

Bishop Johnathan (Ivan Mikhaylovich Kopolovich) - New Exarch of the
Patriarchal Russian Orthodox Church

Born to a peasant family on June 8, 1912 in the village of Oleshnik.
After finishing elementary school he studied at the Gymnasium in Uzhgorod
until 1927. He took a theological course at the Serbian Seminary in
Sremskie Karlovtsy from 1927 to 1932, finishing with distinction. He was
ordained Deacon in the city of Mukachev in November 1933 and assisted in the
administration of the Mukachev Diocese. He was advanced to the priesthood
in 1936, and he continued his administrative duties.

Father Ivan was a catechism teacher in the city of Hust from 1941
to 1944. He returned to his administrative duties as Secretary of the Diocese
in October 1944 and kept this post for the next five years. In 1949 he was
sent to Hungary where he served for five years. He returned to the Soviet
Union in October 1954 (already having been elevated to the rank of Archpriest)
and by June 1955 was Dean of the Mukachev Cathedral.

Archpriest Ivan was released by Patriarch Alexis in 1959, at the special
request of the head of the Orthodox Church in Czechoslovakia, to assist in
the administration of the Metropolitan Council of the Orthodox Church in
Czechoslovakia. For the next five years he was "General Vicar" of the
Orthodox Church of Preshov. During his stay in Czechoslovakia, he ~~was~~ studied
for a doctrinal degree in theology at the Seminary in Preshov and won his
degree in 1963. In December 1964, he returned to the Soviet Union.

In 1965, he worked in the Foreign Relations Department of the Moscow
Patriarchate and lectured at the Moscow Theological Academy on Orthodoxy.
The same year he accepted monasticism at the Holy Trinity St. Sergius Monastery.
He was soon raised to the rank of Archimandrite and in November 1966 appointed
Bishop of Tegel and Vicar Bishop of the Middle European Exarchate of the
Russian Orthodox Church.

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