

## **Chapter Thirty-One**

**Friday, July 29, 2016.**

### **The Coronation of His Majesty Tsar Mikhail II and Her Majesty Tsarina Mariya by His Holiness Pope Nicholas VI. In the Russian Orthodox Rite Catholic Cathedral of Christ the Savior, Moscow, Russian Kingdom.**

As soon as the Russian royal honeymoon had ended, Mikhail had returned to Saint Petersburg and to the immense task of implementing the programs recommended by the Ministry of Catholic Social Reorganization and by the first session of the new Duma. A review of Russian royal history revealed that months or even years had often intervened between the initial accession of the Tsar to power and the performance of the coronation ritual. Nevertheless, there had been a growing consensus among Tsar Mikhail's personal advisors that his coronation ought not to be postponed beyond the summer of 2016. Because the first half of August was a two-week period of fasting in the traditional Orthodox Rite, in preparation for the Feast of the Dormition on August fifteenth, any time of great national celebration would have to be scheduled either before or after the time of fasting.

Grand Duke Father Kiril had noted that a new Russian national holiday had been instituted back in 2010 by then-President Polzin: July 28 was the day of the Baptism of Saint Prince Vladimir, after whose conversion Kievan Rus became a Christian nation in 988 A.D.<sup>149</sup> Patriarch Filaret and Archbishop Bogmolov both agreed that July 28 would be the ideal coronation date, when most Russians would be off work and when the symbolism of Russia's first Christian king would naturally lend support to the crowning of her new Christian Tsar. Also, the Baptism of Saint Prince Vladimir had marked the beginning of Russia's original status as a Roman Catholic nation. A mere sixty-six years later, the tragic schism of 1054 had torn Christendom asunder; and it had taken nine hundred sixty-one years, until the miraculous conversion of 2015, for Russia to once again become a Roman Catholic Confessional State.

A series of consultations between Grand Duke Father Kiril Romanov, the Tsar's papal liaison, and Father John Herald, the Pope's personal assistant in Rome, had resulted in an agreement that Pope Nicholas VI would make an historic first-ever papal visit to the Russian Kingdom in late July. After a week of outdoor Masses in major cities throughout the kingdom, Pope Nicholas would perform the coronation of the Russian Tsar and Tsarina in an Orthodox Rite ceremony. Past Tsars traditionally crowned themselves in a ceremony conducted by the Russian Orthodox Patriarch in the Cathedral of the Dormition in the Kremlin. In order to mark continuity with Russia's Romanov past, the traditional Russian Orthodox coronation ritual would be followed to the greatest extent possible

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<sup>149</sup> Bemis, James. See Bibliography.

consistent with Catholic doctrine. But the location would be changed to the much larger Cathedral of Christ the Savior, capable of accommodating ten thousand people. The cathedral itself is an exacting reconstruction of the former cathedral, the largest Orthodox church ever built, which had been consecrated in 1883 but was dynamited by Josef Stalin in 1931 to make way for a planned (but never constructed) “Palace of the Soviets” glorifying secular humanism. Russians laid the new cornerstone in 1990, and the magnificent new cathedral was consecrated in 2000. Thus, the coronation would take place in a powerful symbol of a new Christian Russia rising from the ashes of its benighted Communist past.

Pope Nicholas arrived in the Russian Kingdom on July 21, 2016, a week ahead of the coronation date. This historic first visit of a Pope to Russian soil was profoundly moving for the vast majority of Russians. The Pope’s Alitalia jet landed at Moscow’s Sheremetyevo Airport at noon, under a cloudless blue sky. When the door opened, His Holiness emerged, smiling broadly, and waving at the joyful and enthusiastic crowd. As Nicholas descended the stairs to the tarmac, his bright red shoes gleamed in the sun as the gentle breeze moved the hem of his shining white cassock. The agility of the aging Pontiff was remarkable. As soon as he reached the tarmac, he knelt down and kissed the ground, signifying his profound love for Holy Mother Russia.

Immediately he was greeted by Patriarch Filaret III, who knelt to kiss the Fisherman’s Ring. Nicholas assisted Filaret to his feet, whereupon the Pope and the Patriarch joined in a prolonged public embrace, both shedding tears of joy that this moment had come in their time, and that they had lived to behold the blessed Russian Sunrise so long awaited. Immediately Nicholas was greeted by the Russian sovereigns, Tsar Mikhail and Tsarina Mariya, who likewise knelt to kiss his ring and then rose to embrace the Vicar of Christ, shepherd of kings. Grand Duke Vasily Polzin, the Tsar’s Prime Minister, was next, and wept as he embraced the Pope who had dared to assent to “The Russian Request” he had drafted with Patriarch Filaret. The Tsarina’s parents, Grand Duke George Peterson and Grand Duchess Katarina Fyodovsky Peterson, the very couple who had smuggled “The Russian Request” into Rome, were next.

Then came leading members of the Romanov family, who now held appointments as special assistants to the Tsar, including Grand Duchess Marina Mikhailovna, Grand Duke Grigory Mikhailovich, and the elderly Orthodox Rite priest Father Oleg Romanov. Finally, the Pope was greeted by a number of newly-appointed Russian nobility, whose last names nearly all started with “S,” and who seemed quite youthful and uncannily familiar. The Pope laughed, realizing they were recent transplants from the Cova Parish in Detroit, now blessed to live and work in the modern world’s first Catholic Confessional State.

After a short limousine ride to an airport hanger where a large crowd of enthusiastic Russians cheered his arrival, Pope Nicholas took his place at a podium bearing the Vatican Coat of Arms, and began his historic

address to the Russian Kingdom and to the world:

It is with great joy that the Holy Father sets foot today upon the hallowed soil of Russia, that Christian nation which has lately received inestimable blessings through the intercession of the All-Immaculate Mother of God. In Anno Domini 987, Saint Prince Vladimir accepted Christian baptism in Kievan Rus, and ordered that Russia would become a Catholic kingdom. Just 66 years later, in 1054, tragic events caused the Church to be torn asunder. Russia, being cut off from the guidance and protection of the Bishop of Rome, was left isolated, weakened, and ultimately found itself defenseless against the cruel anti-Christian revolution of 1917.

Now, not quite a century after that tragic *coup d'état*, we have witnessed a glorious and miraculous Russian sunrise. Through the glorious intercession of Our Lady of Fatima, Russia has obtained a unique and special grace. She has converted, to become not only Roman Catholic but the Third Millennium's first Catholic Confessional State. She has restored her noble Christian monarchy, and is already beginning to enjoy the unique blessings that come to those nations whose God is the Lord and whose laws are Christ's. Efforts are well underway to reshape Russian society according to the social teachings of the Church, which in large part have not been practiced at the national level since the High Middle Ages.

Under the atheism of communism, imposed by the usurped authority of the State, power becomes the real god. Under the practical atheism of unregulated free-market capitalism, the real god is mammon, or money. In both systems, wealth and power become increasingly concentrated in the hands of a few, while the many are progressively rendered powerless and poor. But in a Catholic state, where solidarity, subsidiarity, and the wide distribution of wealth are practiced as social policies, traditional Catholic family life becomes possible for the common man without the necessity of heroic virtue, and a generous openness to life begets a growing population and a proportionate increase in the real wealth that only working people can produce.

A just society will provide a living wage to a man, increasing as his family size increases, so that his wife can stay home to manage the household and properly raise all the children that God sees fit to send them. Children privileged to grow up in large families where the Faith is central become mature, other-centered, self-confident but humble, and become leaders who can make their nation rich not only in material goods but in the true riches of righteousness, holiness, and the fear of God. May the Russian Kingdom be blessed with many such families.

The Catholic principle of subsidiarity militates against the socialist evils of centralization and bureaucratization. There are strong moral arguments supporting the idea that impersonal, oversized corporations are inherently unethical structures, and should be abolished. We are pleased that in the Russian Kingdom corporations will be strictly limited, as part of an effort to downsize companies to a local, human scale. Employers and employees should be friends and neighbors, and the good of the community through the payment of living wages should take precedence over the “bottom line” of excessive profits benefiting anonymous distant investors.

No markets are ever truly free, and in this world, where fallen human nature tends to take advantage whenever it is not kept in check by the moral law, the question becomes simply this: who will do the regulating? If private plutocrats who neither fear God nor serve Christ have control, then the rich will tend to become richer while the poor become marginalized. But under a Christian government, regulation will favor family life and widespread prosperity by placing reasonable limits both on the range of wages and on investment returns. A sound, inflation-proof currency can actually make limited returns on investment quite acceptable.

Catholic social policy therefore also requires an honest form of money, a stable standard of value to facilitate the just and equitable exchange of goods and services in a transparent manner. An honest currency protects against inflation, which is an insidious evil and an unjust tax made possible by the modern “fiat” currencies that are founded upon a lie. Inflation deprives the laborer of his just wages, and oppresses the poor, the widow, and the orphan. “Fiat” currencies thus become in themselves sins which cry to Heaven for vengeance. The Russian Kingdom is blessed to be the first modern nation to return to honest money, to the gold and silver which experience and Sacred Scripture both show to be the natural and normal standards by which the value in transactions can be measured with justice, equity, and transparency. I am pleased to announce that the State of Vatican City will henceforth adopt the Russian Kingdom Ruble as its official currency, until such time as a more universal honest currency comes into widespread use.

The heart of the Holy Father rejoices now to be here. In the next week we plan to travel the length and breadth of this beautiful Catholic kingdom, to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in large public gatherings. Tomorrow we will celebrate the Orthodox Rite of Mass in the Cathedral of Christ Our Savior in Moscow, to demonstrate to the world the profound and real unity which we now enjoy. During the next several days, we will travel to Saint Petersburg, Perm, and Vladivostok, to offer the Tridentine Mass in large outdoor arenas. In Yekaterinburg we will offer the Russian

Byzantine Rite of Mass in the Church on the Blood, built on the site where the last Tsar and his family were martyred by the anti-Christian revolutionaries.

The climax of our visit will be the coronation of your king, His Majesty Mikhail Nicholaevich Romanov, in the Cathedral of Christ Our Savior. As you know, in the past Russian Tsars crowned themselves, indicating that they viewed their power as coming directly from God with no intervening authority. But now that Russia has been converted, the proper Catholic order has been restored, as it existed in Russia in the time of Saint Prince Vladimir. The Tsar will be crowned by the Pope, indicating that in answering to Christ, the Tsar, like all earthly rulers, is subject to the Bishop of Rome to whom Christ entrusted the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and the power of binding and loosing. The Church, like the new Russian Kingdom, operates on the principle of subsidiarity. Just as the Tsar does not intervene in regional or local matters except in rare cases where justice and equity are at stake, so the Holy Father does not intervene in the reign of a Catholic monarch unless necessary for justice, equity, or the salvation of souls.

As your spiritual shepherd, we extend to everyone in the Russian Kingdom our profound thanks for welcoming us to your Christian kingdom. May Almighty God bless you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

When the Pope was done speaking, Tsar Mikhail offered a few welcoming comments, and then the papal motorcade departed for the Cathedral of Christ the Savior where accommodations for visiting bishops had been made ready for His Holiness. The following day the cathedral was filled as a historic event took place: a Pope celebrated Holy Mass according to the Russian Byzantine Rite of the Catholic Church, in Moscow. The world watched in amazed wonder as the event was telecast around the globe.

In the western royal capital city, the new Saint Petersburg Stadium seating 69,500 people was filled to capacity for the papal Mass. Fair weather made it possible to open the retractable roof. The Russian Byzantine Rite faithful appreciated the dignity of the Roman Rite when celebrated in the Traditional Rite, noting its similarity to the Orthodox Mass of Saint John Chrysostom. The next day the Holy Father celebrated an outdoor Tridentine Mass in Perm, one of the largest cities in central Russia. Tens of thousands attended, again showing that the faithful of the Russian Byzantine Rite had fully embraced the Holy Father as their own chief shepherd. Two days later there was a papal Mass in Vladivostok, at the eastern edge of the kingdom, again attended by large crowds.

The culmination of the papal tour of Russia would take place in Moscow. The coronation of a Russian Tsar, which had last taken place in 1896 when

Nicholas II was crowned, had traditionally been a religious ceremony conducted by the Russian Orthodox Church. During the long centuries of the Great Schism, from 1054 to 2015, Tsarist Russia had claimed to be the true Christian state. Moscow was designated the “Third Rome,” the replacement of Byzantium, the “Second Rome” which had fallen under Muslim control when the Ottoman Empire conquered Constantinople in 1453. The “First Rome” where the “Pope of Rome” ruled over the Roman Catholic Church, was viewed by the Orthodox Church as being in “schism” from the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Orthodox Church. The Russian Empire practiced caesaropapism, meaning that Church and State were one. The Tsar was viewed as the head of both the Russian State and the Russian Orthodox Church, and had power to appoint and remove bishops. Therefore, a religious coronation in the Russian Empire conferred both political and religious legitimacy.

The coronation, like European Catholic coronation ceremonies during the Middle Ages, was believed to confer a genuine spiritual benefit that mystically wedded the sovereign to his subjects, and which imparted divine authority to the ruler. In medieval Catholic Europe, the anointed Christian king had been viewed as a *mixta persona*, being part priest and part layman, but never being entirely either. While Europe had gradually shed this view, especially after the Protestant Revolt, the belief had persisted in Russia right up until the 1917 revolution. In the Orthodox view, the Tsar was anointed by God, and the anointing was a Mystery performed by the Church during the coronation. The anointed of God entered the Royal Doors into the altar, went to the altar table and received the Holy Mysteries like a priest, with the Body and Blood taken separately.

By this the Church proclaimed the great spiritual struggle of ruling as a Christian monarch, and likened this to the holy sacrament of the priesthood. The Tsar thus became a sacramental image, and a carrier of the special power of the Grace of the Holy Spirit. No Orthodox layperson was ever permitted to pass through the Royal Doors or to partake of communion in both species separately. This unique privilege, granted to the Tsar at his coronation, emphasized the special duties and authority of the Christian autocrat. The sacred and the secular, the Russian Orthodox Church and state, God and government, were all joined by the Russian Orthodox coronation service in the person of the Tsar.

The coronation of Tsar Mikhail II would necessarily reflect a change in belief. Since Russia had miraculously converted to become a Catholic Confessional State, there was no longer any claim that Moscow was the “Third Rome.” Most of the Eastern Orthodox nations had practiced caesaropapism, viewing their monarch as the head of their autocephalous national Church. Now, the Russian Orthodox Church was under the spiritual jurisdiction of the “Pope of Rome.” No longer would the Tsar have any direct authority over the Church in Russia. The Russian Orthodox Church was no longer a national Church but part of the one, holy, Catholic, and apostolic Church founded by Christ upon the rock of Peter.

The Tsar would still answer to God, but also to Christ's Vicar on earth, for the use he made of his temporal power. Russian bishops, both Orthodox Rite and Roman Rite, would no longer answer to the Tsar in ecclesiastical matters. Like the Tsar, they would answer to God, and to Christ's Vicar the Pope. Proper separation of Church and State would thus be observed: the administration of the Russian state would be separate from administration of the Church in Russia, but the State would be obligated to obey the law of Christ, and to submit to the spiritual authority of the Vicar of Christ who holds the power of binding and loosing over the entire Christian world. The anointing and coronation of the Russian Tsar would represent the realities that he had been chosen by God (through the ancient tradition of hereditary monarchy), and that he would receive unique and special graces appropriate to his station in life (as a Christian autocrat).

In the past, the Russian Tsar had crowned himself, signifying that his power came directly from God. The Tsar then crowned his consort, the Tsarina, signifying that she shared in his dignity and responsibility for the welfare of the nation. In the new Catholic Russian Kingdom, by contrast, Christ's Vicar, the Pope of Rome, would place the crown on the heads of the Tsar and Tsarina, indicating their proper subordination to the Church founded by Christ.

The pre-revolutionary Russian monarchy possessed an impressive collection of Imperial regalia. These included the sovereign's crown, the consort's crown, the scepter and orb, and the banner of state. Although Russia no longer claimed to be an empire but a kingdom, the symbolism of these precious objects would be retained. The Great Imperial Crown had survived both the Russian revolution and the Soviet era. It spent time in Ireland as collateral for a \$25,000 loan from the Irish Republic to the new Soviet Republic, and remained hidden away in various Irish homes and government safes until 1950, when it was returned to Russia upon repayment of the loan. In recent decades the crown and other historic regalia had been on display in the Moscow Kremlin Armory State Diamond Collection. They would be brought to the Cathedral of Christ the Savior on coronation day, and then returned to the museum for exhibition except on those few days per year when the monarch would have need of them, for such State occasions as the twice-annual opening ceremony of the Duma, the annual official portrait of the royal family, or audiences granted to certain visiting heads of state.

The Tsar's nine-pound Great Imperial Crown, made in 1762, was last worn by Tsar Nicholas II. It is fashioned in the style of a mitre, divided into two half-spheres with a central arch between them. The crown is studded with 5,000 diamonds, and is topped by a 398.72-carat red spinel from China. The Tsarina's Smaller Imperial Crown was virtually identical in design, was similarly encrusted with diamonds, and was last worn by Tsarina Alexandra. The 1784 Scepter consisted of a burnished shaft of three sections, containing eight rings of brilliant diamonds, some as large as 30 carats. It was topped by the 189-carat Orlov Diamond, which was in turn crowned by a double-headed eagle bearing the Russian coat of arms

at its center. The Orb consisted of a polished hollow ball made from red gold, and was encircled by two rows of diamonds and topped by a large 47-carat sapphire which in turn was crowned by a diamond-studded cross. Each Tsar had a banner of state manufactured for his coronation. The banner was blessed on the eve of the coronation, in the armory room of the Kremlin Palace, and would then be displayed at the coronation and at all significant State events during the Tsar's reign.

Several days before the coronation, Tsar Mikhail and Tsarina Mariya made a private pilgrimage to the Peter and Paul Cathedral inside the Peter and Paul Fortress on the Zayachy Island in the Neva River at Saint Petersburg. Here were the burial vaults of the Romanov dynasty. Mikhail and Mariya prayed at the tombs of Tsar Nicholas II and Tsarina Alexandra, their final resting place only since July 1998. They had been moved here after their shattered bones were retrieved from a forest outside Yekaterinburg, where their Bolshevik murderers had buried them in haste in July 1918. Mikhail and Mariya offered prayers for the repose of the souls of their Romanov predecessors. They also asked Saint Michael to intercede for them, in the Courts of Heaven, so that their reign might help to foster the growth of the Catholic Faith and help many people to attain the only thing that matters in the end, the salvation of their souls.

The day before his coronation, Tsar Mikhail made a grand processional entrance on horseback into the city of Moscow. He was accompanied by multiple squadrons of cavalry, and by his consort Tsarina Mariya, riding in an antique royal carriage. Thousands of church bells rang out as Tsar Mikhail made his way to the newly rebuilt Chapel of Our Lady of Iveron, where he revered the miraculous Icon of the Blessed Virgin of Iveron. For centuries, Russian Tsars had revered this icon before every entry into the Kremlin fortress. During the Soviet era, as part of a campaign to destroy holy sites, the original chapel had been torn down to make way for parades of huge military machines. But by 1992, an exact replica of the chapel had been rebuilt, and an exact copy of the original icon, painted at Mount Athos in Greece, was blessed by the Russian Patriarch.

On coronation day morning, under bright blue skies, there was a grand royal procession to the Cathedral of Christ the Savior. The Tsar walked under a canopy held by thirty-two generals, representing all branches of the Russian military forces. The Tsarina and the royal regalia followed under separate canopies. The regalia, in strict order, included The Chain of the Order of Saint Andrew the First Called,<sup>150</sup> the Sword of State, the Banner of State, the State Seal, the Purple Robe of the Tsar, the Orb, the Scepter, the Small Imperial Crown, and the Great Imperial Crown. Many Russian nobility, both descendants of the old nobility and those recently

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<sup>150</sup> The Order of Saint Andrew the First Called was named in honor of the Apostle Andrew who, from the time of the Kiev princes, had been the patron saint of the Russian lands. The highest Russian honor, the Order of Saint Andrew, was awarded rarely. It was conferred principally on members of the royal family, heads of foreign states and "exceptional servants" of the state: dignitaries, diplomats or successful military commanders. The heir to the Russian throne was awarded the order at his christening.

appointed by Tsar Mikhail, followed the regalia.

Upon arrival at the Cathedral of Christ the Savior, the Tsar and Tsarina were met by His Holiness Pope Nicholas VI, and His Excellency Filaret III, Patriarch of Moscow and All the Russias. The royal couple knelt on the cathedral steps to publicly kiss a large crucifix, while they were sprinkled with holy water. Upon entering the vast cathedral, Mikhail and Mariya each received the Sacrament of Confession from their Roman Rite Father Confessor, Grand Duke Father Kiril Romanov. Then, while a *cappella* choir music filled the vast space, the newly-shriven royal couple made their way down the aisle, venerating numerous holy icons, and ultimately taking their place on two thrones set up at the front.

The ceremony began with the singing of Psalm 101, while the Tsar repeated the Nicene Creed (now, according to the Catholic version, including the *filioque* clause). The Tsar then read a prayer, and received a blessing from Patriarch Filaret. Further hymns were sung, and three Scripture lessons were read:<sup>151</sup>

Isaias 49:13-19: Give praise, O ye heavens, and rejoice, O earth; ye mountains, give praise with jubilation: because the Lord hath comforted His people and will have mercy on His poor ones. And Sion said: The Lord hath forsaken me, and the Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her infant, so as not to have pity on the son of her womb? And if she should forget, yet will not I forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee in my hands: thy walls are always before my eyes. Thy builders are come: they that destroy thee and make thee waste shall go out of thee. Lift up thy eyes round about, and see. All these are gathered together; they are come to thee. I live, saith the Lord. Thou shalt be clothed with all these as with an ornament: and as a bride thou shalt put them about thee. For thy deserts and thy desolate places and the land of thy destruction shall now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants: and they that swallowed thee up shall be chased far away.

Romans 13:1-7: Let every soul be subject to higher powers. For there is no power but from God: and those that are ordained of God. Therefore, he that resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God. And they that resist purchase to themselves damnation. For princes are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good: and thou shalt have praise from the same. For he is God's minister to thee, for good. But if thou do that which is evil, fear: for he beareth not the sword in vain. For he is God's minister: an avenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil. Wherefore be subject of necessity: not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake. For

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<sup>151</sup> Quoted from the DRV.

therefore also you pay tribute. For they are the ministers of God, serving unto this purpose. Render therefore to all men their dues. Tribute, to whom tribute is due: custom, to whom custom: fear, to whom fear: honour, to whom honour.

Matthew 22:15-22: Then the Pharisees going, consulted among themselves how to ensnare Him in His speech. And they sent to Him their disciples with the Herodians, saying: Master, we know that Thou art a true speaker and teachest the way of God in truth. Neither carest Thou for any man: for Thou dost not regard the person of men. Tell us therefore what dost Thou think? Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not? But Jesus knowing their wickedness, said: Why do you tempt Me, ye hypocrites? Shew Me the coin of the tribute. And they offered Him a penny. And Jesus saith to them: Whose image and inscription is this? They say to Him: Caesar's. Then He saith to them: Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God, the things that are God's. And hearing this, they wondered and, leaving Him, went their ways.

Next the Tsar removed his Chain of the Order of Saint Andrew, and was robed in purple by the Patriarch and the Tsar's attendant, Prince Joseph Shoemaker. He knelt on a crimson cushion before the Pope, who laid hands upon him and offered the following two prayers over him. The first prayer, a Catholic revision of a traditional prayer from the Byzantine coronation ritual,<sup>152</sup> was as follows:

O Lord our God, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, who through Samuel the prophet didst choose Thy servant David and didst anoint him to be king over Thy people Israel; hear now the supplication of us though unworthy, and look forth from Thy holy dwelling place and vouchsafe to anoint with the oil of gladness Thy faithful servant Mikhail, whom Thou hast been pleased to establish as ruler over the Russian Kingdom, a Christian kingdom, a kingdom of holy people whom Thou hast redeemed by the precious blood of Thine Only-begotten Son. Clothe him with power from on high; set on his head a crown of precious stones; bestow on him length of days, set in his right hand a Sceptre of salvation; establish him upon the throne of righteousness; defend him with the panoply of thy Holy Spirit; strengthen his arm; subject to him all the enemies of Christ; sow in his heart the fear of Thee and feeling for his subjects; preserve him blameless in the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Faith; make him manifest as a sure guardian of the doctrines of Thy Holy Catholic Church, and as an

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<sup>152</sup> The two coronation prayers are credited to Wooley, Maxwell, B.D., *Coronation Rites*, Cambridge University Press, 1915. Altered by the author to reflect Catholic doctrine.

obedient son and ready defender of Christ's Vicar on earth, the Bishop of Rome; that he may judge Thy people in righteousness and Thy poor in judgment, and save the sons of those in want and may be an heir of Thy Heavenly kingdom. We ask these blessings in the name of Christ Jesus Our Lord, who livest and reigneth with Thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever. Amen.

Patriarch Filaret then offered the greeting "Peace be with you" to the congregation, and gave the command, "Bow your heads unto the Lord." Pope Nicholas then offered the second prayer:

To Thee O Christ, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, has he to whom Thou hast entrusted this earthly kingdom bowed his head, to pray in union with Christ's Vicar on earth. We pray Thee, Lord of all: keep him under Thine own shadow; strengthen his kingdom; grant that he may do continually those things which are pleasing to Thee; make to arise in his days righteousness and abundance of peace; that in his tranquility his people may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity. For Thou art the King of peace, and the Saviour of our souls and bodies, and to Thee we ascribe glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Following these prayers, Pope Nicholas received the Great Imperial Crown from Prince Joseph, blessed it invoking the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and placed it on the head of the Tsar, saying<sup>153</sup>:

Most God-fearing, absolute, and mighty Lord, Tsar of all the Russias, this visible and tangible adornment, placed upon thy head by the Vicar of Christ, is an eloquent symbol that thou, as the head of the whole Russian people, art invisibly crowned by the King of Kings, Christ, with a most ample blessing, seeing that He bestows upon thee authority over His Russian people, to rule according to His divine law and the teaching of His Holy Catholic Church.

Then the Tsar arose, while Pope Nicholas received from Prince Joseph the Scepter and the Orb. Nicholas blessed them in the name of the Holy Trinity, and presented them to the Tsar while saying:

God-chosen, Christ-crowned, and Faith-adorned, most pious Christian Autocrat and Great Sovereign, Tsar of All the Russias: Receive the bejeweled Sceptre, symbol of the majesty of your benevolent authority; and the Cross-crowned Orb, representing

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<sup>153</sup> This and the following prayer are derived from historical sources cited in Wikipedia, through a succession of untraceable quotes, and were altered by the author to reflect Catholic doctrine.

your dominion over vast Christian realms, and your mandate to assist in the future propagation of Catholic Confessional States throughout the whole earth. Together with the Crown, these emblems form a regal trinity, visible signs of the autocratic power given thee from the Most High over thy people, that thou mayest rule them and order for them the spiritual and temporal welfare they desire, and that shall encourage and assist them in their hope of eternal salvation.

Tsar Mikhail now seated himself on his throne, holding the Orb in his left hand and the Scepter in his right, while Tsarina Mariya approached Pope Nicholas and knelt on the crimson cushion before him. The Pope received the Small Imperial Crown from Prince Joseph, blessed it in the name of the Holy Trinity, and placed it upon her head. When she arose, Tsar Mikhail, having handed the Scepter and Orb to Prince Joseph, placed the Chain of the Order of Saint Andrew around her neck, and laid a purple mantle upon her shoulders, signifying her sharing in his dignity and responsibility for the nation's welfare.

The Tsar and Tsarina now returned to their thrones, both wearing their crowns, and the Tsar once again taking in hand the Scepter and the Orb, while the *a cappella* cathedral choir sang the Orthodox Rite prayer for "Many Years" of health and a long, prosperous reign. This traditional prayer had been adapted in Byzantium from a public acclamation once used for Emperors in the Roman Empire:

Grant long life, O Lord God, to our most pious king Mikhail.  
O Lord, preserve him, unto many years.

Grant long life, O Lord God, to our most pious queen Mariya.  
O Lord, preserve her, unto many years.

Grant long life, O Lord God, to our most pious king and queen.  
O Lord, preserve them, unto many years.

The singing of the prayer was followed by the ringing of church bells and a 101-gun salute outside the cathedral, announcing to the kingdom that the Christian sovereigns had been crowned by Christ's Vicar. The Tsar then handed the Orb and Scepter to Prince Joseph, and knelt while he publicly offered the following prayer, which served as his Coronation Oath:

Lord God of our fathers, and King of Kings, Who created all things by Thy word, and by Thy wisdom has made man, that he should walk uprightly and rule righteously over Thy world; Thou hast chosen me as Tsar and judge over Thy Russian people. I acknowledge Thy unsearchable purpose towards me, and bow in thankfulness before Thy Majesty. Do Thou, my Lord and Governor, fit me for the work to which Thou hast sent me; teach me and guide me in this great service. May there be with me

the wisdom which belongs to Thy throne; send it from Thy Holy Heaven, that I may know what is well-pleasing in Thy sight, and what is right according to Thy commandments and according to the Magisterium of Thy Holy Catholic Church whose visible head is the Bishop of Rome.

May my heart be in Thy hand, to accomplish all that is to the temporal and eternal profit of the people committed to my charge and to Thy glory. May I keep my kingdom ever Christian, never compromising with the worldly kingdom of mammon and its principalities, powers, and spirits of wickedness in high places. May my subjects ever enjoy that true Christian liberty which flourishes only under the Social Kingship of Our Lord Jesus Christ. And may I protect and preserve this autocratic Christian throne, to be inherited inviolate by my successor whom Heaven shall appoint, so that in the day of Thy judgment I may give Thee account of my stewardship without blame; through the grace and mercy of Thy Son, Who was once crucified for us, to Whom be all honor and glory with Thee and the Holy Spirit, the Giver of Life, forever and ever. Amen.<sup>154</sup>

Tsar Mikhail then rose to his feet and stood beside Pope Nicholas, while Patriarch Filaret and all others present knelt to pray for the Tsar on behalf of all the Russian people, while the choir sang the *Te Deum*, a well-known early Christian hymn of praise.

Now the Tsar set aside his crown, and the Orthodox Rite of the Divine Liturgy was celebrated by Patriarch Filaret. After the Communion hymn, but before Communion, Tsar Mikhail gave his Sword of State to Prince Joseph, and he and Tsarina Mariya ascended the stairs in front of the Royal Doors of the iconostasis, which were opened just at that moment for the anointing portion of the coronation ceremony. There, each was anointed with holy chrism by Pope Nicholas, who spoke the words, "Receive the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit." The Tsar was anointed on his forehead, eyes, nostrils, mouth, ears, breast, and both sides of each hand. Then he moved aside to his right to stand in front of the icon of Christ. Mariya then stepped forward and was anointed on her forehead only. She then moved to her left to stand in front of the icon of the Mother of God. A second 101-gun salute sounded outside the cathedral, while church bells rang throughout the city, announcing to the kingdom that the Christian sovereigns had been anointed by the Vicar of Christ.

Now a unique, once-in-a-reign event in Orthodox Rite Divine Liturgy took place: the Tsar was escorted by Patriarch Filaret through the Royal Doors (normally permitted only to deacons, priests, or bishops) into the altar, where the Tsar partook of the Body and Blood separately, in clerical manner. This was the only time the Tsar – or any Orthodox Rite layperson –

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<sup>154</sup> Attributed to R. Monk Zachariah (Liebmann), "Martyrology of the Communist Yoke: The Life of Tsar-Martyr Nicholas II", *The Orthodox Word*, 153 (1990), page 200. Downloaded on 10-20-10 from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coronation\\_of\\_the\\_Russian\\_monarch](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coronation_of_the_Russian_monarch), and altered by the author.

was ever permitted to receive Communion in this manner. Unlike the Tsar, the Tsarina remained outside the Royal Doors and received Communion in the standard Orthodox Rite manner, kneeling and receiving the Most Precious Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, under the appearance of bread and wine, together on a spoon.

After Holy Communion the Tsar and Tsarina returned to their thrones, where their Father Confessor, Grand Duke Father Kiril Romanov, recited over them the following prayer:

We thank Thee, O Lord our God, that Thou hast not rejected us sinners, but hast suffered us to be partakers of Thy holy things. We thank Thee that, unworthy as we are, Thou hast enabled us to receive of Thy most pure and Heavenly gifts. And yet moreover we beseech Thee, O Lord and Lover of mankind, who for our sakes didst die and rise again, and hast provided us these dread and life-giving Mysteries unto the benefit and hallowing of our souls and bodies.

Grant that these Thy gifts may be even unto us for the healing of soul and body, and the driving out of every adversary; for the enlightening of the eyes of our understanding, and peace for the powers of our soul; for Faith unashamed, and love without dissimulation; for the fullness of wisdom, and the keeping of Thy commandments; for the increase of Thy divine grace, and an inheritance in Thy kingdom. That preserved by Thy grace we may be ever mindful of Thy love, and not henceforth live unto ourselves but unto Thee, our bountiful Lord.

And when we have departed this life in the hope of life everlasting, vouchsafe that we may enter into eternal rest, where the voice of those whose feast is unceasing, and the gladness of those who behold the goodness of Thy countenance is unending. For Thou art the true Desire and the ineffable Joy of those who love Thee, O Christ our God, and all creation sings Thy praise for ever. Amen.<sup>155</sup>

Then in a brief ceremony Tsar Mikhail received formal homage from his wife the Tsarina, and then from other family members, old and new nobles, and friends, and finally from all Russians in the congregation. The dismissal was read, and the archdeacon intoned a special blessing for the Tsar and the royal family, with the choir again singing the threefold "Many Years" prayer.

Tsar Mikhail and Tsarina Mariya now exited the cathedral adorned in their full coronation regalia, and entered the horse-drawn royal carriage, while church bells rang wildly all throughout Moscow, and cannons fired in salute. The royal procession took them to the Kremlin, where three cathedrals (Dormition, Archangel, and Annunciation) were visited for

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<sup>155</sup> A traditional Orthodox prayer after Communion, altered by the author.

additional brief rites, affording an opportunity for thousands more to be live witnesses of this historic coronation day. Then the newly-crowned monarchs proceeded to the Red<sup>156</sup> Porch of the Kremlin, where they rested and prepared for a great ceremonial meal at the Kremlin's Hall of Facets. Following the tradition of previous Tsars, they stopped on the Red Staircase and bowed three times to the Russian people assembled in the courtyard, symbolizing the mutual bond of affection between the Russian ruler and his subjects. Inside the Kremlin Palace, there was a special receiving line for Muslim subjects whose faith did not permit them to enter a Christian church.

The coronation banquet was held that evening in the Granovitaya Palata, the former council chamber of Muscovite rulers. A special table was set for the monarchs, who dined alone while being served by high-ranking members of the royal court, including not a few Princes having the last name of Shoemaker or Szczypiorski. Foreign ambassadors were admitted one at a time, and the new sovereigns drank a private toast with each in turn, taking care to sip very lightly of the powerful top-shelf Russian vodka.

Following the banquet, festivities were held that paralleled the night of the royal wedding. There was a grand electrical illumination of the Kremlin rooftops, fireworks over the Moscow River, and a series of royal balls in the Grand Kremlin Palace and several leading hotels. Over the next several weeks, the monarchs made public appearances in major Russian cities, where coronation souvenirs were distributed and the Tsar inspected his kingdom and addressed his beloved Russian people in person.

The Papal Consecration had converted the Russian nation, and now the Papal Coronation of her Romanov Christian king was complete. The Russian Sunrise was breaking forth into the warm sunshine of a brilliant new morning. The world would continue to watch in amazement as the "regressive" Russian Kingdom flourished with all those inestimable blessings, both material and spiritual, which accrue to those men and nations who keep the commandments of Christ, the Savior of the World.

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<sup>156</sup> Note that in Russian "red" also means "beautiful," and here bears no reference to communists.  
[http://www.russiansunrise.com/book\\_pdf/RS\\_Chapter31\\_p.pdf](http://www.russiansunrise.com/book_pdf/RS_Chapter31_p.pdf)