

The Ever-Memorable Confessor Metropolitan
Philaret, First Hierarch of the Russian
Orthodox Church Abroad
(†1985)



Metropolitan Philaret (†) First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (1903–1985)

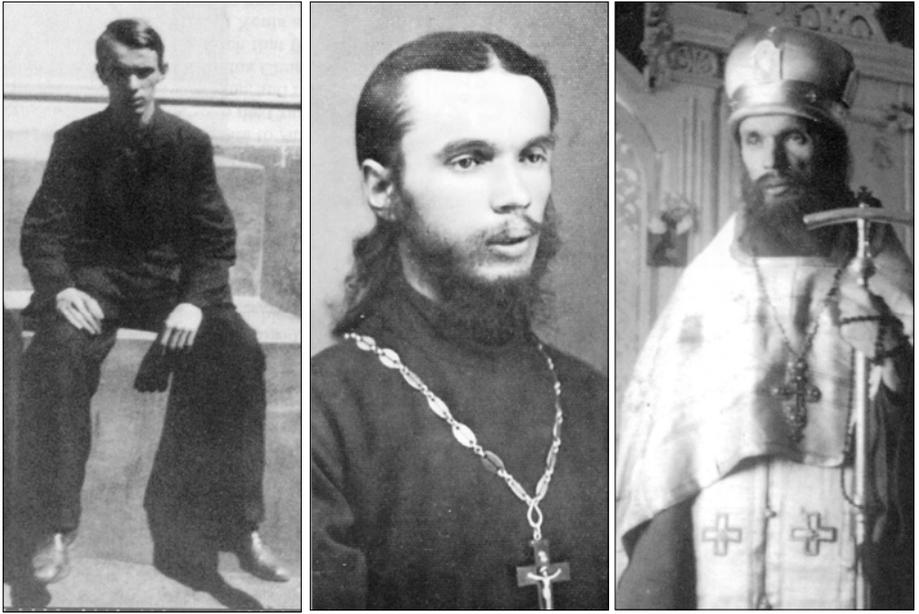
ON 8 NOVEMBER 1985 (OLD STYLE), Metropolitan Philaret, First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (which has its headquarters in New York City, USA) reposed in the Lord.



Metropolitan Philaret—known in the world as George Nikolaievich Voznesensky—was born in 1903 in Kursk, Russia. His father was a Priest who, when he was later widowed, was Consecrated Bishop of Chailar, Manchuria.

This clerical family fled to China in 1920 and settled in Harbin, Manchuria.

Upon finishing his studies at the seminary in Harbin, George was tonsured a monk, receiving the name Philaret,



George Nikolaievich Voznesensky, as a seminarian (1920); as Hieromonk Philaret (1932); as Archimandrite Philaret (1952) in Harbin, Manchuria.

and was Ordained a Priest in 1930. The dignity of Archimandrite was conferred on him in 1937.

After the Communist takeover of China in 1949, all of the Russian refugees were forced to accept Soviet citizenship and to return—with glittering promises of freedom, of course—to the Soviet Union.

Archimandrite Philaret's father, Bishop Dimitry, had already returned to Russia, where he received the title of Archbishop; in 1946, he retired for a brief period to the Pskov Caves Monastery and, in 1947, reposed in Leningrad.

Despite the great dangers, Hieromonk Philaret was unyielding and refused to depart from China to the West until the members of his rational flock were safe. Finally, after many years of hardship, he went to Australia in 1962, where he was Consecrated Bishop of the city of Brisbane a year later.



The Enthronement of Metropolitan Philaret (1964) in New York. St. John, Archbishop of San Francisco (†1966) is visible in front of him.



IN 1964, after the resignation of Metropolitan Anastassy, he was miraculously elected First Hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, even though he was the youngest of the Bishops.

St. John of Kronstadt, St. Herman of Alaska, St. Xenia the Russian Fool-for-Christ, and the Holy New Martyrs of Russia were proclaimed Saints while he was serving as Metropolitan.

He was particularly distinguished for his strong stance against the panheresy of ecumenism; documents by him—full of zeal for



Characteristic snapshots of the blessed Metropolitan.

Orthodoxy, but composed with characteristic discernment—were published, condemning the heresy and censuring its ringleaders.

Also noteworthy was his contribution to the endeavor of bringing an end to the dissension among the anti-innovationists of the Old Calendar Church of Greece, even though his efforts eventually proved unsuccessful.

He was temperate, ascetic, reticent, meek, humble, and very devout—with a great love for his rational flock and for the young in particular—, and always dedicated to the sacred work of unceasing noetic prayer. He was universally above meanness and passions, adorned with virtues and spiritual gifts, in imitation of the great Holy Hierarchs of our Church.

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ON 30 October 1998 (Old Style), a committee composed of the then Archbishop Laurus and other clergy of the Russian Church Abroad opened the temporary tomb in which the Relics of the blessed First Hierarch had been laid in November of 1985 at the Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville, USA, in order to prepare for their transferal to a permanent tomb, which had recently been constructed.

However, when the blessed Metropolitan Philaret's tomb was opened by the committee, thirteen years after his repose, the Relics of this Hierarch were found to be incorrupt, to the great amazement and wonder of all!

