



THE CATHEDRALS IN THE EAST OF MOSCOW

Everybody knows about plenty of Moscow cathedrals, but not many of them are really famous: the cathedrals of Kremlin, Yelochov church, the St. Basil cathedral and the cathedral of Christ the Saviour - that's all. Whereas there are several tens of temples only in our East District of Moscow. Two of them excel from all and are situated close to our school.



Church of Elijah the Prophet in Cherkizovo - is one of the oldest churches in Moscow. It was built by a rich baptized Tatar nobleman Ilya Ozakov.

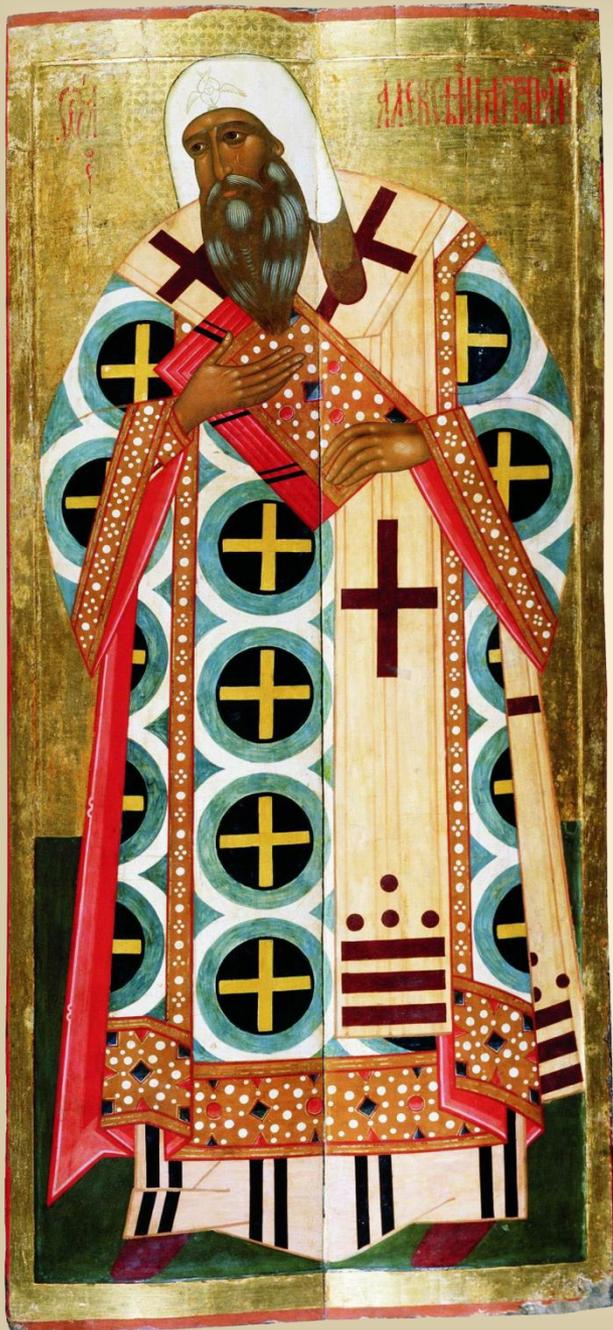
He leaved the village to the metropolitan Alexiy and it became a summer residence of the Head of Russian Orthodox Church.



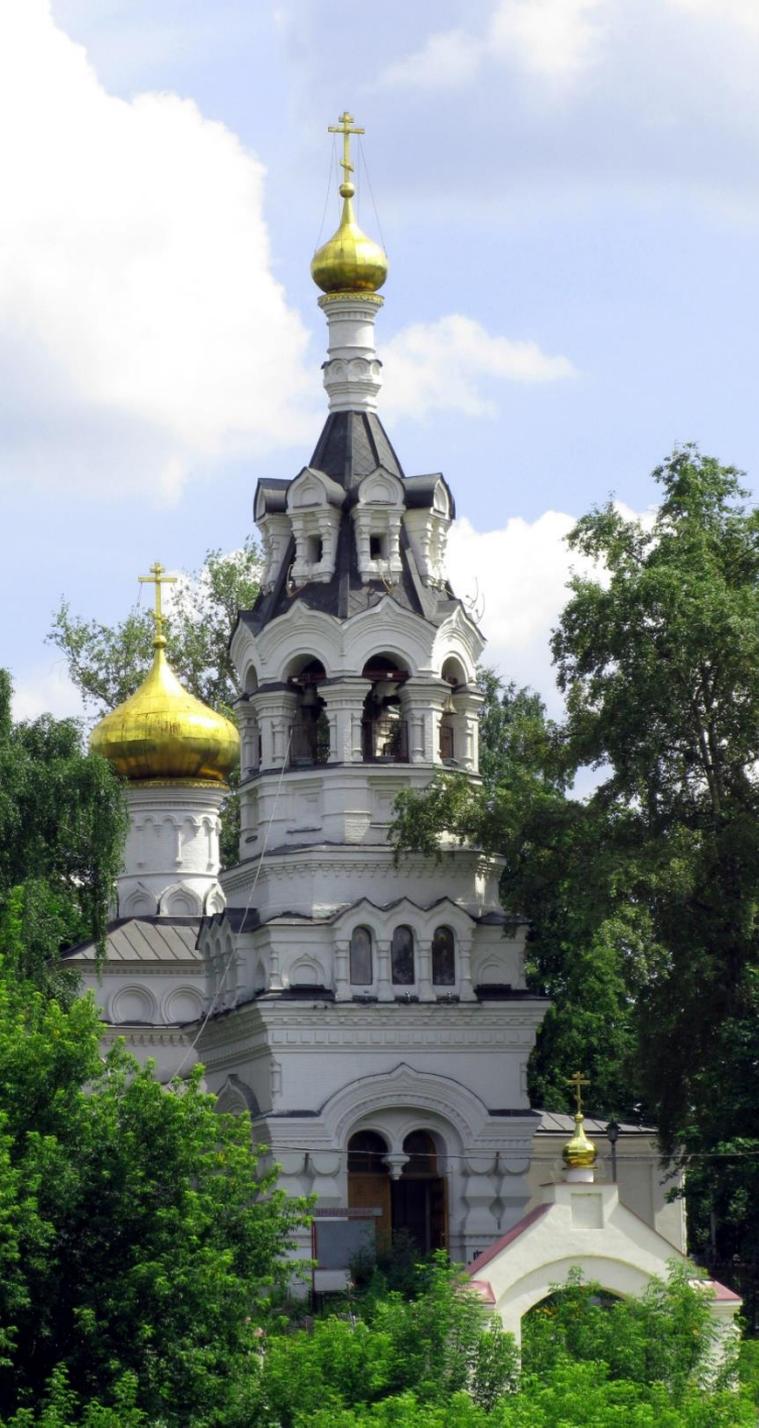


There was also built a mansion where all metropolitans and later patriarchs lived until the 20th century, including Tikhon, who became patriarch during the Civil war. Then it was burned. Now it is being reconstructed according to a special project.





St. Alexiy, boyars' son and godson of Ivan Kalita, is one of the most admired saints in Moscow. Apart from ecclesiastical activity, he was a great diplomatist, the second important man in Moscow, who supported Simeon the Proud, Ivan the Red and young Dmitriy Donskoy. Also, he solved political conflicts between the appanage princes. In his times the Church became the uniting power. The Kremlin of white stone, Chudov and Simonov monasteries were built by his order. Alexiy rested in Cherkizovo, and here he often said his Masses.



The wooden medieval church was burnt down in times of Peter the Great, but the new temple of stone that we see now sprung up soon. Residence was rebuilt many times, especially with the help of St. Innokentiy. It happened twice only in the 19th century.





The oldest Moscow cemetery is adjacent to the temple. It wasn't even ravaged by Bolsheviks. In new times scientists and veterans were buried here. Perhaps, the most admired and famous tomb is the one of Ivan Yakovlevich Koreysha.

He was a well known god's fool with the power of healing and predicting. The Legend says he predicted the beginning of Napoleon and Crimea wars, the death of Nikolay I and Gogol. Koreysha became a character of the books by Leo Tolstoy, Ostrovskiy, Gogol, Leskov, Saltykov-Shedrin, and Dostoevsky. He was not canonized, but a lot of believers think that the place where he was buried is miraculous.

In fact, there is enough of miracles. Some old residents, who remember the Second World War, tell that bombs falling exact to the temple suddenly changed their trajectory and fell to the pond, unable to do any damage.

In Soviet time people brought icons from wrecked cathedrals to the temple of Ilya the Prophet, to save them. In the capital of country, declared the war against religion, this place was still the reserve of the Orthodox Church.





There is a temple nearby on the Preobrazhenskoe cemetery grounds, the temple with a totally different story. This is an Assumption Chapel - the church of the most beloved Russian saint - St. Nikolay.



The History of the Orthodox Church was tristful in the 17th century, when one of the most tragic events happened - schism. When patriarch Nikon decided to rewrite The Holy Bible and to change the rituals according to the Greek canons, many believers did not accept it. Nikon was cruel to the Old Believers: he locked them in prisons, banished and burned them alive. But they were inexorable.





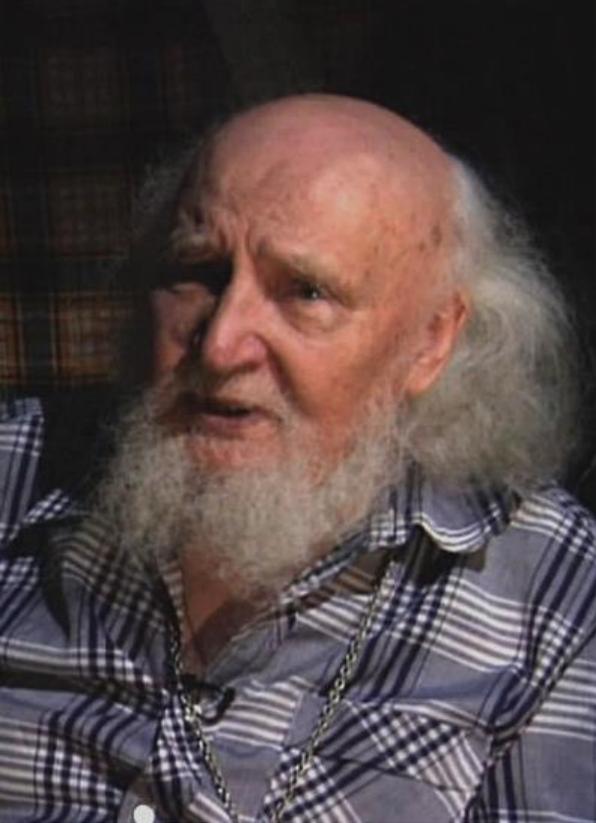
One Hundred years later the opposition lasted, despite the fact, that the government let the Old Believers pray as they want. In this time Assumption Chapel, where the richest merchants of Moscow went, was built.





But 50 years later some of them changed to Nikonians and asked to hand the chapel over to them. Nikolay I decided to divide it into two parts.

It was reconstructed for two communes and reblessed. Until today it remains a living symbol of the schism: two orthodox churches under one roof, separated by a wall.



In the USSR it wasn't easy to be religious, so this chapel became a place of freedom. In the 1970s Dmitry Dudko became the priest. He was never afraid to answer the dangerous questions, even about politics. That's why the temple was always full with people. The Authorities didn't like it and Dmitriy was persecuted many times.

Pupils and teachers of our school have a very loving attitude to the temple of St.Nikolay. Not only because we're believers. Its priest Leonid blessed the creating of "Retro" school twenty three years ago, and since it sprung up, he takes care of us.



We told about only two of East District churches, which became the symbols of Russian Orthodox.



One of them symbolizes all the things that divide the orthodox world, and the other - the things, that unite it.