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Ministry of the Russian Orthodox Church in helping the homeless

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Abstract. Today, the problem we have identified of finding effective ways to help the homeless is very relevant. Modern social work with the homeless is carried out by both the state and the Church. The directions of service to the homeless developed by the Russian Orthodox Church over the centuries create real conditions and opportunities for the interaction of state "social work" and spiritual "social service". Therefore, the state places its hopes on the church in solving the most pressing problems of homeless people. Serving the homeless is not a separate event, but a full-fledged direction of the Russian Orthodox Church. Despite the fact that this ministry began in ancient times at monasteries, now the Church's assistance to the homeless is not limited only to monastic ministry. In social service, society is a kind of step to the basis of all meaning and purpose - God. From the point of view of the Russian Orthodox Church, assistance to the homeless should be provided both in the aspect of love directed to the Lord, whose "lesser brother" is before us, and in the aspect of the perception of the homeless as a concrete person endowed with his own qualities and experiencing pressing problems.

Keywords: the Russian Orthodox Church, social service, homelessness, homeless people, public relations, charity, rehabilitation

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Социальные аспекты служения Русской Православной Церкви. Помощь бездомным

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Аннотация. Современная социальная работа с бездомными осуществляется как государством, так и Церковью. Направления служения бездомным, разработанные Русской Православной Церковью на протяжении веков, создают реальные условия и возможности для взаимодействия государственной «социальной работы» и духовного «социального служения». В работе показано, что служение бездомным – это не отдельное мероприятие, а полноценное направление деятельности Русской Православной Церкви. С позиции Русской Православной Церкви, помощь бездомным должна оказываться как в аспекте любви, направленной к Господу, чей «меньший брат» находится перед нами, так и в аспекте восприятия бездомного как конкретного человека, наделенного собственными качествами и испытывающего насущные проблемы. На материале конкретного социологического анализа автор уточняет общую семантику понятия бездомности и обосновывает перспективы его концептуализации применительно к актуальным практикам социального церковного служения.

Ключевые слова: Русская Православная Церковь, социальное служение, бездомность, бездомные люди, благотворительность, милосердие, реабилитация

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Introduction

In today's world, the problem of homelessness has become very acute; it has a great number of negative consequences for both individuals and entire spheres of society activities. The problem of homelessness or social exclusion is one of the most important nowadays.

According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation and Institute of Socio-Economic Studies of Population of the Russian Academy of Sciences, there is an increasing number of homeless compatriots from the end of the XX century to 2003 from 73.4 thousand people to 300 thousand people. Now, according to the UN, 100 million people in the world are homeless (Alimukhamedov, 2021). The Federal State Statistics Service study showed that the number of homeless people in Russia exceeds 64,000. Many experts believe that the real number of people who live on the street is about 4.5 million (Federal State Statistics Service, 2021).

According to the Synodal Department of the Moscow Patriarchate for Church Charity and Social Ministry, there are the most number of homeless people in Kemerovo (6152 people), Novosibirsk (6080) and Tyumen (4141), Krasnoyarsk Krai (3234), and Chelyabinsk Oblast (2956) (Synodal Department of the Moscow Patriarchate for Church Charity and Social Ministry, 2021).

S Adriaenssens, J. Hendrickx pay attention to the spread of homelessness and such phenomenon as panhandling. In this regard, the homeless people's social protection questions are of primordial importance (S Adriaenssens, 2021).

A.M. Badonov notes that the USA, France, Canada, and some other countries have vast experience in working with the homeless and recommends using this experience "in social work with this category in Russia" (Badonov, 2009: 229).

Some cities in the U.S.A. and Canada, for example, provide shelters for the homeless so that they can sleep there or spend the day; get not only a shelter at night but also a chance to get food.

In Europe, there were workhouses as the social measure to solve the problem of homelessness. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, (1612) institutions with forced labor were opened in France. At the same time, the first workhouse as an institutional household was opened in Bristol (England) in 1697.

State or private institutional households were also established a little later in Germany, Switzerland, and Belgium. Their purpose was to isolate and force beggars and vagrants to work. There no one took an account of the vagrants' mental and physical status. The paternalized were often restricted in their rights - freedom of movement, personal property. Social and living conditions were a modicum of comfort.

They do not have any medical care. The paternalized were engaged in forced, hard labor. So that people, who were used to idle wandering, had no time for their usual way of life, the work lasted from 12 to 16 hours a day. Physical punishment was actively used for a discipline violation. Attempts to escape could be punished with shackles. There were no psychological rehabilitation measures. The only moral measure was Sunday church service.

That is, the pressure on the homeless in workhouses was mostly associated with punitive actions, their isolation from society, physical, social-psychological suppression, and punitive labor.

Only by the 1930s of the 20th century, due to the introduction of social insurance for unemployment and the institution of social work in Europe, the need for workhouses paled into insignificance.

Now the measures of influence on the homeless have changed. In Ukraine, for example, there is now a charitable foundation for the unsettled citizens' rehabilitation and social adaptation, "The Road to Home" (Odesa). In Finland, there is a governmental program "Housing First"

(Housing First). The author is an American non-profit organization National Alliance to End Homelessness. The activities of this organization have helped to reduce the number of homeless people.

A lot of people are wondering “How can one be without a house, but often do not have an opportunity to earn a living, to die of hunger, cold, and disease? What should be done in our society to change the attitude toward the homeless, to see him/her not as a homeless person, but as an unhappy one?”

In many countries, when people are confronted with a social problem, the Church does remain indifferent to people's aspirations.

The main content

Comprehensive consideration of such a phenomenon as homelessness is possible only based on an interdisciplinary approach, but also during philosophical, ethical, and sociological interpretation that is associated with the study of various aspects of homelessness development and spread. In this context, the study notes that the Russian Orthodox Church ministry in channeling aid to the homeless is considered within the framework of the theological approach.

The main method was a literature analysis. Comparative and descriptive methods were used as auxiliary methods.

The literature analysis showed that the most often aspects of the homelessness study are the following:

- 1) the history of the homelessness phenomenon in a particular country (world);
- 2) social and legal status of a homeless today;
- 3) a homeless socio-psychological portrait;
- 4) causes of homelessness;
- 5) economic and social factors and consequences of homelessness for society;
- 6) the homeless population subculture specifics;
- 7) society's attitude to the problem of homelessness;
- 8) peculiarities of homeless population social adaptation and resocialization;
- 9) social work with the homeless population.

At the same time, there are very few scientific works that directly describe technologies, methods, and models of homeless population social rehabilitation and characterize their effectiveness.

A person's social situation (state), or as a social phenomenon. Few works consider homelessness both as a person's social position (state) and as a social phenomenon. In the author's opinion, N.M. Platonova's definition of homelessness that reflects two aspects at once deserves the most attention.

1. “Homelessness is a person's condition (social situation) that can be associated with the lack of rights to a particular living accommodation, which he/she could use to live or stay and in which he/she could register at their places of residence or stay”.

2. “Homelessness is a social phenomenon associated with people's lack of rights to specific living accommodation where they could live or stay, and the lack of registration at the place of residence or stay for a long time” (Platonova, 2001: 146).

A person in a state of homelessness is homeless. He/she does not have the right of ownership to a living accommodation which he/she could use to live or stay, to register at the place of residence (stay). Deacon Oleg Vishinski, therefore, views the problem of homelessness both as a theologian, as a social and medical worker, and as a clergyman, he directly links it to social exclusion (Deacon Oleg Vyshinsky, 2014).

R. Lunkin characterizes homelessness in the context of social exclusion (Lunkin, 2018). Researchers link the exclusion of the homeless from the system of social relations with the unrealized right to living accommodation and, as a consequence, the impossibility to register at the

place of residence and a set of legal problems that can lead to the homeless inability to realize almost all constitutional rights

In Imperial Russia, there was already a legal norm that defined vagrancy. People, who wandered from one place to another, with no money and no desire to work, were called vagrants. Vagrancy was officially forbidden and prosecuted by law. Caught vagrants were severely punished. Until the 20th century, there was no social status of “homeless” instead of the status of “vagrant” or “beggar” was used.

Today, political journalism, mass media, and culture in Russia define homeless people as "BOMZHI" (this abbreviation means no fixed abode).

The history of Russian and foreign aid to the homeless (both charitable and social) shows that there was not a separate area of aid until the 20th century.

In today's society, the homeless population is completely different from people of different categories. Such categories are gender, education, age, health status, the reason for loss of living accommodation, etc. The severity of problems related to homelessness most often depends on the economic condition of a particular region. In Russia, the maximum concentration of homeless population is in large cities, especially in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

The consulting service in St. Petersburg charity organization Nochlezhka attempted to find out the most common causes of homelessness. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Таблица 1

The most common causes of homelessness in Russia ¹
Наиболее распространенные причины бездомности в России

Incidence, % Встречаемость, %	Reason Особенности	Particularity Причины
32 %	labor migration	People go to other localities to search for work. In such a difficult situation a person is without support because there are no relatives and friends nearby.
30 %	domestic problem	Family members eviction due to conflicts or claims to real estate
14 %	fraud, racketeering	Predominantly lonely people, pensioners, people with mental disabilities are the victims
7 %	The lack of own living accommodation after release from prison	A person did not have time to apply for real estate within the legal time limit (after the death of relatives, deprivation of rights to a dormitory, resettlement of emergency housing)
6 %	Emergency incidents	The living accommodation has fallen into disrepair
2 %	Violation of the orphans' rights	Boarding schools and orphanages graduates who have not received the granted living accommodation
2 %	Eviction from company housing	Forced eviction due to relatives death or the loss of employment
7 %	other reasons	—

¹ A source: Charity organization "Nochlezhka", St. Petersburg, 2021. URL: <https://petersburg24.ru/eng/place/blagotvoritelnaya-organizaciya-nochlezhka>

As the figures in Table 1 show, as a social phenomenon, homelessness is connected with a whole complex of economic, socio-political, civil-legal, and cultural-psychological problems that lead to the fact that a person is deprived of necessary living conditions.

According to E.M. Melikhova's research, only for 1-2% among homeless people, homelessness is a life philosophy. These homeless people do not want to return to a normal way of life, they explain it as the life priority of "freedom": to live one day at a time, the one where you wake up in the morning. For the rest, it is "a social reflection of the economic situation in our country. Everyone has a story to tell" (Melikhova, 2021).

A long time ago, when the population was incomparably smaller than it is nowadays, erecting one's dwelling was not a serious problem. Today there is no municipal and community land that does not belong to anyone: the state or a private person. Settlement and use of vacant land without permission are prohibited by law. Consequently, it is impossible to erect a dwelling, if you want to preserve the owner's property rights. At the same time, even if we hypothetically consider the possibility of such construction, the lack of financial resources to build, buy or rent a dwelling makes it impossible. Laws are the most important causes of homelessness.

In many countries, it is difficult and expensive to reconstitute lost documents. Documents are often tied to the place of registration, but homeless people do not have them. The lack of the opportunity to restore a passport and other documents becomes a serious problem. For these same reasons, a person cannot solve this problem, he or she cannot return to normal life.

A homeless person does not care about his or her moral and cultural obligations. After all, life on the streets involves a constant struggle for survival. The satisfaction of basic spiritual needs is neglected.

European sociological research has allowed us to look comprehensively at the problem of homelessness, to identify several types of homelessness:

- 1) the physical (the absence or unsuitability of a person's living accommodation);
- 2) legal (a person's rights to living accommodation);
- 3) social reflection of relations in society (Busch Geertsema, 2010).

Accordingly, the basic principles for social policies that are associated with this typology are different. In the world, social work with the homeless is carried out both by the states and by the Church. Around the world, states rely on the Church to solve the most urgent problems of homeless people.

A legislative analysis of homeless people's legal problems testifies that in modern Russia the homeless, as a social group of the population, are not legally singled out in any federal law. There are no systematic measures for homelessness prevention and resocialization. However, certain steps in this direction have been made.

The President of Russia V.V. Putin instructed the government, together with the region's executive authorities to draw lessons from the regions on how to identify people with no fixed abode and provide them assistance, and to improve legislation in the sphere of homeless people assistance (RIA Novosti, 2021).

The Russian government commission to prevent offenses gave recommendations to the regions to create and improve the work of the centers that are designed to help those who live on the street. The Synodal Department of the Moscow Patriarchate for Church Charity and Social Ministry supported this decision and pressed for the establishment of a federal authority that would monitor homeless rehabilitation. As rightly pointed out by a representative of the Synodal Department for Charity I. Meshkova: "The Russian Orthodox Church is ready to become an active participant in the development of the new system" (Meshkova, 2021). According to I. Meshkova, this is not enough. The homeless need help to re-socialize.

In association with this effort, a joint pilot project aiming at opening first-aid points in the regions was launched by the Ministry of Health and the Russian Orthodox Church. The first point was opened in December 2019 in Irkutsk.

In 2021 in Russia there are 4.5 thousand church social institutions, projects, and initiatives of the ROC (the Russian Orthodox Church), including 95 homeless shelters, 12 mobile first-aid points, and more than 460 diet kitchens.

As a result of cooperation between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Ministry of Health, the regions got special instructions explaining the need for medical care for homeless people. Homeless have rights guaranteed by the Constitution, including the right to health care (ROC and Ministry of Health told how to help the homeless, 2021).

With the participation of the Synodal Department for Church Charity and the Regional Public Organization for the Support of Social Activity of the Russian Orthodox Church "Miloserdiye" staff, information for the creation of a Handbook for Social Workers in the aspect of helping the homeless was collected. By way of introduction, Bishop Panteleimon of Orekhovo-Zuyevo, chairman of the Church Social Work Department, drew attention to the possibility to find detailed information on the following areas in the Handbook:

- 1) regional state homeless shelters and the governing organizations with contact information, a list of types of assistance, etc;
- 2) Orthodox shelters, workhouses, and almshouses for the homeless (with contact information, list of assistance, etc.);
- 3) Meaningful Orthodox projects aimed at social support of the homeless.

Among the social projects of the Russian Orthodox Church aimed at helping the homeless, we would like to pay attention to "Miloserdiye" Bus for the Homeless (Moscow) (Tomilina, 2018). The project has helped more than 22,000 people since November 2004! In summer it was medical assistance, and in winter it saved people from freezing (every night the "Bus" rescued from 10 to 30 people from freezing). There were day and night buses. Depending on the medical findings, the homeless received necessary medical aid, hospitalization, a skilled social worker's consultation. And most importantly, they had an opportunity to go to their permanent place of residence! (Bus "Miloserdiye": mission accomplished, 2021).

Then, instead of the Bus, a mobile brigade "Mercy" began to work, which does not patrol Moscow's train stations, but it makes homeless people call 24 hours a day.

The Diocesan Council of Moscow has a Commission on Church Social Work. It includes a Service for the Homeless in Hospitals. The Commission staff identifies the homeless in hospitals, provides them with clothes, crutches, and wheelchairs, and they search for relatives or find special handicap centers.

The homeless rehabilitation center "Derzhava" has been working in Sredneuralsk, Sverdlovsk Region since 2006 (Social center "Derzhava", 2021). The center operates within the Cossack community. Homeless people are provided with accommodation, food, clothes, and work there.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the Holy Protection almshouse was opened by the blessing of St. John of Kronstadt in Sergievo village, Leningrad Oblast. It did not work for some time and began to assist again in 1996 (Charity at the Church of St. Andrew of Crete, 2021). Although the almshouse's residents are the elderly and disabled single women, the homeless can have assistance to restore their documents and rights to receive government allowance. Almshouse workers search for homeless relatives and friends and place them in orphanages and boarding schools. The volunteers of St. Petersburg Theological Academy visit the transitional housing of the Pokrovsky community daily, they bring spiritual food and communicate on various religious topics with people who are in difficult life situations.

Mercy Home in Minsk has a diet kitchen, Humanitarian Response Depot, an iconography shop, and a sewing workshop (to provide people with work) (House of Mercy, 2021).

The Brooklyn Workhouse was opened in 2003. It welcomes both legal and illegal immigrants to Brooklyn. At the Brooklyn Workhouse, as at several institutions that were created with the participation of the Russian Orthodox Church, there is a requirement not to drink alcohol or to use drugs. Many people were able to get back to normal life by stopping using drugs (The

Brooklyn Workhouse, 2021). The church in San Francisco helps the homeless and provides them with blankets and places where they can sleep each night.

Child homelessness is unacceptable for any country. And measures to overcome it (not to allow it) are taken not only at the secular level but also by the Russian Orthodox Church.

For example, the Kovalevsky Children's Home in Nerekhta (Kostroma Oblast) was opened in 1996, and Archpriest Andrei Voronin has been the director for many years. The residents are orphans and children without parental support (Children's home in Nerekhta, 2021).

An example of a family-type orphanage is the Monastery Orphanage in Bancheni, Ukraine. All orphanage residents were adopted or are under the care of Father Longin (Zhar), superior of the Holy Ascension Monastery and spiritual leader of the Boyan Convent. A lot of the children are HIV-positive. Nuns from the Boyan nunnery and specialists cared for the children. There is an almshouse at the monastery (Stepanova, 2022).

Among Orthodox organizations to help the homeless there are such organizations as the "Helper and Protector" fund, the movement "Kursk Station. Homeless Children", the volunteer movement "Pelmeshki na Pleshka", the Moscow Metochion of the Valaam Monastery, the Community of the Church of Cosmas and Damian in Shubin.

For the most part, the Church provides a palliative, i.e., life-sustaining, assistance to the homeless. Members of Orthodox charitable congregations do not only help the homeless with food, but also they try to help the cause, if possible. Spiritual help is of tremendous importance to reintegrate the individual into the community. This, according to M.A. Rozvadovsky, can be the simplest conversation with a desperate person; the conversation should carry spiritual care, attention, and love, at least a little hope for a better future. M.A. Rozvadovsky calls one of the variants of such hope as "a chance that is given to a person to earn his/her own money, with the help of it he/she begins to believe in his/her own strength" (Rozvadovsky, 2017).

E.I. Ufimtseva notes that the distinctive feature of homeless shelters that are under the supervision of the Russian Orthodox Church is the religious practice of paternalized (Ufimtseva, 2017). However, the Church uses not only traditional but also innovative approaches in social service to the homeless and their return to society. Nilo-Stolobensky Monastery (Tver Oblast) is a good example. The monastery was returned to the Orthodox Church in the 1990s, and the monks began to provide the homeless with shelter, food, and an opportunity to work for the good of the monastery. People who come to the monastery are free to choose spiritually whether or not to attend monastic services. There is even a TV in the rooms. People can live in the monastery as workers; can (if they wish) take monasticism. The homeless are provided with free medical care and help with the re-issuance of documents.

The Novosibirsk Diocese is implementing a project for the homeless - the "Household Society". The homeless - participants of the project have the opportunity to restore documents, house rights, work, and wages (salary) for free if it is transferred to the card. As a result, within 3 months a homeless person accumulates funds to rent a hostel and get a job (Novosibirsk The main topic of the section, 2021).

In Belgorod in 2020, the Marfo-Mariinsky Sisterhood of Mercy received a grant from the Presidential Grant Foundation to implement the project "Dobry dom" ("A Kind House"). The aim is the homeless comprehensive rehabilitation. Accept emergency assistance, resolve living problems, people receive food, shelter, psychological and legal assistance, and assistance in re-socialization in society. Also homeless and underprivileged people have a free haircut once every 2 weeks (The project "Dobry dom" came to an end, 2021).

Overall, according to the Synodal Department for Church Charity and Social Ministry, dioceses of the Russian Orthodox Church have opened:

- 1) more than 500 mercy groups and volunteer services,
- 2) More than 150 Sisters of Mercy in Russia and about 60 Sisters of Mercy in Belorussia and Ukraine;
- 3) more than 100 orphanages;

- 4) more than 30 orphanages;
- 5) over 30 rehabilitation centers for drug addicts;
- 6) over 80 temporary shelters and social guesthouses;
- 7) 11 homeless shelters and 3 mobile services for the homeless;
- 8) more than 30 maternity protection centers (Solnyshkina, 2019).

Today we need a compromise between secular and religious organizations that takes into account the peculiarities of social service.

The social ministry of the Church has at all times been directed toward the destitute and the deprived. Serving the homeless is one of the areas of social ministry that began in monasteries, but now the Church's assistance to the homeless is not limited to monastic ministries. For in social ministry, the community serves as the foundation of all meaning and purpose: that is God.

To consider the stages of work with the homeless in a parish, it is recommended to use a conversation as an initial stage. It is advisable to begin the service with a conversation”, to treat the person to some hot food from the refectory on the street. Only after it is advisable to ask how the person got on the street and what can be done to help him (Lifintsev, 2018). It is necessary to build a relationship with a homeless person. D.V. Lifintsev, A.B. Serkh, A.A. Lifintseva name this relationship as helping one because they help people regain feelings of hope and optimism, maintain trust, and a sense of security in their relationships with others.

If a homeless person has relatives, you can find out if they are willing to accept the person. If the assistance of relatives is not possible, the person can be sent to one of the state shelters. According to the law, Russian citizens who have lost their homes have the right to live in such a shelter in the place of their last registration. Contact information for shelters can be found in the directory of the Synodal Department.

The next parish ministry stage may be feeding the homeless. Here of great importance is the parishioners' participation, among whom there are always those who want to help the needy. Cooking and packing food together has a unifying effect on the congregation. Distributing food to the hungry brings positive emotions to all involved. One-time weekly meals can be a starter in feeding. But the process engages people and attracts others who want to participate in the good deed. Then it will be possible to organize more frequent feedings.

Analysis of the literature sources showed that clergy consider feeding the homeless as necessary, but not the main direction of assistance to the homeless. Feeding is just a way to show a homeless person that he/she is not alone, that someone treats him/her well, that it will be possible to try to arrange his/her further fate.

When discussing feeding the homeless, both clergy and social workers are often faced with the question, “How do we distinguish between a person in need and social parasitism?” The phenomenon of the latter is far from uncommon. There are practically no places in Russia where an undocumented homeless person can earn a living by his or her labor. Since there is no alternative, everyone gets food - both those who have no opportunity to earn money to feed themselves and those who have such an opportunity.

It is no secret that homelessness is often associated with deviant, antisocial, and other negative manifestations. The most common are alcoholism, lack of motivation to work, disregard of hygiene and social norms, disorientation in time, lack of obligation, etc.

Homeless people's social isolation entails the exclusion of a homeless person from the system of norms and values of society. It causes various homeless people's deviations. Homeless people tend to perceive it as resentment against the society that rejected them.

Therefore, good intentions to create free overnight accommodation for homeless people often contribute to the fact that groups of “chronic homeless people” emerge. These social formations tend to have an extremely negative impact on the criminogenic situation in the places where these shelters are located; the local population provokes protests against them.

Therefore, the authorities often use harsh measures to combat the phenomenon (a ban on public drinking, parks restrictions (especially in the evening), a ban on begging, a ban on sitting

or lying on sidewalks, a ban on walking along highways). Sometimes the above bans are not officially listed, but the city's infrastructure makes life on the street almost impossible. For example, in the United States there are cities where there are no benches in parks and at bus stops, or the benches are equipped with armrests that make it difficult to lie down on the bench.

Violations of these laws result in homeless people arrests. But incarceration often saves their lives, especially during the cold season.

It should be borne in mind that Christian morality has to do with both the ability to see our neighbor as the image of God through any distortions and with responsibility not for what our neighbor is like, but according to our attitude toward him/her (merciful or not). Often, however, we do not even notice an important nuance of this moral problem: how important is it to our actions, whether our help will pay off, whether the recipients of our help will change?

In the Gospel (Matthew 25:40), the Lord calls for merciful actions toward those who are suffering. The basis for the merciful attitude is that those who suffer are His least of the brothers, that is, they are partakers of His humanity: "... as you did (did not) it to one of the least of these My brothers, you did (did not) it to Me. Therefore, the Church helps all those who suffer, for the love of the Lord Himself, who bears the same nature as those who show mercy and those to whom it is addressed. The Lord has identified His " least of the brothers " with Himself. With Christ's commandments in mind, it is important to shift our focus from the needy, who may be unpleasant to us, to God. This encourages us to turn away from personal bias toward those who need our help. There are such words in the Sermon on the Mount as: "for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. " (Matthew 5:45). God calls us to love not only those who are pleasing to us. It can also be seen as a call to an impersonal perception of the homeless as recipients of ministry.

But person's detachment is not absolute. That is, while the commandment to love one's neighbor is absolute, we must nevertheless love an individual. This love can be directed toward an individual. And the subjective component of the fate of one's neighbor is very important to those who do ministry. People who understand this theological point will not substitute condemnation for service. Therefore, it seems appropriate to pay attention to two possible approaches to the homeless.

1. As a kind of image that we can see in one's neighbor; the person of that person is relegated to the background (our love is directed to the Lord, whose "lesser brother" is before us).

2. As a specific person with character and vital problems.

In neither case do we sin against the adoration of God and one's neighbor? It is only important to understand when one approach or the other is appropriate.

Most religious organizations that help the homeless and are aimed at overcoming homelessness, they are concerned with providing the homeless with resources to meet their urgent needs (providing temporary accommodation, food, urgent medical, social care, psychological, legal assistance).

Orthodox churches in various dioceses, most often provide the following types of assistance to the homeless:

- 1) Arrangements for feeding;
- 2) Humanitarian supplies;
- 3) Assistance regarding the placement of homeless in medical institutions, adaptation centers, home transportation.

Conclusion

Homelessness is one of the global problems of humanity; it is associated with the lack of accommodation for a large number of people on the planet and has global, regional, and local reasons, subjective and objective. The social ministry of the Russian Orthodox Church to the

homeless has centuries of experience. The time-honored concept of the Russian Orthodox Church's assistance to the homeless opens up real conditions and opportunities for interaction between state "social work" and spiritual "social ministry". The Russian Orthodox Church considers the homeless assistance both in the aspect of love toward the Lord, whose "His least of the brothers" is before us, and in the perception of the homeless person as a specific individual with manifestations of character and vital problems. In both cases, we do not sin against the love of God and neighbor.

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