

Archimandrite Symeon

Born: 12.12.1942 at Lavallois Perret

Surname: Cossec

Forename: Gérard

Education: General Certificate of Secondary Education

Diploma in industrial design. Diploma in educational supervision

Further study: Biblical, dogmatic and ascetic theology (studies in a monastic setting)

Liturgy (Institut Catholique and St Sergius Theological Institute)

Asceticism (St Sergius Theological Institute)

Military service: 1963-1965 (in Germany)

Professional life: Counsellor and social worker with unemployed people (ASSEDIC 'Association pour l'emploi dans l'industrie et le commerce')

Religious life: 1965-1974: Monk – Cistercian

1979: Received into the Orthodox Church

1984: Ordained Reader and Sub-deacon

1985: Ordained Deacon

15 February: Riasophore and monk of the small schema

1986: Ordained priest

1988: 12 February: elevated to the rank of Hegoumen

1990: 1 August: founder and spiritual father of the Monaster of St Silouan

1993: 16 March: tonsured monk of the great schema

2000: 24 September: elevated to the rank of mitred Archimandrite

2011: appointed as Dean for the communities of western France (11 parishes)

Church activities: Former Orthodox Vice-President of the Christian Association for the Abolition of Torture (ACAT)

Founder member and President of the Association of St Silouan for France and Western Europe

Founder of two parish communities: St Jacques in Quimper and the Annunciation in Angers

Conference papers: Sorbonne University: 'The search for God in the hesychast tradition'

UNESCO: 'The lived experience of Orthodox tradition and spirituality in France

Institut Catholique: 'Accidie'

Institut S. Serge: 'Meeting Christ' and 'Spiritual fatherhood'

Conference of the Fraternite of Western Europe: 'Prayer, monasticism and work and money, according to St Paul' and 'Being a monk in the world'

Inter-monastic gatherings (organised by Mgr Athenagoras of Sinope)

Bi-monthly diocesan conferences: several titles including 'Christian life and monastic life', 'Confession of sin', 'Being in the world without being of the world', etc.

Talks during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Interviews (radio and television): Broadcasts by 'Orthodoxy (France Culture)', 'Listen through the night' (Radio N.D.), 'Radio Chrétienne de France', 'Orthodoxie' (France 2), 'Orthodoxy, here and now' (KTO)

Leading retreats: (one week) Protestant Community of Grandchamps: 'Divine will and human freedom'; Benedictine sisters: 'Living the monastic life with St Silouan'; Annual retreat of the Association of St Silouan from 1998 to 2004 in Grandchamps (Switzerland)

Publications:

Articles: 'Meeting Christ' (SOP); 'Spiritual Fatherhood' (Burning Bush); 'The Search for God: Hesychasm' (Contact); 'God is not revealed in riches but in the humble soul' (Burning Bush).

Preface to the book *Ne nous laissez pas entrer dans l'épreuve* (Lead us not into temptation), by J.M. Gourvil (Editions de Guibert)

Work in progress: 'God does not exist; He has said so' (to be or to exist?)