



Russian Australian Representative Council  
Совет Российских Соотечественников в Австралии

31 December 2017

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

**Re: Father Christopher Vakhabov**

I met Father Christopher soon after his arrival in Australia in January 2013. I had a number of private meetings with him and also attended a number of church services conducted by him at the Church of All Russian Saints in Russia located at Croydon, NSW to which he was appointed as its rector and head priest.

I know Father Christopher to have been active in his missionary and educational activities in the Russian community in addition to his main duties as rector of his parish. He conducted religious classes for Russian pupils at the Saturday school of Alexander Nevsky at Homebush, held bible study meetings for people of all ages at his Croydon parish and also gave lectures on religious, cultural and educational subjects in Sydney and other cities in Australia.

I found him to be eloquent and engaging preacher and speaker, very knowledgeable, attentive and quite pleasant. He projected a positive outlook on life and willingness to do positive things for the community with display of abundance of energy.

He was instrumental in organising lecture tour to Australia in August 2013 of prominent Russian Theologian from Moscow professor Andrey Kuraev and had plans also to organise similar visits by other prominent Russian theologians and thinkers. Some of the local Russian clergy had issues with this tour of Professor Andrey Kuraev he organised because of who Kuraev was, being a strong critic of some of the high-ranking clerics of the Moscow Patriarchate.

PO Box 182, Sans Souci, NSW 2219

[www.rarc.com.au](http://www.rarc.com.au)

email : [irina@vremya.com.au](mailto:irina@vremya.com.au)



Russian Australian Representative Council  
Совет Российских Соотечественников в Австралии

Father Christopher was actively involved in improving relations with other ethnic and religious communities in Sydney. During the crisis in Ukraine in 2013 he took an active part in the special meeting organised by the NSW Community Relations Commission on 13 March 2014 in which a large number of representatives from the Ukrainian and Russian communities participated, including me, and resolved to hold a common prayer for peace in Ukraine.

The news of Fr Christopher's arrest and what he was charged with shocked me and the entire Russian community. It is difficult to believe that he was capable of committing those offences and I sincerely hope that truth will prevail and all who bear false witness against him will be duly found out and exposed.

The President of RARC  
Irina Simonian

PO Box 182, Sans Souci, NSW 2219

[www.rarc.com.au](http://www.rarc.com.au)

email : [irina@vremya.com.au](mailto:irina@vremya.com.au)