

In memory of Father Oleg Karlashchuk



Early on Sunday morning, 3 August 2025, after a long and trying illness, our kind and wise priest, Father Oleg Karlashchuk, passed away, aged 52. Although in date of ordination he was the youngest priest of our community, he served the Lord as a seasoned priest with a deep faith, trusted and loved by all.

Father Oleg's life spanned different worlds. He was born in Moscow, studied in Donetsk, and from the early 2000s lived and worked in the Netherlands. During his studies (applied mathematics), he came to consciously believe and was baptised. From the moment he moved to the Netherlands, he began attending our parish together with his wife Angelika and their children Marya and Vassily. The family's life became increasingly interwoven with the community: Angelica started teaching at Sunday school, helping out wherever she could, while Oleg began reading and serving in the altar. With the blessing of Father Sergei Ovsianikov, he enrolled in the correspondence programme of St. Sergius

Theological Institute in Paris, which he completed in 2019. On 19 March 2017, he was ordained a deacon by Archbishop Simon of Belgium.

In the personality Father Oleg, several unique qualities came together. He was a man of deep, sincere faith. As a mathematician and professional (working as a network engineer), he was able to speak about the faith in a down-to-earth, practical way, at any given level of complexity. He was fluent in Russian, Ukrainian, Dutch, and English, thus serving as a link between faithful of the most diverse backgrounds. Both as a manager at work and as a parish priest, he stood out by his concern for others, putting their interests above his own. He reconciled the quarrelling and comforted the grieving, without a trace of pomposity or clerical superiority. He always respected people's freedom. He conducted the divine services with focus, prayerfully and with attention to those present. As a husband and father, he was an example to all. He was kind in his dealings with people, preferring light humour to loud admonitions.

At the same time, Father Oleg was firm when matters of principle were at stake. After the start of the war in Ukraine, he, along with other clergy of the parish, signed an open appeal for reconciliation by clergy of the Russian Orthodox Church. From the moment of the invasion, refugees lived in his home almost permanently. And when the parish transferred to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, he joined the move, at the expense of many bitter reproaches. He became the first cleric to be ordained under the omophorion of Metropolitan Athenagoras: on 17 December 2022, he was ordained a priest.

Since last autumn, Father Oleg and his family have been battling illness. He bravely endured the trying treatments, weakness, nausea, and pain. This spring, the treatment brought about considerable recovery, and he was able to join us during Pascha and even resume serving. In June, he joined one of the 'talks on the Faith' in Russian, offering a courageous and profound testimony to his experience with disease.

In Father Oleg, we have lost a father, a brother, and a friend. The parish is bereft without his kind presence and wise words. We thank the Lord for the years spent together. Let us comfort one another. May the Lord grant repose to the soul of His newly departed servant, Father Oleg!

Fr. Oleg is buried on St. Barbara cemetery in Amsterdam (Spaarndammerdijk 312, 1014 AA Amsterdam)