



ΛΥΧΝΟΣ

A GREEK ORTHODOX PERIODICAL FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

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

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WEALTH AND POSSESSIONS

We live in an age where many things are assigned a dollar value. “Everything costs”. “Time is money”. The value of a business is determined by its dollar turnover. Natural disasters are rated according to the cost of the damage caused. Even people are rated on their net worth.

The Church puts forward Saints Kosmas and Damian (celebrated on 1st November) as examples of the correct attitude towards money and wealth. These brothers were well educated and became doctors. They travelled widely and healed all types of illnesses in people and animals. So why are they regarded as Saints? Because they did not accept any payment for their healing. They are known as unmercenary (Greek ἀνάργυροι – without silver coins).

St John Chrysostom categorically states that those who live luxuriously, indulging their desires, cannot be saved. The rich

man had two main faults: his life of luxury and his unwillingness to give to the poor.

St John states that “the rich man’s prosperity drowned his reasoning, and blinded the eye of his mind; and as if deprived of sight thereafter, he went on walking without knowing where he was going”. The problem of wealth is that we lose perspective, placing more value on created things rather than the Creator.

The second great fault of the rich man is he did not give to the poor. St John says “the rich man had his ship full of merchandise, and it sailed before the wind. He was hastening to shipwreck, since he refused to

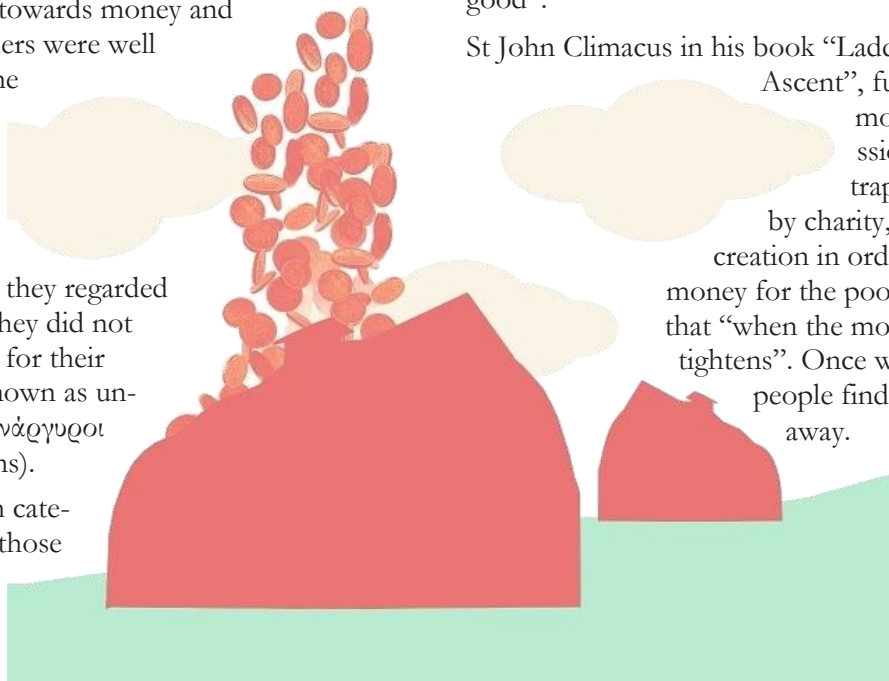
unload his cargo with discretion”. The rich man is headed for spiritual disaster, unless he gives his wealth away. Wealth is a burden, a problem to be dealt with and actively managed. St John added that the solution is to give without judging the other person. “The almsgiver is a harbour for those in necessity, a harbour receives all who have encountered shipwreck, and frees them from danger, whether they are bad or good”.

St John Climacus in his book “Ladder of Divine Ascent”, further explains how money and possessions are a spiritual trap. A person, stirred by charity, may justify wealth creation in order to provide money for the poor. St John warns that “when the money is in, the grip tightens”. Once wealth is generated, people find it hard to give it away.

We all enjoy some degree of wealth. The lives of Saints Kosmas and Damian show that struggling

against avarice is important spiritually. They actively avoided wealth. They knew that money had no real value. They showed that serving others in imitation of Christ and out of love for Christ, was of the greatest value. They knew that their good deeds would earn them eternal life with Christ.

Let us end with St John Chrysostom’s insightful definition of wealth and poverty; “The rich man is not the one who has collected many possessions, but the one who needs few possessions. The poor man is not the one who has no possessions, but the one who has many desires”.





Το Έπος του '40



Μέρες του Οκτώβρη πάλι και οι Έλληνες απανταχού της γης ακούμε τις καρδιές μας να σκιρτούν ξανά από εθνική υπερηφάνια.

Το Όχι του 40 κάνει να αναπηδήσουν μέσα μας το πάθος για την ελευθερία, η έξαρσις του εθνικού μας φρονήματος, η ευγνωμοσύνη μας στην Υπεραγία Θεοτόκο που προστάτευε τους Έλληνες αγωνιστές.

Η 28η Οκτωβρίου ήταν ένα κάλεσμα για θυσία. Στο κάλεσμα αυτό ανταποκρίθηκαν οι Έλληνες με απaráμιλλη αυταπάρνηση και ενθουσιασμό. Και φάνηκε η πανάρχαια αρετή των Ελλήνων να θυσιάσθουν **«υπέρ βωμών και εστιών»**.

Το πέρασμα του τόσων αιώνων δεν έσβησε τη μνήμη του ένδοξου παρελθόντος. Όμως ήταν και η ορθόδοξη Χριστιανική Εκκλησία μας που έπαιξε το δικό της σημαντικότερο ρόλο. Βλέπετε, οι ψυχές των Ελλήνων τρέφονταν με τα νάματα της ορθόδοξης πίστης μας. Αυτή έδωσε φτερά στους αγωνιστές του 40. Αυτή στάλαξε μέσα στις καρδιές των Ελλήνων ένα ακαταμάχητο μεταφυσικό πάθος για αρετή και αγιότητα. Είναι μια θαυμαστή σύζευξη η σχέση του Έλληνα με την ορθόδοξη Εκκλησία του. **Η Εκκλησία με το ανέσπερο φως της φωτίζει και φωτίζει τα ορθόδοξα τέκνα της στο δρόμο της θυσίας.** Γυμνάζει και λεππύνει τις συνειδήσεις των πιστών για αυταπάρνηση, για αφοσίωση σε ανώτερα ιδανικά, αντίθετα από το κοσμικό πνεύμα.

Δεν μπορούμε να ξέρουμε αν θα άντεχε ή αν θα επιζούσε ο Ελληνικός λαός, χωρίς την ορθόδοξη Εκκλησία του. Μπορούμε όμως με βεβαιότητα να πούμε πως άλλος θά'ταν ο χαρακτήρας του ήθους μας και του πολιτισμού μας, μακριά από την Ορθόδοξη πίστη μας. Βέβαια ούτε ο Θεός, ούτε η ορθόδοξη πίστη είναι αποκλειστικά προνόμια των Ελλήνων.

Όμως όταν το έθνος μας, αυτός ο μικρός σε

αριθμό αλλά πλούσιος σε ιστορία λαός, γεμάτος πνευματικές ανησυχίες και ευγενείς οραματισμούς, θέλει να ζήσει ελεύθερος και ειρηνικός και οι γείτονές του δεν τον αφήνουν, έρχονται και του επιτίθενται και απειλούν τα αγαθά που τού'δωσε ο Θεός, τότε είναι φυσικό να πιστεύουμε πως Αυτός ο Θεός του παραστέκεται και τον βοηθά να μην τα χάσει. Γιατί αν χαθούν, παύει να είναι άνθρωπος με υπευθυνότητα και αξιοπρέπεια. Αυτή η αξιοπρέπεια του λαού μας, πλημμυρισμένη με το άρωμα της Χριστιανικής πίστης του, προβάλλει περήφανα μέσα από το έπος της Αλβανίας.

Μιά τέτοια Ενατένιση του 1940, φέρνει άθελα στο νου το ηρωικό φρόνημα και την αξιοπρέπεια των μαρτύρων της Εκκλησίας μας.

Για την ελευθερία της πίστης τους, για τη δόξα του Θεού, **με την Ελπίδα της Ανάστασης να τους φλογίζει τα στήθη**, οι Χριστιανοί παράδιναν τη ζωή τους. Δεν προσκυνούσαν τον κατακτητή.

Ένας λαός που φοβάται το θάνατο, δεν μπορεί να μεγαλοουργήσει. Ένας λαός που είναι αφοσιωμένος στις ηδονές του κόσμου αυτού, δεν μπορεί να υψώσει τη ψυχή του και να κερδίσει την αξιοπρέπεια και την ελευθερία του.

Έτσι λοιπόν ο Ελληνικός λαός, διαποτισμένος στη ψυχή από τέτοιο υπέροχο φρόνημα αυταπάρνησης, διψασμένος για αθανασία, και γαλουχημένος με τα ορθόδοξα νάματα της Εκκλησίας του, ήξερε να θυσιάσει και να νικήσει και να προσφέρει και σε μας υπόδειγμα για μίμηση.

Καθώς ο Οκτώβρης φέρνει μπροστά στα μάτια μας τη μνήμη αυτών των αγωνιστών, αυτών των μαρτύρων, ας σκύψουμε εμείς οι σημερινοί Έλληνες όπου γης, ευλαβικά το γόνυ και ας υποσχεθούμε πως τη θυσία τους αυτή όχι μόνο τη θυμόμαστε, αλλά αν χρειασθεί — και πόσο τώρα την χρειαζόμαστε — θα την μιμηθούμε.

Ο Χ Ι



Current Issues

In Defence of our Faith

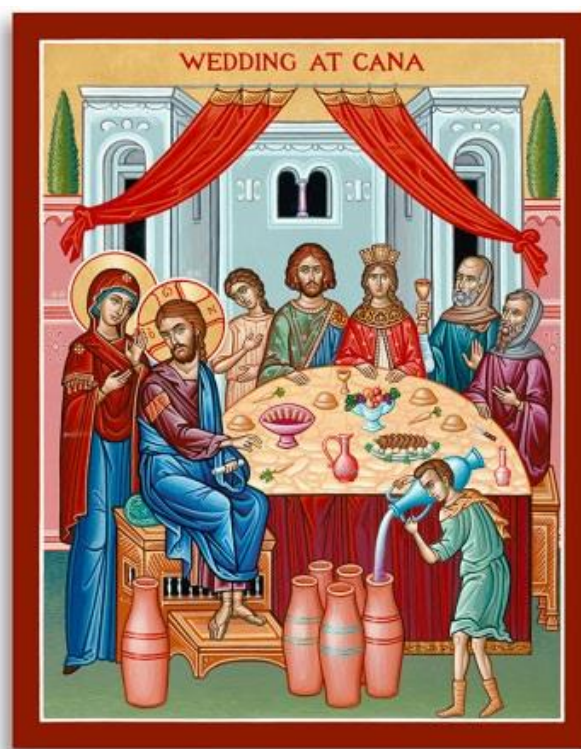
The Government has recently announced that between September 12th and November 7th, Australians will be voting in a postal plebiscite concerning the question of re-defining marriage, so as to allow two persons of the same gender to marry. The slogan of the campaign is “Marriage Equality”. As citizens, we will have to decide according to the principle values each one holds. For the Christian, the matter becomes a question of conscience, as he/she would either have to support those who are asking for change, so as to attain equal status in society as the majority have enjoyed so far, OR whether to obey the law of God, which is contrary to such marriage, and reject the new proposal. The detailed Bible references the Christian will depend on for making a decision are: Lev 18:22, Lev 20:13, Matt 19:4-9, 1 Cor 6:9, Gen 19:1-11, Rom 1:26-27, 1 Tim 1:10, Heb 13:4.

However, when one delves into the issue, by following the print and electronic media on the matter, one becomes not only apprehensive, but seriously disturbed, by what is proposed to follow beyond the plebiscite. Advocates of the new form of marriage, insist that the plebiscite should only concern itself with marriage equality. This excuse is not that easily accepted, since the average Australian is well-educated (the majority up to a high school standard), not to mention the massive rise in the numbers of university graduates over the last 20 years, with increased critical powers, and therefore able to see around corners.

With the knowledge of plans put out by the marriage-equality campaign so far, and now in the public domain, and with the light of objectivity, one sees that there are massive plans of social engineering to follow. Let us mention the most glaring ones, so well described by Paul Kelly, (The Australian, August 22, 2017).

There will be problems of religious freedom, for Churches, clergy and lay people. Changes in school curricula, such as Safe Schools (e.g. sexuality taught from year three, and children to behave and dress like the opposite sex if they so feel), restrictions on religious charities and changes in business and civic Institutions.

Freedom of speech will be curtailed, and those speaking in support of traditional marriage will be pursued. According to law professor Patrick Parkinson (University of Sydney): “In certain sections of the community, there is now deep hatred expressed of people of faith”. Does this imply the removal of religion from the Public Square?



Marriage equality may well be achieved, great attention having been paid around the ceremony of marriage, but protection of religious freedom, and freedom of speech, conscience, thought, and association are all ignored, due to the failure of both Coalition and Labor parties in their draft bills so far, to protect religious freedom, once same-sex marriage is legislated. So, religious freedom in Australia becomes a second-class issue, whereas in international law it is a “first-order” right!

It is rumoured that the Yes vote may win the day, but a recent Newspoll shows that 62% of people voted for protection of religious freedom (Paul Kelly, The Australian, August 22, 2017).

If the social changes described do in fact materialise, Australian Society will be left with a rift right down its middle, because the religious and conservative masses will not be willing to sacrifice their faith for the sake of appearing progressive. After all, the Christian Church is a religious organisation, with which the majority of our population identify, and our religious convictions do not disqualify us from engaging in discussion on such important matters.

Από Τους Αγίους Της Εκκλησίας Μας

**Ο Άγιος Λογγίνος
(Εορτάζεται 16 Οκτωβρίου)**

Ο Άγιος Λογγίνος ήταν εκατόνταρχος (αξιωματικός) στο στρατό του Πόντιου Πιλάτου, και ήταν παρών στη Σταύρωση του Ιησού Χριστού. Ο Ευαγγελιστής Ματθαίος αναφέρει ότι όταν ο Λογγίνος και οι στρατιώτες που φρουρούσαν τον Ιησού είδαν τον σεισμό, την εξαφάνιση του Ηλίου, και το σχίσμο της μεγάλης κουρτίνας που χώριζε το έξω μέρος του Ναού του Σολομώντος από τα «Άγια των Αγίων», φοβήθηκαν πολύ και είπαν, «Αληθινά, αυτός ήταν Υιός του Θεού» (Ματθ. ΚΖ' 54). Η πίστη του Λογγίνου βεβαιώθηκε και έγινε πραγματική όταν έγινε μάρτυρας της Αναστάσεως του Κυρίου.

Οι Αρχιερείς των Ιουδαίων δωροδόκησαν τους στρατιώτες που φύλαγαν τον τάφο του Ιησού, για να πουν ότι οι Μαθητές Του έκλειψαν το σώμα του, και ότι δεν αναστήθηκε. Ο Λογγίνος και δυο από τους στρατιώτες της φρουράς όμως έλεγαν παντού την αλήθεια, και αντί χρημάτων που πήραν οι υπόλοιποι, αυτοί βαπτίσθηκαν από τους Αποστόλους, και κήρυτταν ότι ο Ιησούς Χριστός πράγματι αναστήθηκε. Ο Λογγίνος μάλιστα παραιτήθηκε από αξιωματικός του στρατού, και ταξίδεψε στην Καππαδοκία, και εκεί κήρυττε το Ευαγγέλιο. Μετά αρκετό καιρό, έφυγε από την πόλη και ζούσε μαζί με τους δυο συντρόφους στρατιώτες, σε ένα χωριό κοντά στη Καισάρεια, όπου ζούσαν με προσευχή και πνευματική άσκηση. Οι Ιουδαίοι που μισούσαν τον Λογγίνο, έπεισαν τον Πόντιο Πιλάτο να πάρει από τον Αυτοκράτορα Τιβέριο ένταλμα καταδίκης σε θάνατο του Λογγίνου, δια λόγους προδοσίας. Το Άγιο Πνεύμα πληροφόρησε τον Λογγίνο για τι θα πάθαινε, και τον έδωσε μεγάλη αντοχή, ώστε να πάει ο ίδιος να συναντήσει τους στρατιώτες που έρχονταν στην Καισάρεια να τον σκοτώσουν. Οι στρατιώτες δεν τον γνώριζαν, αλλά ο Λογγίνος τους πήρε στο σπίτι του, τους έκανε πλούσιο τραπέζι, και τους είπε ότι γνωρίζει τον Λογγίνο και ότι θα τον διατάξει να έρθει αμέσως.

Ο Λογγίνος ντύθηκε έναν ωραίο άσπρο χιτώνα, και είπε και στους δυο στρατιώτες που ήταν μαζί του να κάνουν το ίδιο, και τους ανήγγειλε το χαρμόσυνο μαρτύριο που τους περίμενε. Ύστερα απεκάλυψε στους δημίους του ποιος ήταν, ενώ αυτοί έμειναν άφωνοι από την αγάπη και την φροντίδα που τους δέχτηκε. Εκείνοι δεν ήθελαν καθόλου να τον πειράξουν, όμως ο Λογγίνος με την αγάπη του και την ευγένεια της ψυχής του, τους έπεισε να κάνουν αυτό για το οποίο ήρθαν. «Δεν υπάρχει καλύτερος τρόπος να με ευχαριστήσετε για την φιλοξενία μου, από το να με στείλετε το γρηγορότερο στον Κύριο μου, τον οποίο επιθυμώ πολύ να τον δω». Ο Άγιος Λογγίνος και οι δυο σύντροφοι του αποκεφαλίσθηκαν, και κέρδισαν έτσι «τον στέφανο της Δόξης και του Μαρτυρίου».

From the Saints of our Church

**Saint Longinus
(Commemorated 16th October)**

Saint Longinus was the centurion under the command of Pontius Pilate who was present at the Crucifixion of Christ. According to the Holy Evangelist Matthew, 'when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, "Truly this was the Son of God!"' (Matt 27:54). This faith of Longinus was perfected when he became a witness to the Resurrection of our Lord.

When the chief priests bribed the soldiers, Longinus and two of his soldiers refused to keep silent but instead received baptism from the Holy Apostles and began to proclaim Jesus Christ as the Resurrected Lord. He abandoned his high military rank and travelled to Cappadocia, preaching the Gospel. After some time, he withdrew to a village near Caesarea, where he lived a life of prayer and asceticism with his two followers.

The Jews, who despised Longinus, arranged for Pontius Pilate to obtain a decree from Tiberius Caesar which ordered his execution for treachery against his imperial authority. Longinus was enlightened by the Holy Spirit of his approaching martyrdom, and went out with joy to meet the soldiers who were sent to Caesarea to kill him. Not recognizing him, the executioners asked

if he knew where Longinus lived. Although he was fully aware of their intentions, he invited them warmly to his house and prepared a banquet for them, telling them that he knew Longinus and would send for him immediately.

Longinus dressed himself in a festive white garment and called his two fellow-ascetics, announcing to them the joyful news of their impending martyrdom. He revealed his identity to the executioners, who were astounded because of the great love with which he had received them. Despite their great reluctance, Saint Longinus convinced them to carry out their orders, saying "There are no means by which you can better thank me for my hospitality than to send me quickly to my Lord, Whom I have long desired to see". Saint Longinus and his two companions were then beheaded, thus obtaining the glorious crown of martyrdom.



Questions & Answers

A clergyman of our Archdiocese answers ...

How is it possible to believe in God in the 21st century?

Many do not understand the concept of *faith*. They think that Christians are weak intellectually, believing with insufficient evidence. Atheists often adhere to an unproven underlying assumption, that reason is the highest way to find truth. They have not understood that *faith* is actually a very positive attribute.

Jesus thanked God the Father for not just revealing His truth to the intellectuals, but for sending His gift of faith to the humble. He said, *"I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes"* (Matt 11:25).

Bishop Kallistos Ware, in his introduction to the book "The Art of Prayer", talks about three elements of man - body, soul and spirit. He goes on to say that body, soul and spirit each have their special way of knowing: the body, through the five senses; the soul through intellectual reasoning; the spirit can come to a mystical perception that transcends man's ordinary rational processes.

What is implied in your question is as follows. Science has made very impressive progress. Atheists often claim that faith in God is a feeble attempt to "fill in the gaps". In previous centuries thinkers would, for example, study the amazing beauty and order of nature, but could not explain how such order could have come about just by chance, so concluded there must be a creator. Belief in God filled this "gap". Science then progressed: for example, Charles Darwin came up with the clever idea of "survival of the fittest". Science had filled this gap, so there was no longer a need to invoke the concept of a creator. Your question implies that now that we have reached the 21st century, virtually all the gaps have been filled by science.

Thorough knowledge of science can lead to a different conclusion. Yes, science may have offered a plausible explanation for some gaps, but as science has progressed it has found other gaps. For example, modern physics has realised that it has no explanation for the amazing "bio-friendliness" of the universe. There are about 30 basic parameters (e.g., the speed of light, Planck's constant), which if they were a little different to their present values, would mean no life and certainly no humans. Scientists have done calculations and realized that if the speed of light or one of these other constants was only 1% more or less, or if the laws of physics did not happen to be exactly what they are, then there would be no life. The earth would not be continuously orbiting around the sun, there would be no



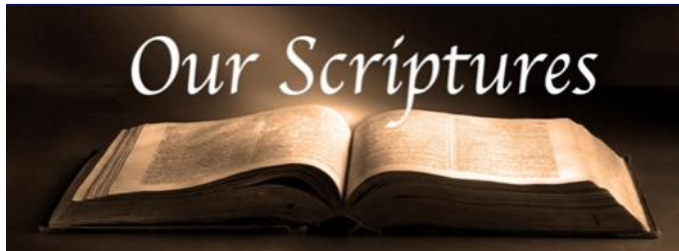
carbon, therefore no DNA, and thus no life.

Another example is the so-called mind-brain debate. Even in the 21st century, no atheist has been able to come up with a convincing explanation of what philosophers call the "hard problem of consciousness". We are aware that we exist, we can feel. An atheist believes that this can be "reduced" to physical processes occurring in our brains, that somehow out of the complex wiring of our brains there "emerges" self-awareness. They seem to start with the assumption that there is no God, they admit that currently we have no physical explanation for self-awareness, but conclude that there *must* be some physical explanation, that one day science and our imagination will progress and we will explain this gap as well. We in the Church however have received from God revelation that every human being has an immortal and eternal soul, which is closely connected with his body. The Church has a deep knowledge of human nature - man unites with his existence the tangible and intangible world.

Space does not permit me to give other detailed examples. We could have also referred to modern scholarly research on the "genre" of the Gospels: they do not have the features of "legend" but of "eye-witness accounts".

In conclusion, an unbiased thinker can be convinced that it takes more faith to be an atheist than to be a Christian. We need to be humble and strive against the passions, we need *philotimo*, and to look into our faith with an open mind. We need to strive to truly pray and live the life of the Church. St Silouan was speaking from experience when he used to say, "It is one thing to know about God, and another to know God". Jesus said, *"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God"* (Matt 5:8).

† Fr D. K.



Gospel Reading Sunday October 22 (Luke 8:26-39)

A Demon-Possessed Man Healed

Galadara was one of ten cities known as Decapolis east of the Jordan river. In this arid place, a demon-possessed man went about among the tombs where he resided, naked, tormenting himself and those around him. In fear, the locals had him shackled in chains but the ferocity of the demons with which he was possessed was too great to be tamed.

Encountering this tormented soul, Jesus asked him his name: "Legion" was the reply. A legion was an armed regiment numbering 6000 soldiers, indicating the man had been possessed



by many demons. Nevertheless, the presence of Jesus brought them all to their knees and the demoniac fell at Christ's feet pleading, "what have I to do with you, Jesus, Son of the Most-High God?" While the multitudes thought Jesus to be a mere man, or a great prophet at best, the demons proclaimed His divinity and superiority over them.

On being commanded to come out from the man, the demons realised they would be banished to the depths of Hell. They begged leave of Christ to enter a nearby herd of pigs. From this plea, we witness the naked shamelessness of the demons, who dare to enter even into the "unclean" swine. Permitted this request, the swine became possessed and, numbering about two thousand, violently rushed down a steep hill to be drowned in the lake. This shows that Jesus exercises divine providence and authority over all creation, for as soon as he gave the pigs over to the demons, they immediately destroyed them. Were they not prevented from harming the man they possessed, they would have done the same or worse to him.

This passage concludes when the inhabitants of that region go out to see what just happened. Seeing the demoniac calm and clothed sitting by Jesus, they were seized with great fear of Christ's power and begged Him to depart from them. Fulfilling their request, He departed the region and left as a witness him who was freed from the demons to tell what great things God had done for him, indicating not only His power, but His meekness too.

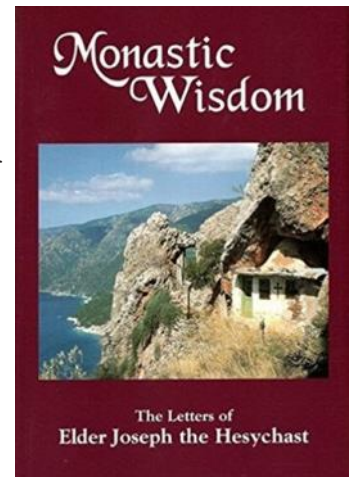
We too can find ourselves far from God and walking amid the tombs of dead works. In such a state, we are not only tormented ourselves, but affect those around us. Until we repent and come to the realisation of Christ's commandments, we can never be free. The message of this Gospel passage is that change is required in all our lives.



Monastic Wisdom: the Letters of Elder Joseph the Hesychast

Published by St Anthony's Greek Orthodox
Monastery (Arizona US), 1999.

Elder Joseph the Hesychast (†1959), a renowned holy elder of our times, is associated with the renewal of monastic life on Mt Athos, whereby many of his spiritual children and grandchildren have been instrumental in renewing six of its twenty monasteries. One spiritual child, Elder Ephraim, became Abbot of Philotheou Monastery, and later founded several monasteries in North America, including St



Anthony's Monastery in Arizona, the publisher of *Monastic Wisdom: The Letters of Elder Joseph the Hesychast*.

The book is divided in two parts: part one contains eighty-one letters of the Elder addressed to his spiritual children, and part two contains the single 'Epistle to a Hesychast Hermit'. Themes covered include the Jesus prayer, the struggle to attain Heaven, and the right way to love God. The letters contain the essentials of the spiritual life, as well as the therapies that can heal us from spiritual disease and set us on the path of purification, illumination, and perfection.

Elder Joseph writes that an un-submissive spirit requires hard mental work, the pain of repentance, and contrition in order to find humility. From humility, we can understand that reproaches and insults benefit us spiritually. When we are proud, everyone seems bothersome and bad. When we truly humble ourselves, everyone seems saintly.

To seek God's grace, we must endure temptations and afflictions no matter how they come. Temptations are medicines and healing herbs that cure our visible passions and our invisible wounds. Consolation in such trials should not be sought in people, but only in God. Whoever has truly found the way of the Lord, has learned that these afflictions are gifts from God. Such a person eagerly waits for afflictions to come, because he/she knows they are purified through these, and by enduring these, is illumined and can behold God.

The letters provide advice and spiritual guidance that is of invaluable assistance to all who have set out on the path to deeper repentance, prayer, and spiritual growth.



Words from the Pulpit

Prior to his retirement, he served as a Greek Orthodox parish priest for many decades in Australia. Every year his strong voice would deliver powerful commemorative services on behalf of those who had fallen for their faith and their homeland, whether it was for our Greek National Day, or for 28th October, or in memory of other significant events in Greece's troubled history. Father's voice was melodic and strong, and deeply emotional. His words affected all his parishioners, young and old. For the younger members, the events that were being commemorated were distant and story-like, yet his words penetrated our minds and hearts. We were the generation that had grown up in peaceful times. Wars were not part of our immediate experience and, yet, when Father told the story of the sacrifice that our forefathers had made, we were deeply affected.

What was it that made his telling so different to the stories we had heard from our own parents or grandparents? I had often wondered and once did ask him about his memories of the war. He responded, in his matter of fact way, 'you can never forget these things, never!' He revealed that as an 18 year old youth he had seen horrific scenes of dead corpses decaying in heaps. These bodies were those of his compatriots, caught up in a senseless war because of the civil and political unrest that had been generated by external and internal dark forces after the Second World War in Northern Greece. Despite becoming ill and not being able to eat for two weeks after having to bury these bodies, he had been humbled by what he had seen. In his own words he stated, 'I believed that all these people could not have died for nothing; they died for us'. He was a young man and could have seen these events in a negative way and yet he chose to not



allow himself to become cynical about humankind. He consciously chose to side with hope, where others of his generation had become so disillusioned that they did not want to believe in anything. He was subsequently ordained a priest after a few years and then took the migrant journey that many of his compatriots had taken. In his new home in Australia he had to contend with many problems such as adjustment, a young family, and the demanding position of a parish priest among people who had had similar experiences. He understood his parishioners deeply, and encouraged them to maintain a positive remembering through his sermons. That was why his words were so affective, not only for those who had had similar experiences, but also for us who were the children of that troubled migrant generation. His words reflected a life lived according to the conscious decision to remember in a positive way the events of the past. It was this decision and his faith that had given him the strength to move on from a war-ravaged past. 'Without faith', he would often say, 'life is very difficult to bear.'

Το θαύμα του Ταξιάρχη

Ο Άγιος Αρχάγγελος Μιχαήλ είναι ο ενδοξότερος Ταξιάρχης των Ασωμάτων Δυνάμεων και Αρχιστράτηγος του Θεού. **Η θαυματουργική, ανάγλυφη εικόνα του Ταξιάρχη**, που βρίσκεται στην Ιερά Μονή του Μανταμάδου της Λέσβου είναι μοναδική στο είδος της.

Το ιστορικό της αναφέρεται γύρω στο 10^ο με 11^ο αιώνα τότε που οι Σαρακηνοί πειρατές λήστευαν και έκαιγαν τα νησιά του Αιγαίου. Εκείνη την εποχή, κάποια άνοιξη την ώρα που ο αέρας γέμισε με τις γλυκές ψαλμωδίες των μοναχών του Μοναστηριού, τρομεροί πειρατές όρμησαν άγρια και έσφαξαν όλους τους μοναχούς με απάνθρωπο τρόπο, εκτός από ένα καλόγερο της Μονής, το Γαβριήλ, που κατάφερε να ξεφύγει και να σκαρφαλώσει στη στέγη του Ναού. Οι πειρατές όμως τον αντιλήφθηκαν και την ώρα που τον πλησίασαν και ήταν έτοιμοι να τον κατασπαράξουν, **με θαύμα**, η σκεπή μετατράπηκε σε φουρτουνιασμένη θάλασσα και μέσα από αυτή πρόβαλε πελώριος **ο Ταξιάρχης**, με σπάθα που έβγαζε φωτιές ορμώντας εναντίον τους. Εκείνοι έντρομοι τράπηκαν σε φυγή.

Ο Γαβριήλ ένιωσε δέος και ιερό φόβο. Το θαύμα του προξένησε μία έντονη επιθυμία να αποτυπώσει την μορφή, που του έσωσε τη ζωή.

-Ταξιάρχη μου, παρακάλεσε, μεσίτευσε στον Κύριο ν' αναπαύσει τους αδελφούς μου. Κι



εμένα αξίωσε με ν' απεικονίσω την εξαίσια μορφή σου.

Αμέσως, σαν να φωτίστηκε από τον αρχάγγελο, πήρε ένα σφουγγάρι, μάζεψε μ' αυτό ευλαβικά το αίμα των μοναχών σε μια λεκάνη, το ανακάτεψε με ασπρόχρωμα και άρχισε να πλάθει την εικόνα του.

Μία αόρατη δύναμη οδηγούσε τα χέρια του και γρήγορα σχημάτισε με τον πηλό το πρόσωπο του αρχαγγέλου Μιχαήλ. Το πρόσωπο εκείνο που είδε στη σκεπή του ναού, τις φτερούγες και την πύρινη ρομφαία, ενώ με το λιγιστό πηλό που του απέμεινε σχεδίασε και το υπόλοιπο σώμα.

Από τότε, αν και πέρασαν εκατοντάδες χρόνια, **η ανάγλυφη εικόνα του Αρχαγγέλου**, με το σκούρο αιμάτινο χρώμα της, **παραμένει αναλλοίωτη, ζωντανή, απείρακτη** από τον νόμο της φθοράς και του χρόνου.

Μνημείο αιώνιο του θαύματος του Ταξιάρχη.

Από τότε, εκατοντάδες είναι τα θαύματα τα οποία επιτελεί η χάρη του.

Πολλά έχουν καταγραφεί σε δεκάδες βιβλία ενώ ως ένδειξη ευγνωμοσύνης, πολλοί είναι αυτοί που αφήνουν αφιερώματα γύρω από την εικόνα του, θερμή ευχαριστία τους για το θαύμα που τους έκανε ο Ταξιάρχης ή την ελπίδα τους για εκείνο που προσμένουν.



SPEAK UP *for* MARRIAGE

GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AUSTRALIA

<http://marriage.greekorthodox.org.au>

From The Old Testament



The Visitation of Abraham (Gen 18:1-8)

In this passage, Abraham revealed the aspects of his character that led to God promising the land of Canaan to his descendants. These characteristics were his hospitality and his spiritual discernment.

Abraham was sitting at noon in front of the door of his tent (v. 1). He did this to extend his hospitality to anyone travelling past. This alone is extraordinary: the intensity of the heat of the Middle East at midday indicates the level of holiness that Abraham had achieved, being prepared to suffer on behalf of others in a way which was then unprecedented.

It is his spirit of hospitality that is manifest throughout this passage, a spirit St John Chrysostom describes as “intense”. He notes that Abraham, old as he was at that time, ran to welcome and to bow down before his guests (v. 2). Furthermore, when Abraham receives his visitors, he brings water for drinking and for the washing of feet, bread, cakes, meat and milk and butter (v. 4-8). This level of hospitality makes clear the love and humility of Abraham.

Abraham’s high level of spiritual discernment can be seen in his reaction to God when He appears before him in the form of three angels. He was immediately able to recognise God, a sign of the spiritual heights he had achieved even at that stage before the Binding of Isaac.

God appeared as three angels to Abraham, who addressed them as “Lord” (v. 3). He recognised that God is one, even though He appeared before him as three persons. The full revelation of God as Holy Trinity would have to wait centuries later until the coming of Christ to be manifest, showing even from such an early time Abraham’s remarkable faith and discernment.



Holiness In Our Times



St Sophia of Kleisoura (1883-1974)

Also known as Saint Sophia the New Ascetic of Kleisoura, Sophia Saoulidi was born in Pontus, Asia Minor, in 1883, at a time of growing hostility between the Turkish and Greek populations. Her married life was short-lived following the disappearance of her husband and the death of her new-born son. These events led Sophia to turn completely to God and marked the beginning of her ascetic way of life.



In 1919, Sophia fled the tense environment in Turkey. Upon her arrival to Greece, the Mother of God appeared to her saying, “Come to my house. I am in Kleisoura”. Sophia went to a monastery in Kleisoura, located in Kastoria, West Macedonia, dedicated to the Birth of the Mother of God. She remained there for the rest of her life, although she was never tonsured a nun.

Sophia’s life in the monastery was characterised by poverty, humility and strict asceticism. She lived in the kitchen near the fireplace. When it rained, water would drip on her. She slept for two hours each night, devoting the rest of her time to prayer. People would see her ragged appearance and give her clothes or money which she would pass onto the poor. She fasted very strictly, only eating oil on the weekends.

Despite being labelled “Crazy Sophia” by some, she was granted many spiritual gifts, including the ability to know the names and troubles of people who came to see her before they would speak. People subsequently came to see her from all over Greece.

In 1967 Sophia became very ill with open sores in her stomach resulting in great pain. She would say, “The Panagia will come to take away my pain. She promised me”. She later explained how Panagia, Saint George and the Archangel Gabriel appeared to her and performed surgery on her.

On the 6th of May 1974, Sophia passed away. Her grave is at the monastery in Kleisoura, Kastoria, where many people venerate her relics each day. She was canonised by the Church on 4th October 2011, a powerful reminder to us, that those who humble themselves will be exalted. Her annual feast day is the 6th May, the day of her repose in the Lord.



What we Hear in Church



From the Holy Fathers...

Dismissal Hymn of St Demetrios the Great Martyr

Ἦχος γ'

Μέγαν εὐρατο ἐν τοῖς κινδύνοις, σὲ ὑπέρμαχον ἢ οἰκουμένη, Ἀθλοφόρε τὰ ἔθνη τροπούμενον. Ὡς οὖν Λυαίου καθεῖλες τὴν ἔπαρσιν, ἐν τῷ σταδίῳ θαρρύνας τὸν Νέστορα, οὕτως Ἄγιε, Μεγαλομάρτυς Δημήτριε, Χριστὸν τὸν Θεὸν ἰκέτευε, δωρήσασθαι ἡμῖν τὸ μέγα ἔλεος.

The whole world has found you as a mighty champion in dangers, O victor, who rout the nations. Therefore as you destroyed the pride of Lyaios in the stadium by giving Nestor courage, holy great Martyr Demetrios, implore Christ God to grant us his great mercy.

Saint Demetrios, the Great Martyr and Myrrh-gusher, originated from Thessaloniki from an aristocratic family. He lived in the years of Roman Emperor Diocletian (3rd – early 4th century). Demetrios was very fond of his fellow citizens as he was virtuous. He is believed to have been the one of the first catechists of Christianity.

He served as an officer in the Roman Army in the service of Diocletian, and so excelled in this role, the Emperor declared him Duke of Thessaly. Diocletian did not know that Demetrios was a Christian. However, this was soon made known to him, and Diocletian called Demetrios before him. The Emperor advised him to renounce Christianity and enjoy the privileges and honours he would offer if he rejected Christ. But Demetrios told the Emperor that only faith in Christ brings eternal life.

Angered, Diocletian ordered his soldiers to torture Demetrios and then to throw him into a cell full of scorpions, so that the Saint would die slowly and agonizingly from their bites.

However when Demetrios entered that dark cell, he prayed to Christ and miraculously the poisonous insects disappeared.

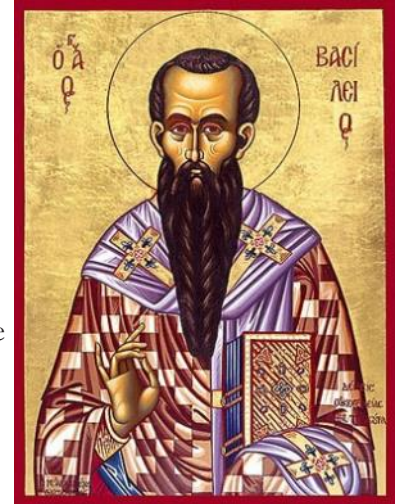
In those days the Emperor of the Western Roman Empire, Maximian, came to Thessaloniki, as guest of Diocletian. He had amongst his guards a very strong man, Lyaios. Maximian arranged for fights to the death in which Lyaios would fight anyone who dared accept his challenge to combat against him. No one had the courage to stand before him in the arena. Saint Demetrios had a friend, Nestor, who was of small stature. So he went to the prison where Demetrios was and asked for his blessing to fight Lyaios. The Saint blessed his friend and predicted his victory. So it happened, Nestor killed Lyaios. Diocletian, then outraged, killed Nestor and Demetrios with his spear.

From the tomb of the Saint, housed in the present-day Church of Saint Demetrios in Thessaloniki, flows a myrrh which has miraculous qualities; which is why Saint Demetrios is also called Myrrh-gusher.

Saint Demetrios is considered the patron saint of Thessaloniki. With his help, the city was saved many times from the raids of the Avars, Slavs and Bulgarians. His feast day is commemorated on October 26th.

St Basil the Great – on Humility

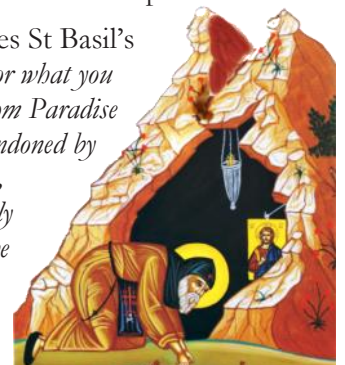
In his beautiful homily *On Humility*, St Basil the Great exposes with his artful oratory man's disobedience, and reveals the folly of human glory. This is of course to show that God's glory is the only true glory - the glory which man should still possess had he not chosen his own path towards false glory.



St Basil draws a direct line between pride and death, telling us that arrogance is poison to the soul. Absalom and Goliath, along with many other Old Testament characters and stories, are used to illustrate this point. Even those things which appear to be good at face value, such as wisdom and prudence, are criticised by St Basil, who tells us that men often misappropriate these gifts of God, allowing them to lead to vainglory - an artificial, imagined glory. In this homily, St Basil places a microscope over the vanity that infests our lives concluding at one point: *"and so in a thousand ways, we may learn how frail is the quality of human wisdom, how petty and lowly, rather than sublime and great."*

For St Basil, the cause of our pride is our disobedience to God. Man suffers because he can never be satiated with the temporal satisfaction of his own abilities and thoughts. In his ignorance, man does not remember that only God will give him the comfort he seeks. He builds a false paradise for himself where he reigns and where he trusts he can build happiness. He would do better to humble himself, repenting before God with tears of contrition, in order to find true paradise.

The following quote captures St Basil's message: *"Recognize yourself for what you are; another Adam cast forth from Paradise (Gen. 3: 24), another Saul abandoned by the Holy Spirit (I Kings 16:14), another Israel cut off from its holy root. Thou standest, by faith; 'be not highminded, but fear' (Rom. 11:20)."*





The Antidoron

The Antidoron (ἀντιδωρον) is the small piece of bread that is distributed by the priest at the end of a Divine Liturgy service.

The literal translation of the word Antidoron means 'instead of the Gift'. The Gift, of course, refers to the sanctified portions that are blessed during the Liturgy, and prepared during the proskomedi service in Matins, to be used for the Body of Christ for Holy Communion.

Although it has been blessed, the Antidoron has not been consecrated, and consists of the remaining bread portions taken from the same prosforo (bread offering).

It is imperative that we have fasted properly to partake of Holy Communion. This is also required of us when we are receiving the Antidoron, regardless of whether or not we have received the Holy Mysteries. In no way does the Antidoron take the place of Holy Communion.

When a person approaches the priest at the end of the service, it is customary to place his right hand over his left with the cupped palms held open. The Antidoron is placed into our hands, and then the one receiving the offering bends down and piously kisses the priest's hand in thanksgiving. The Antidoron should be consumed carefully and respectfully taking care not to drop any crumbs. Of course, young children should be assisted and shown how to do this, learning to respect the blessed bread and to pick up any pieces that may have fallen.

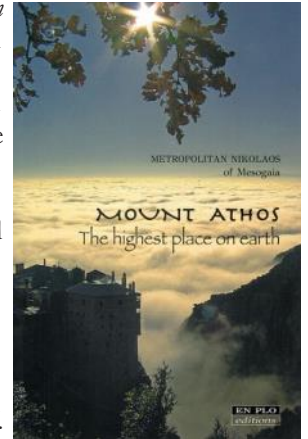
Everyone that attends the Divine Liturgy, Orthodox and non-Orthodox alike, may receive the blessed bread as an expression of love and the desire for fellowship in Christ. In the Divine Liturgy, we pray for all men and all women, hoping to bring them to the truth of Orthodoxy.

Antidoron may also be taken home for use during the week. It is a pious custom for Orthodox Christians to begin the day, after their morning prayers and before eating, by consuming a small piece of dried Antidoron and drinking Agiasmo or blessed water.



Mount Athos: The highest place on earth, by Metropolitan Nikolaos of Mesogaia. Published by En Plo Editions, 2008

Mount Athos: The highest place on earth describes Metropolitan Nikolaos' personal experiences of the Holy Mountain. The book captures the authentic experience of Mount Athos, with vivid descriptions of the rough landscape, stories of holy monks, and explanations of Athonite traditions such as the 'Avaton' rule. The author presents himself as a young and educated man who is fascinated by asceticism, but is reluctant to experience it himself. He struggles with his own calling



to monasticism from the outset, and only upon returning to the world from his first pilgrimage does he begin to see its vanity. As one monk had said to him, pointing to the villages opposite the Athos peninsula: "There, is hell. Here, is paradise."

This book, interspersed with spiritual insights, is beautifully written, and the Metropolitan's self-reflections often describe his spiritual journey more than his physical one.

He describes his interactions with various fathers, among them St Paisios and Elder Ephraim Katounakiotis, as well as his observations of hidden strugglers of monasticism and fools for Christ. About a humble monk who lived in the monastery of Saint Paul as a guest-master, the Metropolitan relates the following: "After twenty five years he still wore the same shoes he had had when he first became a monk, the same habit and cassock... During the thirty years or so he had spent in the monastery he might have uttered no more than thirty words of worldly conversation. A few years ago they had found him in his cell sitting on a chair... with the prayer rope warm in his hands, his last breath breathed, leaving us with the sublime remembrance of a cenobitic hesychast."

The lives of these fathers are a witness to the Athonite tradition and they greatly contrast the reason and logic that the author is acquainted with. This short book is recommended for those who want to experience and understand the Holy Mountain and the ascetic tradition through the eyes of an honest pilgrim.

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NEWS and VIEWS

Supplicatory Service to the Bride of God and Protectress of Marriage



The icon "Bride of God and Protectress of Marriage" at the front of the church during the service

On Sunday 17 September, around 1300 Greek Orthodox faithful and clergy of Sydney gathered together at the Church of St Nicholas, Marrickville, to pray with one voice a supplicatory service (παράκληση) to the Mother of God, entreating her intercession for the national postal ballot on redefining marriage. A new icon of the Mother of God, dedicated with the name "Bride of God and Protectress of Marriage" (Η Θεόνυμφος και Προστάτις τοῦ Γάμου), was painted for the historic occasion, along with a new supplicatory canon written by the noted hymnographer Abbess Isidora of Saint Hierotheos Monastery, Megara, Greece. The service was presided by His Grace Bishop Iakovos of Miletopolis, who addressed the faithful, imploring Panagia's help and protection in this difficult time. After the service, clergy and laity lined-up to venerate the icon, taking over 2.5 hours for all to file past.



His Grace, Bishop Iakovos, venerates the new icon of Panagia



Over 1300 faithful attended the church of St Nicholas to entreat Panagia



The choir chanting the specially-written supplicatory service

Our Orthodox Christian response to the current debate on redefining marriage is succinctly expressed in the words of His Eminence, Archbishop Stylianos: "Our Orthodox view is contrary, not because we have hostile feelings towards our fellow citizens who think or decide differently, but because the proposed alteration to the traditional form of marriage, (between a man and a woman) is diametrically against the sacredness of marriage and of the family, as taught by the Christian faith and Greek Orthodox Tradition."

For the benefit of our readers, the apolytikion (dismissal) hymn of the supplicatory service is as follows:

Ἦχος α'. Τῆς ἐρήμου πολίτης

Μυστηρίου τοῦ Γάμου, ὡς προστάτις Θεόνυμφε, Κόρη Παναγία παράσχου, τοῖς πιστοῖς τὰ ἐλέη σου· καὶ ῥῦσαι ἐκ παθῶν φθοροποιῶν, καὶ ἔργον ἐξ ἀτόπων καὶ αἰσχρῶν, τοὺς φυλάττειν ἐκζητοῦντας ὅσα ζητεῖ, τὸ θεῖον Εὐαγγέλιον. Χαίροις Χριστιανῶν καταφυγῆ, Χαίροις τοῦ κόσμου στήριγμα· Χαίροις τῆς Αὐστραλίας ἡ φρουρός, καὶ τεῖχος τὸ ἀπόρρητον.

As the Protectress of the myst'ry of marriage, O Bride of God, * grant thy mercies unto the faithful, and make haste to deliver us * from all corrupting passions of the flesh * and every wound of sin within our souls; * for we seek with all our strength to preserve and keep * the Gospel's saving commandments. * Rejoice, thou refuge of Christians. * Rejoice, thou support of the whole world. * Rejoice, thou guardian and impregnable wall of Australia.

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

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