

## Carrying out the Body

See below, "A service of burying a layman" even during the week of Holy Pascha (but also about burial of the dead from infectious diseases and about the escorting of deceased bodies).

Participation of the deacon and psalm reader without a priest in carrying out of the body of the departed from his house to the church has an arbitrary basis (refer to pp. 683-685 above), but not the church rule (see in Trebnik "Service of Burying a Layman") after which the carrying out of the body of the departed is done by the priest with clergy (Tserkovniia Vedomosti [Church News] 1898, 12; refer to the Tserkovnyi Viestnik [Church Messenger] 1893, 6).

## Burial

**Burial** is understood to be both the burial service and the entering of the body of the departed to the earth; sometimes the name of burial is used only in the meaning of giving the body of the departed to the earth.

The so-called "**sealing**" of dead men is an illegal custom, breaking church rules and superstitions according to those views, which simple people connect with these customs<sup>1</sup> (Podol'skiia Eparkhial'niia Vedomosti [Podolsk Diocesan News] 1897, 29; see also Tserkovnyi Viestnik [Church Messenger] 1886, 46).

The parish **priest** without special legal reasons (see below about this) cannot evade doing the burial<sup>2</sup> with any ceremony of the Orthodox Church in general for an Orthodox Christian<sup>3</sup> (Ulozh. o nak. [Code of Laws on punishment], art. 859, publ. 1885; Ust. Dukh. Con. [Ustav of the Theological Consistory], Art. 191). - Refer to pp. 857-861 above.

For the burial of Christians without the appropriate Christian ceremonies, in cases when the invitation of the necessary ecclesiastic persons of confessions for the burial of the departed was possible and not laden with special difficulties, the guilty are subject to arrest from three weeks to three months<sup>4</sup> (Vysoch. utv. mnen. Gos. Sov. [Imperial approval of opinions of the Government Councils] May 13, 1891).

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<sup>1</sup> Priests **seal the coffin of the departed**, buried without a burial service, but sometimes also as an addition to a burial rite. The sealing of the departed consists of the following: first the Litiya is done when the coffin is lowered into the grave, then the priest cross wisely touches the four sides of the sepulchral embankment, while saying the words: "this grave (others say "this male/female servant") is sealed until the future judgment and general resurrection, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen."; others say these words: "this coffin is sealed until the day of the Last Judgment in the name of the Father, amen, and of the Son, amen, and of the Holy Spirit, amen, now and ever and unto ages of ages, amen."; the psalm reader thus sings these troparia: "O earth, open" (see this troparion in the Trebnik in the "Service for Departed Monks" and in "The Ukase [decree] about carrying forth of the reposed at Holy Pascha"). The sealing of the dead arose because of the burial in the ceremony of the priest crosswise throwing

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earth on the coffin during the lowering of the coffin into the grave. In the view of simple people, this ceremony is also the most important in all the office of the burial. Only under the condition of its commission the departed is presently, if I may say so, given back to the earth and will lie in the grave; if this ceremony is not done, "the dead man is not sealed", he will not lie in the tomb but "will go", intruding upon the entire village during the night of rest, mainly the rest of the family. The right to do this sealing, according to the simple people, belongs exclusively to the priest, whereas the funeral of the departed and his trip to the grave may fully comprise the deacon and even the psalm reader. Including allowing the bringing of the departed to the earth without priest's burial services and the priest surely necessarily by all means seals the departed, the simple people at the same time freely recognize the possible commission of sealing of the deceased after their burial when the priest finds this convenient for him. But as to doing the sealing (after burial), in that view, specified in the Trebnik for the ceremony of a crosswise throwing by the priest of earth on the coffin, is impossible because the coffin is already lowered into the grave and to say words: "The earth is the Lord's", is already untimely, then instead of a crosswise throwing of the earth or something similar to it, and instead of words: "The earth is the Lord's, a special formula was made. Thus the custom of sealing of the deceased was created. It appeared in old times and, passing from grandfathers to grandsons, remained in practice in some places even to the present time. Evading burial services from commission and replacing it with the "sealing", priests violate the requirements of the church Ustav that it is not done as demanded by the Ustav, a full office of burial, and thus the departed loses those prayers which the Church of the Lord directly comforts after death of this or that person, and relatives and acquaintances of the departed loses that consolation and high edification, which are offered in the touching prayers and hymns of the office. Together with this, doing the "sealing", priests break that legalization of our Church in which the divine services needs to be done without any changes and innovations (Ust. Dukh. Con. [Ustav of the Theological Consistory], art. 35); meanwhile saying the words while "sealing": "this coffin is sealed", as well as "sealing", is not specified in the Trebnik and entered randomly. Besides, replacing the church burial service with "sealing", priests allow their flock to inter the deceased bodies without a burial service or allow deacons to do the burial service. But this is a violation either of that rule by which burial should not be allowed without a burial service, or of what generally all Christian needs can be done only by the priest and not the deacon (refer to pp. 683-685 above). Finally, it is not difficult to see that the basis of the ceremony lies in the superstitious view of the people stated above on the meaning of the "sealing"; and therefore the priests, allowing the "sealing", thereby support superstition in the people and are guilty before the judgment of the church rules, which forbid superstitions and assign the care of their eradication to pastors (Podol'skiia Eparkhial'niia Vedomosti [Podolsk Diocesan News] 1897, 29; see also Rukovodstvo dlia Sel'skikh Pastyrei [Manual for Village Pastors] 1880, 4; 1889, 5).

It is noteworthy that we in the North have no practice of "sealing" of the dead at all. The dispersion of parishes in the South and remoteness of some settlements from the parish temple in any case cannot excuse the allowance of "sealing" of the deceased. Owing to the specified feature of our southern parishes and settled views of the people on the meaning of the church burial service, the activity of the pastor directed to eradication of the custom to inter the deceased without the priest first doing the burial service over them cannot always achieve this goal. But it is impossible to tell the most relatively same custom of sealing of the departed by the priest. This custom, of course, would also not arise if none of priests, by themselves or to please their flock, did not lay the basis for it, and equally would not also take roots if it were not supported by priests. And at the present time, for the eradication of the specified custom, priests should explain to their flock the meaningful need of the church burial service of the deceased and to declare that every request for doing it cannot be fulfilled. It is thought that such an image of the action of the pastor will influence and weaken the custom of committing the deceased to the earth without a church burial service, not to mention that the resolute refusal of the priest to do the sealing will be equivalent to the cancellation of custom of this sealing upon its arrival.

<sup>2</sup> By explanation of the "Rukovodstvo dlia Sel'skikh Pastyrei [Manual for Village Pastors]", **burial has to be made** on the place of death of this person, certainly by itself not differently with the participation of the local clergy (see In. Bl. [Instructions to Deans], 41 §); the other parish priest may participate at the burial as a concelebrant invited for the greater solemnity of the burial, but not at all as an independent person without any claims for encroachment on the power of the local parish priest; in the case, if a family or another wished to transfer the departed body of one village to another with special solemnity (see In. Bl. [Instructions to Deans], §21), then permission must be granted for this each time if not from the diocesan bishop and the governor, then the nearest dean and police officer, - and then both family, and priests have to abide by their instruction and order (Rukovodstvo dlia Sel'skikh Pastyrei [Manual for Village Pastors] 1887, 47; refer to About the Transportation of Dead Bodies).

If the house church at a factory has no cemetery, clergy of this church cannot be deprived of the right to bury the dead workers of the factory in a local parish cemetery, and equally even to serve Panakhida services on their graves at requests of family (Tserkovniia Vedomosti [Church News] 1897, 14).

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The Podolsk diocesan administration issued an order to the diocese, according to which if relatives of the departed for any reasons wish to carry the departed to the cemetery instead of the parish church and there to direct a funeral liturgy and burial after it, then the clergy of that parish in which the departed lived and not the cemetery clergy must participate in the liturgy and burial at the request of the family of the departed, and the brocade from the coffin has to come to the advantage of the parish church if it is not directly appointed to the cemetery church; priests of the parish in which the deceased lived also have the right to do Panakhida in the cemetery for him (Podol'skiia Eparkhial'niia Vedomosti [Podolsk Diocesan News] 1893, 12; refer to Remembering the Departed below).

"Tserk. Vedomosti [Church News]" explained that if the cemetery church exists independently, having both separate clergy and administration, then all needs in this church and in this cemetery can only be met by the cemetery clergy or with its consent (Tserkovniia Vedomosti [Church News] 1898, 50; see also 1895, 46).

All members of the clergy are obligated to participate in doing the burial (see p. 857 above).

The Podolsk diocesan administration was asked to bury babies without the clergy presiding over it (Podol'skiia Eparkhial'niia Vedomosti [Podolsk Diocesan News] 1892, 35).

<sup>3</sup> According to article 859 of the Ulozhenie o nakazaniakh. [Code of Laws on punishment], the priest who **evades burying the departed**, and had no legal reasons, is to be correctively punished for this according to the order of its spiritual administration (Ulozhenie o nakazanii [Code of Laws on Punishment], art. 859, publ. 1885); according to the Ustav of the Theological Consistory, priests and clergy guilty of negligence in doing divine services and needs, is corrected by monastic subadministration and other means (Ust. Dukh. Con. [Ustav of the Theological Consistory], art. 191).

Persons, who died suddenly without repentance, do not lose Christian burial (Tserkovniia Vedomosti [Church News] 1898, 14-15; refer to pp. 1208-1211 below).

It would seem to deprive of Christian burial those, who although considered Orthodox Christians, but never went to church, confession and before death did not receive a Christian parting word; but if during their lifetime they were not separated from the Church by legal authority, then after their death they stand outside the human court and appear responsible before the court of God; and therefore that priest will not be correct, who according to his own judgment and discretion will think to deprive that deceased of a Christian burial, as they do not come into the category of those who under the law lose burial (Rukovodstvo dlia Sel'skikh Pastyrei [Manual for Village Pastors] 1864, 18 ; 1898, 2; Prakticheskoe Rukovodstvo dlia Sviashchenno Sluzhitelei [Practical Manual for Church Servers], p. 279; refer to A. Almazov, "Tain. Ispoved. [The Mystery of Confession]" vol. 2, pp. 343-345, 425-426).

<sup>4</sup> **Burial without the burial service** should not be allowed (Ukaz Sv. Sinoda [Decrees of the Holy Synod] Aug. 28, 1862, No. 4351, in the name of the Bishop of the Don).

In the Kursk diocese in 1888 the diocesan administration strictly confirmed to the clergy that they are obligated to do the burial service over the bodies of the dead during their funeral, but should not postpone the burial service over them until another time and should not allow their parishioners to bury the dead without clergy and besides in cemeteries which are taken away for this, and in gardens and kitchen plots and other plots prohibited by law (see Ts. V. 1889, 1).

By the inspection of metrical books presented by one of the deans of the Ufa diocese to the local Theological Consistory, it appeared that books of deanery were generally entered correctly, except for the books of the dean himself, where in the last column in the 3rd part has such a note: No. 7 a woman "after the Panakhida service by near relatives in the local cemetery", - so, the office of burial, laid down under the Ustav of the Church, was not done at all, and besides it is not clear why the dead are buried after the Panakhida, and not after a funeral service; such notes in the book are in sufficient quantity. In the same part at No. 11 was written a man "in the absence of the priest was buried by close relatives in the local cemetery"; under No. 14 a male, under No. 11 a female and under other No. No. has "the dead are buried by close relatives in the cemetery", - so, many of the departed are deprived, without any basis, not only of Christian burial, but also of a Panakhida. Noting the omissions were delivered to the Consistory in view of the dean, but on the part of the bishop the resolution was made: "to pay special attention also to order the priests so that they for the period of the absence from their parishes they commissioned neighboring priests. If also they were not at home, then for those already committed to the earth to unfaithfully read the Christian burial service in the Trebnik. I hear that some priests do not oblige to bring dead men into the church, although they were next to the church, but read the burial service in the houses and that they support the existence of superstitions among newly baptized foreigners" (Ufimskii Eparkhial'niia Vedomosti [Ufa Diocesan News] 1891, 2).

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The Poltava diocesan administration ordered the clergy of the diocese that they certainly in due time mainly do the established office of the burial service in church, and due to remoteness and other difficult situations in houses that parish priests, without permitting relatives of the departed to bury without the church office of the burial service, in due time they do the made church burial service over the dead, but not over their graves, except for cases of insuperable obstacles for that. The deans have to inform the diocesan administration about violators of the provided instruction and in their annual reports to designate whether all priests in due time did the office of the burial (Poltavskiiia Eparkhial'niia Vedomosti [Poltava Diocesan News] 1891, 19, 20).

The Chernigov diocesan authority ordered the clergy of the diocese that, under fear of strict punishment, they do not allow the burial of the dead without the burial service (Tserkovnyi Viestnik [Church Messenger] 1894, 38).

Relative to those gone to work in the far away steppe and there, after death, was buried without burial service, the Samara Theological Consistory explained to the clergy of the diocese that the correspondence burial can be allowed only in extreme cases to which number it is necessary to carry also when any of Orthodox Christians dies far from church and will be buried, for the lack of the priest, without Christian burial by relatives by departed and other persons. In that case the priest can later do a burial office over the departed in absentia and enter it in the metrical book. But this and another he can only allow when the certificate of the date and cause of death and the committing of the departed to the earth from the village or police leaders, or from the farm police centurion, or from some other volost and rural authorities is shown to him (see Tserkovno-Obshchestvennyi Vestnik [Church-Society Messenger], 1878, 148; refer to Tserkovnyi Viestnik [Church Messenger] 1886, 21).

The same Theological Consistory confirmed, for precisely strict execution by parish priests, that they did not allow burying dead babies without doing the burial ceremony over them according to the office of the Orthodox Church, which office in some parishes of the diocese was done, depending on the convenience of the clergy, after committing the baby to the earth; and priests will be subject to strict liability that the prevention of such action was completely against the church rules and civil laws (Samarskiiia Eparkhial'niia Vedomosti [Samara Diocesan News] 1892, 19).

In the Astrakhan diocese (see Orders of the Astrakh. Dukh. Kons. [Astrakhan Theological Consistory] in the Rukovodstvo dlia Sel'skikh Pastyrei [Manual for Village Pastors] 1886, 51) parishioners, living on farms in the steppe, were permitted to read the burial service over dead babies in absence of the church but only when the farm is really a far distance from the parish and when from the parents of the dead children present the certificate of death for the babies from the local rural authorities and that the babies whom they ask to read the burial service for in absentia, died a natural death; after doing the burial service they need to enter it in the metrics in the usual order, and to protect the certificates, as vouchers, in the metrical books in the church archive; to refuse to do the burial service without having the proper certificates (see also note 2 below).

The Kaluga Diocesan Administration declared to the diocese that under no circumstance and justification should some priest be permitted to practice customs opposite to charters [Ustava] of the Orthodox Church to read the usual burial service over dead children in absentia, not to mention adults, especially from more foreign parishes, under fear of the strictest legal accountability (see the Rukovodstvo dlia Sel'skikh Pastyrei [Manual for Village Pastors] 1886, 51).

The priest's duty in relation to the unauthorized, in the illegal time and without participation of clergy burial of the suddenly departed consists in the statement to the dean and the police officer about such burial; further denunciations are excessive (Tserkovniia Vedomosti [Church News] 1896, 10).

*S. V. Bulgakov, "Handbook for Church Servers", 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900) pp. 1204-1207.  
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