Orthodox Church in Edwardsville, Pa., were organized. He was instrumental in the acceptance into Orthodoxy of parishes in the following cities and towns: Allegheny, Osceola Mills, Scranton, Old Forge, Lopez, Catasauqua, Berwick, Philadelphia, Pa.; Streator, Ill.; Bridgeport, Conn.; Passaic and Yonkers, New York, and many others. He also organized the Russian Orthodox Catholic Mutual Aid Society in 1895 with branches in other parishes.

September 18, 1906, with the Imperial Order of St. Vladimir, Third Class.¹⁷ In 1907 he was decorated with epigonations (palitsa) and on March 21, 1903, with the mitre.¹⁸ He receives a salary from the North American Spiritual Administration in the amount of \$92.40. He is a widower, he does not have anyone in his family.¹⁹

Archpriest A. G. Toth

¹⁷During the Russo-Japanese War, Father Alexis also received an honorary membership certificate for his support of the Red Cross.

¹⁸A special envoy was dispatched to the United States to present Father Alexis with a beautiful gold mitre to express recognition of his efforts on behalf of the Orthodox Church.

¹⁹Two years before his death, in 1909, Father Alexis was asked to become Bishop but he declined the honor because of his age and failing health.

Your Eminence, Most Reverend Lord and Merciful Archpastor!

At Your Eminence's request I hurry to place at Your disposal:
1. a list of church vessels and other items, necessary for the performance of church services with proper dignity, splendor and fullness according to the order in the Holy Annunciation Church in the city of Wilkes-Barre and 2. the program with the estimate for the publication of the missionary magazine.

In relation to the first it is needless to slip in speaking that it would be desirable to supply also the churches in Pittsburgh and Osceola with all the items on that list.

Concerning the estimate of the magazine, to confirm that it is made with frugality I am obliged to explain the financial condition of *Amerikanskii Russkii Viestnik*.²⁰ This newspaper has more than 400 paying subscribers, and considerable income from private printing orders and advertisements, which can total in a year, as much as \$3000, and meanwhile it is almost in a condition of bankruptcy and with difficulty continues to exist, in hopes of a better time, only on account of borrowing means from the money of the Greek-Catholic Union.²¹ The editorial expenses of this newspaper reach as much as \$5000 and now, the necessity of support from the parish priests is not for the first time discussed, as a one time collection of \$100 from each one.²²

Entrusting myself to the mercy of Your Eminence, kissing Your sacred hand, I remain in Wilkes-Barre, 5-17 August 1893.

Your Eminence's all-submitting servant and spiritual son,
Alexis G. Toth, pastor of the Annunciation Church

²⁰Amerikanskii-Russkii Viestnik (American-Russian Messenger) was the official organ of the Greek Catholic Union, beginning publication in 1892. On December 11, 1952 with volume 60, number 49, it changed its name to Greek Catholic Union Messenger.

²¹In February of 1892, Fathers A. Toth and Th. Obushkievich united the Carpato-Russian Church fraternities in the United States into one organization "Soedinenie Greko-Katolicheskikh Russkikh Bratstv" (The Greek-Catholic Union). I. A. Zhinchak-Smith was elected president. The organization was composed of three branches; General, Sokol, and Youth. During its existence it performed humanitarian tasks among its members helping the widows and orphans of its deceased members.

²²Bishop Nicholas noted on this letter on 7-19 August 1893 that the figures will be given to the Ober-Procuror (minister of Orthodox Church affairs in Russia) of the Holy Synod but in his opinion the estimate is too high.

I, all obedient, have the honor to report, that I received that which was mercifully sent to me, the books for the Wilkes-Barre Church, and Pittsburgh, and the copy of the order of the Holy Synod, no. 1978, about the acceptance of the people in Osceola. I will bring the books and also the documents to Osceola when I return after I shall finish business in Pittsburgh...

19-31 August, 1893

I have the honor to obediently submit to You the copy of the fees which have to be paid by the parishioners of Osceola:

Pastor:

| | |
|--|-------|
| 1) monthly | \$40. |
| 2) Liturgy | 1.75 |
| 3) weddings | 7. |
| 4) small funeral | 2. |
| 5) large funeral | 6. |
| 6) large funeral with Liturgy and burial | 11. |
| 7) certification | 2. |
| 8) introduction of a woman into church after birth | 1. |
| 9) blessing of a new house | 1. |
| 10) carriage at the time of burial | |

Reader:

| | |
|--|-------|
| 1) monthly | \$25. |
| 2) Liturgy | .50 |
| 3) wedding | 2. |
| 4) small funeral | 1. |
| 5) large funeral | 2. |
| 6) large funeral with Liturgy | 4. |
| 7) blessing of a new home | .50 |
| 8) baptism-when someone gives anything, one third goes to the reader | |

31st of August, 1893

To His Eminence, Most Reverend Nicholas, Bishop of the
Aleutian Islands and Alaska²³

Report:

Submitting the record of expenses to date for the printing and mailing of the book "Where To Seek The Truth"²⁴ I have the honor to explain the following:

The typographic type setting took longer than expected, because the annotations and notes--which comprised 16 pages, were not included in the original manuscript and also because from the end of December until the beginning of the New Year, the print shop was loaded with urgent work of the commercial business type.

Calculated at about 60 pages, the book increased to 76 pages, and because of that the type setting, the printing and the stitching all cost--instead of the preliminarily agreed upon \$65.00--\$82.28.

In view of the cost of the book, explained in this way, and the not small expenses of distribution, I decided not to start immediately the translation into the Slovak language, the more so since I am still busy with the distribution of the necessary amount of books. Concerning this so that they would definitely come into the hands of known people, it was not possible to risk sending a large amount of copies into the same hands--to the names of Uniate Fraternal Unions or their sergeants, and because of that I was concerned to receive a list with addresses of people who were receiving Amerikanskii Russkii Viestnik,--Myron Volkai, who was active before in the editorial office of that newspaper, helped me to get it.

After mailing according to this list, probably during one month, results from the influence of the book will appear in the enlightenment of the people and if they, the people, will ask for a Slovak text,--then I will start this work, in hopes that Your Eminence will deign to give the additional allotments necessary for the second edition. Otherwise, if no requests for a Slovak text come, I will dispose to Your Eminence with an accounting, the money remaining from the Russian edition.

29-10 January-February 1894

²³The letterhead reads: The Dean of the Russian Greek-Catholic Church in the Pennsylvania District--Very Reverend Archpriest Alexis G. Toth. According to his autobiography written in 1903 Father Alexis was Dean from 1894 until 1895.

²⁴In the record Father Alexis indicates that 2000 copies were printed, of which 888 were sent out: 200 copies went to Bishop Nicholas; 388 to different people in different cities; 75 copies to Pittsburgh; 50 each to Allegheny and Minneapolis; 25 to Osceola; Chicago; Streator, Ill.; New York and Cleveland. In addition 192 copies were distributed in church and 40 copies were given to people who sought out Father Alexis specially. The total cost of the publication was \$98.02.

Respectfully I request that Your Eminence allow me,--and excuse me,--that I dare to turn Your attention to some events, facts, and circumstances, which occurred inside and outside of our mission...

1) Four days ago I received a telegram from the pastor of the church in Bridgeport Father Michael Bologh; in which he called on me to come there immediately, since he had a big disturbance, because the parishioners did not receive--a reader!.. After an hour I received again another telegram from Iann Chrabchak, which I enclose, from which it is possible to understand that the "curators" are even threatening to close the church, because they did not get--a reader!... But since I do not have any official position, nor appointment to mix into the internal matters of one or another parish, naturally I did not go there, but I immediately wrote a friendly letter to Father Michael suggesting that he could bring peace over there with his own authority,--and I expressed my surprise at such an action by "Curator Chrabchak" who allowed something like that to happen! At the same time I sent a letter to Chrabchak and gave him an idea, of who can close the church, who runs the church,--what parishioners can demand, and what not, what their duties are, and how they should receive orders from the higher spiritual authority... To which I today received a reply from them, which I enclose. I do not get into the "meritum" of the entire matter, only I have the honor respectfully to add, that really from one point of view they have the truth, because the acting reader Yulii Lukac has such a wild voice, that it is simply not possible to sing with him!.. They cannot stand Michael Stroip from ancient time; it seems to me that much has to do with the hate of nationality,--except as much as I know they would like their children to go to a Russian school and learn to sing, read and write as their delegates heard and saw it during the conference at Wilkes-Barre.--

2) In Jersey City, happened a "tragi-comical" adventure, Gregory Hrushka had a cook who knew how to make cigars, and opened without state license in the parish house a production of cigars!... The end of the history is that he and his cook are out on bail until the--trial. Naturally it is his private matter, but consequences are greater, because they have a vulgar character, the parishioners do not want him anymore as their pastor...and asked for another Ukrainophil--Ardan, to come, he knocks around America seeking a "parish"--the same one who also wanted to settle down in--Ansanian. I received a letter from there lately and some parishioners wrote to me from there, and they requested that I come to Jersey City but naturally--it belongs to the area of New York's parish,--I simply refused; if we would now have a newspaper, it would be possible to pay Gregory Hrushka for his previous "kindnesses" the more so that the Slavic and also the Polish newspapers kept deep silence

about it!²⁵ The New York clergy at the present time have especially good reason to use these circumstances...although it was possible to do it before; the people from New Jersey in a short time would have united; I had much hoped in Father Evtichii Balanovich, but somehow they didn't like him;--according mainly to their words, "here" the sermon for a long time was given by the clergy from New York, because the Uniates from Brooklyn already from ancient time chased away Evgenii Volkai, who now lives in New York City and who holds "services" in a Roman Catholic Church. But after that the intense help from the side of "Vicar" Chanath, and also, the literary "influence" and even the printing of "Amerikanskii Russkii Viestnik" was not of any good for our side,²⁶--even the furniture of the editor has been sequestered by the creditors, and only the "generosity and magnanimity" of the president of the Union, Mr. Smith, saved the editorial office, after which they decided to transfer their "useful" influence to New York, to paralyze more the influence of "schismatic"

²⁵Since the time of Father Alexis' conversion to Orthodoxy Father Gregory Hrushka also expressed a desire to become Orthodox. But as he wrote in his letter to Father Alexis in early 1893, "the circumstances temporarily do not permit me to do as I wish". In another letter, December 17, 1893, he writes that he throws the gauntlet to the Latins and that he has declared in his church that he is an Orthodox priest. Since he was editor of the Russian newspaper Svoboda he also sent Father Alexis' pamphlet Where To Seek The Truth to his readers. This newspaper Svoboda was the official organ of "Russkii Narodnyi Soyuz" (Russian National Union) which was established for the protection of Russian people in the U.S. The organization was taken over by a politically inclined group headed by Father Ardan who was, for his socialistic ideas, later excommunicated by the Roman Catholic Church. The organization and the newspaper changed its name to Little Russian and then to Ukrainian Union and Newspaper and became critical toward Russian history, literature, and culture and also anti-religious, expressing interest only in workers' movements and strikes. This forced Father Hrushka to turn to Father Alexis. He became editor of the Russian newspaper Svit.

²⁶ARV, no. 29, 21-9 August 1894, p. 1, carries the announcement of Father N. Chanath's appointment as the administrator of all Ruthenian parishes in the United States under the jurisdiction of a Latin bishop. The editor of ARV, P. J. Zatkovich called on all South Slavs to unite in language and not to teach dialects in school, but one language, Russian. He pointed out that German and French people are also united in one language and that the Russian culture is a great one. (ARV, no. 25, 19-5 July 1894, p.2)

propaganda in the center and to stop it, under Hungarian-Jewish aegis: 1) to open a "Russian bank", 2) to buy a Greek-Catholic church and 3) to open an "immigrant house". On the last proposal the "Fraternity Union" and the "Soyuz" disagreed!...

3) There are already so many requests about our newspaper, that it cannot even be told. The Uniates are even saying of it that it is only "promises".²⁷ It is necessary and desirable that it would appear as soon as possible,--and that our people would also hear the truth...because until now only "Viestnik", "Soyuz", "Jednota", and several Polish newspapers wrote and spoke about us and those infamous and nasty attacks were disproved by nobody...²⁸ Until now the Orthodox people do not even know how many churches, how many priests, how many fraternities they have.²⁹ They must against their will judge by that which is written and spoken about us in "Svoboda", "Viestnik", and others.

4) The Brooklyn Uniate priest whom the parishioners chased away (meaning Evgenii Volkai--Ed.), and who now knocks around in New York and performs "short services" in different Catholic churches, and as I said before, only to disturb our business, is making a collection with the help of a Hungarian-Jewish publisher and the newspaper "Magyar Hirado" (Herald) to buy a church; because of this if there will be in the future two priests in New York as there have been until now,--it would be desirable that Your Eminence would have there one itinerant missionary, and he should be from Galicia or Hungary,--they would not understand a real Russian,...³⁰

²⁷ARV, no. 48, 19-7 December 1895 tells about rumors of a "non-Uniate Russian Church newspaper in America" and says there that the Missionary Society of the Synod gave \$100,000 to support it. Another rumor says that it gave \$2,000 annually.

²⁸Even ARV, (no. 48, 19-7 December 1895, p. 5) said that it would be good for everyone if there would be an official expression of the matters of the non-Uniate Church in the United States because until that point there were too many inaccurate stories.

²⁹ARV wrote for example that only the priest and several parishioners converted to the Muscovite schismatics in Minneapolis (no. 6, 21-9 February 1895, p. 2). Then "During 5 years only 2 priests and 200-300 people went over to schism..." (no. 19, 30-18 May 1895, p. 2) It was repeatedly reported in ARV that there were almost no people in favor of Father Alexis in Wilkes-Barre and other cities.

³⁰In a letter of September 4, 1893, Russians in New York City wrote to Father Alexis to come to them to perform the Liturgy to begin the creation of a church and to bless their fraternity. Under the influence of Father Alexis, Father Balanovich was sent there and when he arrived there was already a parish house on 2nd Avenue at 10th Street. Later when Father Balanovich left, Father A. Hotovitzky was appointed but Father Alexis remained very popular.

5) The Polish newspapers all this time comment on the letter of Your Eminence which appeared in "Svoboda"³¹ and "Viestnik".³² "Viestnik" before publishing Your Eminence's letter called the priests for a meeting and it was decided there that Your letter would not be--published, they did not know that "Svoboda" also received such a letter; but when an anonymous comment appeared in "Svoboda" then Mr. Editor Zatkovich published it at his own risk and naturally made comments on it!...with total success since all Polish and Catholic Slovak newspapers praise "Viestnik" and "Svoboda" to the sky!-- Excuse me please, mercifully Your Eminence that I dare to express my humble opinion; it's only trouble to get into conversation with people a la "Viestnik" and even more "Svoboda", I understand the purpose and I know what Your Eminence wanted to say, but it is in vain to tell it to them, nobody will convince them in this matter, they always will do their own, and at the same time they will also bring harm to us, until now they have been hesitant to touch the highly honored person of Your Eminence, but I know well that in the future they will allow themselves more insolence, and even more since Polish newspapers have encouraged and are encouraging them... Infamous attacks are made daily on me or some other, but it is already annoying the Uniates who started them to read them,.. a wise man even among the Uniates does not pay any attention to it, but it would be completely different should a Bishop be dragged into their nasty polemics... I will add here only one Polish newspaper "Wiara i ojezyzna" but this one has written a "decent?!" comment but let's assume that "Polak w Ameryce", "Patryot" and "Wandrownik" would attack Your Eminence, the Orthodox Church and religion in the most nasty way... At the same time Your Eminence's letter has started friendship and unity between the Polish and Galician Uniate priests here, until now they especially in "Polak w Ameryce" had been calling the Galician Uniate priests and their "Soyuz" as "Muscovite" and them as "Muscophils",--those accusations are especially and clearly visible in articles of "Polak w Ameryce" because of the appointment of Sembratowicz as Cardinal,--but since the time of the dishonest comment on Your Eminence's letter the Polacks are very satisfied with the Galician priests and "Svoboda"!.. They are also satisfied, that it was finally proved to the Polacks, that they are--"truthful Sons of the Holy Apostolic See"-- They will never stop throwing dirt on Russia, on the Orthodox Church and religion!.. The Soedinenie is justifying

³¹Svoboda, no. 6, February 6, 1896, p. 1.

³²ARV, no. 5, 13-1 February 1896, p. 2-3. Bishop Nicholas said in his letter that the Orthodox Church does not use dishonest methods nor give any promises to achieve conversion and does not have "itinerant disciples" in the United States. Since early 1894, the issue of "itinerant disciples" was very popular in articles in ARV and Svoboda.

itself with the proclamation of Your Eminence that the Orthodox Church does not have here any "itinerant disciples",--which in reality is the truth--the Soedinenie announced to the people in Sheppton, that their lawyer shall start a suit against those--who took away, by instigation of the "itinerant disciple"--Andrei Taraszor, a church from Uniates!... Curious logic!.. The only misfortune is that in Sheppton the Soedinenie does not have against "whom" to start the suit!...

6) My personal but not decisive opinion, is that it would be desirable that Your Eminence in all parishes of the diocese would do the following with the curators, to stop the actions of the "honest" trustees as in New York, these are the remainder of the Uniates, and they are making much unpleasantness for the clergy, and namely for their pastors, because they imagine about themselves too much, and quasi they want to be the overseers of the clergy, and at the same time among them is a constant competition who is the first? Who did more? Who is the founder? At the same time they despise each other, and even put obstacles for other people who want to do good for the church... At the same time to order in those parishes where there are no debts registered to the church that the property of the church be registered on the ownership papers in the name of the bishop not as a "trustee" but as an owner. But so that it would not make much discord, it would be best that such an order not be made public now, but that the pastor would act wisely with the church elder--and his helper in cases and when it is necessary--he would have in reserve the order of Your Eminence, and little by little he would completely end the existence of the curators... However this depends on the order of Your Eminence. Would You please deign that the church elder not be chosen by the local parish, but be appointed by the Dean? (Dean is the title of the priest who is the district president.--Ed.) How much unpleasantness can one or another "trustee" cause to a priest, the events with the trustees in the New York church are still alive in my memory. I do not know exactly the reason, but I was very surprised with those intrigues which began even before the opening of that church in New York. (approximately 10 lines omitted by the editor) What then can be expected from uneducated people like our Hungarian and Galician-Russian curators!... With one word there are misunderstandings and unpleasantness in Orthodox as also in Uniate parishes; there is always one or another curator with his hand in business...and there will always be such misunderstandings until the cooperation of the curators will not be abolished,--but as I said above only in such a way, that the work and existence would be ended unnoticed.

7) I received the resolution of Your Eminence of the 24th of February of 1896, no. 221 but I have to admit that I totally do not understand the matter, especially not the place where it is said about provoking only "an unpleasant feeling of irritation and dissatisfaction against you in all those, who have to deal with you!"-- Concerning official matters I always act without losing time needlessly, and I do not have private correspondence

since one time...and concerning other people with whom I have business,--and if those people allow themselves indecencies,--I adhere to the rule, "that the towel is of the same quality as the water". I humbly ask Your Eminence to remember that I have had to suffer many attacks during six years. As I can I will in chronological order present all these matters,--and I will not even speak about all those mean tricks which were played on me by Latins when I was still a Uniate, but only from the time when I united with the Orthodox Church which happened on the 25th of March of 1891. Immediately after that event, the damnations, "excommunicat" started to pour and, rude unreasonable slanders began, accusing me of selling my people and my church for rubles to--"Muscovites". And when this did not make anyone uncertain, they began to seed distrust among people, and there were even more bad and libelous matters sent from San Francisco itself... And that did not affect me, nor anyone else, and meanwhile I am in a strange land among hostile elements and I stayed here more than--22 months. At last Your Eminence came in 1892, and I may say that the Jews did not await the Messiah as much as I and my parishioners did await You!.. I have been happy from the bottom of my heart for the coming of Your Eminence and I can say this in front of God and my conscience, I have been happy especially for the fact, that finally after many temptations, and attacks I could hope that under the aegis and protection of my bishop I could occupy myself with the matter, for which I have had to suffer so much... But to my great surprise my enthusiasm was cooled down by the pastor of Chicago's church at that time Father Ambrosy Vretta, who opened my eyes saying that Your Eminence "holds me as a Jesuit who just for material interests united with Orthodoxy, and that he is supposed to watch for my actions." What kind of material interest could there be I do not yet know, since I as a Uniate was not pressured in any way, I could have demanded here from the parishioners whatever I would wish, but this news disturbed me so much that I wanted to leave the parish and look for another kind of bread!...³³ Still for the first time I did not trust Father Ambrosy, and secondly the matters in Minneapolis came into order...and I remained there, and now my whole goal became, to bring the parish as much as possible to the new rules, and to bring everything to the best;--and at that time I was called by the people in Wilkes-Barre,--and I on December 4 of 1892

³³Bishop Vladimir under whose guidance Father Alexis returned to Orthodoxy, trusted him very much. In his letter to Father Alexis of September 12, 1891 he even asked him to be a priest in Minneapolis and Chicago. "I have full confidence in you", he said, "and will help you all the way until the Synod will make a decision." He expresses the hope that the Lord will help Father Alexis in Pennsylvania in his mission work. There was no such confidence expressed in the letters of Bishop Nicholas about the activity of Father Alexis.

went there and being there for several days I accepted the requests and the documentation concerning the church which had been written to Your Eminence's name,--at the same time I requested that Your Eminence would for the time being, until I could finish matters in Wilkes-Barre, send to Minneapolis a helper,--and I received Father Sebastian Dabovich, whose first action in my parish was to begin independent work and to introduce such rules which should only be introduced gradually over a period of time, but in no way in a parish which just united with Orthodoxy otherwise disorder would ensue, which was what happened... I had to act against such rash actions, and in the end Father Dabovich and the reader Zaichenko--riled the people, and it was even easier for the latter to do it since he "urbi ex arbi" had boasted of himself in front of people that he was appointed to watch over me, and to send information about me--as I wrote to You about it once--Your Eminence--and this matter has not been understandable to me from the beginning, even psychologically I do not have a clear view of the situation of how such a coup could happen during 3 weeks, but at the Fraternal meeting the people succeeded in the entire matter, those same people; for whom I have sacrificed everything and who during the attacks of the Papists stood as strong as a wall, whom I have been protecting and saving, became so ungrateful... It was told to my face that "we do not want the 'Hungarian' as a priest anymore,--we need a Russian priest"!... And to show here even more the leader of the entire movement, they elected as the president of the Fraternity a ripe boy--Paul Zaichenko! Father Sebastian Dabovich wisely had already left the movement,--and played the role of an innocent man!... So I left--Minneapolis and moved to Wilkes-Barre, and what happened there later was only the result of the preceding events.³⁴ Not looking at the matter that I donated almost all my salary for the church, for the parish house, fixed everything, and even paid \$670 of money which I did not even hold in my hands!..³⁵ At the same time here in Wilkes-Barre, I also have to

³⁴It can be stated with sorrow that Father Alexis was repeatedly accused by ARV of not being a Russian but a Hungarian and as such should not mix in Russian affairs. (no. 12, April 9, 1896, p. 2-3; no. 47, December 12/November 30, 1895, p. 3; and others). It is repeated that Bishop Nicholas could not know about Toth's activity otherwise the matters of the "itinerant" and "head" disciple would be very bad.

³⁵According to an inventory made of the church and parish house in Wilkes-Barre in 1897 much of the property there was bought and donated by Father Alexis. He also donated a 10 centner bell and many icons to the church. It is interesting to note that at his own cost (\$126) lightening rods were added to the church and the parish house. (The inventory of the parish house is 10 pages long, including a very good description of the church itself and its contents--4 pages.)

fight such difficulties, it is known to everybody, who would just take in his hands the Uniate newspaper "Viestnik". The Uniates with all their forces have been trying to destroy me,³⁶ but even at that time I could help out by establishing parishes in Allegheny and Osceola and to bring people also in Bridgeport and also in New York so that at the present time there are Orthodox Missions; even more could have been done but the formalities which were demanded of me, and which, here according to the conditions of life, never give time to rest--prevented me directly and I put off my plans for a better time, and even more I have had not only to defend the case, but also to protect others!.. Only Hell's hate can fabricate such nonsense as that which the enemies of Orthodoxy were writing daily, which they were spreading around--and which even today they are writing and spreading--in their newspapers,--I used to hold up my head everywhere, for which I received from Your Eminence--a reprimand that I am teasing people!.. My co-brothers and co-workers quietly occupied their parishes, they have been writing reports, but they have not been seeking anything else... As if it would not have been completely their business;--and I had to step out for them: (approximately 25 lines omitted by the editor dealing with various priests, their parishes and their problems). For Mayfield,³⁷ and especially for Sheppton³⁸ I have been berated by the Uniate newspapers who said that I accepted \$120 for things which have

³⁶There were constantly attacks in the press against Father Alexis. ARV, no. 45, 20-7 December 1894, p. 2-3 compares him with Arius who also brought disagreement into the church (Arius, 280?-336 A.D.) when he went into schism. In ARV no. 12, April 19, 1896, the Uniate bishop of Priashev compared the deed of Father Alexis with that of Judas Iscariot. In many instances Father Alexis is accused of attracting people into "schism" with the help of vodka and beer. (ARV, no. 44, 21-9 November 1895, p. 2-3). It was written that there were made promises, payments, vodka and beer (no. 17, 16-4 May 1895, p. 2). It can be said that during this period of time the main subject of ARV was the theme of the "head itinerant disciple from Wilkes-Barre" Father Alexis, who is according to them and to Svoboda accused of dishonesty, opportunism, financial gains, deception, false promises, etcetera.

³⁷ARV, no. 44, 21-9 November 1895, p. 2-3.

³⁸ARV, no. 38, 10 October/September 28 1895, p. 2-3. Father Alexis wrote a rebuttal of those accusations, saying that people in Sheppton paid only for the delivery from San Francisco and that there is no profit made. The editors also remarked that only the court could learn the identity of their correspondents from Sheppton (ARV, no. 39, 17-5 October 1895, p. 4).

been sent here,--nobody stepped forward with a word in my defense, I could not have done it myself, since we do not have a newspaper... I bring up this fact only, because when Fathers Popov and Nedzelnitsky were in Buffalo, and later "Svoboda" accused them of attracting people to "schism" with "promises", naming them as "itinerant disciples"--Your Eminence declared in "Viestnik" and "Svoboda" that there are no "itinerant disciples" nor "promises"...--which in reality is the truth; but with it I think that: "quad uni justum, aliori aequum est"--if then there were no "itinerant disciples" and "promises"--there were neither before!...and the article in "Svoboda" comparing it with "the circulars" and all kinds of dirty and bad attacks by "Viestnik" is only Holy Water for them!.. I will never hide behind somebody else, and even less demand protection from Your Eminence, and only for one reason, that the enemies of the Orthodox Mission would not have a case and a reason to drag the high person of the Russian bishop into dirty polemics--Your Eminence stands above everything,...and if only the Polacks and the Uniates would have the smallest reason to catch Your Eminence then they will lower Your authority in front of our people, which the Hungarian and Galician-Russian people keep untouchable, even now!...

Not only once have I received reproaches from Your Eminence, and from the Spiritual Administration that I have been making such disposition, which was not in agreement with the views of Your Eminence and the Administration of the Russian Church,--I allow myself to bring up only some facts: in 1893 when I foresaw that the Uniates here wanted to begin a suit against us, I hurried to register the property and the church here to Your Eminence, in ownership papers; which I have had to do also, since when the church was given to us the first--condition was that the property of the church would be given unconditionally into the hands of the Bishop,--so I did also otherwise the matter would be only illusory... Besides that if it would not have been done then now in the beginning of the suit, because of the reason that we would not have any documentation we would not be able to prove that we have and that we are standing under the jurisdiction of a Bishop--the church would be "pure simpla" would be closed--by sheriffs!; and at the same time I could have done without any obstacles, since there is not even one cent of debt registered on the property of the church! and our debt is so small that it would be paid out until the last kopeika, if there would not be this unfortunate suit!... And for all those efforts I received an unearned reprimand from the Spiritual Administration! I kept to the local tradition here that the parishes of every religion have,--that the furniture, water, the light would be paid by parishioners, Your Eminence at the beginning had given an order that the furniture and other matters would be bought for the parish house by the priest. Father Popov and Father Balanovich did that,--I do not speak about the material losses had by Father Popov who moved to Osceola, and Father Balanovich who left everything here, but this circumstance caused a serious disturbance in Bridgeport, when I demanded

furniture and other things from the local parishioners, the parishioners from New York who had come there began to talk people out of it.--and they said that this had to be done by the priest himself,--as at their parish, and there was also an educated man Mr. Forster who insistently repeated this; and now accidentally I was reading instructions that were given to Father Michael Bologh, how he has to settle Father Vasiliev, and with great pleasure I read, that Your Eminence demands the same thing and orders, as I wished before; that the parishioners would pay to the pastor a moderate fee for the church services and other services--how much unpleasantness I had to suffer for it, as also in Minneapolis the main motivation was, that a "real Russian priest" would come there, since a "Hungarian" or according to the words of "Moskovski Viedomosti" the Hungarian is a "dollar grabber" and Father Sebastian Dabovich at almost every church service said that there should be no remuneration for it;--and now I read the resolution of Your Eminence concerning Old Forge, in which it is clearly said that if they shall unite with Orthodoxy then they should pay also as the Uniates are paying! I have requested Your Eminence several times, and it has been discussed at the priests' meeting, that You would in the entire diocese or at least in the parishes which united, would give a necessary "normative", that it from one side would regulate the duties of the parishioners,--and from the other side it would end the misunderstandings, and the unreasonable demands,--it is very hard to keep up to the Uniate form since for example they demand \$15 to \$20 for a wedding, \$5 for baptism, \$20-\$35 for a funeral!.. That they would begin to support the clergy, and even more can be requested from them, since until now they have not been paying either to the priest or the reader. Not long ago it happened: I said in Sheppton that the parishioners would pay \$6 yearly so that the parish house would be paid for sooner. Father John Nedzelnit-sky said in front of the parishioners that this was too much!... and they are not paying!...and I am naturally presented to them in a position that I demand from them even against the wish of my superiors!... Your Eminence said that I am teasing--people!.. I humbly request, that You read the papers enclosed: the appeal of Cornelius Laurisin,--and the English letter of Mr. Louis Rethy, both of them he as an agent received from the Uniate priest and sent them to me...in vain!... I cannot be so cold-blooded not to pay them back for their courtesies;--the business of Uniates is now going into despair and this can be seen from the excerpted section of the letter of Father Michael Bologh... The matter of Orthodoxy disturbs them so much that they would like to turn the business of the church in Wilkes-Barre into "entire Catholic Church business"³⁹ and really until now they collected already

³⁹Many people expressed the opinion that the parish in Wilkes-Barre had a central position and if the "itinerant disciples will locate there it is only a question of time until they will convert other Greek-Catholic parishes in Pennsylvania." (ARV, no. 9, March 6, 1894, p. 2)

\$300 for the suit, and yesterday when I was in the courthouse on my private business I have heard that the suit of our church will be conducted again on May 29th of this year, and they are keeping the idea that if they will receive our church not only will I be lost, but also the entire Orthodox Mission--would be finished, the unknown writer has also expressed this thought--unknown to me only in his letter to Cardinal Satolli!... I would have liked to enclose several more letters from people in which they are constantly asking about a newspaper, that they know will appear,... but when it will appear, they wait and wait for it, however I will say frankly also that, our Society, and Fraternities would advance more if they would know how we are standing,--because until now we have been almost as if on purpose keeping everyone veiled and secret, and the enemies of Orthodoxy have been using every circumstance, and from every small thing they have made a lot of noise,... Only the blessing of the bell has been described far and wide, and concerning "celebrations" made by them in comparison with ours, we had One Hundredth Anniversary Jubilee, Bishop's Church Services, Blessing of Churches, etcetera and who knows about it except our own people?⁴⁰ "Svoboda" and "Viestnik" and the Polish-Slovak newspapers can write whatever they wish, they can attack personalities, the religion, and nobody will object... it is not necessary to enter into polemics with them, but their lies should be answered only with serious facts, and they will keep quiet, and our people will have more trust in everything...

That's how matters stand in general, how many letters, telegrams (last year I received 130 telegrams, and I paid \$57 for the postage stamps)--I have to write, answer, and to give explanations to such business which is none of my concern, many people ask me for recommendations to Your Eminence, and if I would leave such demands unanswered, or will tell that it is not my business or it does not depend on me, then I will have already made enemies! Prosor almost every month pesters me about increasing his salary, herewith I enclose only one letter that he wrote me, Your Eminence can conclude from it what he thinks of me, if I leave his request without success, even more so that Father Balanovich and Father Nedzelnitsky have told him that the improvement of his fortune depends on me... Taraszor who has really worked long and hard, at his request the railroad company has given a parcel of one lot for the church,--he himself collected for the church in Sheppton, and who now did not receive a formal salary--has refused to serve in the future, and as I heard a Uniate priest in Hazleton by the name of Martiak called him to

⁴⁰ARV printed in every issue articles about Uniate Church events and repeated them again and again. See no. 20, June 12/May 31, 1894, about the blessing of the church banner and the ball afterwards, the blessing of an altar in McKeesport, Pa., (ARV, no. 24, 24-12 July 1894, p. 1), etcetera. At the same time no articles about events in the Russian Orthodox Church were printed.

work where he will receive \$30 monthly...but this did not stop him from sending me his reproach, where will I now find a man who would conduct the duty of a reader during the festival holiday of Pascha?... The parishioners in Sheppton want to pay up their parish house and until that house is paid up it is difficult for them to give \$15 collections; Taraszor would be completely happy with \$20 a month!... We had during the year of 1894 three different readers, one would only get warm and there was already another one coming,--some of the parishioners and among them Michael Zubko reproached me saying that "when one just starts to build, the other destroys it already". Everyone of them had a special system to teach singing, now also Prosor said, that he should better go to work, than to "work" for \$20--really I will try to ask from the parishioners \$10 for him but I think it would be very difficult, it would be completely different if Your Eminence would order to pay from the church treasury without any agreement with the parishioners, but otherwise they will say, that they having a family don't earn \$20 monthly and--have to live and must live through.

The resolution of Your Eminence concerning Old Forge, and especially Father Zaklinsky did not make a good day for me, receiving the resolution they ran to me with the letter of Father Zaklinsky, who especially was unhappy with the reasoning that because of his "family condition" he cannot be accepted into the Aleutian diocese and he wrote quite rudely to me! As if I am the reason that he was not accepted? Anyhow it seems to be that the people in Old Forge would not appeal to the Holy Synod but will remain--Uniates!... (170 lines are omitted, describing conflicts in the Wilkes-Barre parish among Messrs. Zubko, Pivowarnick, Jevcsak, Volkai and Prosor--Ed.)

Your Eminence! I do not tease anyone and I am not catching anyone but for seven years I am in real battle, I suffer profanation, contempt, defamation from others and from my own people!-- Without any ulterior motives I united with Orthodoxy, about which I already dreamed in the Old Country. I went through the entire America, I have been working as much as my strength would allow me, but such suspicions that I have had to feel especially in the last times are greater than my strength, already in the summer I requested that You lay me off the duties or at least give me a leave of absence,--You see I still had one joy in life that I would see my old father, and I did not achieve it... On the 9th new style my father died, and with tears he said on his deathbed, that he has two sons,--and there is no one who would close his eyes!... I received this sad news on 8-20 March and because of that I was late with the reports and under the pressure and influence of such an event I have spoken out and praised myself, believe me Your Eminence that there is nobody more trustful to You and to the cause and nobody will serve You as I... For it I received distrust, and suspicion, I will not write about it, and never did I write any secret reports and I will never flatter anyone to his face, and this is my unhappy Hungarian--nature...ex si fractus illabatur orbis! Nobody wishes greater success to our case, and greater glory to Your Eminence as I,...and

without exaggeration I can say that nobody worked as much as two as I did--and finally I have to suffer the hints, that I am unnecessary!...and with what kind of obstacles I had and I have to fight with Your Eminence knows,--You see from the report of Mr. Ober Prokurer Sviateishego Sinoda I read what kind of unpleasantness Roman Catholics in Russia made for Orthodox people, and there is already Russian and not only moral force, but also the government is Russian? and here?.. Everyone is doing whatever he wants, attacks, soils somebody's reputation, damages as much as he can... a lot, there has been much unpleasantness which has to be lived through, and if I would have reported it to Your Eminence and would write about it to You it would be boring, but I do not want with such matters to bring Your Eminence into depression and to disturb You, there are enough such "goodnesses" for one man,--I am also only a man, I make mistakes, but I would also want to do as it would be better,--and my feelings are also human and it is painful to me if I am hit for something which I did not do, suspected, and the most is when it is coming from my own side! I never ran from work, I am ready to work, but I need rest...or at least I need spiritual rest!...⁴¹

As fun I will add here the letter of some kind of Kazjuvski and Gregory Hrushka from Jersey City, this means that he has already been left by his "pleasant friends Russians from a nation of 28 million"⁴² now he is running to the "glorious Tsar's hireling"! They did not run to the arms of Cardinal Satolli and Father Hrushka is without parish and parishioners!... Sic transit gloria mundi! Right now our lawyer is leaving me, and he told me to be prepared for the trial on 29th May!... If only it would already be over!

From Brooklyn came the news, that the Uniates over there would like to send a request to Your Eminence with the goal of being united with the Orthodox Church.

12 March 1896

⁴¹Besides publishing, preaching and servicing, Father Alexis had other duties. In the church school Class Record Book, 1895-1896, not only Reverend Victor Toth but also Father Alexis Toth were teaching there much. Some comments made there by Father Alexis are very interesting, for example: "November 16/28 Today the United States celebrates Thanksgiving--it is thanks for Freedom. The children were all at the Holy Liturgy and sung it. Archpriest A. G. Toth"

⁴²This refers to politicians from Svoboda; Ukrainophils who were trying to create a country.

Several days ago a Roman Catholic priest McMagher from Casanovia, N.Y. sent me his composition entitled "Christ's Kingdom on Earth"-- This is a banal Papist work however; I questioned him about it to the theme "Primate of St. Peter and His Successors", and I would like to print it in Latin and English languages.-- I enclose these humbly for the censorship of Your Eminence, and I ask for permission to print it.

2 April 1896

Yesterday I received the enclosed letter;⁴³ from which I conclude that Father Zaklinsky thinks that I probably want to get his parish, and because of that made such a report to Your Eminence that the parish in Old Forge would be attached to my parish...but today in the morning other people from over there were at my place and among them also Constantin Rusin, to whom I read the letter of Father Zaklinsky,--and they told me that Father Zaklinsky has been telling them that they as Orthodox, truth-believers have to be attached to Wilkes-Barre, and that their Fraternity should end its independent existence and would be attached to ours, they told me that they don't want that and because of that they signed the letter which Father Zaklinsky proposed to them! How lucky that I had a copy of the resolution of Your Eminence and I gave it to them and they took it with them.-- What will happen because of this I don't know.--

April 7, 1896

⁴³Father John wrote on April 1, 1896, that there was a meeting of curators and elders of the church and they decided that they should have their own Fraternity and that they did not ask the bishop to be united with the Wilkes-Barre or Allegheny Fraternities because they have their own church, priest, and so on. Although the letter was not overly courteous in tone, at the end Father Zaklinsky proposes a meeting between him and Father Alexis to resolve their difficulties. It is interesting that Father Zaklinsky signed the letter "Your debtor and admirer J. Zaklinsky, self-supporting Russian Uniate-Orthodox missionary".

I humbly request that you excuse me, for not sending the report as soon as I promised, but I just could not do it, because I had to put an end to a whole intrigue, that was made by our dear Uniates.--

In the first place as is known to Your Eminence they sent an appeal across the entire America wherever there are Uniates and Roman Catholics living, for the collection of money for the trial and it was done not without success,--only through "Viestnik" they collected more than \$150, "Katolicka Jednota" and Pennsylvanska Katolicka Jednota" collected the same each, so they have now more than \$500!..

2. They decided to use all their forces to speed up the trial, and if they shall not succeed in getting the church from us, they will build--another one.-- If they would do it intra parenthesis it would be the best outcome for us,-- In that case even the most stubborn Uniate, would come to his senses, because no one would want to pay.

3. But their most secret move was, that the previous judge in the suit, Mr. Rice, who is a Protestant and a very decent and good man, recently was elected as the judge to the Supreme (Superior Court) in Harrisburg--and because next autumn there will be elections here, but the oldest judge, Woodward, whose turn it was, did not want to accept this duty, the second judge in succession a Catholic--by the name of Lynch--the third one was elected to replace Rice,--Bennet, was the Uniates' lawyer and he cannot become the judge in the same lawsuit; in some way through their solicitor they succeeded to put through that for our trial someone by the name of--Günster from--Scranton would be appointed; about whom I already luckily learned, that he is not only a Catholic, but a great fanatic, that he holds American Catholics as "martyrs", who suffer from the brute force of heterodoxes!.. besides this zealously every 3 weeks he goes for confession to monks in Scranton, it seems to Dominicans, and it can be assumed what kind of attitude he would have towards our matter? I learned about this when I was sending a telegram to Your Eminence, I immediately demanded of our lawyers that they would either file a protest against Günster, or would find a way that he would disqualify himself from the case. What happened and how? I do not know, I know only, that 2 of our lawyers Lenahan and Strauss went to Scranton, the third one McGovern to--Harrisburg and now I learned the judge will be someone by the name of Dunham--a Protestant--from Tunkhaunock--Wyoming County--but it cost us money!

4. Our Uniates led by their priests specially requested to transfer the time of the trial to 12-25 of May as I was told to "spoil for the Muscovites the parade" of the coronation of the "head of their church"!..⁴⁴ I again had to run from Saul to Paul

⁴⁴May 14, 1896 - Coronation of Czar Nicholas. Many people thought that the position of Russian Czar was identical to the Pope of Rome. That is why Bishop Nicholas sent "An Open Letter to the Russian Orthodox Messenger" by Nicholas, Bishop of Alaska and the Aleutian Islands (27 October 1896). "...The Russian Tsar

both myself, then the lawyers until it was put through that the lawsuit would begin on June 8, new style.

There was enough trouble! not only from our enemies but also from own people: Kohanik as a former Uniate reader in Kingston-- was present when Zubrizkii the priest temporarily removed from office was "blessing" the cornerstone of this church eight years ago, he was present here also when I accepted this church, he was present--at the sermon when I spoke more than 2½ hours about the difference between Unia and Orthodoxy, he was present when the documents were signed, therefore he is "testis classicus"--three weeks ago I wrote him that I would send him traveling money and \$2 per day, that he would receive board and room, that only he should be here. He did not reply! But he is working for Rovnianek, as an agent, I wrote to Rovnianek so that he would send him here,--then I received the enclosed impudent reply from Kohanik,--and an explanation from Rovnianek!⁴⁵ Kohanik will be heard--if he will come for one or two hours and then he could leave and I offered to pay him \$10 traveling money to here, and for the return also \$10, and for each day \$2 this means \$24...but he for his "work" demands \$50 and traveling money!..now I really do not know what to do with the insolent man? This is how matters are. "Sed quid quid sit inre"--I wish that this vile trial would be already ended--it already cost more than \$1579!--I humbly request Your Eminence to send a letter or telegram in English, that our bills would be paid to the lawyer Scouton, who made the tabulation--that is the registration of \$11,456 of the church property that he should be paid and then it will be registered, and besides this from December of 1895 until June, 1896 from Your Eminence on the ground of "Deposition" was paid for the salary of the clergy \$630--for the assessment \$143--for repairs made \$350--for the suit \$420, totally \$1543. Otherwise our church will be on sale--and we will not survive until the end of the lawsuit!-- his address is: (James Scouton, Esq., Attorney at Law, Bennet Building, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania)--

Bishop Firczak of Mukachevo came from Rome, and brought this sad news to the Uniates namely a) that they will not receive either a bishop or a vicar, they can have only a general

is not the head of the Orthodox Church..." (Pravoslavnyi-Amerikanskii Viestnik, no. 5, 1 November 1896, p. 71.)

⁴⁵Kohanik wrote to Father Alexis on May 20, 1896: "If you want me as a witness then I ask to send to me for the road and also for my service, but I would like an answer from you by tomorrow, because if I will not receive tomorrow an answer from you then I will go from Pittsburgh to the west--to Minnesota..."

Mr. P. V. Rovnianek wrote to Father Alexis in a letter of May 19, 1896, that Kohanik returned from his travels and that he ordered Kohanik to be at the trial on 25 May but Kohanik said he would not go unless he received \$50. (SNCA Box #43)

vicar (equivalent to our Dean), who would be under the jurisdiction of a Catholic bishop; b) that it is to be prohibited for married priests to come to America, and the most important c) that the entire jurisdiction over his priests here "plano inre" has been turned over to the prefect of de Propaganda Fide, a Polack Cardinal Ledochowski!...

The people from Old Forge are continuously crying and begging and praying, I made a request for them so that they would send it to Your Eminence. I don't know if they did it or not? Did they rewrite it or any other?

Several days ago I sent to Your Eminence a Polish newspaper "Polak w Ameryce" with another nastiness,--I am sorry! Your Eminence I am repeating once more it was a misfortune to be indulgent with "Viestnik" and "Svoboda"--however the latter in the last issue, speaking about the celebration in New York and about Kohanik--sings always the same note!..

I am very thankful for the Russian and English newspapers sent to me--but so what? Even that Father Dimitri Gebay will not light a candle to the Devil, it will be lit by other people, so that the Russians from Hungary will be lost forever...these people can be saved only with God's miracle! The Uniate bishops in Hungary because of the "thousandth anniversary" printed their "glorifications" and are making "thanksgiving church services" because 1000 years ago--Hungarians conquered the Slavs and Russians, and they keep them oppressed until now! After Galicia's 300 year anniversary of "Unia"--there is only--pendant, the Hungarian millennium!...⁴⁶

10-22 May 1896

⁴⁶See Svoboda: "Hungarian Rusins in the Hungarian Millennium", no. 31, 30 July 1896, p. 1-2; no. 32, 6 August 1896, p. 1-2. Also Amerikanskii-Russkii Viestnik, no. 30, 13 August 1896, p. 2-3, "Hungarian Rusins in the Millennium of the Hungarian Empire".

...During the last few days Father Alexander Dzubay took a clipping from a Hungarian semi-official newspaper; Budapest Hirlap (no. 80, 1896) in which a writer from Hazleton said much nonsense, among others he is demanding of the Hungarian government, that it would appoint for Hungarian Russian Greek-Catholics, at least one vice-consul, one Hungarian Greek-Catholic bishop for Hazleton or Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, otherwise according to the writer A. Toth, and M. Bologh--who became "Muscovites" will with "rubles" completely pervert the disposition of the poor Hungarian Russians!-- As I learned definitely, this article was written by Nicholas Stetsovich, a Uniate priest in Hazleton,.. but the "official organ" of the Uniates "Viestnik" did not know about it, and did not dream that this article was written by one of its "bread-givers", and in the first excitement wrote a very offensive article against--Hungarians under the title: "Also Here We Are Brought Into Temptation"⁴⁷ in Slovak language "Also Here They Are Not Giving Us Peace"!..naturally being convinced and being unconcerned that a Hungarian would not understand the article written in "idiotic--Ruthenian" language, because they will not be able to read it! It happened at the same time, when the local Uniate priest wanted a Uniate church in Alden, put under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Scranton, I let the people in Alden know about it,⁴⁸ and among other things I told about him also, that after trying three times to read he cannot do it

⁴⁷ARV, no. 13, 16 April 1896, p. 2-3. In the article it states that the demands are made in favor of two business people, who sell traveling cards and want to become Austro-Hungarian consuls. The article states that in reality the situation of Russians who are Austro-Hungarian citizens is not so bad since Father Alexis is just sitting in Wilkes-Barre and Father M. Bologh is not dangerous at all. The writer of the article agrees that there is need of a consul but he must be a diplomat and not a spy or detective. A bishop has to be a man who is dedicated to his nation and the protection of the Uniate Church and rite.

⁴⁸ARV, no. 12, 9 April 1896, p. 2-3, "The Letter of A. Toth to the Russian Fraternity in Alden". After Father A. Toth's letter there is an article five times longer by Father A. Kaminskii who attacks A. Toth saying that he is not of Russian descent; he presents also many rumors about Toth's activity saying that a Uniate bishop compared Father Alexis with Judas Iscariot who sold Jesus Christ. He writes that the churches here were build by people who did not leave the Pope as did Father Alexis. He states that Saints Cyril and Methodius and also St. Vladimir of Kiev were in union with Rome. The Russian Orthodox Bishop Nicholas and the Orthodox Church in several places is called a "Non-Uniate Church". In conclusion the author writes that Father Alexis is financially dangerous to him.

without a mistake in Russian, and he cannot write in Russian three words without a mistake! In reply to this in "Viestnik"--because parishioners in Alden are almost all Galician Russian he among other things sang a folk song of Duchnovich: "I was a Ruthenian", even that in reality he cannot write even one word in Russian without a mistake!⁴⁹ I translated the article of "Viestnik" and "Russo glorification" of Father Kaminskii into the Hungarian language, and sent it to the Hungarian newspaper in Hazleton Onallas (Independence), which continuously, attacks me first for "schism" then for "Muscovism",--and I made for myself a joke of it--a newspaper is insignificant and "local" and I told the editor of it,--that if you want to beat up "Muscovites", then do not go along the streets of Wilkes-Barre, you have much closer your own "Hungarian National Patriotic Muscovites"! The Hungarian newspaper reported my article, and with violence attacked "Hungarian Greek-Catholic patriots" namely Stetsovich and Kaminskii, the newspaper said--they only look like Hungarians, and in reality they are "Muscovites" and threatens that now really there is needed here a consul and--a Hungarian bishop! After that "Viestnik" really got scared, especially from the reason, that for them is invited a "vicar-Hungarian policeman"--and to make Stetsovich clear again they turned against me with fury,--really there is gnashing of teeth!--and Chanath, Laurisin, Volkai, Stetsovich, another Laurisin, Kaminskii, and the "Council" in Hazleton wrote an article in Hungarian language "What Can Be Done"--and the editor of "Viestnik" reported it translating it into his stupid--chuvash--Ruthenian language in "Viestnik"!⁵⁰ With this the editor himself fell into disfavor for his previous articles and for the explanation of the triple-bar cross by his "bread-givers"! Because of that all of them decided to announce that I and "my gang" are only "psalms-pseudo-Orthodox" and are under a "non-Uniate" bishop!...that we are not Russians but "Hungarians"..and that we are Orthodox only because of "business" and even more it is decided not to use the word "Orthodox" for any reason in "Viestnik" because of that it happened that Your Eminence was called "non-Uniate" instead of "Orthodox"! But all this exceeds the circumstance that the majority of the Uniate priests have been scared by an unwished for vicar and "Hungarian Greek-Catholics" and they decided to register the "Greek-Catholic"

⁴⁹ ARV, no. 18-19, May 1896, p. 2-3. "I sing 'I was a Ruthenian...' by right, since it's our Russian Hungarian anthem..." He says that they are by right Russians who live in Hungary. Father Alexis' followers are called by him "a gang".

⁵⁰ ARV, no. 24, 2 July 1896, p. 3. "The Hungarian Patriotism of Proterei A. Toth", was an article criticizing Father Alexis of claiming Hungarian loyalty and being involved in "pro-Muscovite" activity.

religion and church--as all other Protestant sects here, in Washington and after that they shall elect a bishop, supply him with money and send him to the East so that he can be "ordained" as a bishop (a la Vilatte) and how happy will the Uniate Church be-- if it will happen!-- There will be a branch in America of the "Greek Catholic Church registered and chartered"!.. They could even compromise themselves more! And now I showed in the local Hungarian newspapers their "double facedness". I put a question to them why they as "Hungarian" patriots who are loyal--truthful subjects of Austro-Hungary when a trouble comes over them and their "Orthodoxy" is put against the wall, then immediately they write an "Open Letter" to San Francisco to a "non-Uniate" bishop! Why don't they go complain to their consuls, ministers and bishops. My God! If we would just have now a newspaper how it would be possible to finish these gentlemen off!...

My dear friend Archbishop Ireland, got bankrupt... He has his own "streetcars", land, he built a railroad, etc.... Now he owes one and a half million dollars!... And he may lose the church property! I have the honor to humbly offer my sermon for the glorious day of the sacred coronation of Their Majesties!--

13-25 May 1896

...The fathers of the "Council of Olyphant" decided to throw out the "editor" of the notorious "Viestnik", and it took place as I said,--I forecast it to him already last year!...⁵¹

The newly arrived Uniate priest John Iliashevich who is supposed to take the place of Churgovich in Cleveland, because he is married, has not been accepted there by the local Catholic bispup Hortsman, because the Uniate "bispup" Chanath sent Iliashevich to Streator, but just as soon as he arrived there already after 1 or 2 days, he ran from there, and now he sits in Scranton, but there is already trouble; "bispup Chanath" wants to have him in Wilkes-Barre in the place of Sereghy here, but as he (Sereghy--Ed.) says he does not want to go to Streator "to die of hunger"...

I have asked Father Dean to suggest to Father Popov from Osceola, that he would look over the matter in Ramey,--

⁵¹ARV, no. 2, 23 January 1896, p. 1, reports that P. Zatkovich is transferring his duties as editor of the magazine to the president of the Union--John Smith. It is interesting to note that P. Zatkovich had the idea of uniting the Russians from all countries around the Uniate Church and through his newspaper he and his supporters were saying that people have to unite as did the Germans around the language and not to teach dialects in the schools. The language is Russian for all Slavs (ARV, no. 25, 17 July 1894, p.2). He saw the strength of the Russians in the United States in the

the parishioners over there are very angry that Fr. Miatziatsko left them like--brevi manu. I received his instruction (Father Dean's-Ed.) and the decree of Your Eminence, to go to Cleveland with Fr. Kochurov,--I am ready to obey but believe me I am asking to allow me only to say, that it has to be until August 5/17, because later, I will be again for 2-3 weeks occupied with the lawsuit,--besides that the distance from Wilkes-Barre to Cleveland is very great and costs much, I have to go there through Buffalo, and for the Southern Michigan railroad I do not have a "clerical ticket"... When I was there the last time only the way there and back cost more than \$35! and by Pennsylvania Railroad through Pittsburgh will cost the same.

Additionally to my last report, in relation to Prosor and Zubko,--I have the honor to report, that the first of them is behaving quite quietly, occupying himself with the idea, to look for a different profession how to look for bread, and I am supporting him in this idea...it is not necessary to make about him any special orders. I wrote about it to the Dean,--he finally will himself leave his duties,--Zubko--it seems also sits but he cannot be trusted...(2 lines omitted--Ed.)

I am enclosing herewith the "Galichanin"--there is a very interesting article about Hungarian and Galician Russian Uniates.

9-21 June 1896

unity of the Church and accused Father Alexis and G. Hrushka with "Russian National Union" of dividing people with their separatist ideas. Zatkovich and his supporters said that the Church in the East wants unity with Rome and Leo XIII; and only the Patriarch of Constantinople is, under Turkish pressure, against it. (ARV, no. 41, 22 November 1894, p. 3). They were spreading among the people rumors that "Russia acknowledges the right of royal earthly rule of the Holy Father the Pope." (ARV, no. 6, 21 February 1895, p. 3). In the New Year's message, "God Is With Us" it was suggested: "do not call yourself Ukrainian, Polack, Hungarian, Muscovite, Katzaps--but Russians, brothers of one Mother Rus'!" (ARV, no. 1, 16 January 1896, p. 2). At the same time the newspaper office was moved from Scranton, Pa. to New York where an Immigrant House and a Russian bank were opened. (ARV, no. 6, 20 February 1896, p. 1).

| | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|---|----------------|
| 20 / 2 дека. | Лече Занг. мит. | Прямое содерж. уроков. | 23 Лаврова. |
| 10-11 | | Отвар и ер. гр. замминистра русских епископов, млад. гр. сирота привержен иис слова. | |
| 11-12 | | От и ер. замминистра церкви нашии, млад. писанья олицу налучет. | |
| 1-2 | | От гр. писанья подлинновку, сред. писанья привержен слова, млад. писанья гр. гр. гр. | |
| 2-3 | | От. замминистра епископов епископов млад. епископов и разн всех епископов слова привержен. | |
| | | Общ. Протоиерей А. Г. Тоть. | |

One day from the church school Class Record Book, 1895 with the signature of the teacher Proterei A. G. Toth

Since June 8th, new style until yesterday I have been sitting in the courthouse every day, from 9 o'clock in the morning until 5 o'clock in the evening,--I have been coming tired and disturbed, I have had to look for all kind of documentation, certification, witnesses and God only knows what else I have had to look for, to write, to beg, and not once until late night I had to consult with lawyers, and because of this I just couldn't report anything for the information of Your Eminence,--even if I wanted to do it myself, even more, that already once I wanted to end this lawsuit, which is now taking such a dimension, it doesn't anymore only concern the church in Wilkes-Barre, this is already a war between Papistry and Orthodoxy,--a big gang of Uniate priests is sitting in the courtroom, and everything that only Jesuit guile could invent has been done until now by words, letters, and documentation and newspapers, but without success,--and when they saw that the case did not go as they wished, they delayed the lawsuit again until 5-17 August, probably following the axiom: "qui habet tempus, habet vitam"--

However the matter stands as following: there is in the state of Pennsylvania a decision, from the Superior Court, that a church--of one confession cannot be given over to another confes-

sion, that is to change it to another confession, it can be done only by agreement of all parishioners, but here is all the matter, that I accepted the church with the agreement of all and during nine months nobody had protested against such a change, only after this time from outside--from Uniate priests--started disturbances, and by their instigation there were found here twenty-seven jerks who said that they didn't understand what I had been telling them, in spite of the fact that the request to Your Eminence was written in English and in Slovak languages had been not only read, and also explained,--and after only 3 days time the people signed it!- Besides this our lawyers are proving the point that as a matter of fact there were no changes in the church,--because the church services, the rite, remained the same,--and concerning Unia that people never knew anything and don't know now what it is, because they always counted themselves--as "Orthodox";⁵² finally the church has never been registered in the name of the Bishop of Scranton, neither he, nor any Latin Catholic priest had serviced any church service, and that Father Dzubay had been demanding of the curators that the church would not be registered to the biscop.⁵³ The rebels took the Papists for help but Father Alexander Dzubay made a certificate under oath in front of a Notary Public, that the Latin Catholics never have been in half control (command) of that church, and that he never--considered them as his parishioners! Consequently they don't belong to the church! For this announcement he got a corresponding award, as we later will see, from Rome, and from his Uniate colleagues! There were 27 Uniate witnesses,--among them 5 Uniate ksendzes-- then there were 30 Latin Papists. From our side there were 131 people, among them there were 14 native Russians mostly from Suvalskaia gubernia,⁵⁴ which were brought here by my efforts from

⁵²Since the Uniates came to the United States they continued to call themselves Orthodox, confusing many people. In his open letter to Father A. Toth, P. Zatkovich writes "...don't mix into the business of the Orthodox people and nobody will into the matters of the schismatics..." (ARV, no. 47, 2 January 1895, p.3) There were many articles printed that tried to prove that the Uniates are Orthodox: "Orthodoxy and Schism", ARV, no. 4, 7 February; no. 5, 14 February; no. 6, 21 February; no. 8, 7 March; no. 9, 14 March; no. 14, 25 April 1895; etc.

⁵³biscop - Father Alexis makes certain distinctions in his letters and articles. An Orthodox clergyman (only occasionally a Uniate clergyman) is a priest or a bishop while a Uniate or Catholic one is "ksendz" (Polish-priest) or a "biscop" (Polish-bishop).

⁵⁴Suvalskaia gubernia was part of the Polish kingdom. What Father Alexis probably means was that they were from the Russian Empire.

Mt. Carmel, Shenandoah, Shamokin, and Plymouth and who during the creation of the church here in 1887-1888 have paid here to the church, and they--were always Orthodox!--

The courthouse is always full of people,--yesterday and before yesterday it was interesting to hear Obushkievich from Olyphant, who was testifying, against us,--but I called Father John Zaklinsky from Old Forge, who said of him that he was in Kholm⁵⁵ and that he belonged to a strong, old Russian so-called "Muscophils" Party and this made a big sensation, because Father Zaklinsky--simply said that he is also--a Uniate, that he had requested acceptance to the Orthodox clergy, but he has not been accepted! Anyhow he as a Uniate cannot--silence the truth, especially when it concerns "Unia" and even now more that several parishioners from Olyphant from Father Obushkievich have said, they will come to testify against his "double-tongue" if it is going to be necessary!.. However I have the honor to add here a clipping from the "Philadelphia Press" and "Record"--about this case.--

Yes, "Svoboda" has been chattering that I began some kind of a new "fraternity"--but this is a--lie and an untruth! A priest-editor Dmitrov heard the bells but he did not know where they were ringing! As a matter of fact, among Uniate ksendzes there is a real "schism"--there are among them wild ones and peace loving ones,--the latter have had enough of these comedies which are done by Chanath--Laurisin and Stetsovich,--and already they wanted to speak against the above names at the convention of the "Union", but they ran away, Father Dzubay simply told them to their face "The best reward for them would be, for their American activity, if people would send them to Europe 'per Schub'", then to save themselves the above named gathered in Shamokin, and "made peace" with the Galicians and agreed that they will make a meeting on July 14th, on the subject "How to make our disturbed condition better" they also sent out--"Obezhok" a circular letter--which I enclose here, but I am humbly asking that You send it back to me, because it will be necessary for the suit here,--yes, everything has been invented "good", but the entire story changed into--a funny comedy! since the wisest and most reliable from Mukachevo as also from Priashev came to Freeland to Father Gulovich, and decided that they will not go to the council! With that also the president of the "Union" Mr. Smith,--and even more the glorious editor of "Viestnik"--who are on the side of Father Dzubay started to intrigue against--Chanath and his squad even more, because at the meeting of the "Union" Chanath and his Consorts wanted to buy Smith, and Chanath with Feinberg--a Russian Jew, in company had a plan to take "Viestnik" away from Zatkovich,--besides this many delegates were not satisfied how the "Union" led the business--(the "Union", which has 4,000 members after 4

⁵⁵Kholm - a city at the Dnestr River. Until 1235 it was part of the Vladimir-Volynsk Diocese, in the 14th century it was part of the Metropolia of Galish. Roman Catholics appeared there only at the end of the 14th century.

years of existence has in its cassock = 0--dollars, the property is only--the printshop, and in books and "receipts" are \$400-- in people's hands!) and the "Union" started--to fall down, and even more it threatened to become a failure! against the "Union" with the secret assistance of Father Gulovich from Freeland, rose in opposition a Baptized Jew Edmund Lembik (Your Eminence deigns to remember that he was introduced last year in Hazleton, at the railroad station) and he wants not only to start a new Union, but to break apart the old! and he worked so hard against the "Union" that Mr. Smith personally went to Father Gulovich--to talk, and not only him but also the priest Theodore Damianovich and Evgenii Satala and they agreed that they will not go to the council in Olyphant,--and will make peace with the people from Priashev-- under the condition that the people from Priashev would demand-- that Chanath, Laurisin and Stetsovich will be completely thrown out and then there will be peace! Galicians--now want to use this disunity of the Russians from Hungary and according to the instructions of a ksendsz-cardinal had a plan to put him as a cardinal and as their leader "as the head" of the American Rus'--and from another side also to elect "Vicar", and "to rule as lords"; like that. It did not start as a foolish idea but the people from Priashev anticipated their plans and as it was said previously have prevented them, and carried out the matter so that to Olyphant came only 4 Galicians, and 7 from Mukachevo nobody came from Priashev's people, 11 of Mukachevo and 2 Galicians (did not come--Ed.) in other words the "council" became a fiasco! and the hostility became even greater!--the editor of "Svoboda" heard something about these events and with his "Ukrainian" mind, if he at all has such one? decided that if there is talk about a new unity, then nobody else can do it except--me!--Besides--as I wrote already once to Your Eminence--people from Priashev and Mukachevo for the second time made me this foolish proposition, that I would return to them,--but I simply told them as long as they will depend on the bishop in the old country--on Irish local bishops, then there is nothing to be wished about Unity, and I foretold it to them 5 years ago!--and to expect Paradise from Rome,(?) and to quarrel between themselves, then I will not talk with them,--and to be their leader.-- That would be an awful idea!.. I told them several times and now I told them firmly what they have to do, and where it is important for them to turn, if they truthfully want order and peace!.. But it seems that one more stronger blow must come to them and then they will come to their senses!.. In other words among the "most beloved brothers in Christ" there is complete chaos, there is such hostility, that it is even hard to believe, this hostility comes already to an extreme point. Chanath and his supporters in the number of seven came together 7 weeks ago--in Hazleton and they decided to destroy Father A. Dzubay and namely so at first to corrupt the parish of his son-in-law Stefan Iatskovich, in Duquesne, for that they instigated people in Braddock so that they would organize a special parish, which happened, and Father Nicholas Stetsovich has requested to be transferred there, once

upon a time he pushed Father Dzubay from Wilkes-Barre, now by his aspirations it is made so, that the parishioners would turn against Father Dzubay,--Ireney Miatiatsko was also instigated to leave Ramey, and move to McKeesport which also happened;--and it has to be known that both Braddock and McKeesport belonged to the parish of Duquesne, and so Iatskovich remained almost with an empty hand, but this was still not enough for them, those same "brothers in Christ" made a secret and bad report, and sent it to Rome to the Propagande Fide about Father Dzubay and his brother Hilarion who is a parishioner in Johnstown that they are secret "schismatics" because they are in a relationship with me, that their son-in-law Stefan Iatskovich is not only "schismatic" but he is also a drinker,--that Father Valentin Bologh (the father of Michael Bologh) is also--"schismatic". As a result of those reports by the demand of Propagande Bishop Firczak of Mukachevo recalled all of them to the homeland!.. Cornelius Laurisin slandered Father Dimitri Gebay saying that he wanted only to come to the United States to spread "the schism", and Father Gebay writes he is horribly persecuted!..

Everything which I know about the council in Olyphant, I was told by Father John Zaklinsky, whom as still a "Uniate" I talked into going there which he did, but he was not let into the conferences, everything else I know from Father Cyril Gulovich who told it to me confidentially and also wrote me about it.

Concerning Old Forge--I will do what Your Eminence orders, but I fear that, Father John Zaklinsky will again think that I want to add Old Forge to my parish.., sed vederemo, what can be done.

Who is E. Matrosov? A Russian-nihilist, in general as before at Hrushka's all kind of rabble against Russians has found the opening in the door and are getting together now at Konstankevich and Dmitrov's! As much as I can understand the matter, Konstankevich and also Dmitrov--are both socialists! or they belong to the so-called Galician radical party. Your Eminence is asking what Hrushka is doing?... His enclosed letter speaks clearer than anything else!.. It does not make any difference to me who will edit the newspaper, only that it would already appear! There are already so many requests and so many letters that I received from all sides everybody wants to read something better, than the foolishnesses of "Viestnik" and the disgraceful things of "Svoboda" we are all waiting for when for God's sake this newspaper will appear! There, also yesterday, even from--the state of Virginia, I received a letter. On our conference appeared an idea about a special newspaper, there was a reason for that, because by the program of "Amerikanskii Pravoslavnyi Viestnik", I and the delegates have been thinking that this would be a magazine in which only learned people would find pleasure, but our uneducated people will not understand anything and because of that,--I am convinced--venia sit verb!--that the best would be not to get occupied with grandiloquent questions in the magazine,--and with more easy questions for example with the intemperate behavior of the local Russian people--neither me, nor anyone else

will dare to be angry that Your Eminence deigns not to agree to the projected newspaper, already the leaders of the convention said that for this newspaper--has to be asked the blessing of the Bishop! Roma Locuta, causa finita!⁵⁶

Yes--I write to different newspapers, in different languages sometimes and also sharply--there is a reason, however somebody congratulates me, then I give them the answer in the same way, I have been silent for long, partially because there was no place to answer, but my silence was counted by some people as cowardice, because of that I was forced to show, that I am still--alive!...

Concerning Sheppton, and Shepptonians I can only say, that in church matters everything there is fine and in order, my brother is fulfilling his obligations, and is not creating any disturbances, it is only bad, that the poor people don't have this year any work, and they could pay only \$200 of the church debt. I do not know if the Uniate ksendz Kaminskii newly arrived in Hazleton will make any disturbance? Concerning Mayfield and Scranton I can only say that as long as: 1) the matter of Old Forge is not decided, and 2) until our newspaper or magazine will appear, then neither me, nor anyone else will have any success over there. Your Eminence, You remember what "Viestnik" wrote some time ago about the people in Mayfield, and nobody denies this!...⁵⁷ that I would be attacked again,--and I would not be able to reply even a word, and even more with my silence I would prove that the wicked, invented nasty slanders--are truth, this is of use neither to me,--nor to the cause!...and even more this will also bring harm.

I received again letters from Philadelphia and again from Cleveland, all those letters I sent to the Dean, I have been much occupied with the lawsuit.

I mentioned already several times in a friendly way to Father Michael Bologh, that he would possibly try to perform his duties,--I cannot do anything more, but humbly I would add and ask Your Eminence, that You would not charge Father Michael so severely for his carelessness,--he is not a bad man,--I will try

⁵⁶The reader will see that Father Alexis didn't give up the idea of a newspaper as it seems here and will continue to promote it.

⁵⁷ARV, no. 45, 28 November 1895, p. 2-3. In Mayfield "Viestnik" said only 8 people left the true faith and accepted the "faith of Toth". If anyone would propose a pension for him then he would come back to Unia or go to Calvinism or even to Judaism. "Viestnik" claimed that Toth sent one more traveling disciple for a mission G. Kohanik who started to give candy to children and announced that he sells land in Siberia--but only to people who accept the faith of Toth. But the pastors as also the disciples had to leave because there was nobody to be led or taught... (G. Kohanik in reality was an agent for P. Rovnianek who sold property in Pennsylvania.)

once again to mention it to him in the name of Your Eminence.

The parish in Sheppton received neither confession nor other books and because of that it was not possible to send as demanded the semi-yearly report.--

Finally I will allow myself to say that.-- But I am also not reporting-- Father Alexander Hotovitzky I do not know for what reason--wrote to Father John Zaklinsky, as a matter of fact in a letter which was sent to the local fraternity, asking them about the church suit,--and even more, were the \$300 needed for the case of the lawsuit of the church in Wilkes-Barre?-- If Father Alexander wants to know something about the trial, he could have written to me and I would give him an exact summary of the entire matter, and it would be even better if--he would personally come to me, and to the courthouse, at least my people would see that our priests also are interested in this matter and not only the Uniates, of whom there are always at least four or five sitting there; by my final conviction to ask such matter from Father Zaklinsky or from the Fraternity in Old Forge is only to compromise me!..and I did not earn this, at least not from him! He is still a young man.

5-17 July 1896

There is a strange event and excitement among the Uniates!.. It struck them like thunder, that Father A. Dzubay, his brother, son-in-law, and Father Valentin Bologh are being recalled to the homeland; and it seems that the reason for this recall was "Biscup" Chanath and his three satellites, who have slandered in Rome the above named! Now the majority of the Uniate priests are on the side of Father A. Dzubay and they sent a large--"memorandum"--to Rome, and they described all the deeds of Chanath, even "Viestnik" protects Father Dzubay on the second of the month with reserved courage making a reference to the "hand kissing" of the Catholic bishops, saying that he is in no way a "drinker" (Chanath) and not a "scandalmaker" (Stetsovich), in other words the "civil war" already started!-- In Scranton there is a complete revolt in Biscup Chanath's parish, on the second of August he threw parishioners out of the church with the help of police, on August 6 at a meeting it was told to his face, that they would call me--to make order for them and on the 9th only by escape Chanath saved himself after the Liturgy, otherwise he would be beaten up. A scandal usque ad infinitum, I think that Chanath will be chased out.⁵⁸ The local Uniate priest Nicholas Sereghy was forced by Chanath to leave for Streator and from there the "theologus furibundus" Iatskovich is going to the homeland to rest on--his earned laurels! Chanath appointed Cornelius Iliashevich here, the nephew of the Uniate Bishop Firczak of Mukachevo--Cornelius Iliashevich who owes from 7-8000 gulden of promissory notes in Hungary and literally ran away to America, as it was written to me from Ungvar.--

The new Union of Fraternities in Hazleton under the leadership of Edmund Lembik has not had success--but wonderful news was brought from that region: it is said that the head president of the Union himself Ivan Smith is not foreign to the idea of unity with Orthodoxy, and to be under the jurisdiction of--the Serbian Metropolitan in Sremski-Karlovci Most Reverend George Brankovich, then there would be no suspicion, that they are "Muscovites"!⁵⁹ The matters in the city of Mahanoy will work,--with the blessing of Your Eminence I am considering that after the Liturgy which I will service on August 11-23 in Sheppton to go to Mahanoy to the first meeting of the newly opened Orthodox fraternity; with this I humbly request Your Eminence please deign not to give blessings to send my brother to check such matters,

⁵⁸ARV, no. 35, 17 September 1896, p. 3. "...The traveling disciples are so disturbing the people that sometimes it's necessary to get police protection..." writes one Uniate reporter blaming "schismatics" for disturbances.

⁵⁹Orthodox people in the Austro-Hungarian Empire since 1690 were under the jurisdiction of the Serbian Metropolitan but his authority was in reality not great because the Austrian government was very restrictive.

and also to order the same thing to the Dean, that he would not entrust him with these matters--he can from the "hospitality" of the Old Country--quia occasio facit furem!--forget himself and this will hurt the cause, let him remain what he is, under my "jurisdiction" like that I can control him--otherwise I am not taking any responsibility!...

The Uniate priest from Ramey--Ireney Miatiaisko ran away, it would be very good if Father Victor Popov would show more activity in this area!

Father Zaklinsky during the last few days has been at my place and he asked that when I will come to him with Father Kochurov to reunite his parish and him with Orthodoxy--because according to the private letters of the Dean, which I then read, I have been appointed for that purpose, and I did not know anything about it until now!... There was no way for me to go to Cleveland, for all this week I have been held in conferences with lawyers, since the lawsuit will be continued on August 5-17. I received the books sent by Your Eminence, and at the proper time I will give them to Judge--Dunham, it is sad that the requested books have not been in the diocese library, it will be necessary to request them from London and to buy them, because there is a great necessity for them!

God give it that the prophecy of Your Eminence would be fulfilled, that we would win the lawsuit, but in some way I am afraid, knowing the local circumstances, and the fanaticism of the Catholics! It is true that I wrote to Father Dimitri Gebay that with the blessing and agreement of Your Eminence I am ready to give him my parish, naturally I will get another one, oh yes I will get another one,--either in Mahanoy city or in Scranton, or in Catasauqua,--but to be frank after seven years of work I deserve to ask from Your Eminence a rest at least for several months!...

My Fraternity and also the other Fraternities are begging that the charter of the society would be printed, without it there are many discussions and misunderstandings, and if also the newspaper would appear sooner with today's condition of the Uniate it would in many ways be helpful!

Your Eminence asked who is this "Matrosov"? Now I already know, he calls himself "Count" Leliva--from the name one can conclude that he is a--Polack, and in reality he is a nihilist of the most scoundrelly type, otherwise he is the best friend of Konstankevich and Dmitrov,--he is a co-worker with "Svoboda" that everyday shows more its socialistic-communistic goals! And this is a misfortune! Many of our people read "Svoboda"--"Viestnik" is the embodiment of Uniate stupidity, but "Svoboda" is a Ukrainian--nihilistic--anger!... Father Gregory Hrushka--already in ad inertas redactus,--the poor fellow does not know what to do, now his priest stole was stolen from him! But in some way he will find his way out.

August 11, 1896

The letter of Your Eminence I read only today, because only today I came back home from the inspection of my parish; last Saturday I called my brother here,--and I have been in Sheppton, in Mahanoy city, and in Catasauqua. But to be consistent; at first I have to report to Your Eminence de proximis,--namely about the lawsuit of our church'--the enclosed clippings from the local newspapers describe enough about the process of the matter, the trial began on the 17th, but almost the entire last week I have had to work and to counsel with lawyers, and because of this I could not fulfill Your order about Cleveland. Last Friday the local courthouse looked like a--"generale concilium"--there were present the suffragan bispup⁶⁰ of Scranton--he and Hoban the successor of Biscup O'Hara,--he has the title; Eppus Alioli-eusis in parsibus infidelium, besides them there were present also the Uniate "honorary bispup" Chanath, the Uniate priests: Obushkievich, Laurisin from Mahanoy-City, Laurisin from Shenandoah, Dmitrov from Mt. Carmel, and the local newly arrived Iliashevich--intra parentheses; in the homeland he has falsified promissory notes, for 7-8000 guildens, and the first time when he wanted to run away to America about 2 months ago, he was grabbed on the way by police, but because he is the nephew of Firczak, in some way he could settle the matter and he was released--besides them, there was also "Doctor universalis theologiae" Sabov who was sent here by Firczak as--an inspector of the Uniates in America, then there were: Catholic ksendzes; the local one by the name of Murgash from Pittston, Iankola from Plymouth, Koshalko, then one Pole and two Lithuanians! Because of that I also said that it was "Concilium generale", because the conversation there was about the dogmas of the faith both Orthodox and Catholic,--and at the end of all of that was the delay of the trial until September 4th.-- During the trial there was a remarkable "intermezzo", Emilian Prosor performing the duties of reader on Friday evening told me, that he was called to the apartment of the local Uniate ksendz Obushkievich, and there he was promised \$60 monthly, and a good place, if he would go over to Unia, and if he would testify against us, but he requested from them \$1000, and they did not want to give it to him, and finally they agreed on \$300, and they asked him to get some documents,--Chanath gave him in advance \$2! (very little)-- All this matter seems to me very suspicious, because of the reason, that when I called on Prosor to say it in front of the court and to deposit there also the \$2 he refused to do so, saying, that he is afraid of them, that he would be killed by them!...

I have him now under strict surveillance, and I already learned, that the Uniate sexton has visited him many times in the evenings, and that he has friendly relations with the local Uniate priest Kaminskii!... I will find the end of this matter, whom does he want to fool? Ad Vocem; Kaminskii, when he was here hardly received anything from the parishioners so what did he do? When he received the money collected from the Fraternities and the

⁶⁰suffragan - a Roman Catholic diocese, excluding the archdiocese, within a province.

Uniates for the lawsuit in Wilkes-Barre, he imperturbably put into his pocket \$150,--and moved to Hazleton, now "the head president of the Union" Mr. Smith demands this money from him,⁶¹ and warns him that otherwise, if he does not return this money, then he will give the matter over to the court;--this story I heard yesterday from Father Kaminskii in Hazleton,--but I knew the story about this before since it was told to me by Father A. Dzubay. In Sheppton there is great happiness, because 13 icons already arrived as Father Alexander Hotovitzky wrote to them.⁶² But how to put the iconostasis? This costs money! I decided with the curators--in the hope, that Your Eminence will bless our plan: Your Eminence has presented the icons--to the church in Sheppton and now every parishioner who wants and can would be able to buy the icon from the church and would give the frame for it,--and for this it will be permitted to him to write his name on the backside of the icon, (in the altar) and from the collected money it would be possible to pay for the materials and also to the workshop;--otherwise it would be very difficult to collect \$120-\$150 for this purpose,--because there is no work in this area and consequently there is no money. Concerning the other circumstances in Sheppton, thanks to God everything is--all right.--

The movement toward Orthodoxy in Mahanoy seemed very suspicious to me; already because of only one reason, that there is Mr. Smith, rectius Zhinchak who is autonomously ruling there not only morally, but also--financially, how could he a fanatical Uniate not try to put out even such a little movement? I have had the intention to learn about the entire movement in a private way; and now I know the entire story; the matter stands like this: last Sunday in the early morning came two people: George Ksenich and Andrei Striamba to Sheppton, and did not demand from me anything else, except that I would immediately go to them (3 hours to go by carriage) "to perform Liturgy" because they already rented a "hall" On the ground that they are not yet reunited I--firmly denied them, but I promised that after the Liturgy I will go to them,--with difficulty--not easily they agreed and told me a wonderful thing, how we are expected over there! After lunch in the beginning of the third hour I arrived there, and instead of a "hall" I was brought

⁶¹ARV, no. 36, 24 September 1896, p. 4. Mr. Smith reports that \$370 were collected for the lawsuit in Wilkes-Barre and were given to Father A. Kaminskii who gave to lawyers \$150, to Chanath \$20 and \$50, spent on the way to Shenandoah \$12, to Wilkes-Barre \$4.40, to Alden \$2.50, on streetcars \$4.00, for dinner \$18.00 and the rest Kaminskii kept as salary and he does not have receipts for the disbursed money.

⁶²ARV, no. 38, 10 October 1895, p. 2-3. "Schismatics promised financial help to the people in the parish of Sheppton but did not keep their promise..." This article continued the rumors that the "Muscovites" don't help to others but just give promises.

to a private house, to the apartment of the president of the new Fraternity Andrei Striamba--I found there only 7 people, after 1½ hours of waiting finally the rest came; to my question where they were? I received such an answer "at the Fraternity meeting"--at the same time the Uniate Fraternity had its meeting.--To my question,--what motives brought them the wish to reunite with the Holy Orthodox faith? After a long silence one of them finally said in Slovak language: "We don't have any more patience with the supremacy of Mr. Smith and we cannot pay so much to the priest, and to have so many collections,--and in the church treasury there is nothing... We are working and we are paying, and Smith is ruling over us"... To that I told them,--it is not the interest of the Holy Orthodox Church and Faith to make now disagreements and unrest in a Uniate parish, and because of that if you think, that the goal of Orthodoxy is, to liberate you from the "rule" of Smith and others you are mistaken, you are mistaken also that, in the Orthodox Church it is not necessary to pay to the priest and deacon... It seems that you don't have any idea about Orthodoxy? "I recently heard in church, said one of the people--that this is some kind of a new faith, it was told to us by the priest who recently came from the homeland".⁶³ (It happened that "Dr." Sabov had serviced in Mahanoy and he was thundering against "schism" and he threatened condemnation, Hell, etc. in other words he used the entire Roman arsenal.⁶⁴) At this I started to give them a dogmatic and historical explanation of Orthodoxy and Unia, I did

⁶³ARV spread rumors that Father Alexis was teaching a new religion and called it "Toth's Faith".. (See ARV, no. 44, p. 2-3; also ARV, no. 45, p. 2-3; ARV, no. 47, 1895, p. 3, etc.) In many other articles at the same time ARV reported that the "non-Uniate" Bishop Nicholas did not know what the "traveling apostles" were doing in America, ARV, no. 5, 1896, p. 2-3, and that if the Bishop knew what Toth was doing, it would end badly for the "leading traveling apostle". ARV, no. 47, 1895, p. 3, etc.

⁶⁴An article in ARV compared Father Alexis and the mission of the "traveling apostles" with the "time of the godless Arius" saying that those "wrong teachers" will vanish and only their "damned memory" will remain. ARV, no. 45, 1894, p. 3. The "non-Uniate Bishop" Nicholas should "call Toth and his gang to San Francisco and then send them over the Pacific Ocean to Siberia to melt the ice there..." (ARV, no. 18-19, 1896, p. 3). The question of proclaiming a damnation of the non-Uniates was in ARV for years. Svoboda at the same time spread rumors that the Rusins who joined the "Czar-glorifiers" have to believe that the "Head of the Church is Mr. Pobedonostsev and the General of Police. The Invisible Head is the Czar himself. The Czar's wish is God's wish. Through Siberia a man can reach Heaven by order of the Czar. The non-Uniates deny that the Holy Spirit comes from the Father and Son." Svoboda no. 5, 1895, p. 3.

it for more than an hour, they listened with attention, and when I finished the brother of the president came...and he began to talk--he was very drunk; what kind of a faith is this that we have to renounce the "Holy Roman Father" and that he is "God on earth" Why do we have to take an oath to have the Muscovites' faith, don't we have to pray for our "souls", because they (Muscovites--Ed.) are not honoring the mother of God...etc.-- To my question, about who told and suggested to him such foolishnesses? he simply said "that gentleman who came from the homeland (Dr. Sabov) and Mr. Smith"-- "Because of this, continued he--I will not renounce the "Holy Father" and will not go over to the new Muscovites faith but I will leave the Fraternity"... After him the same was also said by another four people and they left the house, and since there was not anything to be done,--I saw that there the matter was not about the soul, not about the church, nor about the faith but only about private interests, I told them simply, "that an Orthodox can be only that one who has real love of God, the Church of our Forefathers, and of the Russian nationality, that the Holy Orthodox Church does not want to use the means used by the Uniates and their ksendzes, that the Orthodox Church is going in a simple way, does not twist, does not dodge, but teaches God's truth and honesty"--and I left them. The enclosed letter that I just received will show the end of the story in the best way!-- I am convinced, I think that, let's leave them as they are, until the arrival of Your Eminence--and then they can be reunited in Sheppton if they will remain strong in their intentions, but I doubt it, because they will be persecuted and damned I concluded from the fact, that through the entire city was shouted at us "Muscovites", "schismatics"--probably at the instigation of "Mr. Smith" and--the ksendz Laurisin!... It would be in vain for the Dean or someone else to go there;--we can still wait; there will be trouble in Mahanoy quantum satis, I make the conclusion from many circumstances,--and it would not be right to get mixed in them!

In Catasauqua the Fraternity already paid \$2000 for the parcel of land for the church,--but many Fraternal members because of lack of work left for other cities, but it is said that in the next month the factories will again start to work and they will return.--

Concerning the coming of Your Eminence I humbly ask that You tell me the approximate time when Your Eminence will leave San Francisco. (15 lines omitted here, concerning the Bishop's travel plans as suggested by Father Alexis in Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, and Connecticut).

I do not wish to report my disagreements with the Uniates in "Pravoslavnyi Viestnik", so that our magazine would not fall to such a low place as "Viestnik" and "Svoboda"--I think, that it would be better to tell about such things in pamphlets.--

I explained the matter to Mr. Matrosov alias Count Leliva in its proper light, and I began from the point, that I was told by Your Eminence to report what relations I have had with Mr. "Marinich"?--I wrote to him in a decent way, but he will not exhibit my answer in the window, otherwise "Svoboda" will have for at least

2 weeks something on which to comment. Concerning prayers and Ektenia⁶⁵ about His Majesty and about the Royal House, I will allow to report and to ask Your Eminence, that nothing should be changed at this point, this would be a concession to the foolish and unreasonable demands of the Uniates.-- I wish to know for whom we would then pray if not for His Majesty and for His Royal House? Since for what we have we can be thankful after to God only to His kindness, and finally we live in America and not in Austria!...⁶⁶

I have the honor to enclose from the newspaper "Record"-- in which it is seen that "Biscup" Chanath could appear only under the protection of the police for the fourth Sunday for the church service. Last Sunday people from Scranton were here looking for me but luckily I was not home.-- They will probably chase Chanath from there, it is only a question of time.

To justify myself about what I wrote concerning salary, allow me to humbly enclose the envelope, on which it can be seen that the "money order" came only on August 12 at 4 p.m. and I took the salary only on August 13,--and it came only on August 15 to Sheppton, because to that post office money orders cannot be sent because that post office is fourth class. It would be the best if the Spiritual Administration would send only one check in a regular letter or by special delivery.

Finally about Old Forge, I have heard that one part of the parishioners wants to add their parish to Wilkes-Barre and that the other part wants to support Father Zaklinsky. However Father Zaklinsky already made enough "disturbance" with some of his imprudent actions.-- I have been awaiting Father Kochurov but until now he did not come to me;--it would be desirable that the business with the people in Old Forge would be finished, they only quarrel and do not do anything else.--

What "Svoboda" wrote about my brother that he allegedly had been caught in Mahanoy because he had an affair with someone there is an invented lie, I can support it with my word of honor, I checked the entire matter.

August 14-26, 1896

⁶⁵Ektenia, Litany, in English, is a series of petitions chanted by the bishop, priest or deacon with responses by the choir.

⁶⁶The first official order of the Russian Orthodox Church to Father Alexis from the Spiritual Consistory of Alaska ordered that at services he would pray for the President of the United States, the Holy Synod of the Church and Nicholas, Bishop of the Aleutian Islands and Alaska. (Jubileinii Šbornik 150 letia, p. 129) Fr. Alexis used a book printed for churches in Russia which required prayers for the Czar and the Royal House.

On 9-21 August in the morning I was ready to go to the courthouse,--together with Ian Repich who was called as a witness and also the court translator Karl Rethy, my countryman, by faith Catholic;--at that moment Emilian Prosor performing the duty of the reader came into the dining room where we gathered, and he told me, that "I do not know, it is possible, that Simeonov who was called among the Mt. Carmel witnesses--who are native Russians from Suvalskaia gubernia--is not happy with that which he received (I paid to him that which he lost by not going to work, for 1 week, and for the work \$16) and he probably gossiped something to the Uniate ksendzes, since, yesterday after the meeting Obushkievich called me to come to the apartment of the local Uniate ksendz, because he wanted to talk with me about something...and I went in the evening about 9 o'clock, and there in the room was Chanath, who immediately promised me a good position if I would give him the documents". (The documents (?) were as follows: when the witnesses from Mt. Carmel came, before their hearing I sent Prosor to them so that he could ask from them some circumstances, namely: how many years do they live in America, and most important how many years were they living in Wilkes-Barre? How much did they pay to the church? Of what faith are they? and so on.-- Prosor asked me to write those questions down because he said he would forget them, and I did it on a little card:) "and will I testify against you,--but I told them that I have only that one document (the questions written by me) to which Chanath replied, that for them this matter exactly is necessary--and I promised him that I would do it if they would give me \$1000 because I would lose my working place and I would not have any means from which to live... At that from another room came the ksendz from Mahanoy-city--Augustin Laurisin--and he asked me if I am a lawyer that I am asking now \$1000?...and he told me that they will give me \$300 or \$400, since they have 30 priests who will pull money for that sum... I told to that that I would think about this matter, and to show them that I have that document I showed them--a copy of those questions"

At that I started to suspect Prosor because of the following reason,--how come that he not knowing about what Obushkievich wanted to talk to him, already went there with a copy of my questions? The doors to the kitchen were open, where during my conversation with Prosor, Repich and Rethy were ready to go to the court and were standing there and listening to what we were saying, I called both of them in and told them that they should come back to the dining room, saying also "Listen to what kind of desperate means the Uniates are already using?..." and turning to Prosor I told him "Continue!-- Chanath seeing the copy wanted to take it, but I agreed to give it under the condition that he will give me \$25, but he told me--'My son you see I have only \$2, and even those I give to you,'--I took the \$2 and gave him the copy, and now I feel unhappy that I gave it to him so cheaply..." To my question "Where are those \$2?" he said that they are at home,--"Because"--said I--"you would have to show those \$2 in the court and give an oath that you received them from Chanath." "Yes I will give the oath and I will show them" answered he.-- "And where is that card

on which I wrote the questions?..." "I lost it or I tore it apart already" then said he. "So how could you have made a copy from it?..." "I was writing it by memory..." "Good--let's go to my office and you dictate to me those questions, so that you would have--an--original,"--and he--Prosor--in the presence of Repich and Rethy dictated to me, and both of them made secret marks on the paper, to witness if it would be necessary that this is not the original--but that dictated by Prosor.-- After that we went to the courthouse,--and from the beginning I have been suspecting, not the Uniates but Prosor, that this jerk will again make some kind of a swindle;--when I told about this to our lawyers they told me, that this entire story doesn't have any essence--and will not have any effect on the lawsuit,-- Knowing that, in the evening I told to Prosor--"Did you speak with Chanath?" "No he calls me on Saturday to the local Uniate ksendz and I will go" On Saturday 10-22 August I went to Sheppton and to Mahanoy and only on Tuesday morning I arrived back home it was 13-25 August, and after some time Prosor came to me--I was at that time sitting on the porch--and with a laugh he told me "Father Proterei I was not only with Chanath, but yesterday the Uniate ksendz paid for a ticket for me for the railroad to Scranton, and both of us went over there,--now Chanath has been demanding of me the original of the questions but I did not want to give it for less than \$400, but this sly person saw in my pocket papers, and thinking that it was the original grabbed the papers from me, but they turned out to be insignificant papers, and then he started to describe for me, my future fate if I would join them, that they would give me the position of a reader with \$60 monthly salary, but again I was not agreeing because he didn't want to put it on paper and we went apart... After we came home for 4 hours I have been walking with the Uniate ksendz and continuously he has been persuading me to come to their side, and he also has been promising me, that I will be thrown out for my testifying, and if I will remain without work and place then he will take me to his apartment"... I as it was said already above, knew already that all this doesn't have any significance for the suit, already then have been convinced in my mind, that Prosor is a jerk and I told him "Watch what you are doing, if you would not be able to prove that, they are trying to catch you, then easily you would come into such a position that they will compromise you and will tell that you yourself hanged on their necks"... "Oh--I am not afraid of that--- If they will be silent, and will not call me as a witness, then I will be also silent, but if they plan to fool me then I will give them a lesson..." "Then why do you not want yourself to tell it to the court?" I asked him. "You know Father I do not want to bring them into harm, because they wish me good, so how can I pay them with harm for their goodness?" This meanness made my blood boil horribly but I held it inside of me and looking into his eyes told him sharply: "You have a funny understanding of morals,--you are willing to sell yourself and to testify falsely against your faith, against your pastor and against those who are giving you bread and you are not counting it a sin, but those who bring you into harm

according to you--they want goodness for you..." He became quiet and left!... And about the subject I didn't talk with him anymore. On 21 August/2 September in our church there was a baptism, I have been baptizing an Arab, and after that Prosor came to my office, I was then recording data for the birth certificate of the baptized and I told him "What is it?" He scratched the back of his head and said "I do not know, what to do with that business?" "With what business?" "With the Uniates, they really wish me well, I know that I cannot get more salary, His Eminence doesn't give"-- "Then go to them"--I broke into his speech--and to my great surprise Prosor told me: "I will testify against you, if you will not give me that money, which I have to get according to the resolution of His Eminence from the collection made in church... And you will be in prison." "You know well what I just told you" I said, "I cannot do it from the church treasury, and we don't have any collection,--I reported about it to the Bishop sometime ago--but when we will finish the suit then I do not have anything against it that \$10 would be added to your salary monthly from the church treasury"... And now I loudly yelled at him--"Get lost!" The next day he again came to me, looking as if nothing had happened yesterday and again he--again demanded money!... But I didn't talk with him even a word, I simply sent him out.--

On 23 August/4 September in the afternoon the trial began again and I was called as the first one.-- The lawyer of the Uniates asked me "Did you delegate Prosor to teach the witnesses from Mt. Carmel, what they have to tell in the court?"-- "No!" I said to him, "but to ask them were they here at the time when the church was built and how much did they pay"-- Did I write for him those questions? "Yes..." "Do you recognize this card," and to my great surprise he called Prosor who took out of his pocket--the original card, about which he had said that he either lost or tore it, but he also showed that one which he dictated to me!... It is obvious that this jerk already then, at the time when the Mt. Carmel witnesses were here (in the beginning of July!) had been breaking his head over treason!-- "And even more" continued the Uniates' lawyer: "didn't you tell Prosor that he should ask from Chanath \$2? And for the original \$1000?" in other words all that which this jerk told me in the presence of the witnesses Repich and Rethy he attached now to me as if I told him, that he should sell himself out to the Uniates!... And he gave an oath on that! Being called as a witness under oath: that I have ordered him to teach the witnesses from Mt. Carmel what they have to tell--and it is naturally understood--that they would lie!-- But now he has been contradicting himself since to the question did he really teach them? "No!" said he. "Why not?" "Because this was not my obligation!" "Then why did you ask to have those questions written down for you? This means that you have been deceiving your pastor?" "Yes--because he has been also deceiving me, and he does not want to pay me that money which I have had to receive according to the resolution of the Bishop..." "Is it also true that Father Toth has been teaching all witnesses not only from Mt. Carmel?" "Yes it is true!" "Tell their names?" asked our lawyer.

"I do not know their names... Only 2, Lishniak and Turk..."
 "How many years do you serve at the church? Two years? Funny! that you know only 2 people"--finished our lawyer. In other words Prosor was dishonestly lying but now also he contradicted himself, so that his entire testimony doesn't mean anything!... Because time was running out, the judge again postponed the trial until the 23rd of October new style--and then I will have to explain the entire matter and to show the meanness of Prosor, but I asked the court so that he would not run away that he would be put under police surveillance, and he has had to put a bond for himself!

What burst of indignation and resentment the treason of Prosor made in the parish among the parishioners I will not tell Your Eminence! They were only saying: "If it would be done by one of our Hungarian-Galician-Russian people, then" they were saying-- "then it would be a bad and nasty matter but it would be possible since it could be explained, for example that this person was weak in his faith and so on, but a native-Russian, an Orthodox since childhood, besides in the service of the Church, this is shame, and defamation for all of us... How now can we hold the Russian people as an example, if they commit treason against us and our matter, for which we suffered so much, and for which we sacrificed so much..."

Yes I myself do not understand this business!-- I assumed much meanness in Prosor, but that he could even commit treason against the Church this even is more than all ideas about his meanness! Not without reason Volkai called him continuously a "nihilist" and exactly a year ago because of the meanness of Prosor, Volkai has had to suffer, and even that he saved Volkai has been accusing him of stealing the money from Zubko,--but now I think, that that trick was made by Prosor, that this money disappeared...

It is remarkable, that at this time a year after, when he wanted to take away the honor and the bread from Volkai, he lost himself the honor and bread!... That he was a jerk and he is, that cold-bloodedly he has been planning the entire treason, I found out last Saturday 24 August/5 September from E. N. Matrosov! Receiving the telegram from Your Eminence in the night between Friday and Saturday,--I called Prosor in the morning to me and I told him, and with that I asked him if he is not afraid of God, that he testified falsely?.. But Your Eminence, I have seen in my life many jerks, but such a stubborn, inveterate jerk as this man I never met! He is without shame, and with such dishonesty, of whom there cannot be found an equal, he told into my eyes: "Didn't you tell me that I would go to Obushkievich and Chanath to ask for money?"-- "Do you mean that I taught you, that you against me--falsely testify? That I taught you to testify against me that I was teaching the witnesses and that for that I gave you the list of questions?" And he probably not understanding what I was asking him,--or he was so mixed up that he said "So is it!" At this time arrived E. N. Matrosov and I was talking to Prosor in the presence of Rethy and when Rethy heard this, he as a special witness of 9-21 August, approached him and told him in Slovak language: "You are a scoundrel. How do you dare to lie so dishonestly?"

Prozor answered with rudeness and even raised his hand against him seeing such meanness I told him that he should immediately leave--but he was demanding the money according to the resolution of Your Eminence, otherwise he will demand it through the court said he! Well--then demand it, what he later also did uti figura docet! What happened later I do not know, I went to my office--the conversation has been in the dining room--I only heard a loud conversation between the translator and Prozor and I saw that the translator (Rethy) threw him out of the room, and as I later heard he hit Prozor several times on his snout! In no way do I approve it,--if it happened, I do not favor it!... Mr. Matrosov was in my office, and when I came to him he said to me the following words: "For God's sake! Why do you mess with such a boor and jerk? As I have heard he went himself to Konstankevich and Dmitrov requesting them to be a witness against you, he was telling Chanath 'I know that the Orthodox will lose (?) the suit and I wouldn't want to lose my position, and if you will keep safe my position then I will testify against my pastor that he was giving instructions to witnesses from Mt. Carmel and I have for it also a document'" Those were the words of Mr. Matrosov. Then he said also that the Uniate ksendzes have been suspecting me that I deliberately sent Prozor to them, then they saw that he seriously came to such a road and that he would like to earn--the penny of Judas they entered into negotiations with him!...

Already last year when Volkai gave me the discovered nihilistic booklet "Popular Mechanix" I wanted to ask Prozor but because of some kind of a reason Father Balanovich didn't give the book to Your Eminence,--and I have heard from people that Prozor was teaching people that there is no God, and he wrecked Zubko and other people, and he pushed Pivowarnick to make disturbances in the parish and he was writing reports, and has been dictating them to Zubko, and in spite of all that which I told to Balanovich Prozor stayed--I seeing it put up with it, swallowing even personal insults from the jerk, and I was waiting for the suitable time when I could rid myself of him,--so that he would not make any other disturbances,--since I knew that he found 5-10 supporters for himself--and I wanted to avoid that unpleasantness, until he would break his own head which also now happened!... Now he lost everything and not even one person will honor him.-- His treason will not hurt the matter, even more that on 11/23 October I will clearly describe his meanness by documentation and by calling witnesses!-- However lately I did not know what to do with him, Prozor has been trying in a real way to perform himself as a "pan"⁶⁷ but he did not have any money, and he wanted so much to get it that he became an agent--to sell the land and farms, then sewing machines, then he wanted to go to the homeland, then to Your Eminence, then to write to the Dean, then he was throwing accusations at me that I am hindering an increase in his salary, etc.-- At the same time especially not on a holiday he was coming to the church after the second bell

⁶⁷Very often Father Alexis calls the leaders of Uniate and Catholic Churches as "pan'y" (Polish for landlord or official).

ringing, so that he would not have to light up even the candles, because according to his idea--it was not respectable for him! It seems to me that to do it is--respectable! In no way did he want to do in church more than he has had to and he was putting the labor on us and he himself would walk through the city!... As I think of the resolution of Your Eminence of February or March I made a recommendation, that I cannot "pay to him monthly \$10 from the collection, which were added for him because we do not have money, that the money is necessary for the trial," and I held myself to it and didn't give him anything, even more because in strict order we do not have a "collection",--because of that I am asking humbly to take my explanation into consideration,--and to order the Spiritual Administration to let me know about it,--so that the jerk Prosor would not continuously recall the resolution of Your Eminence,--and now I do not know should I give him a salary for the month of August since he became already a traitor last month, became a skunk; naturally I will delay it until I will not get the Bishop's decision for this.-- Now until I will not get a reader I have one boy, who sings well and who helps me at the services and ceremonies. If it is possible I humbly am requesting to send Mr. Stepanov, so that we would open the school earlier,--and he can be ordained as a priest in Sheppton, so that the people would see the ordination.

The travel plan of Your Eminence was sent to me it is a very good one, because it is very simple to come from Buffalo to Wilkes-Barre, and from here to Sheppton, only I am requesting to do so that Your Eminence would leave on Saturday from Wilkes-Barre to Sheppton.

Concerning Mr. Evgenii Nicolaevich Matrosov--this is his real name--and "Count Leliva" is a pseudonym, he came to me in answer to my letter.-- As much as I can judge him he is a very highly educated and not a regular man, but it also seems that he is an--idealist and highly trustful! He told me that he wrote twice to Your Eminence but did not receive an answer,--to that I simply told him, that "in the place of our Bishop I, would not reply to you either.. You respectful man forgot in America that you are a Russian, and you want to speak to a Russian bishop..." He started to talk about some kind of officials and "administration means" and God only knows about what. But again I told him frankly "I know that everywhere can be all kinds of mistakes, and that also in other countries people are bureaucrats, and not angels,--but you do not touch in front of us and our people Russia,--because we would like to see Russia and to know it as it is,--we Slavs are very much putting ourselves down in front of "Russians" who as if with some kind of a reason lower our ideal of--Russia, from which we only expect a rescue... I know only that our Bishop is not only a Bishop, but he is also a loyal subject, and he loves his home country in his heart,--and with your letters you hurt his feelings not only as a Bishop but also as a--Russian man-- To your misfortune you came among people a la Konstankevich, Hrushka, Dmitrov, and you judged our matters according to their measures, and the matter stands completely differently..., and we started to have a

discussion.-- He told me frankly, that in Galicia and here he was very surprised that the Rusins have so many hopes in Russia, and that the Russian Czar is so idealistically thought about by them.. "That is the reason"--repeated I--"don't touch in front of us Russia,--.. And do not look through the glasses of Ukrainophils becoming Polish dirty scum!..." After that he started to speak from his heart, and only then he could understand some of our matters.- As much as I see he would like to take the position of a teacher here, because several times he was asking me what kind of learning institutions do we have? And naturally he would like to be introduced to Your Eminence.-- I had to burst into laughter, when he began to discuss our local matters according to "Dmitrov's Svoboda", and when I explained to him how it is in reality, then I think that he coming to me as a Saul, left as a Paul! He told me also that I shouldn't think that he is a--nihilist or a socialist,-- "I", he said, "am a liberal, but--I am a loyal subject of His Majesty!" The man by the way is very decent and nice, his manners are "gentleman like", he is 34 years old, he told that he is doctor of law, and that he has been a kollezhskii sovetnik.⁶⁸ Only now he understood that the life of American Russians cannot be discussed according to circumstances in Shamokin,--and we amicably separated! It is true that several times I have "burned" myself, and "I was burned" by those Russian natives, but I am so convinced, that Mr. E. N. Matrosov is an honest man and that his only mistake is that he went into the territory of "Svoboda"--and because of that he is judging, in this way about our local matters. He asked me very much to tell Your Eminence that he is far from that one whom you judged him by his letters,--he would like personally to see Your Eminence,--and I simply told him, that I will submit his wish to You, "and if His Eminence will wish, then I will let you know about it" That's all about Mr. Matrosov.

I received a letter again from the people in Mahanoy city,-- that I have the honor to enclose here,⁶⁹ but also I received letters from my "dear friend" from Jersey City to the first one I made a good reprimand for his double facedness, for his depthless

⁶⁸Kollezhskii sovetnik - When Peter the Great established in 1718 nine ministries or central government departments (kollegii) and then in 1722 established the Table of Ranks to reward individual merit, the councillors or advisers of the kollegii (kollezhskii sovetnik) had a rank of 6 on a scale of 14 civil service ranks. Presidents of kollegii and members of the Senate were tainye sovetnik ("Privy Councillors"), rank 3 (the highest rank is 1). The rank of an official corresponded to his degree of service. The military had their own set of ranks and both sets carried nobility status, either hereditary or personal. After the kollegii were abolished and the government institutions changed in the 19th century, the correspondence between rank and degree of service was lost but the old ranks remained.

⁶⁹The people requested books about Orthodoxy.

Ukrainophil stupidity--and I told him several "locos communes" to which he replied to me in the second quite naive letter, these people really think that I have under my control thousands of dollars.⁷⁰

The icons arrived already in Sheppton, and now I received a telegram to go there after the iconostasis is erected, I will go there tomorrow.--

Your Eminence! I am asking you humbly to let me know, may we congratulate the Prince of Chernogoria by a telegram in the name of our community, we have here 3 Serbians!--and through whom through Your Eminence or through the Imperial Russian Ambassador?⁷¹

From our hearts we thank Your Eminence for the congratulations and for the wish of blessing on our festival day. I read the telegram in the church, and there was no year when there have been as many people in the church as on this celebration.

26 August/7 September 1896

⁷⁰The letters were from Father Hrushka. In the first one he writes that he is not happy that he came to America, that he now sees the light of religion and he is no longer a hetman (leader) but a simple Cossack and a burlak, because regular Cossacks serve Polack-Jesuits for money in Pennsylvania and revolted his camp and he lost everything. In the second letter Father Hrushka asks for \$25 to start a suit in Jersey City.

⁷¹Yugoslavia consists of 6 regions: Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Chernogoria (Montenegro), Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Macedonia. Chernogoria under the name of Zeta was an independent kingdom at the end of the 11th century. Then it became part of the Serbian monarchy and in the 14th century again independent. It took part on the side of Russia in all wars against the Turks.

According to the order of Your Eminence, I have advised Father John Zaklinsky by special delivery about the order of the Holy Synod, and I called him to me to give him the necessary instructions, in relation to the reunion.--

The travel plan to Old Forge, Sheppton, and farther I will offer to Your Eminence for decision personally.

Next Sunday I will try to be in New York for services to Your Eminence, I cannot be earlier,--because first of all Prosor is making for me here some problems, it must be finished with him, and secondly I am sick,--my left ear got cold and it is very unpleasant, and the head terribly pains and I do not hear almost anything.

About the apartment for the reader I will try.

I am enclosing a very interesting letter from Scranton--in which it is seen in what condition is the "Biscup" of the Uniates Chanath.⁷²

September 18-30, 1896

Enclosed with this letter, are the newspapers and the service books of needs of Your father, may his memory be blessed,--and the receipt for the registered letter to the Holy Synod-- I have the honor humbly to report to Your Eminence, that the letters which were sent by Father Dean came here right after Your departure.

On my return I came to Father Igumen (Superior) Gulovich, and I found there four Uniate ksendzes and the editor of "Viestnik" Zatkovich--all of them invited me to come the next day to New York, and to help them "with my suggestions"!... Father Dzubay wrote the same thing to me, but now I will not go!... The time of a lack of leadership among them occurred,--one accuses another and calls him "thief", a pamphlet follows another pamphlet--in which one blackens another.--

I have been told, that on the past Sunday there were exceptionally many people in church, in hopes that there would be a Bishop's service and they were very sad that they didn't see Your Eminence. The weather is bad--snow and rain fall.

October 1, 1896

⁷²The letter (6 pages long and dated 21-9-96) is from Mr. Alexandr Vrabel' who complained to Father Alexis that Chanath gave the Passion Holy Gospel to a peasant to read, that he introduced also other changes and people are against him but there is no leader among them who will unite them against Chanath. Parishioners didn't pay Chanath's salary for two months and don't have any intention of doing so. But the parish is now mortgaged. A. Vrabel reports rumors from Scranton, among them that Father Alexis lost his church and committed suicide by cutting his throat with a razor blade! (AARDM)

I have the honor humbly to report to Your Eminence the following:

a) During the last few days Father Michael Bologh visited me and gave me the enclosed request of Adolph Shinal' who finished the theological course in the Pennsylvania Collegium of St. Vincent that belongs to the Scranton Catholic Diocese, he requests admission into the bosom of the Holy Orthodox Church, so that Your Eminence would deign to send him to one of the Russian spiritual academies.-- I know him only by sight, his mother is a house-keeper of a Catholic ksendz Koshalko in Plymouth, who by the way is the greatest enemy of the Eastern Church, and even in our suit he has been called by the Uniates to witness against us!-- I naturally do not know fioles penes auctorem!--but people are saying, that Adolph Shinal' is an illegitimate son of Koshalko. Concerning his certifications, I looked them over,--and they showed that Adolph Shinal' finished four classes of gymnasium, after this he was a novice in the monastery of the Franciscan Fathers, that he was of good behavior and that he left the monastery because he had not taken the vows and then he moved to America,--then the certification of the Collegium of St. Vincent shows that he finished also the seminary course, successfully.-- The birth certificate shows that he was born in 1877; I think that it is necessary to add also that he speaks English, German, Hungarian, Slovak, and Latin languages well, his appearance is very handsome. What the reason was for such a step as he makes, Father Bologh says, relata referro--that A. Shinal' was in church during the Bishop's Service and everything, and mainly the personality of Your Eminence influenced him so greatly,--further the Bishop's Service, made such an impression on him that he wanted to come immediately after the service to Your Eminence, but he didn't have his certifications in hand,--the rector of the Collegium had them.-- I offer humbly his request without any remarks for the decision of Your Eminence.

b) The matter with Old Forge is a real "sea dragon" that appears at least once a month!-- On the 9th of October new style two people from Old Forge came to me again namely: Matfey Sharak and Nicolai Telekh and asked what will happen to them?... I told them only "You heard yourself from His Lordship"... But they began to make references to Zaklinsky, I told them that all of that will not help them and finally they asked that I would unite them "I have not been ordered to do so by His Lordship"--was my answer.-- And in their conversation they recalled Father Hrushka, and I told them how matters are with him,--they told me that Father Hotovitzky in New York recommended Father Hrushka to them,--"If it is so"-- I said--"call him"; but I had some doubts about it, and not without reason because I immediately wrote to Father Hotovitzky asking him what the matter is? I enclose herewith his answer.⁷³ But

⁷³In his letter of 28 October 1896, Father Hotovitzky writes Father Alexis that he received a letter from Father Zaklinsky who asked him if it was true that he promised the people in Old Forge a priest from him or Father Hrushka. He writes that he cannot give promises like this since it is not his business. He wrote

the people from Old Forge besides the money which they sent me sent me also the enclosed letter.⁷⁴ I sent the money to Father Hrushka and to them I wrote: As an Orthodox priest I cannot recommend Father Hrushka, since he is a Uniate,--secondly I do not have any right to give orders to parishes,--and thirdly I would not dare to speak in the name of the Bishop, not having any right nor instructions for it; but--as a private person, and as a "friend" of Father Hrushka I would ask you to receive him, and not let him die of hunger!-- As a matter of fact it was already annoying to read his messages,--and so I was thinking for myself that from one and another side I would have for myself--peace! Father Hrushka went there,--if he is accepted by the Holy Synod at least this matter--will bring him merit, if he is not accepted then let him live as he knows, we cannot keep Old Forge any longer without a priest--but I think the people from Old Forge and Father Hrushka will become friends!...

But there was also another reason why I recommended Father Hrushka to them.-- Emilian Prosor completely goes out of his mind, or the anger of this man is greater than all other feelings,--so what did he do? Not having any more credit here among the people because of his treason he was making plans to move to Old Forge and to start to instigate people; that they would not: give oaths to the Russian Czar,--that they could be Orthodox without the Holy Synod, without the Bishop, and even more without--a priest,--that he is ready to be at their place--a reader! That's what came to the mind of this cunning peasant!

c) Our suit was continued on the 29th of October and began when Repich denied the entire diabolical anger of Prosor and Chanath!.. The same was done by other witnesses, and because of that the judge suggested that the parties make peace.-- I did not want to seem stubborn and because of that I accepted the proposal, I said that first of all I would like to know what the Uniates want? They expressed the wish to have half of the entire church property, consequently \$3,000,--naturally I didn't agree to that, but finally I said that I am ready to give them \$1200, and that I am doing it to bring an end once for all time to this matter--but they didn't accept this and because of that the suit will continue on the 12th of November. Prosor did us much harm, he can be seen consequently

also that he learned himself in APV that His Eminence received in Wilkes-Barre a deputation of parishioners from Old Forge, and that Father Hrushka asked not to print anything about him until a resolution will come from the Holy Synod. (AARDM)

⁷⁴In the request signed by 11 curators and church committee members of the church in Old Forge of 11-21 October 1896, they asked Father Alexis to allow Father Hrushka to perform the service in Old Forge. Father Zaklinsky was fully paid and will not perform for them any services. They enclosed money for the railroad ticket so that Father Hrushka would come to them. (AARDM)

in Scranton at Chanath's place,--or if it is even true then he is also running around in Mt. Carmel and Shamokin!...

d) Michael Galkovich sent to my name the letter to Your Eminence which I enclose herewith.--75

e) Father Dean writes to me that the things which were sent for Mayfield I should send to him for the people in Buffalo--and he asks also for one full priest vestment.-- I am sending to him an entire new priest vestment, but for exchange I kept for myself a little New Testament, since that one which we have is very big and heavy, and if I would have to go somewhere for the mission, it would be difficult to carry the New Testament of big size.-- They can for the price of the vestment buy for themselves a New Testament from the Spiritual Consistory.-- The fight among the Uniates with every day grows stronger,--but there is also a new "champion" against "schism" in the person of "Dr." Sabov in Cleveland who appeared there, and who in "Viestnik" ex tripade started to thunder against traitors "Judases" etc. under the title: "Treatment of Heretics"--and "in a doctoral way" he proves that the Russians are "schismatics"--heretics!...

2 November, new style, 1896

⁷⁵M. Galkovich's letter of August 21, 1896 was in reality addressed to Father Alexis. He makes good suggestions in his letter about not starting suits with Uniates over church properties since according to American law they have to stay in the faith in which they were begun, but to build new places of worship. He offers his assistance and asks Father Alexis to go everywhere for the Orthodox mission. (AARDM)

I received the letter from Your Eminence and humbly I thank you for the congratulations...

With this I have the honor to enclose my manuscript, concerning the "war" or better said the "internecine war" in the Uniate camp for the judgement of Your Eminence, but besides this I gave earlier another manuscript to Father Hotovitzky for publication as an answer to the glorious "Doctor" Simeon Sabov to his mostly wise article which appeared in "Viestnik" under the title "The Treatment of the Heretics".--

Prosor created for me many problems, and I am extremely forced to call again to the courthouse 143 witnesses so that he can show whom I taught, what they had to say!... How much time and how much money it costs! Indeed for that money I could have already built a new church.-- Tomorrow the trial will be continued; and so I think it will already be finished, with what kind of success? only God knows; the Uniates are completely convinced that they will receive--the church, Vede remo! Chanath is here almost every day,--occupied with fanaticism and with deceiving his people.

Hrushka--holds out well,⁷⁶ and the most important is that the people in Old Forge are very satisfied with him, Father Zaklinsky is still there, even that he is completely paid but he still does not want to leave, since he showed the road to O'Hara then to-- Chanath. It seems that Hrushka wants to make an attack on Mayfield and he wants to make "caput" ObushKievich, who hurt him much and now Hrushka wants to repay him... Let them quarrel a little!...

What kind of people are in Scranton? Honestly to say I am scared of them, and of all living in that area,--they were demoralized so much by Chanath, that the most dependent became suspicious, but I think, that the Scranton Fraternity can be received by Your Eminence into our "Society".. There are not many of them, it would be possible to keep them under control... However, it will be as Your Eminence wishes.--

Mr. Matrosov sent me the following letter,--I enclose it herewith since Mr. Matrosov feels that he has to excuse himself for some kind of article that he wrote for the calendar published by "Svoboda"--honestly to say I haven't read it yet, but it is enough for me to know, that Prosor became an agent of "Svoboda" and the "calendar"--and I strictly prohibited buying the calendar

⁷⁶Father Alexis encloses herewith letters from Father Hrushka from the 14th, 16th, and 21st of October, 1896 describing the happiness of Father Hrushka, since he is finally a member of the Russian Orthodox Church; and includes another letter of the 22nd of October in which Father Hrushka points out to Father Alexis that Svoboda in no. 43, of that year published an article about him; Dmitrov wrote that Hrushka received \$30 from the Orthodox side. Father Hrushka mentions that he did not sell himself and that the article suggests that the Orthodox Church grows in America by means of money. He asks Father Alexis to speak to a lawyer about this matter asking if he should give the matter to a court.

from him, and I ordered calendars from Russia.-- In Mahanoy city the Fraternity grows.-- In Ramey--my brother-in-law, Father Antoni Khodobay, brother of Professor--Khodobay, arrived as pastor.-- The Uniates in Philadelphia are disturbed.-- In Scranton Valentin Bologh and Chanath are conducting an inveterate fight and one is blackening the other, first to O'Hara, then to--Hoban ad maiorem gloriam Unianis!... The Uniate biscup Firczak recalled home by demand of Propaganda the son-in-law of Father Alexander Dzubay-- Stefan Iatskovich from Duquesne, and his brother Hilarion Dzubay from Johnstown, and threatened Valentin Bologh and Alexander Dzubay with it also!...

I request humbly Your Eminence that You would deign if it is possible? to assign and pay my salary at once for the months of November and December,--this suit will bring me to the fate of a "beggar".

14-26 November 1896

To fulfill quickly the order of Your Eminence, I looked over several catalogs of Hungarian books, and I selected such books that can correspond to the requests,--I have the honor to include herewith the list of these books, for the judgement of Your Eminence.-- If they are approved by Your Eminence, then I can send them over to Petersburg through the bookstore of Emil Zhitrai.-- But as concerns the newspaper, even though there are 3 Hungarian newspapers--it is not possible to send one from America, all 3 treat the Russian matter with hostility,--the nation, and the Orthodox faith.-- The best would be to order from Hungary a weekly illustrated literary magazine.-- Vasar napi Ujsag (Sunday's Newspaper)--the subscription price in Hungary is 10 guildens (\$4.20) to that must be added also the postal rate, about 1 gulden equal to \$.42, because in Russia the mail is more expensive than in Hungary, and so the magazine would cost for the entire year \$4.62,--the sending of the books over to Russia would also cost \$1.00-1.20; I humbly request Your Eminence to instruct me about this if I can do it! And would Your Eminence give the blessing to send over there the designated books?...

The last time I sent to You a request by someone by the name of Vasilii Suvak,--without any kind of remark, the matter is that, he sent that request addressed to my name, as it can be seen by the enclosed envelope, and at a time when I have been already sealing my letter, and I have been hurrying to the courthouse for the matter of our church.-- This reader has visited me already, he is a young man, his voice is not bad, he has been a reader and a teacher in a village school in--Heralt, in Hungary. Wouldn't it be possible to send such requestors as Suvak or Bachynsky to Alaska or to the Aleutian Islands?...

Many people will hear about the school in Minneapolis when the request about that will be sent to Your Eminence?⁷⁷

The first stage of our suit--is finished it is the hearing of the witnesses, and now remains Argument and Arbitration Court and that will be on 6-18th February 1897⁷⁸--then after a month or two will come the decision of the court,--Prosor who was called the last time to court disappeared,--and didn't come,--but I know definitely that he constantly loiters around Scranton after Chanath and at the same time sells "Svoboda's" calendar...

The local Polish, Hungarian, and Catholic Slovak newspapers horribly criticize me as a "renegade" for the order of St. Anna,--especially is "Polak v Ameryce" enraged!...in vain!... The German proverb says: "Keine Rosen ohne-Dornen"!⁷⁹

Father Gregory Hrushka begins to be melancholic, I allow myself to enclose his letter that I just received today in the morning.⁸⁰ "Dr." Simeon "Andreevich" Sabov,--I do not know now? what kind of rudeness, and what kind of "doctoral" wisdom will be let into the world,--he should be taught a little bit, that here the "doctors" are not the same, as in--Hungary, and that here--simply nobody pays attention, to his "inaugurations" and "his oaths"--and most important nobody gives anything: "Judases of Iscariot", "schismatics" and "renegades" for example also such as--I!

Stepanov is still not here;--I humbly request Your Eminence to kindly reserve the funds of September, October and November months for Michael Perkhach to perform the duties of the reader, he serves with great zeal.--

30 November 1896

⁷⁷The churchschool in Minneapolis was started in 1892. In 1897 it became the Russian Missionary School; in July, 1905, it became the Russian Orthodox Theological Seminary. (The archive of the Missionary School and the Seminary is now part of AARDM.)

⁷⁸Here Father Alexis encloses a clipping about the case from a local newspaper.

⁷⁹Keine Rosen...- German proverb - There are no roses without thorns.

⁸⁰Father Hrushka writes that people and secular matters have tired him out and that he has come to such a state that he is ready to damn everything but what keeps him alive is only faith in Christ. He expresses the hope that he will someday see Father Alexis with a mitre and a Bishop's cross. (SNCA Box #43)

I have the honor to report humbly to Your Eminence that:
 1) I was on 13-25 December in Scranton for the inspection of the matters of the newly founded Orthodox Fraternity,--Father Gregory Hrushka from Old Forge was also there. After the inspection of the books and reading the membership list it was found that there are 35 brothers, that all of them except one are Russians from Hungary,--in the treasury there is about \$100 cash,--I asked them such questions: why do they want to unite with the Holy Orthodox Church?-- I received such answer: "We know that this is 'true faith' and that one which we had until now is not our faith, because that one is Catholic".... Where or from whom did you hear and how do you know it? "We heard it from the others,--and we read a book 'Where to Seek the Truth'! and anyhow if it would be the true Russian faith, then we would not be forced by our priests to go under an Irish (Catholic) bispup and they would not give our church to the Irish to bless, but to a Russian bishop"....

Maybe you are expecting God knows what kind of advantages, or rewards from the Russians--Orthodox if you would unite?... "No--we are not expecting." Or maybe to free yourself from the payment to your grand magnate pan Chanath...or because of his disturbances and unrest in your church you would like--to get united?... "No,--we are already for 2 years seeking for it, we do not have business with Chanath...and we have been paying collect to the church of Our Lady of the Don (Old Forge), and that is where we are going.."

I heard not once from Russians from Hungary and Galicia when there is a talk about the Holy Orthodox Faith, that even the most stubborn Uniates were saying, that "we are all Orthodox"! But however they accept the Pope as the head of the church, and they have been going to the Catholic kostels⁸¹ for confession, and for services... But we Orthodox do not accept the Pope, and some of the teachings of the Catholic Church we reject,--so if you really want to be Orthodox then you cannot go to Uniate and Catholic kostels neither to have there confession, nor accept there any services, and most important you cannot accept the Pope as the head of the church..."-- "We know it, and we want it like this"....

After this in short I told them what Unia is--and what is Orthodoxy... After that I asked them--is that the way in which you want to have the faith of Christ and to renounce Unia, if you will be accepted? "Yes like that... We do not want to have any business with the Pope"... And so I announced to them, that until the business about Old Forge will be decided that they should turn with all of their necessities to me, and later they would go there,-- Father Gregory Hrushka spoke to them with some encouragement and after that they requested that Your Eminence would accept them into "Orthodox society" to which I told them, that later I think there will be no obstacles to it,--that Your Eminence would accept them.-- What concerns Scranton there is a

⁸¹Father Alexis distinguishes a church (a place of Orthodox worship) from a Uniate or Catholic church which he calls "kircha" (German-church) or "kostel" (Polish-church).

big field for a missionary from Old Forge,--in Scranton there is a big "tabula rasa"--the largest part of the Uniates got separated from Chanath, because of his horrible scandals--and they want to have a new "independent" church, and they do not want to be either under the rule of an "Irish bishop" nor "Muscovites"--no... They want an "independent" priest, because of that they also did not give to the church the name "Russian" but "Slavic" and so they also chartered it--Slavonic National Greek Catholic Church,--it means this monster is the new result of "Holy Unia",--one part of the people want to be Orthodox, and namely those who live in--Hyde Park, the third stubborn part and the church is in their hands, to which there is \$2,800 debts!--Chanath already did not receive a salary for 6 months but the Catholic bishop is paying him and he (Chanath) together with the curators is giving notes which are recorded as the debt of the church to the bishop! Mr. Bachynsky 2 weeks ago came to me,--with a recommendation from Mr. Matrosov,--and laid out here his plans,--and has requested that I would recommend him to Your Eminence, which I simply denied to do--then he started babbling about Mt. Carmel, allegedly the parishioners are not satisfied with Dmitrov,--to get rid of the man I gave him \$5 and sent him back to Shamokin, telling him that when he will have a chance to make a truthful report about Mt. Carmel.-- I know very well, that nothing can be done over there,--as long as Shamokin remains a Uniate parish.-- So as soon as Bachynsky arrived there he started to rebel people against Dmitrov on his own head, of whom he was anyhow not in favor,--as he told it to me, and also that Ksendz Dmitrov has the intention of moving to Canada, or to go to the homeland.-- I decidedly forbid Bachynsky to make a revolt over there,--I do not have any solidarity with him,--(but however if Dmitrov would be chased away, I would be the last one who would regret it, my "order of St. Anna" is horribly thrown into his teeth and he talks already about denunciation).

"Dr." Sabov did not honor me with his reply; neither "satisfactio" is on his mind;--but however a whole story came because of his article that appeared in "Viestnik" under the title: "Dealing with Heretics". From Cleveland I received a letter, in which I was requested to come there but I refused, because they are attached to Chicago's parish,--to this I received again the letter I am enclosing. Also Andrei Taraszor--wants to refuse to work,--he is saying that he cannot live on \$10 monthly.⁸²-- Stepanov is not here--and I am without a reader, the one performing the duties of the reader Michael Perkhach after I told him of the resolution of Your Eminence left everything, and went to the mines--but not to be left completely without a reader I--paid him from my own

⁸² Andrei Taraszor in his letter of 9.12-96 wrote that he receives \$10 a month, and nothing for additional services from people. He has a family and can't live like that any more. He is ashamed to ask the Bishop for assistance and intends to go to work in a mine to earn bread for his family. (AARDM)

salary, and in this way I held him,--otherwise there would be nobody even on Sundays to have service with.-- I have been 2 weeks ago in Catasauqua for the confession of the Fraternity,--these are living full and peacefully there, they are only telling that with jobs it is hard over there.--

To the Uniate "world" quietness came and they made "peace" in Trenton. They will not quarrel anymore among themselves,--the more so that among all the Uniate bishops from Europe came "pastoral messages" in which they are called to mutual love and peace, that they would not give reasons to "enemies"--schismatics!--to steal them, some of them were recalled to the homeland. Namely Hilarion Dzubay from Johnstown, and Stefan Iatskovich from Duquesne,--the bishop from Mukachevo is threatening to recall Alexander Dzubay and Valentin Bologh if they will not obey the local--Latin bishops! In other words the party of Chanath completely beat Dzubay ex Consortes,--and now the Latin bishops themselves are demanding in Rome--until now they have been against it! that Chanath would be named as: "vicarius Apostolicus"! It came into my hands "admanitio paterna"--of the bishop of Mukachevo but it is in Hungarian language and because of that I do not send it.-- Father Dimitri Gebay will not come to America as I know for sure.--

Your Eminence! Our magazine, somehow is writing only for educated persons,--wouldn't it be possible that in it would also be written something for the people?...

In the parish of Wilkes-Barre a female fraternity is founded which has 12 members. On the holiday of the Nativity of Christ--Latin--burned down a splendid Episcopal church here, and a Jewish synagogue!... For the lawsuit in Wilkes-Barre is again made a collection in all Uniate churches!... Emilian Prosor became a disciple of an "independent church" and now he is going around with this idea to Old Forge and to Scranton!... He writes me letters every day from a different place, but I without opening them send them back.--

16-28 December, 1896

Father Archpriest Alexis G. Toth's sermon, given at the church in Old Forge, before the festival Union of the Old Forge parish and its priest to the Orthodox Church.

Brother Russians!

Finally your wish is fulfilled, that about which you have been for more than a year putting forth effort... It is fulfilled after many difficulties and misunderstandings; today you are uniting to your Mother, from which your forefathers were separated by flattery, lies, and force 300 years ago by the enemies of your Mother, by the enemies of the Holy Orthodox Church. Today you are renouncing that one, who put your conscience, on the conscience of your forefathers as an immeasurable yoke, you are renouncing the Pope of Rome, who with his trust-worthy slaves, invented the God-disgusting and besides this also stupid "Unia" which made you free Russian people into disgraceful slaves of Rome and the Pope.⁸³ You reject this yoke, and again you become as were your forefathers, Orthodox Christians and free Russian people!...

Ach! how much can be said about those tortures, about that patience which was carried through your forefathers and fathers through them, from those, who took them from the right way to salvation...but most of you are from Halych, from age-old Russian land, you know not only how to speak Russian, but the majority of you writes and reads Russian; you read and you know how much blood has poured on the Russian land, under the Polish rule, for Christ, for His Holy Orthodox Faith and Church is the only one that brings salvation. I do not want to talk with you about that, you know very well about it as I do also, you know, how those, who forced you into the damned Unia, who were giving your churches, Russian churches for rent to Jews!... It is horrible to think! It was not possible without the Jew either to baptize or to marry, it was not possible even to bury, and even more: the Pascha bread had to be bought from the Jew, without a stamp from the Jew the priest of

⁸³The chief promoters of "Unia" in the Russian territories occupied by Lithuania and Poland, Bishops Cyril Terletzky and Hipatius Potrey, invented "Unia" with the assistance of Papal Jesuits. They made a secret agreement with Pope Clement VIII because they were afraid that they would be persecuted by the Patriarch of Constantinople for their vicious lives; they thought also that being with the Pope they would obtain protection from the Polish king Sigismund III. They obtained in a deceitful way the signatures of other bishops as if in the name of a Synod and sent it to Rome requesting Unity with Rome (1595). When the clergy and lay people learned about it, it came to a division. As we see Unia came about for selfish material purposes, but not for the love of truth and Christian brotherhood. Riots, violence and bloodshed marked the course of "Unia" for centuries, churches and monasteries were destroyed, sealed and rented to the Jews.

the Christian Church could not if he did not want to be severely punished, could not bless the Pascha bread! The sanctuary of Christ, the Lord's house, was in Jewish hands!...

I do not wish to talk to you about that man, who indignity of a bishop has been going from place to place with his servants, burning the churches, robbing, church estates, has tortured, killed people... Blood and fire marked his path, wherever he turned with his hordes... Who of you has not heard about "clergy martyr" Josaphat Kuntzevich⁸⁴ Damned is his memory to every Orthodox Russian... However that jerk, that valiant, arsonist was made by the "infallible", Pope, the imaginary "Vicar" of Christ a "saint" of the Uniate Church! Only this one saint has the Uniate faith and Church, but that is just the trouble to praise him!...

So "Holy Unia"...across the Russian land by Jews and Kuntzevich, by force, and violence! And the like of that Kuntzevich did not die here either on the free American soil! and here they wished to put through their "twisted truth" by violence, and also to preserve it! Here is an example for you! Yesterday evening a truthful son of "Holy Unia" threw a more than 3 pound rock into the window of the pastor of your souls, and by a hair did not kill him... Only the hand of God saved your spiritual father! And naturally, if this truthful servant of the Pope and of "Holy Unia" would be caught and put into prison probably again he would be made by the Pope if not into a martyr, then at least a "confessor" of Unia.

And what kind of means are they using to put out the rising and increasing Russian Orthodox spirit! They tell that we do not believe in the Holy Trinity, that we do not honor the Mother of God and God knows what else? But what kind "of a truth" is it which they subdue by force, rocks, lies, twisting and blackening of their own brothers. They call us Muscovites... That we are "Muscovites"? What do they understand of this? There is no such

⁸⁴The Uniate Archbishop Josaphat Kuntzevich of Polotzk, a prelate blindly devoted to the Pope of Rome, persecuted the Orthodox people with particular severity. Leo Sapega, chancellor of Lithuania, strongly warned Kuntzevich of the danger of his conduct in his letter of March 12, 1622! "...Your sanctity assumes that you are permitted to despoil schismatics and cut off their heads; the Gospel teaches the contrary. The 'Unia' has not produced joy, but only discord, quarrels and disturbances. It would have been better if it had never taken place. Now I inform you that, by the King's command, the churches must be opened and restored to the Orthodox, that they may perform divine service. We do not prohibit Jews and Mohametans from having their places of worship, and yet you are closing up Christian temples." Kuntzevich did not pay attention to this letter pursuing his career of oppression until the inhabitants of Vitebsk rose against him and killed him on July 12, 1628 by throwing him into the river Dvina. The Roman Catholic Church canonized him in 1867 as a saint of the Uniate Church. He became and is until now an obstacle for any agreement between Orthodox and Catholics.

nation on the earth, but if by the word "Muscovites" they understand a Russian, who loves God and His Holy Orthodox Church, who loves his Russian nationality, who honors loyalty, who fulfills God's law, then let's be called "Muscovites": we will not be ashamed of this name, we will be proud of it and even more than a "uniate" who is only an imprisoned "schismatic" and it means; that they honor the Pope instead of Christ, that instead of Orthodox Christian teaching, they have some kind of a mixture, which is neither Roman nor Eastern Russian that teaches one to be ashamed of his own nationality and to bow to foreign gods, and to run to one's own enemies, and to suffer from their abuse: then we know what is called "Holy Unia" and what is "schism"... We do not envy this name!... You see here four priests who are offering the bloodless sacrifice, you hear their prayers, you hear their sermons, this is the teaching of the Christian Orthodox Church, this is the teaching of your forefathers, your fathers, this is your faith through which all of us will come to salvation. Hold to it!

Amen!

LETTER TO BISHOP NICHOLAS OF SAN FRANCISCO

I congratulate Your Eminence in my and my parishioners' name with the New Year! We all wish Your Eminence in the coming year health, strength, spiritual and physical for many years to come...!

I received the letter of Your Eminence and because of it I have the honor to humbly report to Your Eminence:

1) the reunion of the people of Old Forge and of Father Gregory Hrushka ⁸⁵ was made according to the following program,--

⁸⁵Already in his letter of 17 December 1893, Father Gregory wrote Father Alexis that he announced in church to the congregation that he is an Orthodox priest and throws down the glove to the Hungarians and the Latins. (Svistun, Filipp Ivanovich. Prikar-patskaia Rus' pod vladeniem Avstrii 1850-1896. "Nachalo Istorii Amerikanskoi Rusi" by Prot. P. Kohanik. Connecticut, P. Hardy, 1970, p. 492) but I conclude that he wasn't really convinced yet on which side he was going to be since we see still his articles in newspapers glorifying the Papacy for example, he writes that the "Pope signed a decree about organizing in Rome a seminary for 40 Rusins giving 300 thousand lira", he continues that, "this news filled every Russian heart with a feeling of great joy, and great thanks. And we Rusin Catholics send over the ocean our big-Russian Glory to the Lord and Many Years to Leo XIII." Svoboda, no. 11, 10 April 1895, p. 1. In another article he attacks the Poles who thought that in the United States there is no necessity to have separate Rusin churches saying "our deadly enemies are Polish and Muscovite rules. They drank our blood..." Svoboda, no. 16, 28 May

more than 100 people made the confession and received the Holy Sacraments,--the denial of the Pope was made loudly, there were very many people, and the most important was that everything was conducted in the best way.-- It is true that one unexpected event occurred the day before the reunion in the apartment of Father Gregory Hrushka, a zealot of "Holy Unia" and trustful son of Rome threw into the window a stone of more than 3 pounds and only by a hair missed killing Father Gregory,--I do not know if it was to us, or only to him that such "honor" was given?... There was not space for all of us in Old Forge,--and because of this all of us returned to Wilkes-Barre and early in the morning we came back to Old Forge. At the church service the Fraternity from Scranton was present and was also reunited.

Relating to Cleveland I received the telegram of Your Eminence, and according to Your order I will go there,--what kind of parade do they need?... Really I do not understand anything from those letters,--what do they want, Father John Nedzelnitsky was there several times,--I can in advance give to Your Eminence a record of the costs,--I will have a clerical permit to Buffalo this will cost round trip \$8 or by a little bit less,--now from Buffalo along the lake shore and Michigan I would have to pay the full fare this would be round trip \$20,--then I would have to stay for 1 or 1½ days, the whole cost is calculated at \$38-\$40;--to go to Pittsburgh it seems would cost \$2-\$3 more.-- I can tell it for sure because when I was there in 1894 I didn't have a clerical permit, and I paid for the trip \$45! round trip; and I had to sit in Buffalo almost the entire night; because there was no direct connection between trains. If I go there then I plan to do it in the evening of Theophany on 6th-18th January at 5 o'clock,--I cannot go earlier because there is much to do at home;--and I do not want to leave the church service.--

Concerning Andrei Taraszor, I will tell him the decision of Your Eminence,--if he wants to stay for \$10 or not?... But his wish would not exceed more than \$15 a month,--I can say only additionally, that he is a most trustworthy servant of the Church.

I do not need Bachynsky, he can be a reader only in places where people have not learned the Russian style of singing, at my church it is not done exactly but they sing, and I do not want to spoil what is already learned.-- If Your Eminence would agree to give the full salary of the Wilkes-Barre reader then immediately I can get someone to perform the duties of the reader and the teacher--2 people, \$20 each, until the time when we will get some-

1895, p. 2-3. Already in a few months we see that Father Gregory invites all Rusins of Jersey City, New York, Centoville, Passaic and Yonkers for a public debate about Orthodoxy and Unia. Svoboda, no. 43, 1896, October 22, p. 3. The Uniates knew earlier that the people in Old Forge were returning to the Orthodox Church. In ARV, no. 47, 1895, p. 3, the Uniates called on the people in Old Forge not to join the Muscovites and in no. 48, 1895, p. 2, ARV reported that "traveling disciples took away from the Uniates the church in Old Forge."

one from Russia,--we will take care of the apartment,--if it is not desirable to Your Eminence then I ask to give Michael Perkhach \$20 monthly, at least he will continue to perform the duties of the reader as before,--I do not have anyone else here,--not even one will leave work if it would be necessary to bury someone, to baptize or to marry during the weekdays, or on holidays to help at the church service. I will find here a teacher with a diploma,--and he will be happy if he will receive \$20 and an apartment. I am offering for the best judgement of Your Eminence this project,--because Michael Perkhach cannot teach,--he has to study himself,--I also cannot teach,--I have already enough work, sometimes I have to leave for services for the whole day and how then can the children be left? The reader is most necessary here--because until now there were 69 births,--24 marriages,--18 deaths, of those 8 were killed in mines and by trains, the last time I had to be lowered into the mine to give confession to one who was burned by gas;--and I have had to go to sick people already 30-40 times this year; and also to different places. We also have many children of pre-school age.--

So!... "His Lordship" John Konstankevich made a report?... and Mr. Matrosov?...what righteous people are those here--"Ukrainians"! (the following fifteen lines are omitted--Ed.) Mr. Matrosov is now a guest of Obushkievich why should he mix into our business?.. I have to report to Your Eminence, that during the last days I sent a long "report" to the Uniate Bishop Firczak, under the title "The Deeds of the Holy Uniate Apostles in America"--and I simply told him that if he will not recall all these jerks from America, then I would have to make a justifiable attack against him in the Hungarian newspapers, since he is the person indirectly responsible for all the disturbances which are made here by his--spiritual sons!⁸⁶-- I request not to pay attention to such of my--reports. To the magazine "Pravoslavnyi Viestnik" something really has to be added for the common people, and it has to be done in their language,--such as the magazine is, is nice--but it is only for the educated people,--if Your Eminence would wish to give the blessing for this to the editor so that he would publish such an edition then it will attract a large public,--after much thought I came to the conclusion--to make a project of such editions together with the editor and to send it for the decision of Your Eminence.

⁸⁶There were for some time rumors that the 4 leading priests headed by Chanath would be recalled (ARV, no. 35, 17 September 1896, p. 3) but there was fear that they would not go to Europe but would join the "schism". "They can't be recalled"... "Father Chanath in the name of the faithful conducts in Wilkes-Barre the lawsuit against the schismatics who grabbed the church there"... "Father Iatskovich with his speeches broke the activity of the traveling disciples but because he strained himself with that activity he lost his health and is sick". "Father C. Laurisin also took part in the suit against the schismatics. Father Volkai also is in court and is occupied with the purchase of a church in New York".

Right now I received a letter from Jersey City which I enclose,--because he--the writer--writes about some kind of a cemetery and mentions Your Eminence, and I do not understand anything about it, maybe something of it would be interesting to Your Eminence.

I was preparing myself to go to the church for the service of the Hours--the day before the Nativity of Christ when suddenly the sexton came running and said that thieves broke into the church through the window into--the altar, broke the screen on the window, and damaged the safe! I checked if anything was stolen from the church sacred vessels and vestments? but nothing was touched, only the handle on the safe was broken, then the outside lock (combination)--probably somebody scared them off, because they ran away not through the window, but through the door, but they broke the lock on it also, leaving there--a saw for metal, and a hat... The safe was completely damaged but they did not open it,--they damaged it about \$20-\$30 worth.-- The day before that I put into the safe my salary and about \$150 of church money, now we have to wait for a specialist who will come from--Philadelphia. A remarkable matter happened along with this, I had a big Newfoundland dog and it was poisoned,--the light which was burning at the church was put out,--but it is evident that those were not professional thieves from the fact that neither the chalice, nor the other items were touched, as for example was done in the Uniate church in Hazleton, and in the Catholic church in Plymouth, then it is evident also from the fact that the handle of the safe was broken off with a stone and also the outside lock,--the file got broken,--the hat and all that show, that probably those were some kind of "farmers" they were probably from the ranks of our enemies, even more because they found on the collection plate--six cents and they took them! It seems to me that this was the same gang which a year ago broke into my apartment!...

Now I am forced to allow to be put the so-called "electric burglar alarm" on all the windows and doors in the church, so that a bell would immediately ring if anyone would even touch the windows or doors.-- The "delict" I turned over to the police.--

The holiday of Christ's Nativity passed wonderfully and the weather was good, because of that many people came to the church, and even now there are enough of them.--

The Hungarian books which I ordered, were returned to the bookseller because of some kind of reason--maybe he did not write well the address, or censorship?--I do not understand the matter, and I have personally to learn about it from him in New York, where I will go for one day next week.--

Concerning the "clerical tickets" I sent to the office of the railroads--Lehigh Valley,--Pennsylvania and New Jersey Central, but frankly I do not know if they give them? because they give only to such clerics, who live on those lines,--to those who live farther they give only temporary tickets;--so-called "special clerical permits"...

"Where To Seek The Truth?"--is requested from all sides, I am adding to it and correcting this pamphlet,--and I will send it to Your Eminence for proof-reading,--would Your Eminence give the

blessing to print it?..

Your Eminence! Most Reverend Bishop and Lord!. I have a humble request to Your Eminence, not in my own interest, but for another man. The matter stands like this; the editor of "Amerikansko-Slovenske Noviny" Mr. Peter V. Rovnianek in spite of which he with his soul and body is a Slovak--he is a Pan-Slavist and he is very helpful to us, in his newspaper there is always a sympathetic perspective toward Orthodoxy, in Russia he sees the salvation of the Slavs. He calls the Orthodox faith as the--Slavic faith, in the printed calendar for the year 1897 he put in the Royal pictures, and he wrote about the Holy Coronation of His Majesty, he is teaching the Slavic-Russian idea to all Slovaks, his newspaper especially last year wrote much about us, because of this the Catholic priests, and especially the Polacks attack him horribly,--they call him--the "Czar's servant, Muscophil and schismatic",--and most important he is president of "Slovensky Narodny Spolok", which has from 8-9,000 members, he can do much good for us, his newspaper is read by 15-20,000 people... Wouldn't it be possible to present his name to the high authorities for a decoration for example by Stanislav, or to Belyi Orel (White Eagle--Ed.)⁸⁷--he is--a Catholic.-- Your Eminence--as is widely know, You have an important word in law-giving circles,--with Your request and influence You can surely do this, and I assure Your Eminence, that the request and the patronage will not go to an unworthy!... The man will be elevated with this,--and the Slavs who see him as a leader in America, will follow him even more, and he will do for us all that is possible. In May of 1897, there will be a general yearly conference of "Slovensky Narodny Spolok" in Wilkes-Barre, the ambassador from Hungary will be there, how it would inspire all Slavs if Your Eminence would show this favor to me and to him.-- May I ask You for this Your Eminence?

P.S. Rovnianek does not know anything about this, I give my word of honor, about it, I ex mea iniciativa dare to ask for this.

December 28, 1896

⁸⁷The order of the White Eagle was, like the order St. Stanislav earlier, a Polish order but when Poland became part of the Russian Empire, these orders were incorporated as Russian Imperial orders and were given mostly to foreigners, to non-Orthodox people--Roman Catholics.

THE JUBILEE OF THE ENGLISH QUEEN AND OUR BROTHER UNIATES!

He who knows the liberal establishment of the great and glorious Republic of the "United States" and knows its history, would never come to the conclusion, that the citizens of that Republic licked somebody's shoes or that they wish again to be subjects of the English crown! But what do we see? Queen Victoria now celebrates the jubilee of the 60th anniversary of her rule and naturally all the crowned heads of Europe, and nations congratulate her. But the great and free American nation also congratulates the Queen, besides this in churches it also prays for Victoria! All Anglo-Episcopalian churches are filled, and the same prayer, ordained by the leading Bishop of the American-Episcopalian church, Potter, is pronounced and to the mind of no one of the Americans comes the idea to accuse our Episcopalian citizens of treason, and hochverrat!⁸⁸ Everybody knows, that even though they have an independent state, the nationality, the faith and the church is common, the same for everybody!...

Czar Peacemaker Alexander III fell asleep; the entire world took part in the grief of the Russian nation, expressing regret and weeping especially the Slavic nations! Only our American Uniates intentionally ignored this event; they did not have a prayer for the repose of the soul, of the pious soul of the great Peacemaker!.. Isn't this a shame?..⁸⁹

The young monarch of Mother Russia Nicholas II was crowned by God; the entire civilized world rejoiced, was glad and congratulated the young monarch. In free America even in non-Orthodox churches this glorious and great event was mentioned,--only our Uniates were deathly-still,--they were glorifying the thousandth anniversary of their enslavers, or they were exhaling poisonous saliva on God's anointed, the Russian Emperor because of the unhappy event on Khodynka Field.⁹⁰ But this was blood of our blood, flesh of our flesh! The grief and happiness of the great Russian

⁸⁸hochverrat - German - high treason.

⁸⁹Father Alexis probably did not see the article in ARV, no. 39, 8 November/27 October 1894, p. 4 in which it is said: "...The Czar of All-Russia, the real father of his subjects, the example of state morality and good heartedness, dear father of all wide Russia; the Representative of the Slavic Idea"... "is no longer alive...the flag of the Slavic Idea is lowered to the ground in front of the grave...." However Svoboda expressed no grief at the death of the Czar.

⁹⁰During the coronation celebration hundreds of people were trampled to death as people rushed to obtain free souvenirs and beer as a result of a rumor that there was not enough for all.

nation--is our grief, is our happiness!⁹¹

But no! Not for them; on the burial hills of their ancestors they rejoiced, they were glorifying those who took from them their faith, their fatherland, and stole their nationality!

Isn't it disgraceful, isn't it shameful? Well! Let's assume that it was not possible to do so in the homeland...but who prohibits doing so here on our free unrestricted land...on the land of the American eagle!.. Oh, no! Even here they wished to look for rewards from our federal government and denounced the Orthodox Russians, telling that they are in their prayers mentioning the name of the Russian Czar!.. They forget this, that the bread of denouncers is the most bitter! They write home and they ask for a biskup, among other "arguments?!" They also write and say that the Russians from Hungary and Galicia, returning to the faith of their ancestors the Holy Orthodox Church, pray for the Russian Czar ("Muscovite" literally)!... Uniate ksendz'es saw their hochverrat, the printed calendar of the "Union" for the year 1897 had a photograph of the Russian Czar; they stopped sending it out and selling it!..

Until what time will you brother-Uniates fool and blind yourselves and your nation? Until what time will you stick out your necks for your enemies? And when finally will the grace of the Holy Ghost fill your hearts and your minds, that you will not be ashamed of the Russian name and your real mother the Holy Orthodox Church! Is it not that you live in America, in that America, whose cornerstone is: the free conscience!..

You should learn now from the Anglo-Americans who pray for that Queen with whom politically they have nothing in common, they pray for her and they bring their prayers to God! By nationality she is English, by faith Episcopalian. When will it be possible also to say the same thing about our Russian Uniates? Indeed the faith and nationality of the great glorious Russian nation--this is our faith, our nationality!...

⁹¹ARV, no. 21, 11 June 1896, p. 4-5 describes the accident in Moscow at the coronation simply as a tragedy, rather than calling it an evil omen or calling the government unfeeling.

FROM THE HISTORY OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN WILKES-BARRE

In the last days of November, 1892--I received a letter in Minneapolis, Minnesota from the curators of the church, (in Wilkes-Barre--Ed.) in which they called on me to accept the leadership of the parish in Wilkes-Barre, and I have to admit that this surprised me very much! What is Wilkes-Barre?-- The future cathedra of the future Uniate biscop?... I thought, that this was either a joke, or some kind of misunderstanding; because of that I wrote a long letter (on 11 double pages!) to the curators: what is the Orthodox faith, what is the Uniate, asking them if they know, what they are doing? What is the reason for such action on their part? To this I received a reply by telegraph: "We know all of that,--but come as soon as you can".

What could I do?... In spite of the terrible distance (very far) 1200 miles I went there and arrived on December 3rd new style in Wilkes-Barre,--but I did not go to the parish house but to the Hotel Wyoming. As soon as one curator Michael Jevcsak learned about that, he came there, and involuntarily I had to leave the hotel and move to the parish house! Even though this was Saturday, the parish house was filled with people, and I clearly made explanations about everything; what it means to unite with the Orthodox Church;--they were all satisfied, and namely they like, that finally they will have a bishop.

The next day the 4th of December during the service after the Gospel, I to considerably many gathered people, explained clearly in their native language, what is--Unia, when and where it started, what kind of harm and what disaster it brought, for the Galician and Russian people in Hungary, how the Russian people were persecuted, how they were tortured, how the jerk and villain "Hieromartyr" Josaphat Kuntzevich set fire to the churches, and killed people and for this the Papacy made him "a saint"; then, what is Orthodoxy? What does it teach? that only the Orthodox-Russian Church and faith can call itself redeeming, since it was preached and spread with Christ, by His Apostles and the Holy Councils, and by the Holy Fathers: I showed that, the supremacy of the Pope, his infallibility is a human invention; that he spoiled the symbol of the Creed⁹² (I believe..), that the Roman teaching of "immaculate

⁹²The Western Churches did not preserve the Creed as it was formulated by the Councils of Nicea and Constantinople where it was decided to use the exact words of the Holy Scripture, adding nothing to the expression "who proceedeth from the Father" in the conviction that nothing thought of by human mind must be added to that revealed by God. Roman Catholics have added to the Creed the words "and from the Son", in Latin "Filioque". This addition was made in Spain in the 7th century. It spread under the influence of Emperor Charles the Great and Rome admitted it only in the 11th century at the request of Emperor Henry I. When in the 16th century the Anglican and the Protestant Churches undertook to correct the abuses of the Roman Church, they did not oppose this addition. Thus arose the East-West difference in the Nicene Creed.

conception of the Holy Virgin"⁹³--all this opposed the teaching of Christ and the Church, that "indulgences" are foolishness⁹⁴ and have been invented, to fill the Pope's pockets, and so on; only the sermon continued for more than an hour and a half! After that I called them, if they give up and are ready to renounce all this Uniate foolishness, and to believe in that which the Orthodox Church and faith teaches, then I will accept the church from them. And to let them have enough time to think about this and to talk it over, I am giving them a full three days, and only then, that is on the 6th of December in the evening, I would like to hear their decision. After the service all curators came to the parish house,--and it was told to them, that they would go to all places where there are living people belonging to the church and would ask them the following:

- 1) Do you want to unite with the Orthodox Church and faith?...
- 2) Are you agreed, that the church, the parish house and the cemetery would be given over to the Russian Orthodox Bishop, who lives in San Francisco, Cal.?
- 3) Do you renounce the tie to the Uniate-Papist faith?

⁹³In the year 1854, Pope Pius IX published a bull: "By the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul and by our own, we proclaim the doctrine that the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, at the first moment of conception by special grace of God Almighty and by special privilege, for the sake of the future merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the human race, was preserved pure from all stain of original sin - to be a doctrine revealed by God, and therefore all the faithful are bound to profess it firmly and constantly." The Orthodox Church believes that this Catholic dogma does not have foundation either in Holy Scripture, or in the Holy Tradition of the Christian Church and teaches that the Most Holy Virgin was born according to a promise but still of man and woman both. For only the Lord God Jesus Christ was born of the Most Holy Virgin Mary and of no man, but, in a manner ineffable and inscrutable, of the Holy Ghost. This dogmatic difference made possible the accusation of Orthodox people during the mission of Father Alexis by Uniates and Catholics that "Muscovites" do not believe in the Holy Virgin.

⁹⁴The Roman Church teaches that, the souls of such dead as have not received absolution from their sins on earth, or have received absolution, but have not undergone any temporary punishment, go to Purgatory of which there is no mention made in the Holy Scriptures. Therefore the Orthodox Church declared that if sinners could be cleansed of their sins by suffering, there would have been no need for the Son of God to be made incarnate and to suffer. They believe that at the last judgement, God will Himself decide the future of the souls and therefore no one, except Him can give absolution to the dead.

If all these points will be answered clearly, with determination, then let each sign his name, or put the sign of the cross on his name on the paper which was given to every curator, and which is confirmed by the church seal;--it is severely prohibited under oath to talk people into it or to say anything else; it was also instructed not to ask for signatures from Roman Catholics and Protestants, since the church is only a Uniate one, and the Catholics are not considered to be its parishioners!... On the same evening there was again a crowd of people in the parish house, and all were talking happily, that "finally there is going to be order"...and they asked first one, then another about Unia, about Orthodoxy--and even more than one of them admitted, that they already from their soul pastors, that "that faith, which we have now (Unia), is not the right faith; it is only forced upon us"...

Until late night I led the discussion with them, and in the morning about 7 o'clock I went to Hazleton, and from there to Shenandoah and I returned only on Tuesday afternoon.-- In the evening about 7 o'clock the parish house started to fill with people; the entire house, the yard and the basement of the church were full of people, there were present all the curators and the lawyer Mc-Aniff. To all people gathered once more I explained shortly about Unia, and about Orthodoxy, and finally I asked them, do they wish to unite and to save themselves in the Orthodox faith, do they wish to give all the church property to the Orthodox Bishop in San Francisco to sub-ordinate themselves under his spiritual rule?...all unanimously answered: "We wish!"... Then the petition to the Orthodox Bishop in San Francisco was read, to the Most Reverend Nicholas, in the Little-Russian language, which Michael Jevcsak explained in the Slovak language... To my question "Did everyone understand everything? they loudly answered: "We understood!" "Do you give the church, and everything else to the Orthodox Bishop of your own will, freely without force?" The answer was "We give!". Then I took out a watch and word for word said, "Now it is 8 o'clock. I give you 15 minutes more, and if only one person be found who will protest giving up the church then I will agree and will depart from you, without demanding anything for my expenses, which are more than \$80, and the matter will remain as if we never talked!"... And there was silence: it can be said--not one word was heard... I went to another room...

After 15 or 20 minutes passed I returned, and again I asked, "Do you want to give the church? Are you uniting with the Orthodox faith? Are you going to subordinate to the Orthodox Bishop... Did you think it over well?"-- "We thought and we wish it so"... was the unanimous answer. "Then sign the petition and the statement about this"--I told them, and all curators, as the representatives of the church, two presidents of the fraternities--namely: Saint Peter and Paul, and John the Baptist, signed it, and then put the church and fraternity seals on these documents: and the key of the church, as the sign of the surrender, was given into my hands by the head curator Andrei Pivowarnick with the words: "I give to you our church and its property freely, by my own will and with the agreement of the entire parish"!

The signed petition, and the statement with all the signatures, collected by the curators, which on that evening were 400, and by the next Sunday there were more than 600, were sent by me to San Francisco, and on the 12th of December I left for Minneapolis, Minnesota.

By the request of the people of Wilkes-Barre, by the blessing of the Bishop I remained in Wilkes-Barre during the holidays of the Nativity of Christ, Epiphany, and, seeing that, the church had neither iconostasis and had not been built right: its altar was to the west,⁹⁵ and there was no Oblation Table on it⁹⁶--and instead of the Oblation Table there was a washstand, I after long conferences with the curators, decided to rebuild the church, so that it would as much as possible look like a Russian Church; I showed the plans of the church and nobody said a word against it, there has been agreement and peace among the people, and the blessing of the church was done on the 29th of June, 1893 by the Most Reverend Bishop Nicholas in the best order. The Russian seamen which at that time arrived from New York, were met by the parishioners received and treated with zeal...all this didn't give any peace to the enemies of Orthodoxy--to the stubborn Uniate ksendz'es,--especially because at the same time as the people in Wilkes-Barre, the Uniates in Pittsburgh, Allegheny, and Osceola started to move for unity with Orthodoxy: this frightened the ksendz'es and they started to counsel among themselves, but they couldn't find a reason to seize upon!...they ran around Washington, around Baltimore, by the Papal delegate, along the Cardinal and along the bishops' entrance halls, and assured them, that the "schism" threatens to swallow "Unia!"... But what can be done? According to reliable reports it was decided first, that they will make a report to our Federal Government, that the "schismatics"--horrible to say! in their churches are praying for the Russian Czar!...and they forget, that they are not in Austria but that they live on free American soil, and that here with such fears there cannot be put "fear to the Liakhs" and that nobody can be proven committing "hochverrat". Nothing can be proven and they would only make themselves look silly.

⁹⁵In all Orthodox Christian churches, the sanctuaries look to the East, the area of the world where Christ appeared.

⁹⁶The Oblation Table is placed against the wall on the left side of the sanctuary. There stand vessels and other objects that are an integral part of the Liturgy. It is here that the elements to be used in the Divine Liturgy for the Holy Eucharist are prepared before the beginning of the service. During the procession of the Great Entrance, these Holy Gifts are brought from the Oblation Table to the Holy Table.

CONCLUSION

This first volume of Selected Letters, Sermons and Articles of Archpriest Alexis Toth covers the period 1893-1896; the time during which Father Alexis was called by some of the Uniate congregations in Pennsylvania to reunite them with Orthodoxy. It is clearly seen from these letters and articles that Father Alexis struggled greatly to continue his work with little financial and moral support; sometimes unsupported even by his own people, and with the constant reproaches and accusations of the Uniates. The beginning of the lawsuit between the Uniates and the Orthodox over the church property in Wilkes-Barre also occurred during this time period.

Volume II will include reports on the progress of the lawsuit, some of the history of the Minneapolis parish which Father Alexis returned to Orthodoxy prior to coming to Pennsylvania and more of Father Alexis' thought-provoking articles.