



ΛΥΧΝΟΣ

A GREEK ORTHODOX PERIODICAL FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

«Λύχνος τοῖς ποσί
μου ὁ νόμος σου
καὶ φῶς ταῖς
τρίβοις μου»

Ψαλμ 118, 105

Volume 32, Issue 4

JUNE - JULY 2017

Fishers Of Men

As we approach the Feast of the Apostles, we are reminded of the work the first pioneers of our Faith completed to establish the Church. These men chosen by Jesus were commanded to preach the coming of the Kingdom of God. They had authority to heal the sick, cleanse lepers, raise the dead, and cast out demons (Matt 10:8).

By definition, an apostle (Greek ἀπόστολος) is one who is called by God and sent on a holy mission. This work was not in any way limited to the acts of the 12 main disciples, or even the 70 lesser disciples also sent out by Jesus. For instance, the first apostles appeared in the Old Testament and were the Prophets sent by God. They were instructed to lead God's chosen people, to reveal God's will, to

teach His commandments and His covenant, to convince people to repent and to warn of impending dangers.

In the New Testament, we also read of other apostles. St Paul is the most famous, calling himself 'a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God' (Rom 1:1). In John 1:6 we read 'there was a man sent from God (Greek ἀπεσταλμένος) whose name was John', the Forerunner and Baptist, who was sent to prepare the hearts of the people by preaching repentance. But the greatest apostle of all, whom all the others imitated in their apostleship, is of course Jesus Christ. He is described as 'the Apostle and High Priest of our confession' (Heb 3:1). He was sent and appointed by the Father to be born of a Virgin, to die on the Cross and to rise again on the third day, to enrich the Church with the

Holy Sacraments and to lead us all into eternal life.

It is worth noting that of all ministries in the Church, apostleship is numbered first: 'God has appointed these in the Church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers...' (1 Cor 12:28). It is first because it consists of laying the foundation upon which everything else is to be built. These apostles were all energised by the grace of the Holy Spirit, Who constantly confirmed their calling and

directed their apostleship. They all harboured a fiery zeal for spreading the Gospel, tremendous faith, self-sacrifice and unfading perseverance. However, the office of apostleship also has a general role in the Church, since it is described in our Creed as the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

All Christians are called to exercise their gifts and talents to become messengers of the Gospel to their relatives, friends, neighbours, colleagues and many others.

Do you imagine that you don't have the "essence" of an apostle? You are not alone. Even St Paul thought that he was 'less than the least of all the saints' (Eph 3:8), but God's strength is made perfect in weakness (2 Cor 12:9).

The Acts of the Apostles does not conclude with chapter 28. Many men and women alike have gone on to earn the title "Equal-to-the-Apostles (Greek Ἰσαπόστολοι) and appended their own chapter to this God inspired book, and you can too. The first step is to follow Jesus who says, 'follow me and I will make you fishers of men!' (Matt 4:19).



Εκκλησία και Παράκλητος

Η Πεντηκοστή είναι ιστορικά η γενέθλιος ημέρα της Εκκλησίας. Είναι η εκπλήρωση της υπόσχεσης του Κυρίου στους μαθητές του πως θα τους στείλει τον Παράκλητο, το Άγιο Πνεύμα, «**τήν δύναμιν ἑξ ὕψους**».

Αυτή την αλήθεια διατρανώνει η υμνωδία του Αγίου Κοσμά επισκόπου Μαΐουμά που πανηγυρικά ψάλλει η Εκκλησία μας στις καταβασίες «**τήν ἑξ ὕψους δύναμιν τοῖς Μαθηταῖς, Χριστέ, ἕως ἂν ἐνδύσηθε ἕφης, καθίσαιτε ἐν Ἱερουσαλήμ· ἐγὼ δὲ... Παράκλητον... ἀποστελῶ, ἐν ᾧ στερεωθήσεσθε**» (Εσὺ Χριστέ μου εἶπες στους μαθητές Σου να καθίσουν και να περιμένουν στην Ιερουσαλήμ μέχρι που να ντυθούν σαν άλλο ρούχο την δύναμη που θα τους ἔστειλνες ἀπὸ ψηλά. Εγὼ θα σας στείλω τον Παράκλητο - το Άγιο Πνεύμα πάνω στο οποίο θα θεμελιώσετε την ζωή σας).

Και περίμεναν υπομονετικά οι Απόστολοι στο υπέρωον της Ιερουσαλήμ. Περίμεναν τη μεγάλη εκείνη ημέρα. Τότε που «**ἐγένετο ἄφνω ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἦχος ὡσπερ φερομένης πνοῆς βιαίας... καὶ ὤφθησαν αὐτοῖς διαμεριζόμενα γλῶσσαι ὡσεὶ πυρός**» (Πραξ. Β' 2-3) (Ξαφνικά ακούστηκε μια βοή ἀπὸ τον ουρανό σαν να φυσούσε δυνατὸς ἀέρας... και φάνηκαν να μοιράζονται γλῶσσες σαν ἀπὸ φωτιά που μιά μιά κάθισε πάνω στον καθένα ἀπὸ αυτούς). Σαν βίαιος ἀνεμος που συμβολίζει τον δυναμισμό της ἐνέργειας εισέρχεται το Άγιο Πνεύμα μέσα στους Αποστόλους, τους καθαρίζει τη διάνοια, τους μετατρέπει σε ἐνθερμους κήρυκες του Ευαγγελίου.

Σαν φωτιά που ὄχι μόνο φωτίζει ἀλλὰ καίει συνάμα και καθαρίζει της καρδιές των ἀνθρώπων «**ἀπὸ πάσης κηλίδος**», ἀναδεικνύει αὐτὴ τη μέρα τους μαθητές σε σοφοὺς διδάσκαλους και τελικὰ σε ἀναμορφωτὲς της Οἰκουμένης.

Το ἴδιο το Άγιο Πνεύμα είναι «**θεὸς καὶ θεοποιούν**» (κάνει τους πιστοὺς θεοὺς κατὰ χάριν), λαλεῖ, ἐνεργεῖ, διαιρεῖ τα χαρίσματα. Μ'αὐτὸ το τρόπο ἐργάζεται μέσα στην Εκκλησία και με κάθε τρόπο μας καθοδηγεῖ στον ἁγιασμό και τη σωτηρία μας.

Εἶναι ο «**πανταχοῦ παρὼν καὶ τὰ πάντα πληρῶν, ὁ θεσσαυρὸς τῶν ἀγαθῶν και ζωῆς χορηγός**».

Εἶναι το Πνεύμα της Αληθείας, το τρίτο πρόσωπο της Αγίας Τριάδος. Αὐτὸ χαρίζει και κατευθύνει τη ζωή. Μέσα στην Εκκλησιαστικὴ μας ἱστορία, Αὐτὸ κατεύθυνε τις Οἰκουμενικὲς Συνόδους. Αὐτὸ διατηρεῖ ζωντανή την Ἱερή

Παράδοση. Αὐτὸ παρηγορεῖ. Αὐτὸ ἀποκαλύπτει. Αὐτὸ δυναμώνει. Αὐτὸ ζωογονεῖ ὄνειρα και ἐλπίδες. Αὐτὸ ἐμπνέει πίστη.

Το Άγιο Πνεύμα κατεύθυνε και κατευθύνει την ορατὴ και ἀόρατη Δημιουργία. Ο Παράκλητος κρατᾶει στα χέρια του και τη δική μας ζωή και ἱστορία. Μόνο Αὐτὸς μπορεῖ να μας ζωοποιήσει και να μας μεταμορφώσει.

Αλλοίμονο στην ἐποχὴ μας, ἀλλὰ πράγματα φαίνεται πως μας ἐπιρεάζουν. Άλλα πνεύματα πνέουν ἀνάμεσα σουσ ἀνθρώπους. Νοοτροπία εωσφορική, τάσεις

εγωιστικὲς, ἰδεολογίες ἀλλοπρόσαλλες και παράλογες. Ἐνα πνεύμα «κοσμικό», ἐφήμερο, ἀδιάφορο, βασιανιστικό. Αὐτὸ το διαβολοκινούμενο πνεύμα ὑποκινεῖ τα κατώτερα ἐνστικτα του σημερινού ἀνθρώπου, προκαλεῖ μῖσος για το συνάνθρωπο, λατρεία του «εγὼ» μας, ἀνταρσία ἐναντίον του Θεοῦ και των θείων ἐντολῶν του.

Τελικὰ ὁδηγεῖ τον ἀνθρώπο σε ἀδιέξοδο, ἀβεβαιότητα, ἀγωνία και καταστροφή.

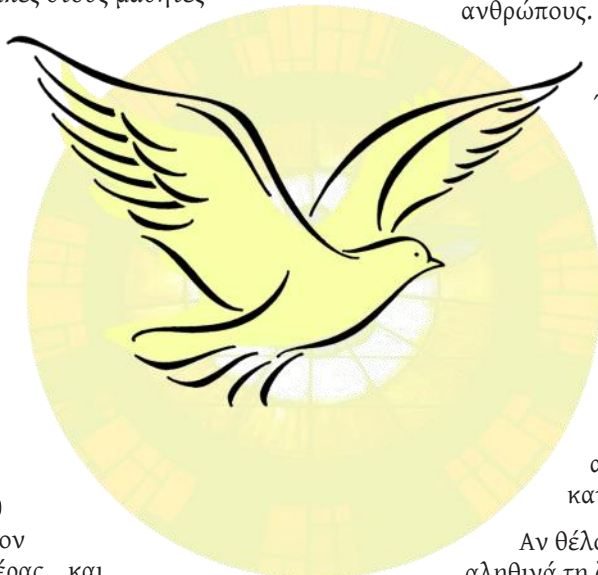
Αν θέλουμε ὁμως να ζήσουμε βαθιὰ και ἀληθινὰ τη ζωή μας, τότε πρέπει να ἐπικαλεστοῦμε τον «Παράκλητο». Να μας ποτίσει με το πνεύμα της ἀγάπης. Να μας ἐμπνεύσει την ἀλήθεια και την ἐλευθερία των «τέκνων» του Θεοῦ. Να μας φωτίσει την διάνοια στις δύσκολες στιγμές της ζωῆς. Να μας ἀποκαλύψει τα μυστικά του ουρανοῦ.

Να μας ὁδηγήσει στη σωτηρία μέσα ἀπὸ τη ζωή της Εκκλησίας μας.

Παντοῦ εἶναι το Άγιο Πνεύμα. Ὅμως κατ' ἐξοχὴν ἐργάζεται μέσα στο χώρο της Ορθόδοξης Λατρείας μας. Μέσα στην Εκκλησία μας το Άγιο Πνεύμα εἶναι ἡ Δύναμη που διαμορφώνει το εἶναι μας. Για τούτο ἡ Εκκλησία μας εἶναι ἡ μοναδικὴ ἐλπίδα που θα μας σώσει ἀπὸ το σύγχρονο κατακλυσμὸ.

Ἡ Εκκλησία συγκροτημένη ἀπὸ το Άγιο Πνεύμα, χαριτώνει και καλλιεργεῖ ὅλα τα προσόντα μας. Σωματικά, διανοητικά, ψυχικά. Δημιουργεῖ ἀκαίρες και ολοκληρωμένες προσωπικότητες, ικανὲς ν'ἀλλάξουν την ἱστορία της ἀνθρωπότητας.

Αὐτὴ τη ζωή της Εκκλησίας να ζούμε και μεῖς. Να γίνεται και δική μας ζωή. Να μας ἀγιάζει, να μας κατευθύνει και να μας σώζει.



Current Issues

Salvation: Do We Need It In Our Times? - Part A

The concept of Salvation is as long as the history of human-kind. The word means to be saved or liberated from danger or harm. It assumes great significance in the spiritual realm, particularly since the arrival of Jesus Christ on earth. After all, this was the purpose of His arrival, to liberate man from the bondage of the devil, sin and death.

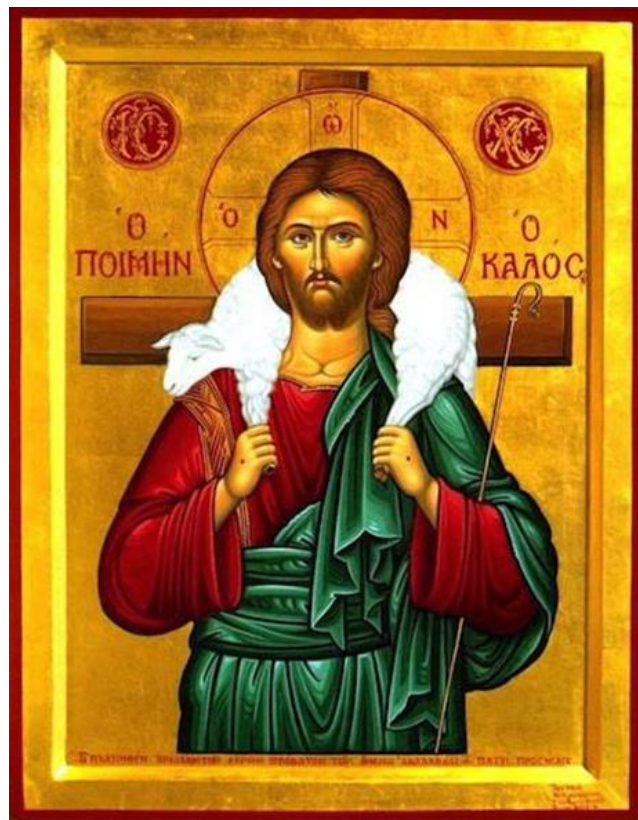
In the Orthodox Church, all aspects of salvation are covered by the following definition: After the fall of original man, communication between man and God was disrupted. Sin, corruption and death, became the dominant powers that controlled the life of man. Jesus Christ (*the Son of God*) came to earth to abolish these powers through His own sacrifice. From then on, every man, if he believes in Jesus as his saviour and lives according to the will of God, is liberated from the power of sin, corruption and death, and shall live in the presence of God in His Eternal Kingdom.

The Orthodox Church has a unique power that is not found in other religions. If we use today's criteria, its power can be called a form of medical science - it heals and cures the whole person [Mind (*Logic*), Heart (*Nous*) and (*Body*)].

Salvation is attained through an unceasing spiritual effort on the part of him/her, who wishes to attain that state. It consists of three steps:

1. Cleansing of the Soul and Body, of the passions, weakness of character, sinful past and sinful habits - (**Katharsis**),
2. Illumination of the Nous by the Holy Spirit - (**Photisis**), and
3. Divine State - (**Theosis**), where the person has abandoned his whole self to God. This state is usually associated with divine visions, transient divine sentiments, and unusual events (miracles), which confirm the complete healing of the person. This state had been experienced by the Prophets, the Apostles, the Fathers of the Church, the Saints who have fallen asleep, and the Saints who are still alive.

The Orthodox Church, and particularly its Fathers, is concerned with what will happen to the Christian person on earth. Since there is no Repentance in Hades, the person's salvation will have to be completed here, on earth. It is an edict of Orthodox theology, that the person needs as a minimum both Katharsis of soul and Illumination of mind, so he or she can enter the Kingdom of God. However, entry into the Kingdom has a more concrete



significance. In Orthodox theology all people, irrespective of religion, will see the glory of God at the second coming. But there will be a difference.

1. Those who are saved, will see the Glory of God as a Light - sweet, pleasant, and unending, whereas
2. Those who are condemned, will see the same Glory of God, as a light which consumes them, and as a fire burning them.

Since all people will see God in one way or another, it is the task of the Church how people will see Him. The task of the Church is to preach the existence of a True God, that He reveals Himself as light, that we all will see Him in His Second Coming, and to make sure its members see Him as a pleasant and unending light, and not as fire which consumes and burns.

In conclusion, those who want to see God as Light have to undergo this therapeutic treatment, which will have to begin and be completed in this life.

Let us pray to the Lord daily, to make us worthy to see God as Light wonderful and permanent in His Kingdom. future.





Από Τους Αγίους Της Εκκλησίας Μας

**Ο Άγιος Συμεών, ο δια Χριστόν Σαλός
Εορτάζεται 21 Ιουλίου**

Ο Άγιος Συμεών Άγιος Συμεών έζησε τον έκτο αιώνα μια ζωή θαυμαστή, γεμάτη σοφία και αγιότητα. Το μεγαλύτερο μέρος της ζωής του το έζησε με έναν φίλο του που λεγόταν Ιωάννης, και τον οποίο είχε συναντήσει σε ένα προσκυνηματικό του ταξίδι. Και οι δυο τους έγιναν μοναχοί τον ίδιο καιρό, και έζησαν μέσα στην έρημο για τριάντα χρόνια. Όταν όμως ο Συμεών έλαβε θείο μήνυμα να επιστρέψει στον κόσμο, ο Ιωάννης στενοχωρήθηκε πολύ που θα έχανε τον αγαπητό του φίλο.

Ο Συμεών πήγε σε μια πόλη που λεγόταν Έμεσα (Χομς, Συρία), σέρνοντας μαζί του με ένα σκοινί τον σκελετό ενός σκύλου. Ο αποκλειστικός του σκοπός ήταν να κάνει το έργο του Θεού, ενώ φαινόταν ότι ήταν τρελός. Οι Ασκητές τρελοί (αυτοί που η Εκκλησία τους ονομάζει «Δια Χριστόν Σαλοί» (τρελοί), έχουν σαν σκοπό της ζωής τους να σώζουν ψυχές με αυτόν τον παράξενο τρόπο. Αυτοί χρησιμοποιούν την τρέλα τους για δυο λόγους: **Πρώτα**, η παράξενη συμπεριφορά τους δημιουργεί στους ανθρώπους αισθήματα μετάνοιας, και **Δεύτερον**, κάνουν τον ηλίθιο, για να αποφεύγουν τους επαίνους των ανθρώπων.

Η Χάρης του Θεού έδωσε στον Συμεών την δύναμη να θεραπεύει και να μπορεί να προλέγει το μέλλον. Πεπατούσε στους δρόμους φορώντας λίγα ρούχα, και έπιανε φιλία με τις γυναίκες του δρόμου, τις οποίες συμβούλευε να μετανοήσουν και τις οποίες πλήρωνε για να μένει ο ίδιος αγνός! Πετούσε πέτρες σε εκείνους που έμπαιναν σε δρόμους κακής φήμης, καθώς και στους μάγους που όταν σταματούσαν τις μαγείες τους, θεραπεύονταν. Επίσης θέραινε και τους δαιμονισμένους. Όποιοι τον κορόιδευαν, αρρώστιαν από διάφορες αρρώστιες, και θεραπεύονταν μόνο όταν μετανούσαν. Μια μέρα, ο Συμεών κτυπούσε τις κολώνες ενός σχολείου, για να προειδοποιήσει τους κατοίκους της πόλης για την καταστροφή που ερχόταν. Σε λίγο άρχισε μεγάλος σεισμός, και το μόνο που έμεινε όρθιο ήταν οι κολώνες του σχολείου!

Ο Συμεών εργαζόταν για να εξαφανίσει την αμαρτία από την πόλη. Τους κλέφτες και τους διεφθαρμένους τους ανακάλυπτε με ευκολία, προσευχόταν δε και έκλαιγε γι' αυτούς, καθώς και για τις αμαρτίες όλου του κόσμου. Όταν πέθανε, τον έθαψαν φτωχικά, σαν ένα ξένο, χωρίς προσευχές κηδείας, και χωρίς κεριά ή ύμνους. Ένας Ιουδαίος, τον οποίον ο Συμεών τον έφερε στην πίστη του Χριστού, περνούσε την ώρα εκείνη από τον δρόμο όπου έθαβαν τον Συμεών, άκουσε ψαλμωδίες μιας αόρατης χορωδίας. Τότε φώναξε:

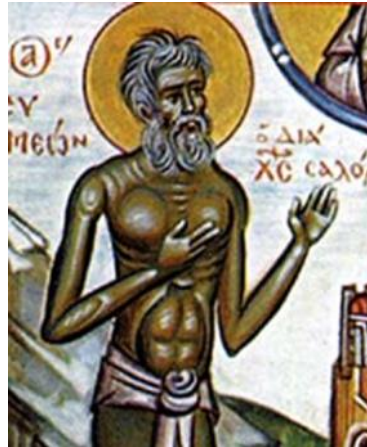
Ευλογημένος είσαι, Σαλέ (τρελέ), διότι χωρίς να συνοδεύεσαι από ανθρώπινους ψαλμούς, οι Ουράνιες Δυνάμεις σε τιμούν με τους δικούς τους ύμνους.

Τότε ο Ιουδαίος ανέλαβε να κηδευθεί ο Συμεών με τιμές. Αλλά όταν ο διάκονος κανόνισε την εκταφή του σώματος του, ο τάφος βρέθηκε άδειος. Έτσι ο Θεός ανταμείβει αυτούς που Τον αγαπούν με όλη την δύναμη της ψυχής τους!



From the Saints of our Church

**St Symeon the Fool for Christ
Commemorated on 21st July**



St Symeon, who lived in the sixth century, had a remarkable life filled with wisdom and saintliness. He shared a blessed friendship with a man called John whom he met on a pilgrimage. They became monks at the same time and went into the desert, sharing its isolation together for thirty years. When Symeon received his calling to re-enter the world, John found it difficult to part with his dear friend.

Symeon entered the town of Emesa dragging a dog carcass on a rope. His unique calling was to present a façade of foolishness to perform God's work. Ascetic fools have a special purpose: they save souls by behaving in unusual ways. Fools for Christ use folly for two reasons. First, their unseemly behaviour triggers reflection and repentance in people. However, they also feign stupidity to avoid the admiration of people.

The Grace of God granted Symeon powers of healing and foresight. He would roam the streets dressed with few clothes, and befriend prostitutes whom he paid to be chaste. He would throw stones at people entering dangerous roads and at magicians who would be healed upon abandoning their sorcery. He also healed the possessed. People who scorned him were struck with illness until they repented. Once, before an earthquake hit, Symeon was found whipping the pillars of the local school in an effort to warn the townspeople. When the earthquake came, the pillars were the only structures upstanding.

Symeon worked to eradicate sin from the town. Thieves and fornicators were found out by the wise fool, who prayed and wept for them and for the sins of the whole world.

When Symeon died, he was given the lowly burial of a foreigner. There was no funeral service for him – no candles or hymns.

A Jewish glassblower who had been converted by Symeon passed by at that moment. He heard the psalmody of a vast, invisible choir. The man cried out:

"Blessed are you, you Fool, because deprived of the accompaniment of human psalms, you have the heavenly Powers honouring you with their hymns!"

He saw to it that the saint was buried with honour. When the local deacon learnt of this, he arranged an exhumation only to discover an empty grave.



Questions & Answers

A clergyman of our Archdiocese answers ...

Why Do We Repeat So Many Set Prayers?

Our life is full of repetition. It makes us who we are. For example, we are alive because we repeat the basic function of breathing. Do we think about breathing? No! We just do it. So much of our day is filled by repetition. This morning you brushed your teeth, or bathed, as you have every day for the past many years. Teeth brushing has become a part of your life, a part of who you are.

Now let's look at prayer in the same light. If prayer is a part of your life, you have chosen it primarily to fulfil the desire to connect with our Lord.

Many of the Saints, when teaching about prayer, write in the same language as a physical fitness coach. They recommend consistent repetitive

application, a good routine, focus and patience. They remind us not to be too concerned about the content of the prayer. Our Lord already knows our needs, our pains, our joys, and our weaknesses. The Saints teach us that the goal is not the words, rather to open our hearts so the Lord can enter and rest in there. In achieving that, we will enjoy His presence, His love, His warmth, His joy and His energy. We will feel peace. We will trust Him and leave everything in His hands. Suddenly the words will not really matter. The question remains how to open our hearts.

What about our own words? Sometimes your heart will overflow with something and with your own words you will speak with the Lord. That is wonderful, but impossible to maintain over time. Over time using your own words for prayer, you will fall into a routine and repeat the same things each day. That too is good, but others have written much better prayers. That is why most often we read prayers written by others.

In communal prayer and in private prayer, we have been

taught to leave the actual words to the experts and focus instead on the condition of our heart to accept a visit from the Lord. Who are the experts? The experts are our Lord Jesus Christ Himself with the Lord's Prayer, David who wrote the 150 Psalms, St John Chrysostom who compiled the Liturgy we use, Saints such as Basil the Great, Ephraim, Damaskinos, Cassiane, Nektarios and so

many others who left us with an enormous wealth of material to use for prayer. Like good physical exercise, tooth brushing, or homework routine, we repeat these prayers, some daily, some weekly, and some annually. We use the prayers of these Saints over and over and they slowly become our prayers, their words become our words because we dipped

those words into our heart and sent them to the Lord as our own. In return, the Lord visits us and we connect to Him. Done! Repeat as regularly as possible!

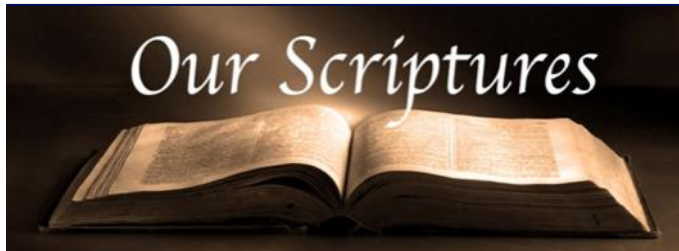
Finally, there is one little prayer that the Saints recommend for us to repeat constantly, all day, every day, wherever we are and whatever we are doing. They say to repeat it like we repeat breathing. Breathing results in life for your body. Yes? Well then, breathing this tiny prayer gives life to your soul. The deeper and more slowly and carefully that you breath this prayer, the more life and health you will give to your soul, the more connected you will remain with the ultimate source of Life.



“Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on me”.

† Fr N. S.





Gospel Reading July 2nd (Matthew 8:5-13)

Jesus Heals a Centurion's Servant

In this Gospel reading, a centurion pleads with Jesus in the town of Capernaum: “Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented” (v. 6). Jesus responds, “I will come and heal him”, but the centurion answers: “Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed!” (v. 8).



The centurion teaches us many lessons about the humility required in cultivating our personal relationship with Christ. We know that he was an important man having under his command one hundred soldiers. However, despite his status, he declares himself unworthy that Jesus should enter his home, knowing that Jesus can heal his servant by simply uttering a word from afar!

The Lord we are told, “marveled” at the humility of the centurion’s faith: “assuredly I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!” (v. 10). All the centurion’s good deeds and achievements up until that point had taught him to recognize that he was not worthy for the Lord to come to his home. He understood that he gave commands to human beings and they listened, but the Lord commanded storms, demons, diseases and even death itself!

What we must realise is that each of us, like the centurion, has our own personal servant, our heart, which we must care for. We must take heed that this servant (i.e. our heart) does not become our master and potentially even a cruel master. It can become our cruel master because it contains all our sinful desires, and can lead us into slavery where we are tormented by our passions such as gluttony, envy and anger.

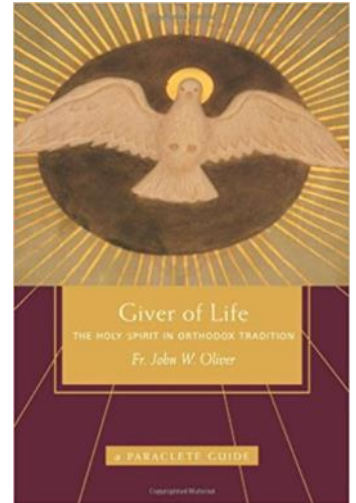
Our blessing as Orthodox Christians is that Christ can heal our heart through the mysteries of Confession and Holy Communion. What is required from us is the same humility as the centurion, so that we may pray from the depth of our heart the same prayer: “Lord, I am not worthy that you should come under my roof, but only say a word and my servant (*my heart*) will be healed”. And our hope then is that Christ replies to us like he did to the centurion: “Go your way; and so as you have believed, so let it be done for you” (v. 13). ❖



Giver of Life: the Holy Spirit in Orthodox Tradition, by Fr John W. Oliver.

Published by Paraclete Press, 2011.

In *Giver of Life: the Holy Spirit in Orthodox Tradition*, Father John Oliver provides an excellent study of the daily-recited prayer ‘O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth...’. He draws from Biblical and Liturgical tradition, theology, and the writings of the Church Fathers, who personally experienced and wrote in the revelation of the Spirit, to delve into the deeper meanings of this profound prayer to the Holy Spirit.



Each line of the prayer is examined in detail over nine chapters and the author covers a wide variety of topics, such as the development of Pneumatology, perspectives on world religions, and meditations on the Sacraments. The book slowly reveals the identity of the Holy Spirit, distinguishing it within the Trinity, and explains the Spirit’s significance and role in the salvation of the world.

Father Oliver also meditates on the fruit of the Spirit. He writes: “*Christian life is about becoming a new creation in Christ; it’s the daily renewal of the inward man. It is to follow Saint Seraphim’s advice to acquire not peace in and of itself, but the Spirit of peace.*”

The acquisition of the Holy Spirit is necessarily a slow process which requires patience, love, and a lived experience of the heart. Father Sophrony Sakharov of Essex is quoted at the end of the book in a beautiful explanation of this point: “*The Holy Spirit heals us from the consequence of the fall, regenerates us and hallows us. But all this He accomplishes in an invisible manner, like some marvellous diffident Friend Who does not want to burden us with gratitude to Him.*”

The author concludes his fine study with the observation, “*gradually, the Holy Spirit leads the willing soul through the struggle of purification, the sweetness of illumination, and the grace of perfection, until all that remains is union with God — the highest, most exalted, yet most natural state for which the human being was created. This is the life for which we were made; this is the life of the saints.*” ❖



A Cretan Freedom Fighter's Son Remembers

In 1975, the Ecumenical Patriarchate elected Metropolitan Stylianos Charkianakis to become the new primate of the Orthodox Church in Australia. He was then Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at the University of Thessalonica, as well as exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate over northern Greece mediating on behalf of the monastic community of Mt Athos with the local Greek governing bodies. This new calling to such a faraway place seemed to him totally out of his expertise. He did not even know where Australia was on the map!

Now after four decades, our Archbishop remembers his response to this invitation: *"They gave me three days to think about it. I was not the man they should send."*

Every day they asked him, and every day his response was the same.

"No, I am not the man for this. I am a man of letters, you know this."

Then on the third time they said that I was timid, that is why I did not want to undertake this calling.

"Timid!" I said to them, *"How can I be timid after having had such a father?"*

His father was one of the leading members of the resistance against the Germans during the battle of Crete in 1941. He was executed in front of his fellow fighters and in his own fields.

"My father represented whatever was most sacred to me and so after this challenge I knew the decision had been made for me. I would show those who thought me timid that I had to honour my father's memory."

Archbishop Stylianos narrates the story of his father's execution, a story embedded in his memory since he had experienced it as a young boy. The Germans knew of the elder Stylianos Charkianakis' resistance, but they also knew of his whereabouts and they waited for the moment to capture him. He knew he was a wanted man. Together with other resistance fighters from his town, as well as his civilian compatriots, his wife and young family, the resistance fighter had gone into the mountains to hide as the Germans approached. His elderly mother refused to

leave her home, stating that she would remain where she was, even though most of the townspeople had left.

When the Germans entered Rethymnon, Stylianos the elder, the resistance fighter, sneaked back into the town to check on his mother. The Germans had planes flying overhead and with their close-up cameras they could track the movements of those on the ground. Stylianos the elder was caught and rounded up with other members of the resistance group and made to march off to a distant field. There, the captives were made to dig their own graves with a small shovel, and then asked to take off their shoes so that the Germans could replace these with old boots instead.



As he bent over, Stylianos the elder knew that this was the last action prisoners were expected to do before being executed and so he grabbed the small shovel, knocked the guard down, and made a run for it through the citrus trees that were densely covering the field, which was his own. He knew it as well as he knew his own hand and so an escape would be easy. The Germans were afraid that he would get away from them and so they used a bomb to stop him.

The distraught mother, unaware of what had transpired, searched for her son, whom she had seen

being taken away with the other prisoners. She made him rabbit stew as it was his favourite food, and covered it with a towel, and with this casserole in her shaking hands she searched everywhere, asking if anyone knew where he was.

The news eventually spread that there had been a bomb let off to stop the fighter Stylianos Charkianakis the elder, who had tried to escape. Eventually the family approached a newly dug mass grave, and with sunken knees fell just before the mound. They knew their loved one was there because the family dog was sitting plaintively on the side, faithful to his master till the very end.

It is indeed an honour for us to have the son of a hero as our Archbishop, who himself is a spiritual hero, sacrificing 42 years, governing, serving and laying down his life for his flock, whom God and the Church entrusted him with.



Οι Άγιοι Πάντες

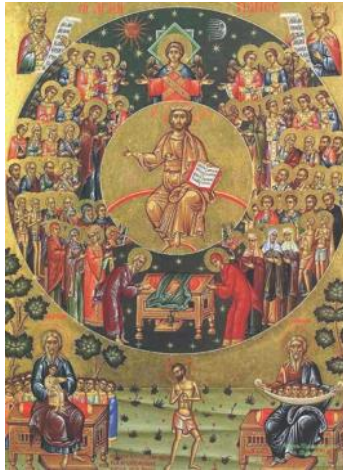
Η Αγία μας Εκκλησία μια εβδομάδα μετά τη γιορτή της Πεντηκοστής, τιμά και πανηγυρίζει την μνήμη **Πάντων των Αγίων**. Την ημέρα αυτή τιμάμε **όλους τους Αγίους, γνωστούς και αγνώστους, άγνωστους σε μας, γνωστούς όμως με μεγάλη δόξα και τιμή στο Θεό, οι οποίοι μαρτύρησαν σε διάφορα μέρη και τόπους.**

Τι ήταν οι Άγιοι; Ήταν από άλλο κόσμο; Ήρθαν από άλλον γαλαξία; Τους έκανε τα χατίρια ο Θεός; Όχι, ήταν άνθρωποι σαν και μας, με πάθη και αδυναμίες. Μόνο, που έζησαν με **μετάνοια, με εγκράτεια, με νηστεία, με προσευχή, με συνεχή πνευματικό αγώνα, με αγιότητα, με τη βίωση της χάριτος του Αγίου Πνεύματος, με τη συχνή συμμετοχή στα μυστήρια της Εκκλησίας με πίστη ανόθευτη και ακαταίσχυνη.**

Οι Άγιοι ζούσαν μέσα στον κόσμο, αγαπούσαν τους γονείς τους, τους συγγενείς και τους πλησίον, όχι όμως παραπάνω από τον Κύριο, με αγάπη ανόθευτη και καθαρή, χωρίς συμβιβασμούς και μοιρασιές.

Ολόκληρη η κτίση μαζί με όλους τους ανθρώπους της εάν αντιπαρατεθεί μπροστά τους, δεν θα βρεθεί κάτι που να αξίζει τόσο, όσο οι Άγιοι. Αυτοί απέδειξαν με τη ζωή τους την ύπαρξη του Θεού και **δόξασαν τον Θεό με**

την ομολογία τους. Αυτοί έδειξαν στους γύρω τους πόσο ψηλά μπορεί να φθάσει ο άνθρωπος, σε ποια ύψη αρετής και αυταπαρνήσεως και προσφοράς μπορεί να ανέλθει.



Οι Άγιοι ζουν ανάμεσά μας. Τους αισθανόμαστε ολοζώντανους να πρεσβεύουν για μας, να δέονται για τον κόσμο μας, να μας μεταγγίζουν τη Χάρη του Θεού. Γι' αυτούς ο Θεός δεν καταστρέφει τον κόσμο. Γι' αυτούς δεν εγκαταλείπει και όλους εμάς που παραβαίνουμε τόσο εύκολα το θέλημά του. Εκείνοι υπέφεραν τα πάντα, κι εμείς γογγύζουμε για τα ελάχιστα.

Ας εκτιμήσουμε τη ζωή τους κι ας μιμηθούμε το άγιο παράδειγμά τους. Να μάθουμε κι εμείς να αγωνιζόμαστε με υπομονή στο δικό μας αγώνα. Να σηκώνουμε αγόγγυστα τις δοκιμασίες μας με προθυμία και πίστη, με υπομονή και ελπίδα για να **καθίσουμε κάποτε κι εμείς μαζί με τον Κύριο στον ένδοξο θρόνο Του Θρόνου πλημμυρισμένοι στο φως και στη δόξα Του.** Γιατί η αγιότητα δεν είναι πολυτέλεια λίγων ανθρώπων αλλά γενικό προσκλητήριο προς όλους τους ανθρώπους κατά το «**Άγιοι Ξεσεθε, ότι Άγιος Εγώ Κύριος ό Θεός ύμών**» (Λευϊτ. ΙΘ', 2).



For Adults who Seek a Deeper Understanding of their Faith

The Greek Orthodox Christian Society and Orthodox Ladies Groups of Sydney hold Talks, Lessons and Bible Study groups weekly so that those who participate can:

- Learn to live our Orthodox Christian Faith within the life of the Church
- Have fellowship with one another
- Participate in voluntary mission work, such as Sunday Schools and Youth Groups, Camps/Retreats, distribution of Orthodox Christian books, Orthodox radio programmes, visiting the sick and similar activities.

Meetings are held at the Orthodox Mission Centre, 217 Bexley Rd Kingsgrove, for those 18 years and over, in several age groups:

- For women: 4 to 5:30 Saturday afternoons
- For men: 8 to 9:30 Saturday evenings.





Psalm 50

Psalm 50 (English Bibles, 51) is the only Psalm prescribed to be recited in its entirety during every celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Whether in the Liturgy of St Basil or St John Chrysostom, it is the prayer of a murderer and adulterer that the Priest must pray when the congregation commences chanting the Cherubic Hymn in preparation for the Great Entrance of the Holy Gifts. It is a Psalm in which, using the words of that great sinner David, one prays for God's Holy Spirit, mercy and forgiveness. It is this strong sense of the presence of the Holy Spirit that keeps this Psalm from being despairing.

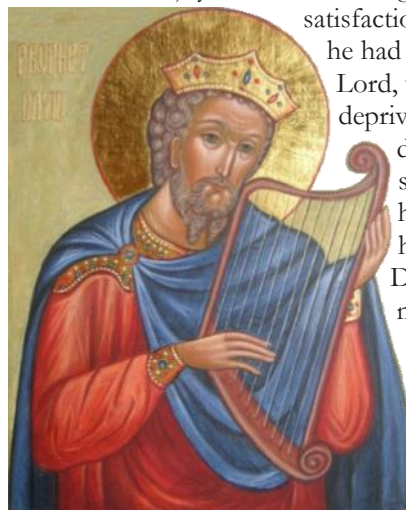
The Holy Spirit spoken of by David also, as St Luke writes in the Acts of the Apostles, is the same which descended on the day of Pentecost upon the disciples after the Lord's Ascension.

"Cast me not away from Your presence, and take not Your Holy Spirit from me" (v. 11).

From this verse, the Church has taken one of the most common and most encouraging petitions. If we ask that the Holy Spirit may not be taken from us, it follows that we must have received Him. We receive the Holy Spirit as Orthodox Christians in the Sacrament of Baptism. We learn clearly from these words that David was not deprived of the Grace of the All-Holy Spirit: it is not as though he asks to recover it after being deprived of it; rather, he begs not to be deprived of it, nor kept far from the Divine Care of God.

"Restore to me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit" (v. 12).

What David had not lost he begs to retain, that is, the Grace of the Spirit. What he had rejected he asks to recover; this is joy in the Lord. King David enjoyed every satisfaction, he is saying, when he had great confidence in the Lord, whereas now that he is deprived of it, he is also deprived of joy. It was slavery to pleasure, however, which robbed him of joy. Hence David begs that his mind may recover the former guidance, and after being subject to the passions it may once more regain control over them. ❖



Father Hadji-George the Athonite (1809-1866)

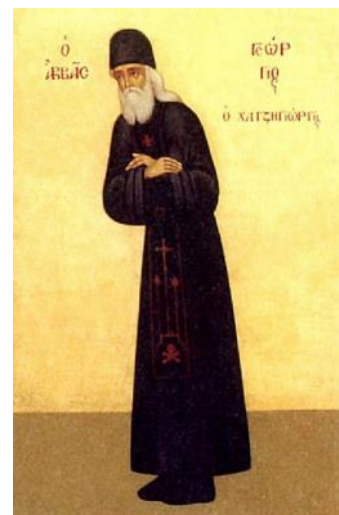
Cappadocia was the birthplace of many of our Faith's holy mothers and fathers. Even up to the twentieth century Cappadocia continued to bestow the blessings of saintly offspring on the Orthodox world.

One such blessing came in the nineteenth century in the form of the child Gabriel. From his youth, this blessed child would seek out the monastic life in the local caves, seeking counsel from the local ascetics, to spending hours (and days) in fasting and prayer. Miracles filled his early years. The Theotokos appeared to him in church one day and, taking him by the hand, led him to the icon of her Son, who granted him the ability to read and write.

Whilst still a child, he snuck onto a boat heading to the Holy Mountain and convinced the abbot of Gregoriou Monastery to allow him to stay. The young novice Gabriel would go on to become the venerable elder Hadji-George the Athonite. His fasting and ascetical feats were comparable to those of the 4th century desert fathers. Not even on Easter was his fast broken. His brotherhood would dye potatoes red in lieu of eggs, content with the spiritual joy received on the day of the Lord's resurrection.

Despite the elder's strictness, he committed himself to tireless pastoral work. He would advise pilgrims and his flock during the day, and would spend the night in church standing in prayer. Even the Tsar was known to seek advice from Elder Hadji-George. This, however, became the source of jealousy among those who failed to see the grace of God working in this holy man. Some plotted against him and he was eventually exiled from the Holy Mountain. He went to Constantinople and for the Greek faithful, became a spiritual fountain, counselling them in difficult times.

Saint Paisios brought Elder Hadji-George's life to contemporary prominence. His short book on the life of an amazing elder of recent times is well worth reading. ❖





What we Hear in Church



From the Holy Fathers...

Post-Communion Hymn of the Divine Liturgy

Εἶδομεν τὸ φῶς τὸ ἀληθινόν, ἐλάβομεν
Πνεῦμα ἐπουράνιον, εὐρομεν πίστιν ἀληθῆ,
ἀδιαίρετον Τριάδα προσκυνοῦντες· αὕτη γὰρ
ἡμᾶς ἔσωσεν.

We have seen the true light, we have received
the heavenly Spirit, we have found the true
faith, worshipping the undivided Trinity, which
has saved us.

It is not by chance that this hymn, which is
dedicated to the Holy Spirit and is derived from
the vespers service of Pentecost Sunday, is chanted
after Holy Communion on most Sunday and
weekday Divine Liturgies of the Church year.

St Gregory Palamas illuminates us in his twenty-
fourth homily *On the Appearance of the Divine Spirit
during the Day of Pentecost*. He points out that the
visible appearance of the Holy Spirit, in the form of
tongues “like fire”, indicates its oneness of nature
(συνφυῖα) with Christ, the Word of God, “for nothing
is closer in relation to the Word than the tongue.” He
continues by explaining, “the term ‘it sat’ (ἐκάθισεν), does
not only reveal the kingly character of the Holy Spirit but also
its undividedness because even though it is divided in
appearance according to its different powers and energies, the
whole of the Holy Spirit is present and acts, being shared
without division and wholly partaken of, according to the
example of a ray of sunlight.”

We all feel the warmth and benefit from the
illumination of a ray of sunlight, however the sun is
not divided.

This is a very important theological and dogmatic
truth. It is through the energy (i.e. action) of the
Holy Spirit that the gifts of wine and bread become
the body and blood of Christ. When we partake of
Holy Communion we are not just partaking of a
small part of Christ, but of His whole divine body.

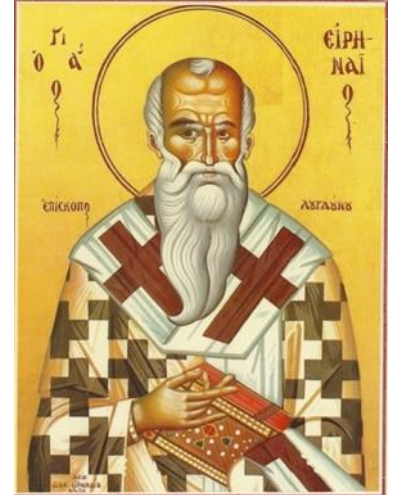
The divine power of the Holy Spirit is the same as
that of God the Father and God the Son, it is the
energy of the Holy Trinity. As Metropolitan
Ierotheos states in his book *On the Feasts of Our Lord*,
“Man’s salvation is partaking of the uncreated energies of the
Holy Trinity.”



St Irenaeus of Lyons

St Irenaeus of Lyons
was born c. 130 AD
in Asia Minor, and later
became the Bishop of
the city of Lugdunum
in Gaul (now Lyons in
France), where he
martyred around
202 AD.

In 1904 an old
manuscript was
discovered in an
Armenian church which
was proven to be a
treatise written by St
Irenaeus called “The
Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching.”

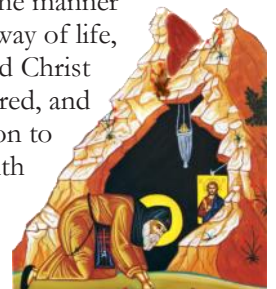


This remarkable discovery of a work which until then had
been considered lost, provided a great insight into the
way in which the Christians of the second century
understood, interpreted and lived their faith.

St Irenaeus himself lived alongside St Polycarp during his
youth. He tells us that St Polycarp was instructed by the
apostles, particularly St John the Theologian, and that he
even spoke with many people that had seen Christ
Himself. As a bishop in Smyrna, he would always
proclaim “that he had received this one and sole truth
from the apostles—that, namely, which is handed down
by the Church.” St Irenaeus became a key link in
preserving this truth by the apostolic succession which he
passed on to the Christians after his time.

In “The Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching”, St
Irenaeus masterfully synthesises the Old and New
Testament Scriptures and sets out the key points of
Christian doctrine: The Word of God and the Holy Spirit
were always present with God the Father before time and
throughout the Old Testament. The Word of God
became flesh, fully God and fully human, born of the
Holy Virgin, suffered in the flesh and rose from the dead,
accomplishing the salvation of the fallen human race.

St Irenaeus summarises by saying: “This, beloved, is the
preaching of the truth, and this is the manner
of our redemption, and this is the way of life,
which the prophets proclaimed, and Christ
established, and the apostles delivered, and
the Church in all the world hands on to
her children. This must we keep with
all certainty, with a sound will and
pleasing to God, with good works
and right-willed disposition.”





Fasting

Fasting is an integral part of our Orthodox Christian life, and is a spiritual exercise that, when we embrace it, teaches us self denial, strong will-power and discipline. The purpose of fasting is not simply to “give up things”, but rather to practice self-discipline in a day and age when we are “consumed” by food: with a plethora of diets, cookbooks, TV shows, eating disorders, medical intervention treatments etc, we often allow food to control us. We fast as a sacrifice, to improve our self-control - by being more disciplined with our physical desires, we become freer to use our life to serve others and not simply to serve ourselves.



Our Orthodox liturgical calendar demonstrates the Church's great wisdom, outlining prescribed fasting days for the benefit of our souls and bodies, to bring us in closer communion with the living God. We are reminded that "Man does not live by bread alone" (Mat 4:4). There are four main periods of fasting during the year where we abstain from meat, dairy, fish and sometimes oil:

- The Great Fast (Lent) - which begins seven weeks before Pascha (Easter).
- The Fast of the Apostles - which starts on the Monday eight days after Pentecost and ends on the 28th June, the eve of the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul. This fast varies in length from 1 to 6 weeks depending on when Pascha falls.
- The Dormition Fast - from 1st to 14th August.
- The Christmas Fast - 40 days from 15th November to 24th December.

In addition to the above periods, we fast every Wednesday (in remembrance of the betrayal of Christ) and Friday (His crucifixion and death), except between Christmas and Epiphany, during Bright Week (after Pascha) and during the week after Pentecost. We fast also on other important days during the year such as the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (Sept 14), the Beheading of St John the Baptist (Aug 29) and the eve of Epiphany (Jan 5).

Is it worth remembering that Adam and Eve were expelled from Paradise because of their lack of fasting, i.e. eating of the forbidden fruit. True fasting goes hand-in-hand with increased prayer and almsgiving. Fasting helps us to pray more fervently, and to have compassion for the poor and hungry. ❌

The Way of a Pilgrim

Hope Publishing House, 2nd Edition, 1989

The *Way of a Pilgrim* is a story of an 18th century Russian pilgrim who encounters and experiences the deeper meaning of prayer through his life of struggle and yearning for God. His deep interest and enlightenment began when one day he entered a Liturgy during the Epistle reading and heard the words “pray without ceasing” (1 Thess 5:17). The pilgrim made it his mission to understand their importance, and went to find a spiritual father.

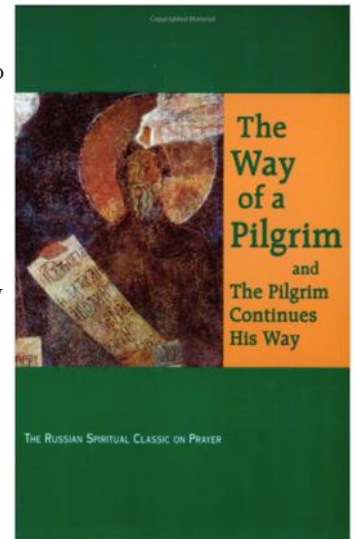
After some time, and by the grace of God, an old man guided him to a monastery and he began his everlasting mission in prayer. The pilgrim started from a basic level with the prayer rope and advanced throughout his life to greater heights.

This pilgrim is one without a permanent home, a little bit of bread in his knapsack, a copy of the Philokalia, a little pocket Bible, and the grace of God in his heart and soul. His guide is Christ and his eternal goal is to attain Christ. In one of his experiences he meets a wise priest who tells him: "For a pure and satisfying prayer one should chose simple but powerful words and repeat them fervently so as to get an appetite for prayer". The pilgrim grasped this message throughout his journey. When he practised the Jesus prayer all day and night, he became so accustomed to the prayer that it started to form roots inside him and it became almost automatic; engraved in the heart and soul.

This book contains a lot of advice and practical examples that help not only the pilgrim but the reader in their understanding of prayer. For example:

When you call on God's name, you weaken your enemies. Knowing this, do not cease to call on God's name for help. This is what prayer is, and Scripture says that we should pray constantly.

God listens to our prayers with love and grants us His blessings and abounding grace. I encourage all of you to read this amazing book that will guide you as pilgrims in the Christian world through a spiritual journey to paradise and eternal life. ❌



A wide range of Orthodox Christian books is available from the Orthodox Mission Bookstore, 217 Bexley Road, Kingsgrove.
Tel: (02) 9787 9779 E-mail: editor@lychnos.org
Internet: www.orthodoxbookstore.org.au

NEWS and VIEWS

Well-Known US 'Bible Answer Man' Converts to Orthodox Christianity

On Palm Sunday 9th April, US Christian radio host Hank Hanegraaff was chrismated into the Orthodox Church at St Nektarios Greek Orthodox Church in Charlotte, North Carolina. What makes this event so remarkable is that the former Protestant and author of 20 books, also known as the "Bible Answer Man", has been a major influence on many US Christians, routinely answering questions on the Bible and Christianity on his daily radio programme since 1989. On his conversion to Orthodoxy, he said: "I've been impacted by the whole idea of knowing Jesus Christ, experiencing Jesus Christ, and partaking of the graces of Jesus Christ through the Eucharist or the Lord's table".



Mr Hank Hanegraaff (centre), being received into the Orthodox Church on Palm Sunday.

Although Mr Hanegraaff's conversion was the subject of much controversy among evangelicals, it was publicly welcomed by many others, including Orthodox convert Rod Dreher, author of the influential book *The Benedict Option*, who wrote: "What astounding news. Many evangelicals seek the early church; well, here it is, in Orthodoxy".

Although Mr Hanegraaff's conversion was the subject of much controversy among evangelicals, it was publicly welcomed by many others, including Orthodox convert Rod Dreher, author of the influential book *The Benedict Option*, who wrote: "What astounding news. Many evangelicals seek the early church; well, here it is, in Orthodoxy".

The conversion of Mr Hanegraaff follows that of many others, including Fr Peter Gillquist, who led around 2,000 Protestants into Orthodoxy in 1987. Fr Gillquist, who fell-asleep in the Lord in 2012, wrote the following sobering words in his book *Becoming Orthodox*: "Over the years non-Orthodox people have asked me, as they're considering becoming part of the Church, "Do the Orthodox people really mean it? Are they really sold out to this faith, or are they simply Orthodox because their parents and grandparents were?" Of course that's for each Orthodox Christian to answer for himself or herself. I would say the greatest favour that we who are Orthodox can do is help those who are not yet Orthodox is to fully live this spiritual life. Those of us who entered into Orthodoxy with the Evangelical Orthodox Church in 1987, as well as the thousands of evangelicals who came in before or since through this or other jurisdictions, surely can agree that the Church has transformed us, affecting us far more than we have affected it. Being unworthy, we humbly thank the Lord for leading us here."



Mr Hanegraaff hosting his daily radio programme.

What a moving inspiration and example of faith that so many of our non-Orthodox brethren, both here in Australia and across the world, through their own personal study of the Bible and the Church Fathers, are coming to know the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church common to Christians East and West throughout the first millennium, the Church of the Saints and Martyrs, the True Church of our Lord Jesus Christ!

What a moving inspiration and example of faith that so many of our non-Orthodox brethren, both here in Australia and across the world, through their own personal study of the Bible and the Church Fathers, are coming to know the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church common to Christians East and West throughout the first millennium, the Church of the Saints and Martyrs, the True Church of our Lord Jesus Christ!



**Ακούτε το ραδιοφωνικό πρόγραμμα
«Η ΦΩΝΗ ΤΗΣ ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΙΑΣ»**

κάθε Κυριακή:

10:45 π.μ. στο 2MM-AM 1665

11:00 π.μ. στο 2ERA-FM 151.675 (scanner)

5:30 μ.μ. στο Galaxia FM 151.850 (scanner)

κάθε Πέμπτη:

3:30 μ.μ. στο Radio Club AM 1683

« ΛΥΧΝΟΣ »

**is a bimonthly publication of the
Greek Orthodox Christian Society,
under the auspices of the
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia.**

Phone: (02) 9787 9779.

E-mail: editor@lychnos.org

Internet: www.lychnos.org