



Faith without Works is Dead: Sacred Space and Civil Society in Late Imperial Moscow and Tver

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Abstract:

This article proposes a reevaluation of the Russian Orthodox parish clergy in the early twentieth century as influential organizers of free associations, mutual aid societies, and other manifestations of late Imperial Russia's nascent civil society. The parish clergy occupied one of Imperial Russia's five estates, which also included the nobility, merchantry, peasantry, and townspeople. The clerical estate was arguably the most segregated from the rest of society. Ordained clergymen were restricted from most non-liturgical employment, rendering them and the estate they supported vulnerable to poverty. The state bestowed privileges of free association on the clerical estate in order to encourage the practice of mutual aid to support the pastorate. The 'estate isolation' of the parish clergy was tempered by their material dependence on the voluntary contributions of parishioners. This article argues that the parish clergy, however, promoted mutual aid beyond narrow estate interest as a religious practice among the laity in order to forge partnerships with lay associations. In some dioceses, the clergy organized social support networks for the laity as extensions of the sacred space that they administered in the parish churches. These networks empowered communities to collaborate across boundaries of space and estate in support of common causes.

This article examines the organizational work of the parish clergy in the dioceses of Moscow and Tver' during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It first traces the development of clerical-estate associations since 1823, when they first received legal sanction. It examines the expansion and development of clerical mutual aid until the 1905 Revolution, when parishioners engaged in boycotts of church collections, demanding that more Church resources be used for parish needs, rather than to support the clerical estate. These temporary boycotts lent urgency to a movement already in force among the parish clergy to instill the practice of mutual aid into the religious lives of the Orthodox laity. The article next examines evidence from Moscow and Tver' that this movement created parish-based mutual aid networks for the laity, which collaborated with those of the clergy. Finally, the article examines the robust war-relief efforts of the clerical and lay mutual aid networks of Moscow and Tver' after 1914. These impressive efforts during the first years of the First World War provide compelling evidence for the successful development of a working relationship between the two communities in the sphere of mutual aid over the previous decades. The ultimate breakdown of this relationship and fragmentation of the Orthodox social networks must largely be attributed to the proximate cause of protracted industrial warfare, rather than to irreconcilable divisions in Russian society.

In January of 1906, just as the dust of the 1905 "All-Russian Revolution" had begun to settle, a sermon by one Father Vinogradov appeared in the journal of the Orthodox diocese of Moscow. This parish priest began his sermon by paraphrasing the Epistle of

1 This article was last updated on August 22, 2014.

James: "Our faith, if not manifested in works, is a dead faith." He went on to urge his parishioners to "manifest" their faith within the community.

"We, here in this church, are the parish. We have come here to pray to God as a parish, and when the service is over we go home to tend to our own affairs. That is the extent of our parish life. [...] Brothers! When you leave the temple, stop at the threshold and look upon the hands stretched out to you. [...] Those are your brothers and sisters who grew up with you. You know them as your neighbors and now they have fallen into poverty. Is it not painful for you to see them in need? [...] If you want the temple of God to be in order and in grace, form a parish trusteeship. [...] Then we would gather under the blood of our mother – the Church. We would discuss how to satisfy the needs of our temple, and we would think of how to provide alms for the poor of our parish."²

The pastor's effort to direct the devotional practices of his parishioners toward social engagement was characteristic of Russia's Orthodox parish clergy at that time. A social crisis within the Church, culminating in boycotts of church collections during the 1905 Revolution, had sparked a movement among the pastorate to extend Orthodox sacred space beyond the walls of the churches to encompass the daily life of the community.

The practice of mutual aid was a defining characteristic of the Orthodox parish clergy in late Imperial Russia. Over the course of the nineteenth century, rather than fully financing the clergy of their official church, state authorities had gradually extended the clergy's freedom of association in order to facilitate collective support of the orphans and widows of clergymen. The diocesan networks of the Orthodox clergy grew into, arguably, the most extensive social networks in the empire, stretching from remote rural parishes to the provincial capitals. Clerical mutual aid grew along with these networks to support diverse tasks for the benefit of both clergy and non-clergy such as religious schools, shelters for the elderly, and disaster relief. As an economically imperative component of the pastoral profession, participation in mutual aid became a defining feature of the distinctively clerical form of Orthodox religiosity. Yet, the Orthodox laity did not always recognize clerical mutual aid as the proper use of their contributions to their parish church, and resentment grew among them over the clergy's siphoning off of parish resources to fund their own initiatives. Acutely aware of their material dependence on the voluntary support of the laity, the clergy responded to the mounting crisis with a pastoral movement to mobilize popular piety in support of mutual aid. The clergy both promoted mutual-aid practices at the parish level, and collaborated with non-clerical institutions such as village communes, urban *artels*, and local government bodies (*zemstva*) for the provision of social services. This movement integrated the voluntarism of diverse communities and individuals through the clergy's social support networks. Clerical mutual aid promoted the growth of civil society across Imperial Russia's fragmented social landscape.

The definition of the term "civil society" and its application to Imperial Russia have long been subjects of controversy. Civil society has traditionally been understood to encompass the non-governmental, secular sphere of public life in which citizens voluntarily engage in collective action to pursue common goals. Some form of civil society is widely

2 VINOGRAOV Ob ustroenii tserkovno-prikhodskoi zhizni, pp. 46–47.

considered to be a prerequisite for the development and stability of a democratic society, which is what the Russian Empire nearly became between 1905 and 1917. In his classic observation of the early United States, Alexis de Tocqueville argued that the capacity of an enfranchised citizenry to form voluntary associations was crucial for the preservation of rights and liberties against the encroachment both of the government, and of the “tyranny of the majority”.³ Subsequent thinkers have significantly broadened the definition of civil society to account for the role of politically marginalized groups in the formation of voluntary associations.⁴ The sociologist Robert Putnam points out that diverse, non-political associations are necessary for establishing “trust, norms, and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions”.⁵ In a complex and stratified society such as that of the Russian Empire, the task of building social networks must involve a diverse variety of associations. A fairly expansive definition of civil society is necessary to account for the contribution of traditional groups like the Orthodox clergy to the self-organization of society. Larry Diamond provides such a definition: “Civil society is the realm of organized social life that is open, voluntary, self-generating, at least partially self-supporting, autonomous from the state, and bound by a legal order or set of shared rules.” Such a realm, according to Diamond, must exist not only among enfranchised elites, but also among the general population in order to “deepen democracy beyond its formal structure”.⁶ The present work argues that, despite their disruption by government restrictions, the social networks created by the Orthodox parish clergy created an autonomous “realm” of civil society in late Imperial Russia.

Area studies scholarship, including work on India and Southeast Asia, has increasingly come to recognize the importance of traditional associations, such as caste associations, tribal organizations, and religious communities, to the growth of civil society.⁷ This is less true of the historiography on Imperial Russia. While a significant amount of recent scholarship has addressed the question of civil society on the eve of the Bolshevik Revolution, most of these studies have regarded civil society in Imperial Russia as a “conduit of Western ideas”.⁸ Much of this work describes civil society as a European import, developing in spite of the estate (*soslovie*) structure of Russian society.⁹ For example, while Adele Lindenmeyr argues that the proliferation of voluntary, charitable associations strengthened civil society in late Imperial Russia, she also speculates that those particular associations that coalesced around traditional social structures may have further fragmented Russia’s civil society. “Some societies drew their membership from an estab-

3 TOCQUEVILLE *Democracy in America*, vol. 1, pp. 191–198.

4 See, for example: TRENTMANN (ed.): *Paradoxes of Civil Society*.

5 PUTNAM *Making Democracy Work*, p. 167.

6 DIAMOND *Developing Democracy*, pp. 219, 221.

7 For example: HASAN/ONYX (eds.): *Comparative Third Sector Governance in Asia*; VEER *Imperial Encounters*; RUDOLPH/RUDOLPH *The Political Role of India’s Caste Associations*, pp. 5–22.

8 LINDENMEYER *Poverty is Not a Vice*, p. 99. See also: BRADLEY *Voluntary Associations in Tsarist Russia*; TUMANOVA *Obshchestvennye organizatsii i russkaia publika*.

9 See, for example: WIRTSCHAFTER *Structures of Society*; OWEN *Impediments to a Bourgeois Consciousness in Russia, 1880–1905*, pp. 75–89.

lished, narrow group like a parish or an ethnic enclave, demonstrating persistent or emerging parochialism among segments of the population.”¹⁰ The present work, by contrast, argues that traditional social structures such as parishes and estate organizations contributed both to the growth and to the integration of autonomous, voluntary associations. The highly developed estate organizations of the Orthodox clergy helped the pastorate to consolidate and coordinate the voluntarism of other organizations, communities, and individuals.

While seldom overtly political, the pastoral movement did pursue political goals. Clergymen were acutely aware of the connection between Russia’s poverty and its political turmoil. Many priests came to view not only poverty and ignorance, but also social injustice as an evil that the Church would have to confront through pastoral work. Writing in February of 1906, one Moscow clergyman suggested that the pastorate should take up the revolutionaries’ fight for social justice even as they adhered to the Church’s traditional aloofness from partisan politics.

“Why not learn from the revolutionaries if to do so would be useful for us?! [...] From them we can learn selflessness, zeal, readiness to defend the poor, courage before the strong, everything that they use to attract the young! [...] Then the clergy will become the center of a Christian social movement. Joining neither parties on the right, nor parties on the left, the clergy will call everyone to the Christian life.”¹¹

Clergymen perceived the need to reclaim the Church’s moral authority from political radicals through extra-liturgical social leadership. Moreover, by promoting free associations for the relief of poverty and support for education, parish clergymen expanded a realm of Church life outside of the control and manipulation of the regime. While recent scholarship has called attention to political dissidence among the parish clergy,¹² most pastoral activists organized locally autonomous associations without directly confronting the authorities. As Lindenmeyr argues: “In the Russian context, all independent public initiative was political, even when it was not overtly oppositional, because it challenged, indirectly if not directly, the autocracy’s control over society.”¹³ As the regime proved increasingly ineffectual at resisting the centrifugal forces of famine, war, and revolution, the pastoral movement provided an important support network for the Church and society.

The effectiveness of the pastoral movement at mobilizing popular piety in support of mutual aid remains another topic of controversy. Scholarship on Orthodoxy in late Imperial Russia has thoroughly discredited the Soviet caricature of the Church as an oppressor and exploiter of the poor.¹⁴ Recent studies have taken notice of a “pastoral care

10 LINDENMEYER *Poverty is Not a Vice*, p. 225.

11 *Pochva dlia ob’edineniia pravoslavnago dukhovenstva*, p. 73.

12 HEDDA *His Kingdom Come*; PISIOTIS *Orthodoxy Versus Autocracy*.

13 LINDENMEYER *Poverty is Not a Vice*, p. 196.

14 Scholarship on the social outreach and poverty relief work of the Orthodox clergy has focused on the city of St. Petersburg. See, for example: HERRLINGER *Working Souls*. Yet, references to the Orthodox Church as a social parasite continue to abound in the historiography. See, for example: FIGES *A People’s Tragedy*, pp. 60–69.

movement” among the parish clergy by the turn of the century.¹⁵ Localized research continues to shed light on the achievements of the parish clergy’s social work across the empire.¹⁶ Yet, many leading scholars of Russian Orthodoxy argue that the exclusion of laity from the ecclesiastical administration, which oversaw the diocesan social networks, undermined the clergy’s pastoral work and perpetuated the rift between clergy and laity.¹⁷ Gregory Freeze offers a critique of clerical initiatives to establish parish-level mutual-aid organizations such as Fr. Vinogradov’s above-mentioned parish trusteeship. Freeze cites statistics compiled by the Church’s governing body, the Holy Synod, indicating that most of these organizations were used to embellish individual churches, but did not generate popular support for church-based mutual aid.¹⁸ Elsewhere, Freeze argues that popular resentment toward the Orthodox clergy became so great that, “religion, not secularization, played an important role in the Russian revolution of 1905–1917”.¹⁹ I argue that the crisis that Freeze identifies produced a dialogue between clergy and laity. While often contentious, this dialogue led to compromise and collaboration between the two communities and, in certain dioceses, to the growth of robust voluntary associations. Moreover, I argue that the ultimate fragmentation of Russia’s Orthodox communities after 1917 must be attributed to the proximate causes of the First World War and revolutionary violence, rather than to irreconcilable divisions within the Church.

The present study draws on research in the diocesan archives of Moscow and Tver’ to examine the interaction of the Orthodox laity and parish clergy over the decades leading up to the collapse of the Romanov Empire. The Church as a whole was divided into sixty seven dioceses, the boundaries of which corresponded with those of the regional and/or provincial administrations. In the context of the imperial Church as a whole, these two dioceses were not typical. The parishes of Moscow and Tver, like those of the imperial capital, generated more voluntary support for mutual aid networks than for church maintenance. Yet, far from being peripheral anomalies, these populous dioceses in the historical heart of Russian Orthodoxy encompassed a diverse cross-section of parish life. In addition to Russia’s industrialized second capital city, with one of the empire’s four theological academies, the Moscow diocese contained smaller municipalities such as Klin. The Tver’ diocese included a semi-industrialized provincial capital as well as small towns like Torzhok and Rzhev. Both dioceses encompassed large swaths of poor, rural parishes. While representative of the Church as a whole by virtue of their size and diversity, these two dioceses were unique in that they supported exceptionally active pastors and parish organizations. Their pastors did not have to contend with the vast distances between villages that characterized many eastern dioceses, or the unmitigated

15 MANCHESTER Holy Fathers, *Secular Sons*, p. 33.

16 UL’IANOVA Tserkovnoprikhodskie popechitel’sтва kak strukturnaia edinitaia blagotvoritel’nost’ vnutri mestnogo soobshchestva v pozdneimperskoi Rossii, pp. 166–176; APKARIMOVA Tserkovno-prikhodskaia blagotvoritel’nost’ na srednem urale vo vtoroi polovine XIX – nachale XX v., pp. 279–287.

17 SHEVZOV Russian Orthodoxy on the Eve of Revolution, pp. 24–25; CHULOS *Converging Worlds*, p. 115; LEONT’EVA *Vera i progress*, pp. 114–115.

18 FREEZE *All Power to the Parish?*, pp. 174–208.

19 FREEZE *Critical Dynamic of the Russian Revolution: Irreligion or Religion?*, p. 74.

poverty that plagued some dioceses that were further removed from industrial centers. In focusing on Moscow and Tver, my intention is not to present an exaggerated image of the practice of mutual aid throughout the Church, but rather to unearth its development in these dioceses from the broader narrative in which it has been buried.

This article is divided into three sections. The first section provides an overview of clerical mutual aid as it developed over the 19th century to become an integral component of Orthodox pastoral work. It also describes the crisis in clerical-lay relations that arose in reaction to this new form of pastoral work, culminating in church collection-boycotts that broke out during the 1905 Revolution. The second section focuses on the pastoral movement as it arose in Moscow and Tver' in reaction to this crisis to promote the practice of mutual aid among the laity. It assesses the relative success of this movement at building free associations within the Church up to the outbreak of the First World War. The third section examines pastoral work in Moscow and Tver' at the parish and diocesan levels during the First World War. In these final efforts of the parish clergy, I identify evidence that the preceding decades of dialogue had established active collaboration between the two communities. I also identify the proximate causes of the fragmentation of both of these communities in the trauma of industrialized warfare, and the clergy's heavy involvement in the doomed war effort.

Mutual Aid as Pastoral Work?

The clerical community included not only ordained clergymen, but also their wives, children, and other dependents. This small segment of the population²⁰, occupied one of five "soslovie", a term sometimes translated as "estate". The other estates included the nobility, peasantry, merchantry, and townspeople. Each estate imposed different privileges and obligations on their respective populations. Yet, the clerical estate was arguably the most legally and socially segregated. Individuals born into the clergy were educated in a separate school system that prepared them to serve both Church and state. Those who were ordained into the priesthood were not only expected to perform church services, but also to perform a wide variety of extra-liturgical duties. Parish clergymen were called upon to maintain schools for peasant children, compile population statistics, supervise public health, and perform other duties to supplement the empire's thinly stretched civil service. While the clergy of state churches throughout Europe were called upon to perform similar duties, Russia's Orthodox pastorate was unique in that it was virtually uncompensated for this work, receiving neither significant financial support from the government, nor legal enforcement of tithe payments.²¹ Instead, they relied on the voluntary contributions of parishioners for their livelihood. Ordained clergymen, moreover, were forbidden from augmenting this meager income with any work other than teaching or farming, as entrepreneurial activity was deemed incompatible with the pastoral profession. Supporting themselves and their families on such limited resources became the

20 The clerical estate constituted 0.47 % of the empire's population in 1897, according to statistics cited in: DOWLER *Russia in 1913*, p. 52.

21 On state support for official churches, see: LEE *Rural Society and the Anglican Clergy, 1815–1914*; and BOWMAN *Priest and Parish in Vienna, 1780 to 1880*.

most arduous of the parish clergy's extra-liturgical duties. Yet, this burden would afford them expanded freedom of association.

Kinship networks provided the primary source of social security to clergymen and to their numerous dependents in the event of their incapacitation or death. As the number of these dependents – orphans, widows, and elderly clergymen – outstripped the capacity of kinship networks to support, the state sanctioned the integration and expansion of these networks as an alternative to funding the pastorate in order to manage clerical poverty. At the request of the Synod, the formation of the “diocesan trusteeships for poor of clerical rank” was authorized in 1823. The simple organization consisted of a central committee of six parish priests with overlapping membership in the diocesan consistory, and numerous local committees that performed the work of gathering and distributing funds throughout the diocese. The purpose of the diocesan trusteeship, as stated in the Holy Synod's original proposal, was to identify and support existing mutual aid and philanthropic activity among the clergy. “Specific knowledge of local conditions and of [the practice of] benevolent care will, without a doubt, open these sources [of charity], if not in all, then at least in some dioceses.”²² Once identified, these sources could be linked so as to obtain aid for the poorest parishes from the wealthiest. Members of the local committees were also instructed to utilize local knowledge obtained through kinship networks in order to scrutinize requests for aid and to encourage families to bear responsibility for their poor relatives.²³ This mandate to cooperate across distances while maintaining the mutual-aid structure of local communities fostered the development of an effective social support system within the clerical estate. It also reshaped the clergy's understanding of pastoral duty and religious community.

The freedom of the parish clergy to associate and cooperate increased dramatically after the Great Reforms of the 1860s. Parish priests were first authorized to assemble at the diocesan level in 1864, for the purpose of electing representatives to the pedagogical councils of seminaries. The deliberations of these assemblies soon extended to other areas of concern to the diocesan community. In December of 1867 the Synod recognized them as “diocesan congresses” with authority over district assemblies that oversaw clerical secondary schools and mutual-aid operations.²⁴ These new liberties allowed the parish clergy to expand their mutual-aid networks and improve living standards throughout their communities. For example, the diocesan congresses of Moscow and Tver' created pension funds to support retired clergymen in 1867 and 1878, respectively.²⁵ Yet, clerical assemblies were also used to coordinate pastoral work among the laity. Beginning with Archbishop Mikhail (Golubovich) of Minsk in 1865, many diocesan bishops authorized and encouraged their parish clergy to assemble at the level of the superintendent district (a group of ten to fifteen parishes overseen by a clerical superintendent) to discuss religious life in their parishes, and coordinate pastoral responses to superstition, alcoholism,

22 For the 1823 charter, see: GATO, f. 318, op. 1, d. 654, l. 5 (Delo ob otkrytii popechitel'stva o bednykh dukhovnogo zvaniia).

23 BARSOV Sbornik, p. 183.

24 BELIAEV/VIKTOROV/MANSUROV Eparkhial'nye s"ezdy, p. 7; See also: Pastyrskii sobranii, p. 54.

25 Ustav emerital'noi kassy dukhovenstva Moskovskoi eparkhii, p. 71; LEONT'EVA Vera i progress, p. 31.

illiteracy, and other problems afflicting parish communities.²⁶ As a tool of pastoral work, the expanding clerical network came to be used not only to maintain the pastorate in the field, but also to extend the benefits of mutual aid beyond the bounds of the clerical estate.

The ability of clerical mutual-aid networks to convey resources and information between remote parishes and provincial capitals made them particularly useful in times of crisis. During the famine of 1891–92, the Synod instructed the consistories of all Russia's dioceses that, "Requests [for aid] by parishioners are to be satisfied according to the same reckoning and in the same way as requests by clergy, i.e. through the trusteeships for poor clergy".²⁷ During this crisis, the clergy of Tver' diocese collected an estimated total of 69,167.31 rubles and 297 tons of grain from their own parishioners for export to famine-stricken provinces.²⁸ During the famine relief campaign of 1907–09, the clergy of Tver' collected a total of 3,187.37 rubles, which they distributed to the diocesan consistories of provinces affected by crop failure.²⁹ These resources were significant for a diocese that reported only 6,883.76 rubles of income from parish taxation and 65,019 rubles in invested savings in the consistory's 1906 financial statement.³⁰ The widespread, voluntary cooperation of clergymen at all levels of the ecclesiastical hierarchy in such transfers of the funds collected in church and other resources back to those lay communities that had contributed them in the first place was motivated, in part, by the clergy's identification of their own interests with those of the peasantry on whom they relied. It also reflected their understanding of such work as an integral component of their duty as pastors.

However diverse were the functions that the clerical networks had come to perform, they remained exclusively clerical institutions – i.e. membership was restricted to ordained clergymen. Lay participation in the networks was limited to passive financial contributions. Moreover, the social burden that parishioners were asked to support through these contributions had not diminished by the early 20th century. As the 1905 report of one clerical superintendent to the diocesan consistory of Tver' suggests, the number of impoverished dependents within the clerical caste had only grown.

"There are eight male orphans and sixty two female orphans in my district. Forty two of them receive aid from the diocesan trusteeship. Several receive a pension from the diocesan pension fund and live in houses left to them by their families. One lives in a rented apartment for lack of her own. All the orphans behave honestly."³¹

While the scope of extra-liturgical services that the clerical networks performed had also grown, such work produced no income to alleviate the financial burden of the growing estate. For example, the parish clergy performed a variety of services for the *zemstva*, for which they usually received little or no compensation. In 1914, the bishop of Tver' wrote

26 Pastyrskiiia sobraniia, pp. 53–55.

27 Vsepoddaneishii otchet za 1890–1891 gody, p. 338.

28 GATO, f. 886, op. 1, d. 13, l. 83, l.o. 103 (Sbornik bumagam).

29 GATO, f. 886, op. 1, d. 30, ll. 1–26. (Otryvok).

30 GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 8672, ll. 5–16. (Delo s otchetom konsistorskikh summ za 1906 god).

31 GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34393, l. 9 (Svedeniia o sostoianii tserkvei i blagochinnikh okrugov Tverskoi gub.).

the following comments to the Over-procurator of the Synod, arguing that the *zemstva* should at least exempt the clergy from taxation in return for these services.

“The great majority of the clergy should be considered *zemstvo* workers, if not *zemstvo* employees. They work as teachers of catechism in *zemstvo* schools, as attendants in *zemstvo* hospitals, shelters for the elderly, orphanages, and jails. They participate in small *zemstvo* credit unions, cooperatives, and grain banks. They work as statisticians, providing the *zemstva* with data on births, marriages, deaths, infectious and epidemic diseases, and harvests. They participate in *zemstvo* fire brigades.”³²

This work and the clerical networks that performed it continued to rely almost entirely on the voluntary financial support of parishioners. While such work might benefit the laity, it was carried out without their active approval. By the early 20th century, much of the Orthodox laity had come to resent the burden of clerical mutual aid, in which they were asked to participate as unequal partners.

Examination of the complaints against and praises of parish clergymen that were submitted to the diocesan consistories reveal that differing conceptions of sacred space had arisen between the Orthodox clergy and laity. As “the chief cultural adhesive of patriarchal village life,”³³ the Orthodox parish assembled rural populations from villages that were many miles apart to celebrate the liturgy, participate in icon processions, and receive the sacraments. While most laypeople were not opposed to their priest’s organization of extra-liturgical social services within the parish, this was not typically the focus of their religious lives. Letters to the diocesan consistory from parishioners in praise of their pastor almost invariably began with commendations of his maintenance of their church and performance of religious services. The organization of mutual aid or charity was sometimes praised, but usually as an afterthought. These letters present mirror-images of the accompanying endorsements by the clerical superintendent,³⁴ which typically emphasized the pastor’s organization of charitable associations. In some cases, a priest’s organization of social services was mentioned only by the superintendent, and not in the commendations of his parishioners.³⁵ Moreover, parishioners sometimes complained that a pastor’s engagement in charity constituted a drain on parish funds.³⁶ In 1909, one church elder complained that “The church buildings are being destroyed because of the onerous, excessive taxes for general Church and diocesan needs.”³⁷ Lay frustration at their lack of

32 GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 9079, l. 20 (O zemskikh nalogakh). For a discussion of the cooperation of *zemstva* and parish clergy, see: LEONT’EVA Vera i progress, p. 119.

33 CHULOS *Converging Worlds*, p. 85.

34 A superintendent (*blagochinnyi*) was a priest or archpriest who oversaw 10–15 parishes.

35 For examples, see: TsIAM, f. 203, op. 550, d. 267, ll. 1–35 ob. (Delo o sostavlenii spiskov lits dukhovnago zvaniia, predstavlennykh k nagradam; 1908), f. 203, op. 551, d. 71, ll. 1–9 ob. (Delo o nagrazhdenii dukhovnykh lits za zaslugi po eparkhial’nomu vedomstvu; 1909), f. 203, op. 550, d. 267, l. 24 (Delo o sostavlenii spiskov). GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34475, l. 8 (Khodataistva o nagrazhdenii dukhovnykh lits; 1914–1916).

36 TsIAM, f. 203, op. 550, d. 239, ll. 71–72 (Protokoly zasedanii obshcheeparkhial’nogo s’ezda blagochinnykh 1908 goda).

37 Quoted in FREEZE *Critical Dynamic of the Russian Revolution: Irreligion or Religion?*, p. 71.

control over church finances created a backlash, culminating in a general boycott of support for the clergy in 1905.

Amid the all-embracing popular outcry of the 1905 Revolution, priests throughout the empire began reporting that their parishioners were refusing to provide them with financial support.³⁸ These boycotts by angry parishioners were soon overshadowed by revolutionary violence, including vandalism of churches and attacks on clergymen.³⁹ A number of parishes in Tver' diocese were forced to cancel services on Easter Sunday of 1905 because pamphlets had been circulated threatening to set off bombs in their churches on that day.⁴⁰ This anti-religious violence may actually have contributed to the tentative reconciliation between clergy and laity. While frustrated, parishioners had no desire to see their churches destroyed, and they eventually resumed their voluntary contributions. Yet, 1905 had placed the Church's crisis in stark relief. Mutual aid as pastoral work was clearly unsustainable without the active involvement of the Orthodox laity.

The Pastoral Movement

The difference in understanding of sacred space among clergy and laity greatly complicated the integration of the two groups into one diocesan network. The first attempt to do so was initiated in 1864, when a joint commission of Synodal prelates and state ministers drew up plans for the new "parish trusteeship". Members of the commission hoped that the freedom to associate in parish institutions would motivate the laity to more actively "maintain the services and welfare of the parish church and clergy".⁴¹ But, they were not prepared to grant laypeople authority over the allocation of parish and diocesan funds, and the trusteeships had to raise their own donations separately from regular church collections. The fears of skeptics were confirmed when, by 1870, the trusteeships that had been established throughout the empire collectively spent 85 percent of the funds they had raised on church construction and renovation, versus 15 percent on charity and support for the clergy.⁴² These figures convinced Church leaders that fully integrating laity into the clerical associations that managed diocesan resources would bankrupt those associations in favor of church beautification. The laity remained excluded from the institutional network that afforded the clerical estate such broad freedom of association. Yet, the parish clergy themselves became increasingly aware of the fact that the laity could not be excluded from the management of Church finances indefinitely. Priests' reports to their consistories expressed both shame and trepidation at this exclusion.

38 GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34393, ll. 1 – 157 ob. (Svedeniia o sostoianii tserkvei i blagochinnikh okrugov Tverskoi Gub. – 1905-06). See also: GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34398, ll. 1 - 119 (Svedeniia o sostoianii tserkvei i blagochinnikh okrugov Tverskoi Gub. 1906).

39 For accounts of violence against the clergy in Moscow, see: TsIAM, f. 203, op. 550, d. 158 (Delo o predstavlenii blagochinnym Moskovskoi eparkhii svedenii o nalichii detei nizshikh sluzhashchikh vedomstva pravoslavnogo veroispovedaniia, postradavshikh ot anarkhistov-grabitel' dlia pomeshcheniia ikh v priiut).

40 GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34393, l.o. 22 (Svedeniia o sostoianii tserkvei, 1905-06).

41 BARSOV Sbornik p. 384; FREEZE Parish Clergy, p. 253.

42 FREEZE Parish Clergy, p. 294.

“At church meetings [parishioners] have begun to openly demand explanations as to what taxes their church pays and to what end. To what lengths have we church deans and superintendents not gone in the past, with pain in our hearts, to dissemble before the church elders, hiding the true purpose of church taxes from them? [...] And if they asked more boldly, then we became timid, turned red, and gave them vague rather than specific designations of church taxes. [...] But now it has become impossible to hide and remain silent and our situation has become extremely difficult.”⁴³

Clerical writings and publications in Moscow and Tver’ discuss the urgent need to instill the practice of mutual aid into the religious lives of parishioners in the hope that increasingly assertive laity would eventually become active participants in church-based mutual aid, rather than dismantling the networks that the clergy had built. This concern served as the driving force behind a broad-based pastoral movement spanning the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that established an institutional framework for church-based mutual aid among the Orthodox laity.

The diocesan journals and other clerical writings from early 20th century Moscow and Tver’ reveal pervasive efforts among the parish clergy to establish mutual aid societies among the laity, parallel to their own diocesan networks. The language of this material sometimes resembles that of a campaign for a kind of re-conversion of the Orthodox faithful. In 1902, for example, one article in the *Moscow Church Gazette* (*Moskovskie tserkovnye vedomosti*) called upon the clergy to undertake an “internal mission” among the Orthodox population to improve living conditions through mutual aid.

“In the sphere of social life, the internal mission fights against need of all kinds that oppress the poor classes. [...] The mission, thus, collaborates in the establishment of various associations, organized for different kinds of mutual aid, loan funds, companies for the organization of inexpensive apartments, and consumers’ societies. The mission also works to instill into the members of these societies the spirit of true Christian self-sacrifice, on which their success depends.”⁴⁴

Priests promoted mutual aid practices through a variety of parish-level organizations such as choirs and temperance societies,⁴⁵ but the parish trusteeship remained the most common focus of such activity. In 1907, one parish priest in Moscow expressed his embarrassment at the official charter of the parish trusteeship, which encouraged participants to designate funds for the support of their clergymen, and he avoided reading them to his parishioners. He explained that his intention was to lead his parishioners to associate participation in the Church with social support. “I wanted to show the peasants, at least on a small scale, the concern of the Church for their needs. After all, the peasants have become accustomed always and everywhere to view the Church as an institution to which they must give [...]”⁴⁶ Clergymen elicited participation in parish trusteeships as a form of religious observance, which included devotional practices to which

43 GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34398, l. 38 (Svedeniia o sostoianii tserkvei i blagochinnykh okrugov Tverskoi gub. 1906).

44 ROZANOV O vnutrennei missii, p. 564.

45 For examples of mutual aid activity within parish temperance societies, see: GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34398, ll. 62–66 ob. (Svedeniia o sostoianii tserkvei).

46 Popytka k ustroistvu popechitel’sтва, p. 1239.

parishioners were accustomed such as icon veneration and singing,⁴⁷ but incorporated engagement of the material concerns of the parish community.

The pastoral movement entailed not only the expansion of sacred space beyond the walls of the church, but also the integration of other lay organizations into that space. In Moscow and Tver, the poverty and isolation of many parish communities proved to be more formidable obstacles to the pastoral movement than skepticism among parishioners. The logistical difficulties of the Russian countryside had hindered the establishment of effective institutions of social welfare within the peasant estate before the creation of the *zemstva*.⁴⁸ They also inhibited the clergy's ability to organize successful trusteeships in individual, rural parishes. One superintendent in a rural district of Tver' described this situation in his 1906 report that, "No parish trusteeships have been opened in the churches of the district because of the poverty of the parishioners," who were nevertheless, "sympathetic and charitable to all who are in need and who ask for help."⁴⁹ Some parish communities were able to establish trusteeships on extremely limited resources, such as one congregation in Tver' that accumulated only 200 rubles, "from which parishioners distribute grants in cases of great misfortune."⁵⁰ Yet, budgetary reports indicate that most successful trusteeships derived a significant portion of their income from substantial investments, either in interest derived from invested funds, or in rent collected from real estate. Such income supplemented the meager dues that members could afford, and often constituted the trusteeship's main source of revenue. For example, the 1903 income of one trusteeship in Moscow was listed as follows: "Member dues – 190 rubles. Rent collected from church land – 150 rubles. Rent collected from apartments – 583.33 rubles. Interest from invested capital – 98.80 rubles. Taken from the collection box – 20.48 rubles."⁵¹ Real estate was also used to carry out the services of the trusteeship by housing schools or alms houses. One urban trusteeship in the Tverskaia-Iamskaia district of Moscow purchased a two-story building to provide housing for impoverished industrial workers and their families. In 1904 it housed fourteen families on the top floor and twenty orphans on the bottom floor.⁵² Thus, the success of a parish trusteeship often depended on the ability of its organizers to raise sufficient funds to make such an investment; a daunting task for the congregation of an isolated, rural parish.

The clerical networks played an important role in linking poor parishioners with outside donors from the industrial capitals of Moscow and Tver. The clerical mutual-aid network was one of the few non-governmental associations capable of facilitating cooperation across administrative and estate boundaries. As Adele Lindenmeyer points out, most voluntary associations that developed in the wake of the Great Reforms remained confined to their estates. Those of the peasantry, the estate most in need of social sup-

47 Iz g. Kolomny. (Otkrytie tserkovno-prikhodskago popechitel'stva), p. 619.

48 VESELOVSKII Istoricheskii ocherk deiatel'nosti zemskikh uchrezhdenii Tverskoi gubernii, p. 391.

49 GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34393, l. 77 (Svedeniia o sostoianii tserkvei).

50 GATO, f. 160, op.1, d. 34393, l. 2 (Svedeniia o sostoianii tserkvei i blagochinnykh okrugov Tverskoi gub., 1905–06).

51 TsIAM, f. 203, op. 545, d. 31, l. 67 (Delo o sbore svedenii).

52 TsIAM, f. 203, op. 545, d. 31, l. 73 (Delo o sbore svedenii).

port networks, were fragmented throughout the Russian hinterland.⁵³ Yet, the parish clergy could convey charitable aid from urban centers to rural parishes, and even between provinces. In 1909, for example, two Moscow townspeople (*meshchane*) entrusted the Tver' consistory with the delivery and management of a 1,000-ruble government bond for their former parish in a rural district of that diocese.⁵⁴ Priests were constantly in search of such donors to support their parishes. In an article from 1907, one Moscow priest described his attempts to obtain investors for the establishment of a parish trusteeship.

"My first attempt to find support at a dinner in the house of a baron did not discourage me. I knew that in some cases, noblemen could be sensitive to the real needs of poor people – but could outsiders? It is difficult to demand such sympathy from them; they were accidental guests, and if they always responded to the invitations of every priest they met, then, due to the transient nature of their lifestyles, they would have to become members of too many trusteeships."

Having failed in this first attempt, the priest appealed to his parishioners, but found that they lacked the resources for a collective investment, or even regular dues.⁵⁵ In other cases, priests were able to find sources of funding from outside their parishes, such as one Moscow merchant who donated 23,000 rubles to the consistory to be divided among all the trusteeships in the diocese,⁵⁶ or a peasant land society that contributed 4,000 rubles to one parish trusteeship for the purchase of a two-story wooden building.⁵⁷ The difficulty of obtaining such investments explains the relatively small number of parish trusteeships in most dioceses. By 1914, there were, respectively, 194 and 221 trusteeships registered in Moscow and Tver' dioceses, each of which contained over a thousand parishes.⁵⁸ Yet, the work of the pastoral movement to elicit such collaboration ensured that the mutual aid practices of the Orthodox laity stretched beyond the limits of individual parishes.

An obvious remedy to the diffusion of resources among parish communities was to form a parish network, just as the clergy had done within the clerical estate. Such parish networks were taking shape in both Moscow and Tver' by the early 20th century. In 1899, for example, a declining parish trusteeship in the town of Torzhok, Tver' diocese, transferred responsibility over an almshouse to a neighboring parish in order to preserve it.⁵⁹ Inter-parish collaboration played a role in the survival of lay institutions during the 1905 Revolution and church-collection boycotts. In a report from January 19th, 1906, for

53 LINDENMEYER Poverty is Not a Vice, pp. 51–53, 99.

54 GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 8807, l. 1 (Po proshenii moskovskikh meshchan Ivana Zaitseva i Evdokii Zhuravlevoi o pozhertvovanii imi Gosud. 4 % renty v 1000 rublei v pol'zu bednykh prikhozhan tserkvi sela Krasnogo Kaliazinskogo uезда – 1909).

55 Popytka k ustroistvu popechitel'stva, pp. 1239–1243.

56 UL'IANOVA Tserkovnoprihodskie popechitel'stva, p. 173.

57 TsIAM, f. 203, op. 545, d. 31, l.o. 23 (Delo o sbore svedenii).

58 Vsepoddanneishii otchet za 1914 g., appendix, pp. 16–19.

59 GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34457, ll. 1–2 (Perepiska s popechitel'nym sovetom Novotorzhskoi Tetiukhinskoi bogadel'ni o prichislenii Tetiukhinskoi bogadel'ni k Novotorzhskoi Klimen-tovskoi tserkvi).

example, one priest explained that, under the influence of revolutionary agitators, his parishioners had ceased to participate in their parish trusteeship. Yet, the institution had been kept alive by a sobriety society in a neighboring parish whose members contributed donations until his own parishioners were persuaded to resume their support.⁶⁰ Parish networks were easier to maintain in urban settings where their close proximity to one another allowed lay institutions to provide services and receive contributions from neighboring parishes. In 1901, for example, one trusteeship in an urban Moscow parish was operating an almshouse, a parish school, and inexpensive housing, all in one three-story building that it had erected on Arbat street.⁶¹ Despite this urban focus, the frequency of peasant-worker migration between villages and industrial centers helped to extend the benefits of urban parish associations to even more communities. In 1906, Moscow's church school inspector published his account of a parish association in Moscow's Preobrazhenskii factory district that supported a religious school with 120 students. In addition to providing food for these children, the association provided training in a variety of crafts practiced by its members such as shoe repair, bookbinding, and barbering. The association also maintained a library of more than 2,000 books. The students and their families took these books, along with the education and skills they had acquired, back to numerous villages throughout Russia.⁶² The parish clergy continued to play a central role in these associations, almost invariably serving as the chairmen of the parish trusteeships and overseeing their allocation of aid.⁶³

While the pastoral movements of Moscow and Tver' exerted prodigious efforts for the promotion of parish associations among the laity, they displayed more ambivalence toward initiatives to merge those associations with those of their own estate. Efforts to do so were stepped up in the wake of parishioners' boycotts of church collections. On November 18th, 1905, the Synod authorized the formation of "parish councils", assemblies of parishioners that were to manage church finances directly, rather than holding separate collections.⁶⁴ Yet, the revolutionary situation of 1905–06 discouraged parish clergymen from promoting this transfer of authority over their main source of income to the laity. The fact that only three such parish councils participated in Tver' diocese's 1907–09 famine relief effort suggests that they were not widely established.⁶⁵ Eager, nevertheless, for rapprochement with the laity, priests from both Tver' and Moscow submitted proposals to their consistories in 1906 and 1908, respectively, for the inclusion of church elders in the parish clergy's diocesan congresses as voting members.⁶⁶ The Synod

60 GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34393, l. 145 (Svedeniia o sostoianii tserkvei).

61 Otchet o deiatel'nosti prikhodskago popechitel'stva o bednykh pri Moskovskoi Smolenskoi, na Arbate, tserkvi za gg. 1900–1901, p. 539.

62 ITALINSKII Iz zhizni tserkovno-prikhodskoi shkoly, pp. 27–38.

63 For an example of priests' supervising the distribution of aid from a trusteeship, see: TsIAM, f. 203, op. 545, d. 31, l. 110 (Delo o sbore svedeni).

64 Opredeleeniia Sviateishago Sinoda ot 18-go noiabria 1905 g., za № 5900, po voprosu ob ustroeni tserkovno-prikhodskoi zhizni i pastyrskikh sobranii, pp. 523–525.

65 GATO, f. 886, op. 1, d. 30, ll. 1–26 (Otryvok iz prikhodnoi denezhnoi knigi o postuplenii na golodaiushchikh v pol'zu dukhovenstva i mirian denezhnykh summ).

66 GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34398, l. 40; TsIAM, f. 203, op. 550, d. 239, l. 142 ob. (Protokoly zasedanii obshcheeparkhial'nogo s"ezda blagochinnykh 1908 goda).

carried out this proposal in 1909, and the elected representatives of parishioners were invited to take part in all the parish clergy's diocesan and district assemblies to determine the allocation of funds collected in church.⁶⁷ While the actual participation of church elders in the clerical networks is difficult to estimate, Synodal statistics suggest that the influence of parishioners over diocesan resources grew over time. In 1893, diocesan trusteeships for poor clergy throughout the empire spent a total of 2,195,148.06 rubles to relieve clerical poverty, while parish trusteeships collectively spent 2,566,097.22 rubles on parish needs.⁶⁸ Twenty years later, during the empire's last full year of peace, diocesan trusteeships spent a total of 1,783,862.93 rubles, while parish trusteeships spent a total of 4,914,244.81 rubles.⁶⁹ Thus, by 1913, a greater proportion of the resources that the Orthodox laity dedicated to their religious lives was being contributed to organizations in which they were active participants. Despite this marked transition, and despite the prominent role of the clergy in lay associations, the two networks remained segregated. While viable in times of social stability, this continued division of the Orthodox faithful along lines of estate would severely compromise the unity of the Church under the strains of war and revolution.

How prominent of a role did Orthodox mutual aid play in Russian society during the years leading up to 1914? Viewed on a macro-scale, the accomplishments of the pastoral movement seem unimpressive. Citing empire-wide statistics, Freeze argues that the parish trusteeships were able neither to generate interest in mutual aid among the laity, nor to empower the parish community to "take up modern social functions", such as supporting almshouses or parish schools.⁷⁰ In 1913, all parish trusteeships registered throughout the empire contributed only 19.4 percent of their total expenditures, or 953,689 rubles, to charity and education, the great majority being dedicated to church beautification. Nevertheless, this figure represented an important source of social support for certain communities, especially in the absence of effective state welfare. In 1905, for example, "the townships and communes of all fifty provinces of European Russia spent only 1.9 percent of their entire budget on aid to the needy (1.4 million rubles)."⁷¹ Moreover, the parish trusteeships of certain dioceses consistently dedicated the majority of their resources to charity and education.⁷² A survey of expenditures by the trusteeships of Moscow and Tver' over the Empire's final decades suggests a sustained increase in the importance of mutual aid for the religious lives of parishioners in those dioceses.

67 TsIAM, f. 203, op. 551, d. 207, l. 8 (Ukaz Moskovskoi dukhovnoi konsistorii. 1909).

68 Vsepoddanneishii otchet za 1892–1893 gody, appendix, pp. 144–151.

69 Vsepoddanneishii otchet za 1913 god, appendix, pp. 16–19, 56–59.

70 FREEZE *All Power to the Parish?*, pp. 174–176.

71 LINDENMEYER *Poverty is Not a Vice*, p. 54.

72 In 1913, the parish trusteeships of 13 out of the Empire's 64 dioceses dedicated the majority of their resources to charity and education. These included: Moscow, Tver, St. Petersburg, Warsaw, Vladimir, Voronezh, Kaluga, Perm, Pskov, Riga, Riazan', Stavropol', and Iaroslavl'. See: Vsepoddanneishii otchet za 1913 g., appendix, pp. 16–19.

Table 1: Trusteeship: Tver' Diocese, 1884-1913							
Year	Parish-ioners	Trustee-ships	Total Expenditures	Allocation			Avg. Per Cap.
				Support for Clergy	Church Embellishment	Charity / Education	
1884	1,623,720	155	1,707.09	654.77	668.57	383.75	.001
1894	1,711,578	164	1,455.06	332.44	362.32	760.30	.001
1905	1,889,864	182	3,081.19	0	538.75	2,542.44	.002
1907	1,898,540	190	4,969.51	0	1,267.14	3,702.37	.003
1913	1,904,672	220	10,605.84	0	1,348.41	9,257.43	.005

Table 2: Trusteeships: Moscow Diocese, 1884-1913 ⁷³							
Year	Parish-ioners	Trustee-ships	Total Expenditures	Allocation			Avg. Per Cap.
				Support for Clergy	Church Embellishment	Charity / Education	
1884	1,495,708	54	30,676.07	0	2,365.97	28,310.10	.021
1894	1,561,327	66	58,759.20	0	277.35	58,481.85	.038
1905	1,721,962	124	81,175.65	0	221.44	80,954.21	.047
1907	1,776,754	136	80,006.03	0	283.61	79,722.42	.045
1913	1,826,691	189	72,669.42	0	377.19	72,292.23	.040

While parish trusteeships did not provide a significant source of social support per capita, they served specific needs, often in cooperation with other institutions. In 1909, for example, parish trusteeships of Tver' maintained nine shelters for the elderly and infirm while the *zemstva* supported seven.⁷⁴

Localized research continues to shed light on the development of parish-based mutual aid in other parts of the Empire. In some dioceses, parish trusteeships were far more widespread than in Moscow and Tver.⁷⁵ While often more narrowly focused on the maintenance of church buildings, trusteeships and other parish-based associations created autonomous social networks across the Empire that provided forms of social support that could not always be quantified. The full extent of these networks in Moscow and Tver, and their capacity to coordinate popular social support, was briefly revealed in reaction to the humanitarian catastrophe that ultimately shattered the Church.

73 Vsepoddanneishie otcheti za 1884, 1894–95, 1905–07, 1913 gg.

74 VESELOVSKII Istoricheskii ocherk deiatel'nosti zemskikh uchrezhdenii Tverskoi gubernii, p. 400.

75 UL'ANOVA notes that Astrakhan, Grodno, Don, Kazan', Minsk, Novgorod, Podol'sk, Riazan', Samara, Tambov, Chernigov, Kholm-Warsaw, and Blagoveshchensk dioceses all had parish trusteeships operating in most of their parishes by the early twentieth century: UL'ANOVA Tserkovnoprikladskie popechitel'stva kak strukturnaia edinitsa blagotvoritel'nosti vntri mestnogo soobshchestva v pozdneimperskoi Rossii, p. 169.

The Church at War

Russian society responded to the catastrophe of the Great War independently of the regime, and with a proliferation of voluntarism that belied Antonio Gramsci's well-known statement that, "In Russia the state is everything and civil society is primordial and gelatinous."⁷⁶ A variety of associations such as the Red Cross and the Union of Zemstva worked together to address the various crises engendered by the war that quickly grew beyond the regime's capacity to manage.⁷⁷ Yet, Russia's robust home front in the early years of the war exhibited social divisions that would widen dramatically under the trauma of modern warfare. This was true of the Orthodox Church as well. As a social network, the Church played an important role in the war relief effort. The dioceses of Moscow and Tver' supported remarkably active relief campaigns that were, however, bifurcated between the networks of the laity, and those of the parish clergy. The former facilitated local efforts to support the families of soldiers, while the latter focused on support for the military, particularly on providing care for wounded soldiers. Both networks collaborated extensively with secular organizations, and with one another. Both efforts revealed the great capacity of the Orthodox Church to consolidate the voluntarism of a diversity of associations and communities for common social support. At the same time, the divergence of their specific goals weakened the cooperative relationship between the clerical and lay networks at a critical moment, on the eve of the political and social breakdown of the Russian Empire.

Like the governments of most of the combatants in the First World War, the overwhelmed tsarist regime relinquished a great deal of control over the logistical elements of total war to "professional organizations and the educated public",⁷⁸ and the parish network proved itself to be a significant component of this "public". At the outset of the conflict, the Holy Synod called upon the Orthodox laity to take upon themselves the care of the families of soldiers. Along with this appeal, the Synod established yet another new parish institution, the trusteeship council. Like the parish council, this institution was to grant its members access to their church's resources, essentially placing control over the relief effort in the hands of new and existing parish trusteeships.⁷⁹ While the parish-level relief effort was poorly documented in most dioceses due to minimal oversight by the ecclesiastical authorities, the Tver' Consistory archive presents an exception to this rule thanks to the work of a "Central Committee" that compiled the reports of clerical superintendents. These reports indicated that at least half, and often all, of the parishes in most districts had established a parish trusteeship council by the summer of 1915. In letters to their superintendents, parish priests described a shift in the laity's dedication to parish-based mutual aid since the outbreak of war.

76 Quoted in BRADLEY *Voluntary Associations in Tsarist Russia*, p. 3.

77 GLEASON *The All-Russian Union of Zemstvos and World War I*, pp. 365–378.

78 HOLQUIST *What's so Revolutionary about the Russian Revolution?*, p. 95.

79 *Opredeleniia Sviateishchego Sinoda ot 18-go avgusta 1914 g. za № 7438 ob obrazovanii Verkhovnogo Soveta pod predsedatel'stvom eia Imperatorskoga Velichestva Gosudaryni Imperatritsy Aleksandry Feodorovny po prizreniiu semei lits prizvannykh na voinu*, pp. 403–405.

"I cannot fail to remark on the joy that was felt in carrying out collections. Despite the extreme poverty of the parish, the population met the collection with great sympathy and willingly contributed what they could. The council that organized the collection counted on no more than about 30 rubles. In fact, they received 48 rubles in donations and 40 rubles in kind. The heavy feeling of timidity that at first oppressed those carrying out the collection soon changed to joy."⁸⁰

From parish sources alone, and by collaboration with one another, Tver's parish trusteeship councils were able to provide most military families in the dioceses with at least several rubles a month.⁸¹

While the work of the trusteeship councils remained integrated into the religious practices of the parish community, with collections being carried out during church services and by icon-bearing processions,⁸² they also coordinated their efforts with those of secular organizations. For example, they provided the *zemstva* with information about relatives of soldiers who were not receiving the state aid for which they were eligible.⁸³ The trusteeships withheld funds in numerous cases when military families were already receiving support from a *zemstvo* or local factory.⁸⁴ In other cases, *zemstva* asked trusteeships to provide aid for particular families.⁸⁵ The parish network also coordinated the traditional mutual aid practices of the peasantry to benefit a larger proportion of the rural population. Extended families and members of rural communes had always assisted households that were temporarily unable to work their own fields or bring in their own harvest.⁸⁶ With so many families in this situation during the war, clergymen worked with their parishioners to determine who was receiving such assistance during the summer harvest and who was not. One superintendent described how members of parish trusteeship councils in his parishes had convened their respective village assemblies in order to determine how many families were still in need of such assistance.⁸⁷ Members of parish trusteeships throughout the diocese volunteered to help military families harvest their fields. Other trusteeships provided funds to hire field hands for those families with no other sources of help.⁸⁸ Some trusteeships also provided funds for nannies so that soldiers' wives (*soldatki*), could work during the day.⁸⁹ The parish networks, thus, acted as conduits of both resources and local knowledge, greatly increasing the effectiveness of multiple sources of relief.

Tver's parish clergy played an active role in the war relief efforts of the parish network. As pastors they, "beseeched and exhorted relatives and neighbors to extend what

80 GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34461, l. 128 (Otchety blagochinnykh ob okazanii pomoshchi sem'iam prizvannykh v armiiu; 1915).

81 GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34461, ll. 1–289.

82 GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34461, l. 128.

83 GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34461, l. 128.

84 For one such example, see: GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34461, l. 14.

85 GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34461, l. 18.

86 LINDENMEYER Poverty is Not a Vice, p. 53.

87 GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34461, l. 121 (Otchety blagochinnykh).

88 GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34461, l. 61, l. 85, l. 129 ob.

89 GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34461, l. 89.

help they could to the needy families of soldiers".⁹⁰ They participated as individuals. One priest, for example, housed and fed two relatives of a soldier in his own home.⁹¹ They also participated through the collective action of their estate organizations. The diocesan Central Committee extended small grants to the parish trusteeships when local funds were not available to meet pressing needs.⁹² In at least one case, the assembled clergy of a superintendent district pooled their resources to provide child care for military families.⁹³ Yet, the clerical networks of Tver' and Moscow could not lend their full support to the efforts of their parishioners because of the parallel campaign they organized in support of the military.

In the absence of centralized direction from the bureaucracy or the Synod, the clerical networks served as the primary organizer of the Orthodox Church's relief efforts in most provinces. One of the Church's largest war relief organizations was established by prominent parish clergymen in Moscow. On July 25th, 1914, twelve of the seventeen clerical superintendents in the city of Moscow assembled at the bishop's residence to establish a *War-Charity Commission*. The assembled archpriests resolved that the Commission would donate a portion of the funds it gathered directly to the armed forces, use another portion for the care of wounded soldiers, and dedicate the final portion to the support of soldiers' families. It was the first two objectives that would draw the most enthusiastic support from the parish clergy. The archpriest A. V. Nikol'skii had already designated one apartment on the territory of Kazan Cathedral, of which he was dean, to hold ten beds for wounded soldiers. The Cathedral would provide them with food, clothing, and medical care. Archpriest Ioann Vostorgov, the dean of St. Basil's Cathedral who was to chair the new Commission, proposed to offer moral as well as material support for the army by delivering patriotic sermons and holding "religious-patriotic gatherings" in parish schools.⁹⁴ Enthusiastic support for the war effort also motivated many of the rural clergymen who lent their support to the War-Charity Commission. "Several parishes", as reported in the Commission's journal, sent donations directly to the army and navy until the city administration urged them to use this money to care for the wounded instead.⁹⁵ By the beginning of September, the Commission and its supporters had established forty three clinics with six hundred beds, supplied with clothes and regular medical care, for which it contributed an initial sum of 40,000 rubles and a planned monthly payment of 25,000 rubles. Other clinics were organized independently by rural superintendents. One sacristan complained to the Moscow Consistory that his priest was trying to evict him from his parish apartment in order to house wounded soldiers there.⁹⁶

The clerical community of Tver' was also heavily invested in the campaign to provide care for wounded soldiers. In October of 1914, Tver's consistory reported to the Synod the establishment of one clinic at the bishop's residence, and another occupying the top

90 GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34461, l. 121

91 GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34461, l. 124 ob.

92 GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34461, l. 5.

93 GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34461, l. 121 ob.

94 Zhurnal zasedaniia Moskovskago Stolichnago Soveta oo. Blagochinnykh, pp. 495–500.

95 Zhurnal zasedaniia Moskovskago Stolichnago Soveta oo. Blagochinnykh, p. 504.

96 Zhurnal No. 5 Moskovskago eparkhial'nago komiteta o bol'nykh i ranenyykh voynakh, p. 600.

two floors of Tver' Seminary, the latter providing care for five hundred wounded soldiers. These clinics were supported by a long list of patrons including at least seven associations of parish clergymen from throughout the diocese. These consolidated, diocesan efforts were supplemented by smaller operations that some clergymen organized locally. The clergy of at least four of the diocese's superintendent districts opened their own clinics with up to forty beds for wounded soldiers. A further sixteen groups of parish clergymen – organized by district or individual parish – pledged monthly contributions of between 25 and 112 rubles for the support of *zemstvo*, Red Cross, and municipal clinics. Fourteen of these clerical associations specified that some or all of their contributions came “from their own savings” (*iz svoikh sredstv*), or from their “salaries and incomes”, rather than from the contributions of their parishioners.⁹⁷ Seminary teachers in Tver' and elsewhere contributed two percent of their salaries to the support of military clinics.⁹⁸ Seminary students pledged portions of their scholarship stipends for the same cause.⁹⁹ Numerous seminarians and young priests volunteered to serve in the army as soldiers or as military chaplains.¹⁰⁰ In marked contrast to this commitment of the clergy to the war effort, Tver's records contain far fewer examples of direct involvement by parishioners. It listed two parish trusteeship councils that opened their own parish clinics with ten beds each. One brotherhood and one trusteeship council in the town of Kashin organized collections for the Red Cross. Finally, one trusteeship council promised a monthly contribution of 30 rubles to the clinic in the bishop's residence. With the exception of the work that these five lay organizations performed, parishioner participation in the campaign to help the wounded was mostly limited to passive contributions in church, or acquiescence to the donation of their parish's savings.

The bifurcation of the Church's relief effort between clergy and laity must be considered in light of the relative severity of the crises that the two campaigns addressed. The state had granted compensation to peasant households that had lost their farm laborers to conscription, and there was, as of 1914, no food shortage.¹⁰¹ By contrast, as early as August of 1914, the War-Charity Commission was preparing to accommodate tens of thousands of wounded soldiers in Moscow alone, and smaller clinics were being prepared in the surrounding districts in the expectation that the central facilities would be overwhelmed. In rising to meet this challenge, the parish clergy joined forces with numerous professional and local-government organizations. Moscow's War-Charity Commission, for example, combined their efforts with those of the *United Organization*, a coalition of associations working under the umbrella of Moscow's municipal administra-

97 Uchrezhdeniia dukhovnago vedomstva v okazanii pomoshchi ranenym i bol'nyim voynam i ikh semeistvam, pp. 1787–1789.

98 This was the case in Tver' and Volynia, among other dioceses. See: Uchrezhdeniia dukhovnago vedomstva v okazanii pomoshchi ranenym i bol'nyim voynam i ikh semeistvam, p. 1717.

99 Students of the Mozhaish ecclesiastical school, for example. See: Zhurnal No. 5 Moskovskogo eparkhial'nago komiteta o bol'nykh i ranenym voynakh, p. 600.

100 See, for example: GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34477, ll. 1–8 (Delo o naznachanii sviashchennika tserkvi sela Rogaleva Rzhevskago uezda, Nevskago v deistvuiushchuiu armiiu. 1916).

101 GATRELL Russia's First World War: a Social and Economic History, pp. 1–14.

tion.¹⁰² Yet, the peasantry, composing the vast majority of both parishioners and soldiers, proved to be far more concerned with the local impact of this national catastrophe.¹⁰³ As the pastoral movement of the preceding decades had demonstrated, the clergy were by no means indifferent to the wishes and interests of their parishioners. Moreover, the process of integrating parishioners into the decision-making structure of the dioceses continued during the conflict. Trusteeship councils had been given the power, which they used in many cases, to appropriate the savings of their parish churches for local needs.¹⁰⁴ Church elders continued to participate in the diocesan assemblies of the clergy, including Moscow's War-Charity Commission.¹⁰⁵ Nevertheless, the clergy-dominated diocesan networks once again diverted a majority of church resources away from the parishes to fund initiatives in which most laypeople were only passively involved. However justified it may have seemed in the early stages of the war, the clergy's collective decision to de-prioritize their parishioners' local relief efforts undid much of the work of the pastoral movement. In the subsequent years of revolution and civil war, the Orthodox laity would cease to identify their religious or practical interests with those of the clerical networks.

In its initial stages, few could have imagined that the war in Europe would prove far more disastrous than the war, revolution and famine of 1904–07, much less that it would bring down four empires and ignite two, successive revolutions in Russia. In 1914, the population was less politically volatile than in 1905. Harvests were plentiful and the urban economy was expanding due to foreign investment and a stable currency.¹⁰⁶ Yet, the devastation of industrialized warfare brought about the rapid destabilization of the Russian Empire. In his study of the Church in Cheliabinsk during the war and revolutions of 1917, Patrick Brown notices a transition in the tone of prayers published in the diocesan press, reflective of this growing social fragmentation.

"The prayers in December 1916 and early January 1917 celebrated the Russian soldier and the Russian population; but by February, in response to the growing unrest in the army and on the home front, prayers became more imploratory, entreating the masses to support the war. [...] A few months later the papers completely abandoned any laudatory tone and instead criticized parishioners and even the soldiers."¹⁰⁷

Although many among the parish clergy and even the Orthodox hierarchy supported the February Revolution,¹⁰⁸ their continued support for the war effort proved almost as disastrous for the Church as it did for the provisional government. Episcopal authority was the first to break down. In April and May of 1917, councils of clergy and laity assembled in all sixty seven dioceses of Russia to discuss Church reform, in some cases without the

102 Zhurnal zasedaniia Moskovskago Stolichnago Soveta oo. Blagochinnykh, p. 501.

103 For a discussion of the comparative reactions to the war among the peasantry and the educated classes, see: HERETZ *Russia on the Eve of Modernity*, pp. 191–233.

104 See, for example: GATO, f. 160, op. 1, d. 34461, ll. 1–2, ll. 61–85 (Otchety blagochinnykh).

105 Zhurnal zasedaniia Moskovskago Stolichnago Soveta o.o. Blagochinnykh, p. 497.

106 GATRELL *Russia's First World War*, pp. 1–14, 169.

107 BROWN *Revolution and the Russian Orthodox Church*, pp. 24–25.

108 BABKIN *Dukhovenstvo russkoi pravoslavnoi tserkvi i sverzhenie monarkhii*.

traditional “blessing” of the diocesan bishop, and in some cases even by order of secular officials.¹⁰⁹

The diocesan councils of 1917 have justifiably been identified as the catalyst of a revolution in the Church at the parish level.¹¹⁰ Yet, this revolution was more cultural than institutional. In June of 1917, the desperate Synod approved the proposal of many of these congresses to allow the election of parish priests by their parishioners. All other institutional reforms to provide the laity with access to diocesan resources and administrative authority were basically in place by this point. It was only in the summer of 1917, however, that parishioners throughout Russia began to dismantle the clerical networks that they had previously supported. In addition to renewed boycotts of church collections, parishioners seized clerical land, deposed unpopular priests, and installed new pastors obedient to the parish, rather than the diocese.¹¹¹ The Church’s continued support for the war effort, the disastrous July offensive, and even the attempted coup of General Kornilov all contributed to a breakdown in the dialogue between clergy and laity that brought about this ecclesiastical revolution.¹¹² Yet, the history of parish life in Moscow and Tver’ over the preceding decades belies the assumption that this breakdown was inevitable. Had the clerical organizations of these dioceses lent their complete support to the energetic, mutual-aid activity of their parishioners during the war, it is more than likely that they would have survived the summer of 1917 as important social support networks that might have resisted the monopolization of political power by a militantly atheistic regime.

Conclusion

At their inception, the mutual aid networks of the Orthodox clergy did not encompass a “realm of organized social life that is open”, as Diamond and other scholars define “civil society”. As defined by their founding charters, the 1823 trusteeships for poor clergy and the 1864 diocesan congresses were to be institutions for the clerical estate alone. The free association that they facilitated was open only to members of that estate. Yet, these institutions were ‘self-supporting’ insofar as they relied almost entirely on the voluntary support of the Orthodox laity. This material dependence inhibited clerical exclusivity, and drove the pastoral movement to elicit lay participation in a more open ‘realm’ of mutual aid as a common endeavor. The associations that activist pastors worked to organize were “autonomous from the state”, and responsive to the local needs of the laity whose support they required. While the social integration of the clerical and lay communities was limited, they established a collaborative relationship that significantly augmented the availability of social support networks in Moscow, Tver, and other dioceses. These networks fortified their communities against an array of humanitarian disasters in the early 20th century before being overwhelmed by the general social breakdown of 1917. This

109 LEONT’EV *Revoliutsiia v tserkvi: s’ezdy dukhovenstva i mirian v 1917 godu*, p. 220.

110 See: FREEZE *All Power to the Parish?*

111 FREEZE *All Power to the Parish?*, p. 194.

112 BROWN *Revolution and the Russian Orthodox Church*, p. 97.

ultimate collapse has overshadowed the preceding decades of development in the capacity of Russian society to cooperate across boundaries of space, class, and social estate.

The influence of imperial Russia's estate structure on the development of voluntary association was not uniformly inhibitive. The distinctive social status of the clerical estate, which relied on mutual aid as a means of survival, inspired the Orthodox pastorate to conceptualize sacred space as extending beyond the walls of the church to encompass the vital needs of those communities and social networks on which they and their dependents relied. The clergy's gradual extension of control over diocesan resources to the laity involved an extended dialogue between lay and clerical conceptions of sacred space. By 1913, active lay participation in Church-based mutual aid was far more extensive than it had been in the preceding decades. In many dioceses this enhanced role of the laity resulted in the reallocation of Church resources back to the local parish church. Sacred space, thus understood, resembles the realm that Diamond excludes from civil society as "parochial society: individual and family life and inward-looking group activity (recreation, entertainment, religious worship, spirituality)".¹¹³ In Moscow, Tver, and other dioceses, however, the Orthodox laity contributed resources to an expanded sacred space that included parish-based social support networks as well as secular manifestations of 'the public'. For a significant portion of the Orthodox laity, the practice of mutual aid in support of the weak and vulnerable had become an integral dimension of religious life. The development of a working relationship between clergy and laity in the sphere of mutual aid over the Russian Empire's final decades was clearly demonstrated by the widespread, un-coerced, and locally directed participation of both lay and clerical associations in war-relief efforts after 1914. Yet, as Laura Engelstein observes, "Society, though mobilized, rallied on behalf of a regime that was digging its own grave".¹¹⁴ Despite their extensive involvement in the local relief efforts of lay parish networks, the clergy's collective dedication to the war effort linked their associations, in the perception of many parishioners, to this discredited regime.

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| Fond 160 | Fond of the Tver' Diocesan Consistory |
| Fond 886 | Fond of the Tver' Diocesan Committee for the Collection of Donations for Victims of the Famine of 1891-92 |

113 DIAMOND *Developing Democracy*, p. 221.

114 ENGELSTEIN *Slavophile Empire: Imperial Russia's Illiberal Path*, p. 79.

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