

The Blood Moon Saints of Feb. 14

On Feb. 14, we celebrate Valentine's Day by sending love notes like St. Valentine sent them to his church from prison. But February 14 is also a day set aside by the church to remember two brothers who translated God's love note, the Bible, for millions of people. The two brothers, Cyril and Methodius, are revered as the apostles to the Slavs.

In the blood moon tetrad year of 860, Cyril was sent as an ambassador to the Kazars, who were vacillating between Christianity, Islam and Judaism. Ultimately the Kazars chose Judaism, but they agreed to stop Islamic intrusions into their region of southern Russia. Because of this agreement, Russia was open to the gospel message when it arrived in the tenth century, carried along by the Slavic alphabet, Cyrillic, developed by Cyril and Methodius.

The brothers are responsible for two breakthroughs which enabled Christianity to spread into Eastern Europe and Russia. First, their alphabet allowed Slavic believers to understand the Bible in their own languages so they could respond to God's love and be converted. Second, the brothers developed a system allowing each nation to have its own national church so that the kings would accept Christianity without fear of losing their power. In 863, Cyril brought the first king so converted, the king of Bulgaria, and his people into the Kingdom of God.

Our research has shown that the blood moon tetrads of the Church Age were signs of the expansion of the church (see our book *The Mystery of the Blood Moons*). The first, in 162-163, marked the first charismatic revival and allowed Christianity to recover the spiritual power needed to overcome the Roman Empire. The tetrad of 860-861 was one of three in the early

Middle Ages that led to a breakout of the church from the boundaries of the old Roman Empire. Today there are 184 million Christians in Eastern Europe and Russia because of the breakout initiated by Cyril and Methodius.

For over 100 years, since the communist revolution of 1917, we have looked at the Russians as enemies. But after the fall of communism, most Russians returned to Christianity even if their leaders have not. The Russian people are not our enemies. They are our brothers in Christ.

Perhaps we should mix a little of the loving spirit of St. Valentine with our remembrance of the apostles to the Slavs this Feb. 14.

Let us pray God's blessings for the Russian Christians, and even for those other Russians who are still our enemies, as Christ commanded us to do.