



# ΛΥΧΝΟΣ

A GREEK ORTHODOX PERIODICAL FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

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

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## SAINT PAUL THE DEFINITION OF AN APOSTLE

One of the first names that comes to mind when reflecting on the role of an Apostle is St Paul. This is not a mere coincidence, but rather recognition of St Paul's amazing accomplishments in establishing the Church through his Apostleship. So how is it that such a persecutor of the Church and enemy of the first Christians, transformed from Saul of Tarsus into the great Apostle Paul?

His conversion is well documented multiple times in the Acts of the Apostles. It records that just like the twelve disciples, St Paul was commissioned to be an Apostle by Jesus Himself, as he was on the road to Damascus to arrest Christians. But the just Lord met him on the way and made him His own chosen vessel. Up until that time, St Paul applied his zeal for God to divide and separate: thereafter, his only purpose was to build up and strengthen.

However, "whom the Lord loves He chastens" (Heb 12:6), and the Lord certainly chastened St Paul. In his letter to the Corinthians, St Paul writes that Apostles are last of all, a spectacle to the world, fools for Christ's sake, weak, dishonoured, reviled, persecuted and slandered (1 Cor 4:9-10). The irony is that after his conversion, his new name, Paul, literally meaning small in Latin, would also become synonymous with this definition of an Apostle. But St Paul was very precious in the sight of the Lord, ready to be refined and polished like a diamond in the rough

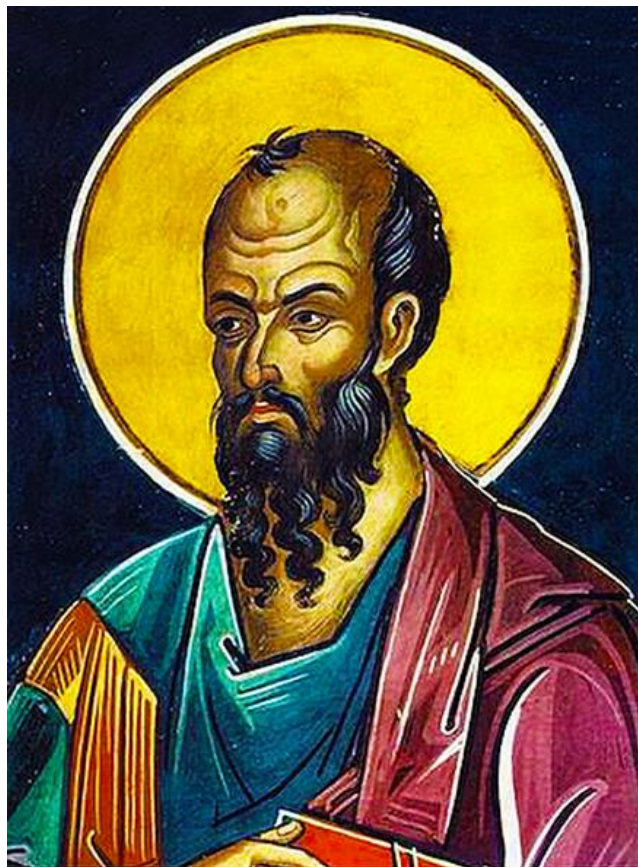
with every beating, lashing, stoning, imprisonment, shipwreck, danger from Jew and Gentile, land and sea, and also from hunger, thirst, cold and lack of sleep (2 Cor 11:23-27).

And yet with all these misfortunes, he still managed to plant over a dozen churches in various cities and lands, making his influence on the early Church second to

none. This is so evidently captured in the New Testament where 14 of its 27 books ascribe their authorship to St Paul. Even non-believers consider him to be one of the most influential people of all time, precisely because he made Christianity accessible to non-Jews. In so doing, he shed its light into every crack and crevice of the Roman Empire, which eventually embraced it and propagated it to all of the western world to be followed by billions of people throughout the ages.

With the coming feast of the Apostle Paul (29<sup>th</sup> June), we are reminded how difficult it is to be a Christian in a world that does not know Christ. St Paul teaches us that the best way to

overcome our trials and tribulations is by following the pattern of his life - through Christ. He carried Christ's name into the world as a witness, he carried the marks of Christ in his body (Galatians 6:17), and to the Lord's word: "I will show him how much he must suffer for my name's sake" (Acts 9:16), St Paul simply answered: "for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil 1:21).



# Η Μία, Αγία, Καθολική και Αποστολική Εκκλησία



**Σ**το «Σύμβολο της Πίστεως» ομολογούμε τη πίστη μας και, «εις μίαν, αγίαν, καθολικήν και αποστολικήν Εκκλησίαν». Η ομολογία αυτή για τον Ορθόδοξο πιστό είναι όχι απλώς επιβεβλημένη αλλά και αυτονόητη. Διότι από την εποχή των δύο πρώτων Οικουμενικών Συνόδων (4ος αιών.) οι άγιοι πατέρες υπερασπιζόμενοι την αλήθεια και την ακεραιότητα του Ορθόδοξου δόγματος εναντίον των αιρέσεων, θέσπισαν το Σύμβολο της Πίστεως.

Έτσι η Εκκλησία των αγίων Αποστόλων του Κυρίου, που τυπικά εγκαινιάστηκε την ημέρα της Πεντηκοστής, συνεχίζει από τότε να παραμένει η Μία, Αγία, Καθολική και Αποστολική Εκκλησία.

Αυτή που θεμελίωσε με το αίμα Του ο Χριστός και που ο Ίδιος διεκήρυξε πως «**πύλαι Ἰδου οὐ κατισχύσουσιν αὐτῆς**» (Ματθ. ΙΣΤ' 18). Δηλ. Ο θάνατος και οι δυνάμεις του κακού δεν θα υπερισχύσουν και δεν θα κατανικήσουν την Εκκλησία που θα είναι αιώνια και αθάνατη (Ερμ. Κ.Δ. Παν. Τρεμπέλα).

Μέσα σ' αυτή την Εκκλησία ο άνθρωπος πραγματοποιεί τον ύψιστο σκοπό της ζωής του που είναι η σωτηρία και η θέωση.

Δυστυχώς στις μέρες μας η αγία Εκκλησία του Χριστού όπως και όλοι οι Ορθόδοξοι πιστοί, βάλλονται από πλήθος εχθρών. Η οργανωμένη αθεΐα. Το κοσμικό φρόνημα της σύγχρονης εποχής που παρασύρει τους ολιγοπίστους, ο θρησκευτικός συγκρητισμός που θέλει να μας πείσει πως όλες οι θρησκείες είναι το ίδιο και τελικά ο οικουμενισμός που επιμένει όλες οι θρησκείες, χριστιανικές, αιρετικές, σχισματικές, αλλόθρησκες, ακόμη και ειδωλολατρικές, να ενωθούν και να κάνουν μια ΠΑΝ-ΘΡΗΣΚΕΙΑ.

Το ότι η ειδωλολατρεία μας οδηγεί, σε πρωτόγονο σκοταδισμό, το ότι η αίρεση είναι πλάνη και απέχει

πολύ από την αλήθεια, δεν φαίνεται να ενοχλεί και πολύ τους υποστηρικτές του οικουμενισμού και του συγκρητισμού.

Αυτοί επιμένουν έσθιθελικά να μας ενώσουν, να μας κάνουν ένα, ίσως επειδή έτσι θα μπορούν να μας ελέγχουν και να μας κυβερνούν όπως θέλουν. Όμως εμείς απαντούμε πως κάθε προσπάθεια ένωσης των ανθρώπων που γίνεται χωρίς Χριστό, είναι καταδικασμένη σε αποτυχία.

Ο Χριστός μας το είπε ξεκάθαρα: «**Χωρίς ἐμοῦ οὐ δύνασθε ποιεῖν οὐδέν**» (Ιωαν. ΙΕ' 5). (Χωρίς

εμένα δεν θα κατορθώσετε τίποτα). Ο Κόσμος δεν μπορεί να ενωθεί έξω από τη Μία, Αγία, Καθολική και Αποστολική Εκκλησία.

Και εδώ προβάλλει απαιτητικό το ερώτημα προς όλους τους Ορθόδοξους: Άραγε στη σημερινή εποχή πόσοι από μας γνωρίζουμε τις μεγάλες και σωτηριώδες αλήθειες της Αγίας μας Εκκλησίας;

Γιατί η πίστη μας πρέπει να έχει άμεση σχέση με τη ζωή μας. Τρεφόμεσθε με τα Άγια Μυστήρια. Καλλιεργούμε Ορθόδοξη συνείδηση. Έτσι μπορούμε να αντιστεκόμαστε και να αντιδρούμε στους εχθρούς της Εκκλησίας που προαναφέραμε.

Όταν οι Ορθόδοξοι της σήμερον στραφούμε πίσω προς το πνεύμα των Αποστόλων, των Μαρτύρων, των Πατέρων και των Αγίων, τότε μόνο θα κατορθώσουμε να διαφυλάξουμε ακέραιη και αμόλυντη την παρακαταθήκη της Ορθόδοξης πίστης μας, που αυτοί μας παρέδωσαν.

Τότε και η Εκκλησία, η Μία, Αγία, Καθολική και Αποστολική, θα αποβεί η κιβωτός της Σωτηρίας που με αγάπη θα μπορεί να φωτίζει και να σώζει τον κάθε πλανημένο και ταλαίπωρο άνθρωπο που αναζητά με ειλικρίνεια την Αλήθεια.



# Current Issues

## Words do not Change Reality

Every citizen born and raised in a Country where his forefathers lived and established themselves for centuries, loves and defends the place of his birth, and feels happy and secure only there. This is particularly true for the Greek people, who since antiquity the ideal was that their Country was superior to father, mother and anything else. The Spartan women when sending their sons to war, on giving them the Shield, the major armour of protection, were saying to them – “Come back either with it (as victor), or on it (as dead)”. The moral of the words being, do not come back defeated. Victory was the only option in a war. And certainly, victory was the outcome in most conflicts the various Greek states were involved in – from antiquity until the war of liberation of the whole Nation from the Ottoman Empire in 1821.

The idea of the superiority of the country of birth is very old, in fact since the time of Ancient Egypt. The Earth was referred to as the mother of every person, and in fact was considered as the source of curing all illnesses, since medicines and other healing physical procedures were derived from it. For instance, a headache could be cured by placing a live fish on top of the head, whilst the unconscious patient would recover by making one or two holes in his skull (trephining) to relieve the pressure in it, without regard as to what might lay beyond the holes!

The concept of dependence on earth or the place of one's birth permeated throughout the ancient world, and has remained as such with various degrees of empathy in all nations. As a result, the history of mankind is mostly filled with the history and outcomes of wars between countries, small and large, each defending its territory with all its might. In our times, the Greek Nation has been preoccupied by assertions of one of its northern neighbours that they have territorial rights on the northern province of Macedonia. It is known world-wide that the area had been Greek for 4000 years, since they have used the

Greek alphabet all this time, all archaeological inscriptions are written in that alphabet, and throughout the centuries the basic language was Greek, and not Slavic, as the impostors claim. Further, they claim that Alexander the Great and his father Phillip were not of Greek descent, and yet they spoke and wrote in Greek, and spread the

Greek civilisation to the then known world. There was found no single inscription in the Slavic language anywhere so far as at the time of the famous Greek kings; the slavs had not yet arrived in the area until the 6th century AD, 900 years after the appearance of Phillip and Alexander.

Our Slavic northern neighbours, who number hardly 1.5 million people, know well their claims are spurious, false and purely political, organised by communist dictator Tito with the help of a few traitors

of the Greek left. These people did not care selling part of their country for acquiring favour, both in the pan-slavic character of their political masters, and above all upgrade their stocks with Stalin.

Since the World knows the truth, and the majority on planet Earth are made up of honest and thoughtful people, our northern neighbours would do well to abide with what they have, and remain friendly with the countries that surround them. When they come to their senses, they will reap more benefits than maintaining their current absurd and laughable stance.



## Από Τους Αγίους Της Εκκλησίας Μας

## From the Saints of our Church

### Ο Άγιος Κύριλλος Αλεξανδρίας

(Η Μνήμη του εορτάζεται 9<sup>η</sup> Ιουνίου και 18<sup>η</sup> Ιανουαρίου)

Ο Άγιος Κύριλλος γεννήθηκε στην Αλεξάνδρια της Αιγύπτου το 376. Ήταν ανηψιός του Θεόφιλου, Πατριάρχου Αλεξανδρίας, και εσπούδασε διάφορες γλώσσες και φιλοσοφία. Διαδέχθηκε τον θείο του ως Πατριάρχης Αλεξανδρίας, και κυβέρνησε την Εκκλησία για 32 χρόνια, από το 412 μέχρι του θανάτου του. Έγραψε πολλά συγγράμματα και μελέτες, κυρίως για τα Ευαγγέλια του Λουκά και Ιωάννη, καθώς και τις Επιστολές του Αποστόλου Παύλου.

Ο Άγιος είχε βαθιά γνώση της Θεολογίας, και υποστήριξε πολύ την τιμή της Θεοτόκου. Επολέμησε την αίρεση του Νεστορίου, Πατριάρχου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως, που τον διόρισε ο ίδιος ο Αυτοκράτορας. Ο Νεστόριος αντικατέστησε την λέξη «Θεοτόκος», που χρησιμοποιούσε η Εκκλησία μας μέχρι τότε, με την λέξη «Χριστοτόκος». Την Παναγία την ονόμαζε «Μητέρα του Χριστού», ή «Μητέρα του Ανθρώπου», αντί **Μητέρα του Θεού!** Στην ουσία ο Νεστόριος δεν παραδεχόταν ότι Αυτός που γεννήθηκε από την Μαρία ήταν ακριβώς ο ίδιος ο Υιός του Θεού.

Αυτή την προσβλητική αλλαγή του Νεστορίου στο όνομα της Παναγίας, δεν μπορούσε να την παραδεχθεί ο Άγιος Κύριλλος, ούτε επέτρεψε να μείνει χωρίς απάντηση. Έγραψε 12 «Ανάθεμα» εναντίον του

Νεστορίου, αναφέρονμε μόνο τρία για παράδειγμα:

- Εάν κανείς δεν λέγει ότι ο Υιός του Θεού και ο Υιός της Μαρίας, δεν είναι ο ίδιος Υιός – ας είναι ανάθεμα.
- Εάν κανείς δεν λέγει ότι αυτός που γέννησε η Μαρία είναι ο γεννημένος από τον Πατέρα πριν από τους αιώνες, που είναι φως από το φως, Θεός αληθινός από Θεού αληθινού – ας είναι ανάθεμα.
- Εάν κανείς λέγει, ότι ο Λόγος (Υιός) ενώθηκε σε κάποιον άνθρωπο, αλλά δεν είχε γίνει πράγματι άνθρωπος – ας είναι ανάθεμα.

Ο Άγιος δικαιώθηκε στην Τρίτη Οικουμενική Σύνοδο, στην Έφεσο το 431, και η οποία κατεδίκασε τον Νεστόριο. Εκοιμήθηκε εν Κυρίω ειρηνικά το 444.

### St Cyril of Alexandria

(Commemorated 9<sup>th</sup> June and 18<sup>th</sup> January)

St Cyril of Alexandria lived from 376 to 444. He was the nephew of Theophilus, the Patriarch of Alexandria, and received a classical education in languages and philosophy. St Cyril was Patriarch of Alexandria, succeeding his uncle, from 412 to 444. He left many works and commentaries on the Gospels of St Luke and St John, as well as the Epistles of St Paul.

St Cyril was well-versed in theology, contributing greatly to the honouring of the Theotokos in our

Church. He fought the heresy of Nestorius, who was the Patriarch of Constantinople by appointment of the Emperor. Nestorius took away the use of the word “Theotokos” in the Divine Liturgy, which had been used by our Church until then, with the word “Christotokos”. The names used by Nestorius for Panagia, “Mother of Christ” and “Mother of Man”, instead of Mother of God – i.e. Theotokos, were used to attack the humanity of Christ. Nestorius could not accept that He who was born of Mary was the very same Son of God.

This provoked a reaction from St Cyril, who could not simply allow this slight to the Mother

of God go without a response. He sent no less than twelve anathemas against Nestorius and all who followed his teaching. In one of these, he writes, “If anyone does not say that the Son of God and the son of Mary are the same Son, anathema! If anyone does not say that the one born of Mary was begotten of the Father before all ages, and is light of light, true God of true God, anathema! If anyone says that the Logos merely joined to a man but has not really become man, anathema!”

St Cyril was vindicated at the Third Ecumenical Council held in Ephesus in 431, which condemned Nestorius. He served as Patriarch of Alexandria for 32 years, falling asleep in the Lord on the 9th June, 444.



# Questions & Answers

A clergyman of our Archdiocese answers ...

## *What do we expect Heaven to be like?*

**W**hat an exciting Question!

I was once with a 15-year-old boy who was dying in the middle of the night after a long battle with leukemia. He asked me “What will Heaven be like?” I was not sure which answer would be suitable for him, so I asked him “What do you imagine Heaven will be like?” He responded, “I think Heaven will have waterfalls and dolphins.”



Everyone who believes in God, has a strong sense that Heaven is an existence of great beauty. Many earthly words and images have been used to describe Heaven as a garden, as a great feast, an abundant table, a beautiful house with many doors and windows, a place of green pasture, wonderful fragrance, a place of no pain or suffering and so much more.

St Paul the Apostle and other great Saints reported experiences of having been taken to heaven, then returning to their earthly existence. One thing they all reported in common was that they could not find words to describe their heavenly experience. However they gave the very strong impression that it was far, far beyond any positive experience on earth. They used terms like ‘incredible joy and light’. St Mark the Noble said that whatever we think and imagine Heaven to be, we can be sure that is not what it is. Why did he say this? Because we humans think in terms of our human, worldly existence, yet Heaven is outside of that realm, outside of time and space.

Once when teaching about the kingdom of Heaven to thirty little children in kindergarten, all sitting on the floor, I must have done a very good job, because a little girl suddenly jumped up, shouting “I can’t wait to die!” While this sounds cute and amusing, it expresses the “nostalgia” for heaven that is experienced by all those

who fully connect their lives with Christ. A Christian with a clean heart and a life given in full to Christ, lives and tastes the joy and light of Heaven in small doses. He waits in hopeful anticipation for the day when our Lord will call him to Heaven to fully experience this happiness, light, peace, and the glory of God.

We know that Heaven is being in the presence of God. God is love. He is light. He is life. By joining ourselves to Him as often and as sincerely as we can, we can enjoy little tastes of the happiness, the light and the love that He has so freely offered to us. We can taste Heaven now. St John the Baptist said that the Kingdom of Heaven is taken by force. That means that we must make an effort. We must make an effort not to sin, an effort to connect to God and our fellow man, an effort to love and be charitable, an effort to control our passions and build up our souls.

Finally, our Archbishop Stylianos once preached that when we are in this state of tasting Heaven, the whole world around us becomes a beautiful place, an earthly paradise. Everything becomes green, fragrant and joyously abundant. As a result, we enter a state of thankfulness and glorification. In that state we will even declare our love for beauty of the rock that we see before us, because God made it.

† Fr N. S.



## Jesus Sends Out the Twelve (Matthew 9:36-10:8)

This passage from Matthew is read on the feast day of the Holy Apostles (30 June). We read that Christ sent out the Twelve on their first apostolic mission and about how they were given power over demons and even the power to raise the dead! But Christ reminds them to accept these gifts in humility because every good thing given to them (and to us) is not their own, but a free gift of God's grace. This is why the Apostles and all the Saints never sold their gifts. In gratitude to God, they gave freely to all men, using their gifts for the benefit of others without expecting anything in return.



It is worth noting when reading this passage that the twelve Apostles were not selected on their individual merits, nor did Christ grant them the powers He did because of any distinction they had achieved. Many of them were simple fishermen. Matthew himself is not ashamed to identify himself as "the tax collector". Included in the list is even Judas Iscariot. This serves to remind us that the gifts which God bestows on us in His great love do not make us invincible. The gifts given to Judas were no different to those given to the other disciples. He cast out demons and performed miracles along with them, but he did not respond to Christ's love with gratitude. Instead, he chose to reject and betray Jesus.

But why did Christ need to send the Apostles out at all? Could He not have sent His angels to the people, or provided salvation to those who received the Apostles without human help? Indeed this would have been possible for God, but everything He does is out of love for us. We read at the start of the passage that "He was moved with compassion" (v 36), and this is why He emptied Himself, become man and suffered on the cross for our sake. He lifted up our human nature from our fallen state up to the heavens. Beyond this passage, and after His ascension, He left behind for us His Apostles who had lived with Him and who had seen His glory. The Apostles sealed God's plan for our salvation by handing down to us the teachings of Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Mysteries of the Church. They made God's presence permanently accessible to all the faithful, passing their gifts on through the Saints of every generation, and ultimately through us today. This is the grand tradition from which we as Christians are called to partake.



## Elder Ephraim of Katounakia by Tessa Vassiliadou-Christodoulou. Published by Katounakia, 2003

Elder Ephraim of Katounakia is a recent Athonite pillar of faith, having fallen asleep in the Lord in 1998. This book, written by his spiritual children from Katounakia, provides us with a glimpse of the elder's life, teachings and holiness.

The book is separated into three sections. In the first, we are relayed details of his life. We begin with his youth, to time in the isolated Katounakia, his extraordinary struggles in prayer and complete obedience, and eventually to his eldership of a brotherhood of his own.

The second part considers the experiences and teachings of the Elder. He pays particular focus on two important virtues - obedience and prayer - illustrated with beneficial and inspiring stories from his own life.

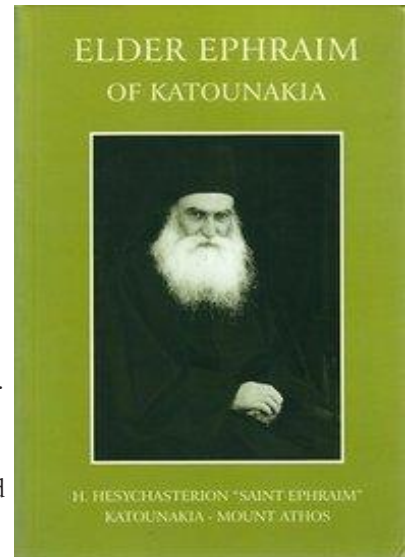
Regarding obedience the Elder would say, "obedience is above all things", and, "experience has convinced me that obedience is superior, even to prayer".

On prayer the Elder says, "Do you want to obtain the gift of prayer? Do you want tears gushing from your eyes whenever you say the Jesus prayer: 'Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy upon me'? Do you want to live the life of angels? You should say 'Evlogison', Let it be blessed'. In one word: obedience".

His advice is not limited to this. He provides practical advice to us, in the 21st century, on how to advance in our spiritual struggle and climb the ladder of virtues.

The last part of the book is on the Elder's letters and writings to various monks, nuns and laypeople. These writings exemplify his great love and compassion for his neighbour and the whole world.

Elder Ephraim of Katounakia provides us with ever-necessary practical guidance for our spiritual life. His saintly life and direct advice inspires us to imitate his love for God. As St John Chrysostom says, "to honour a saint is to imitate the saint". May we have his blessing.





## Habits That Do Not Go Away

She was a teenager when the Germans had reached her sea-side township of Poulithra in Greece. A fair number of soldiers were stationed in the upper township and they had chosen her family's home as their base. The officers had set up their command control centre with the radio and other equipment in their sitting room. The family continued to live there as well, as it was a two storey house, and the heavy doors afforded them some sense of security, even though it must have felt like house arrest.

Being young, Metaxia felt protected by her strong father who knew how to navigate dangerous situations. When the Germans had first come to the township it was "Barba Gianni", her father, who spoke on behalf of the community. He had spent his younger years in America and was fluent in English, so he was well positioned to negotiate certain terms whereby the villagers would not be harmed.

At the time, Metaxia's brother had just begun high school in the nearby town of Leonidion. She was older than he was and so she would often go to visit him and take him clean clothes as well as food supplies from her father's store. She recalls, years later, the time she had left Leonidion by foot to go back home to Poulithra. It was a fresh sunny day and life felt good, despite the ever present threat of strangers occupying her house. Mid-way home she heard bomb blasts that were being hurled from boats offshore and directed towards Poulithra. She continued to walk the tree-lined, protected path, frightened but also resolute that she had to go home. After a while the bombing ceased and she ascended the exposed steep incline that was the last leg of her seven kilometer journey. Having finally arrived, she thanked God that she had made it safely home.

These kinds of encounters were an every day event during the occupation. Fear, as well as a certain sense of stoicism, accompanied the people's every day tasks. The children needed to be fed, the animals looked after and the supplies sent to those in the neighbouring town who were dependent on the older siblings. Metaxia, like so many other young women at the time took these duties in her stride.

Now, in her declining years and in her nineties, she lives in her daughter's home and she still has an obsession with closing doors. The doors are not heavy like those she had in her childhood home, and there are no enemy-occupying Germans in the living room, yet those memories linger still. When her children were growing up they did not understand why she was so emotional when any family member was late coming home. They could not fathom her sense of insecurity when her spouse would be sick and unable to work for certain periods because of his ulcerated stomach. They did, however, know that Metaxia often prayed on her knees for them. Prayer was what her father had shown her. He would pray every night for a long time, no matter what was happening around him. It sustained him, just as he had sustained her and his community throughout those difficult years. Now, before Metaxia goes to sleep, she may have forgotten many things, but she continues to do the sign of the cross and to bless and thank her carers with that sweet smile of gratitude.





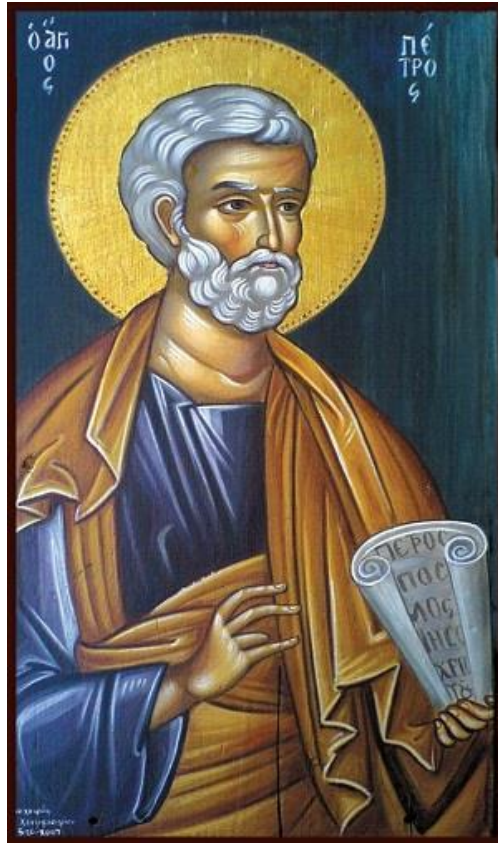
# Ο Άγιος Πέτρος



**Ο** Πέτρος καταγόταν από τη Βηθσαϊδά της Γαλιλαίας και ήταν γιος του **Ιωνά** και αδελφός του **Αποστόλου Ανδρέα**. Ήταν ψαράς, όπως οι πιο πολλοί Απόστολοι. Όταν γνώρισε τον Χριστό, άφησε τα δίχτυα του και Τον ακολούθησε με αφοσίωση. Συχνά Τον φιλοξένησε στην Καπερναούμ, στο σπίτι της πεθεράς του, που τη θεράπευσε. Το όνομά του ήταν Σίμων. Ο Ιησούς τον ονόμασε Πέτρο, για την αδιάσειστη πίστη του.

Ο Πέτρος ήταν φύση απλή, θερμή, με καρδιά που ξεχείλιζε από αγάπη, αυθορμητισμό και ενθουσιασμό. Είχε χαρακτήρα ορμητικό αλλά ευμετάβολο, γι' αυτό και πολλές φορές ο Χριστός τον έλεγξε. Ενώ διακηρύσσει πρώτος τη θεότητα του Κυρίου: «**Σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος**» (Ματθ. 15Τ' 16), τον αρνείται τρεις φορές, λίγο πριν τη Σταύρωσή του. Αυτός που δεν υπολόγισε τους Ρωμαίους στρατιώτες, που πήγαν να τον συλλάβουν κι έκοψε το αυτί του Μάλχου, φοβάται αργότερα μια παιδούλα, στην αυλή του αρχιερέα, και σε μια στιγμή αδυναμίας και φόβου Τον αρνείται! Πόσο μετανόησε αργότερα! Έκλαψε πικρά και έτσι αξιώθηκε πρώτος να δει τον Αναστάντα Κύριο.

Ο Αναστημένος Χριστός με προτροπή «**Βόσκε τὰ ἀρνία μου**» (Ιωαν. ΚΑ' 15) αποκαθιστά τον Πέτρο στο αποστολικό αξίωμα. Από τότε, γίνεται αληθινή πέτρα πίστεως, ακλόνητος βράχος αγάπης,



κηρύσσει, θαυματουργεί και πρωτοστατεί στο αποστολικό έργο.

**Στα Ιεροσόλυμα την ημέρα της Πεντηκοστής, ιδρύει την πρώτη χριστιανική εκκλησία.** Πραγματοποιεί περιοδείες στην Παλαιστίνη, τη Μικρά Ασία και την Ελλάδα. Πηγαίνει στην Αίγυπτο και τη Ρώμη, όπου συλλαμβάνεται και οδηγείται στο μαρτύριο. Παρακαλεί τους δημίους να τον σταυρώσουν ανάποδα, με το κεφάλι προς τα κάτω, διότι θεωρεί τον εαυτό του ανάξιο να σταυρωθεί σαν τον αγαπημένο Δάσκαλό του! Έτσι παραδίδει την αγία του ψυχή στο Χριστό, το δε αγιασμένο λείψανό του, το περιμαζεύουν οι πιστοί και το θάβουν έξω από την πόλη.

**Με την ιεραποστολική δράση του Αποστόλου Πέτρου διαδίδεται και εδραιώνεται η Χριστιανική πίστη.** Για να

στηρίξει τους Χριστιανούς που διώκονται, **στέλνει δύο επιστολές**, όπου μεταξύ άλλων τους προτρέπει: «**Νήψατε, γρηγορήσατε· ὁ ἀντίδικος ὑμῶν διάβολος, ὡς λέων ὠρυόμενος, περιπατεῖ ζητῶν τίνα καταπίη**» (Α' Πέτρου, Ε' 8) *(Εγκρατευθείτε, αγρυπνείτε, διότι ο αντίπαλος διάβολος, σαν λιοντάρι, με μανία ζητάει ποιον να τραβήξει μακριά από την πίστη για να τον καταπιεί).* **Επίκαιρη και για μας η προτροπή.**

**Η μνήμη του τιμάται στις 29 Ιουνίου μαζί με του Αποστόλου Παύλου.**

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## From The Old Testament



### Prophet Elisha

We first encounter the Prophet Elisha in the third book of Kingdoms. The Prophet Elijah had thought that he alone was left among the prophets of Israel, but it was revealed to him that “Elisha, the son of Shaphat of Abel Meholah, you shall anoint as prophet in your place” (3 Kingdoms 19:16). When the Prophet Elijah found Elisha, he was “plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him”. He threw his mantle onto him, thus signifying that Elisha was now the prophet of Israel (3 Kingdoms 19: 19).



From that time, Elisha became Elijah’s loyal follower, following him even to the end of Elijah’s time on earth (4 Kingdoms 2). He witnessed Elijah’s ascent to heaven in the chariot of fire and worked many miracles thereafter. He parted the Jordan, healed lepers, and fed hundreds during famine, among many other God-inspired works. Elisha, like Elijah and other prophets before him, advised and prophesied to the kings of Israel and anointed them as required. He also helped Israel and Judah in war against the Moabites (4 Kingdoms 3).

The holiness of the prophet is perhaps best manifested in 4 Kingdoms 4. In this passage, Elisha resurrects a dead boy, the son of a Shunammite who conceived through Elisha’s prayers. He told his servant Gehazi to place his staff over the body of the dead boy, but nothing happened. Elisha then went in, prayed with the door closed, and then stretched himself over the corpse. After he stretched the first time, the body grew warm. After the second time, the boy sneezed and came back to life.

Elisha did these works with a fervent fear of God, thus showing the people the correct way to perform works of God. After healing a leper called Naaman, he was offered many rewards by the former leper. Elisha refused to accept, but Gehazi was tempted. Gehazi ran to Naaman asking for two talents and two changes of clothing. When he returned to Elisha, he lied and said he had not gone anywhere. But Elisha knew that this was not true, and Gehazi was struck with the same leprosy that had cursed Naaman.



## Holiness In Our Times

### Gerontissa Makaria Desipri

(1911-1999)

Referred to by her spiritual children as “Mother of the afflicted”, Gerontissa Makaria was the vessel chosen by God to discover the relics of St Ephraim “the Newly-Revealed” of Nea Makri, north-east of Athens, in 1950. On this same site, she founded the current monastery dedicated to the Annunciation of the Mother of God and remained Abbess for almost 50 years.

Makaria born in 1911 in Tinos, to God-fearing parents. From a young age, she grew to love God and the Church, leading to her monastic tonsure in 1932.



In 1945 she visited the ruins of a male monastery located on Mount Amomon near the town of Nea Makri, where she would spend the rest of her life in obedience to God’s calling. There she lived in isolation for several years enduring adverse conditions and illness, whilst labouring to clear the ruins of the monastery.

During this time, Makaria speculated on the lives of the martyrs who had watered the earth with their blood in times past and sensed that she was on holy ground. She prayed earnestly that God would overlook her unworthiness and reveal one of the fathers who had lived there previously. After persisting in this prayer over a long time, Makaria heard a voice saying “dig there and you will find what you desire”.

Thus it was that on January 3rd 1950, the blessed Gerontissa was granted the honour of finding the wonder-working relics of St Ephraim.

Amongst the many virtues she possessed was that of “philanthropia” – love for her fellow person. Earlier in her life, during the German occupation of World War II, Makaria would visit the female prisons in Athens, comforting the women prisoners and their children. Despite personal illness, she shared deeply in the troubles of those who would come to her and prayed to St Ephraim for his intercessions. She maintained an orphanage until 1980, which provided basic necessities, education and most importantly, God’s love, to dozens of children.

Gerontissa Makaria died on April 23rd 1999 on the feast-day of St George, after receiving the Holy Mysteries. Following her death, her body remained warm and flexible for three days and an inexplicable fragrance accompanied it, signs of the grace given by God to those who love Him with all their heart and soul.



## What we Hear in Church



### Entrance Hymn from the Divine Liturgy

Δεῦτε προσκυνήσωμεν καὶ προσπέσωμεν Χριστῶ.  
Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ.



This hymn is the entrance hymn used in most Sunday and weekday Holy Liturgies of the Church Calendar (different hymns are used on the major feast days). It is called an entrance hymn because it is chanted as the

priest, holding the Holy Gospel in an elevated position, enters the Sanctuary to complete the Little Entrance. Nowadays, the Little Entrance is more of a symbolic procession, as it begins where it ends (in the Sanctuary). However, up until the 7<sup>th</sup> century, the Holy Liturgy itself would begin with the entry of the Bishop and people into the Church. This hymn, largely made up of verse 6 of Psalm 94 (Come, let us worship and fall down before him) was chanted triumphantly as the clergy and laity entered into the Church. Psalm 94 is the third of three psalms used as antiphonal hymns at the beginning of the Divine Liturgy (this is why they are known as the three antiphons) which the Fathers have interpreted as prophetically referring to the saving works of Jesus Christ, primarily His sacrifice on the Cross and His Resurrection. As a chorus to this entrance hymn, on Sundays we chant “Save us Son of God who rose from the dead”.

St Nicholas Cabasilas explains in his Commentary on the Divine Liturgy: *“The sacrifice commemorates the death, resurrection and ascension of our Lord, since the precious gifts are changed into the very body of the Saviour. Those acts which precede the sacrifice recall the events which took place before his death, his coming, his first appearance and his perfect manifestation.”* In referencing this particular hymn, he interprets that it *“is like an encounter before the Lord who draws near and appears; that is why it is chanted while the Book of Gospels is brought in and shown, since it represents Christ. It is particularly clear that the prophet sang this hymn with the coming of Christ in mind, so full is it of joy and gladness; he is overflowing with this joy himself and invites others to share in it with him.”*



## From the Holy Fathers...

### The First Apology of Justin Martyr

In the middle of the second century, a fearless philosopher, who later came to be known as Justin the Martyr, delivered a zealous apology of the Christian Faith to the emperor Antoninus Pius and the Roman Senate.

St Justin the Martyr, a Roman of Samaria, became the earliest Christian Apologist, launching a rich tradition that flowed

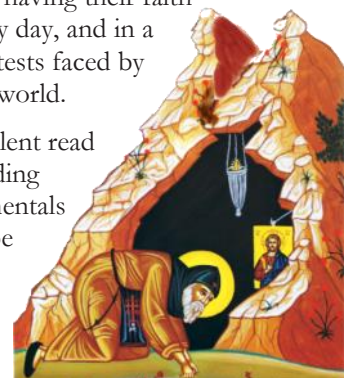
through early Christianity and aided in the formalisation of accepted Christian teaching.

On its surface, the First Apology (there were two) appears to be a petition to the emperor and Senate for the repeal of laws persecuting Christians on the basis only of their identification as Christians (“from a name neither praise nor punishment could reasonably spring”).

However, as St Justin elaborates his arguments, it soon becomes clear that the petition is better characterised as convincing rhetoric on the truth of the Gospel.

St Justin presents a complete defence of the Christian Faith and its members. He takes his esteemed audience through the teachings of Christianity, the manner of Christian worship, the proofs of Christ's teachings, the prophecies of the Old Testament, the compatibility of Greek philosophy with Christian teaching, the follies of heathen mythologies, and the power of the Sacraments. In so doing, he provides a summary of the Faith which would have been of interest but also tangible for his audience. He spoke to them about differences but also of similarities. One cannot help thinking that the approach adopted by St Justin would be just as suitable in the atmosphere within which 21st century Christians live. Christians are having their faith tested by worldly norms every day, and in a manner not dissimilar to the tests faced by the Christians of the Roman world.

The First Apology is an excellent read for those interested in reminding themselves about the fundamentals of our Faith and how it can be defended in the face of persecution. It is highly recommended.





## Mnimosina (Memorial Services)

**T**he Mnimosino (calling to memory) is a prayer service conducted, often at the end of the Divine Liturgy, for our departed loved ones. The service is composed of psalms, litanies, hymns and prayers. These services can also be conducted at a grave site or at other times in church.

In the Mnimosino we ask God to show mercy and forgive the sins of the departed, whether committed in word, deed or thought, whether done in knowledge or in ignorance. To grant rest to their souls and life everlasting, as only He who overcame death can.

A plate of koliva (boiled wheat) is prepared and distributed to the faithful at the end of the service.

Mnimosina are mostly held on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 40<sup>th</sup> day, then the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> month, as well as on the first anniversary and every year following the day of death. Also on the numerous "Soul Saturdays" held throughout the year. After the service, family and friends gather to share a common meal together.

The days that they cannot be held are from the Saturday of Lazarus until the Sunday of St Thomas, and major feast days such as Circumcision of Our Lord (Jan 1<sup>st</sup>), Epiphany (Jan 6<sup>th</sup>), The Presentation (Feb 2<sup>nd</sup>), The Annunciation (Mar 25<sup>th</sup>), The Ascension (40 days after Easter) Pentecost (50 days after Easter), Transfiguration (Aug 6<sup>th</sup>), Dormition of the Virgin (Aug 15<sup>th</sup>), Christmas and on the feast of the Parish Church.

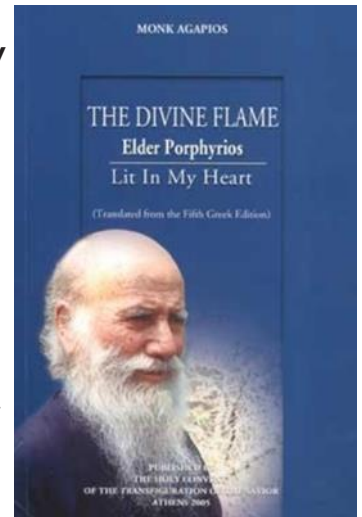
Orthodox Christians believe in the power of intercessory prayer. We are the "Church Militant", struggling on earth and fighting for our faith. Those who have died and have fought well are the "Church Triumphant". Together we are all members of Christ's Church.



## The Divine Flame Elder Porphyrios Lit in my Heart

**By Monk Agapios.  
Published by The Holy  
Convent of the  
Transfiguration of the  
Saviour, 2003**

St Porphyrios (1906-1991) was a monk from Mount Athos whose ill health forced him to leave his monastic community at a young age and serve as a spiritual father in the world. He was endowed with many gifts of the Holy Spirit which allowed him to provide spiritual guidance to the many faithful who came to him. *The Divine Flame Elder Porphyrios Lit in My Heart* is a short book recounting a series of conversations between St Porphyrios and the author, Monk Agapios, who often visited the Saint to receive spiritual counsel.



The conversations are short, often no more than a page, and they each have a clear and applicable teaching. Some of the topics discussed in the book include Prayer, the monastic life, our relationships with others, as well as stories that St Porphyrios recounts from his life on Mount Athos.

St Porphyrios emphasises reading, especially studying the Fathers and the hymnology of the Church, and he frequently quotes various verses that he had memorised from the liturgical books to support his counsels to Monk Agapios.

Many times in the book, Monk Agapios reveals the clairvoyance of the Elder, who was able to spiritually experience events such as the author's tonsure and other services, and was able to describe them, despite being physically absent.

Ultimately, the book is easy to read and spiritually beneficial, and it gives insight into the saintly figure of Elder Porphyrios through his own words. The accounts of the author give an authentic impression of the Elder as a man of deep humility and simplicity, giving advice from his own experiences.

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# NEWS & VIEWS

## Holy Cross Monastery Building Project

In the tranquil atmosphere of Mangrove Mountain, 90 minutes north of Sydney, the nuns of Holy Cross Monastery continue their daily coenobitic program. Simultaneously, on the eastern side of the Monastery, the building project of the Katholikon (Main Church) is progressing at a steady pace. It is now at the stage of pouring concrete on the roof and dome of the Chapel of St Irene Chrysovalantou.

During this building project, an unforeseen Chapel emerged on plan at the foundations of the Katholikon. With the blessing of His Eminence Archbishop Stylianos, this new Chapel is dedicated to the newly canonised St Iakovos of Evia, whose feast is celebrated on the 22nd of November. He is the Saint of love, mercy and charity, and is known for performing many miracles. His all-holiness Patriarch Bartholomew recently gave him an extra title «Ο Με Συγχωρεῖτε», or “The Forgive me”. This is because one of the Saint’s most characteristics phrases was “forgive me”. His virtuous life is an example not only for monastics but for all Orthodox Christians.

The Holy Cross Monastery accepts visitors, however due to the extensive construction works, bookings are necessary. Please ring the Monastery to make an appointment on (02) 4374 1657, Email: [holycrossmonastery@bigpond.com](mailto:holycrossmonastery@bigpond.com)



Holy Cross Monastery buildings, with the Katholikon currently under construction



St Irene's chapel during construction



Chapel of St Iakovos of Evia beneath the Katholikon



**Ἀπολυτίκιον Ἁγίου Ἰακώβου τοῦ ἐν Εὐβοίᾳ**  
(Ἦχος πλ. α΄. Τὸν συνάναρχον Λόγον - Plagal First Tone)

*Διοράσεως ἔκτυπον καὶ σεμνότητος, μονῆς Δαβὶδ τοῦ ὀσίου, θαυματουργέ, προεστώς, ὁ ἀρότρῳ γεωργήσας τῆς ἀγάπης σου κεχερωσμένος τοῦ λαοῦ, θεοφόρητε, ψυχάς, Ἰάκωβε πάτερ, ἄρτι, μὴ ἐλλίπης Χριστῷ πρεσβεύων ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν τῶν σέ καλούντων πιστῶς.*

*The prototype of discernment and modesty, the wonder-working leader of the Monastery of David the venerable, who plowed and sowed love in the hardened hearts of the God-bearing people, O Father Iakovos. Do not neglect to intercede with Christ on behalf of those who call upon you in faith.*

To contribute to this sacred project, please forward your gift to:

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**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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