

## **French Court recognises that St Nicholas Russian Cathedral in Nice belongs to Russia**



According to reliable French and Russian media reports of 20 January, a court in Nice has finally recognised that the Russian Orthodox Cathedral in Nice, together with all property associated with it, does indeed belong to the Russian Federation. Built by the martyred Tsar Nicholas in 1912, St Nicholas Cathedral, which is the largest Russian Orthodox Church in Western Europe, has in recent years been occupied by modernist schismatics of the ‘Rue Daru’ jurisdiction.

It is not known what the government of the Russian Federation will do next. It is to be hoped that it will in due course hand over the property to the Russian Orthodox Church, so that it can become a centre for local Russian and French Orthodox who wish to live according to the Russian Orthodox Tradition. In this way, the property can become yet another stone in the construction of a United Russian Orthodox Metropolia in Western Europe, the foundation of the future Western European Orthodox Church.

However, in order to do this, the Patriarchal Russian Orthodox Church based inside Russia will need the co-operation of the well-established Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia (ROCOR) and its local missions in Western Europe. In order to obtain this, Patriarchal authorities will have to eliminate the last remnants of neo-renovationist modernism and ecumenism in its own midst. For example, its seminary in Paris and a few other parishes have been infiltrated by such modernist elements.

This process of cleansing from modernism was completed in England in 2006, when modernist elements voluntarily left the Patriarchal Diocese in England, where they had been cultivated for decades, for the Rue Daru jurisdiction. This led directly and almost immediately to full unity between the Patriarchal and the Local Russian (ROCOR) Dioceses. However, the process of self-cleansing is not complete elsewhere in Western Europe. Thus, the situation in the Patriarchal seminary in Paris has been made particularly difficult by the shocking compromises of just one individual.

The return of the Nice Cathedral to the Russian government makes the situation of the Rue Daru Exarchate (under the Patriarchate of Constantinople) even more fragile. It now has only one active bishop left (the result of decades of anti-monastic attitudes), since a few years ago its last bishop in Nice was arrested by the French police, though was later released for lack of evidence.