



ΛΥΧΝΟΣ

A GREEK ORTHODOX PERIODICAL FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

«Δύχνος τοῖς ποσὶ
μου ὁ νόμος σου
καὶ φῶς ταῖς
τρίβοις μου»

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Guardian of our Souls and Bodies

Long ago, before the creation of mankind, an epic battle took place that shaped the course of the entire cosmos. The angels of God, led by Archangel Michael, fought against the dark forces of Satan. The Archangel addressed the heavenly host saying: "Let us stand well! Let us stand with fear!" All the angels then replied with one voice: "Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord God of Sabaoth! Heaven and earth are full of Your glory!" The outcome of this battle was the expulsion of Satan and his forces from heaven. As our Lord Jesus Christ would later testify: "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven!" (Luke 10:18). From that moment, the holy angels of God have never ceased to fight on our behalf against evil, protecting and leading mankind on the path to salvation.

When Joshua, the leader of the Jewish people, came to Jericho centuries ago he saw a mighty angel standing before him carrying a sword. "Are you for us or on the side of our enemies?" he asked. The angel replied: "I am the chief captain

(ἀρχιστράτηγος) of the host of the Lord!" Joshua fell on his face, saying "O Master, what do you command your servant?" (Joshua 5:14).

St Isaac the Syrian explains why we don't have a greater awareness of the presence of angels: "Divine providence surrounds all persons at all times, but it is not visible except to those who have purified their souls of sin".

More often than not, the dangers we face throughout our lives are spiritual sinfulness rather than physical. As St Paul writes: "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:12). This is why in our evening prayer (Ἀπόδειπνο), we

pray to our guardian angel: "strengthen my poor and feeble hand, and guide me in the way of salvation".

At every Divine Liturgy, the priest or deacon prays that God grant "an angel of peace, a faithful guide, a guardian of our souls and bodies". The recently canonised Saint of our Church, St Iakovos of Evia (1920-1991), according to his own testimony, would officiate as a priest at every Divine Liturgy surrounded by a throng of holy angels, Cherubim and Seraphim. During the Preparation service (προσκομιδὴ), he would see angels of the Lord taking the portions of those being remembered, placing them before the throne of Christ, as prayers.



What a great blessing it is for us to be surrounded by holy angels! To know that we have an angel of peace always at our side, a guardian of our soul and body, protecting us in every moment of our lives from every spiritual and physical danger.

Η Κατ' οίκον Εκκλησία



Όταν ο Θεός έπλασε τον Αδάμ και την Εύα στο Παράδεισο, τους ευλόγησε να αυξηθούν και να κατακυριεύσουν τη γη. Στην ουσία καθιέρωσε την οικογένεια. Στερέωσε τον έναν άνθρωπο μέσα στην καρδιά του άλλου. Πλημμύρισε τα στήθη μας με τρυφερότητα και αγάπη, ο ένας σύζυγος για τον άλλον. Έβγαινε μέσα από το Άγιο χέρι Του ένας κόσμος αρμονικός και ευλογημένος.

Αλλοίμονο ο ζηλόφθονος διάβολος γρήγορα σκέπασε με μαύρα σύννεφα το γαλανό ουρανό της ζωής των ανθρώπων. Η αμαρτία γέμισε με αγκάθια και τριβόλια το βίο τους. Παρά ταύτα η οικογένεια παρέμενε ο μόνος θεσμός ικανός να παρηγορήσει και να προστατεύσει τον πεσμένο άνθρωπο.

Με την εμφάνιση του Χριστιανισμού η οικογένεια παρουσιάζεται κάτω από το φώς της πανανθρώπινης αγάπης. Ο Χριστός στην Κανά ευλόγησε το γάμο με το θαύμα της μεταβολής του νερού σε κρασί. Δεν ήταν τυχαίο ότι στο γάμο παραβρισκόταν και η Παναγία. Αργότερα ο Απόστολος των εθνών θα διακηρύξει πως: **«τέκνα Θεού εσμέν»** και πως εν Χριστώ **«ουκ ένι δούλος ουδέ ελεύθερος, ουκ ένι άρσεν και θήλυ»**, Δηλαδή, στην ένωσή μας με το Χριστό δεν υπάρχει διάκριση και διαφορά μεταξύ δούλου και ελεύθερου. Δεν υπάρχει άρσεν και θήλυ.

Η Εκκλησία ανέβασε το γάμο σε Μυστήριο. Κοντολογής του έβαλε θείο θεμέλιο και διακηρύττει στο αποστολικό ανάγνωσμα του Μυστηρίου του Γάμου πως η ένωση του άνδρα με την γυναίκα στο γάμο παρομοιάζει τη μυστική ένωση του Χριστού με την Εκκλησία. Μέσα σ' αυτό τον ιερό χώρο, την οικογένεια, το ζευγάρι αθλεί και ολοκληρώνεται. Και μέσα απ' αυτόν τον χώρο ξεπηδούν τα νέα βλαστάρια, τα παιδιά, που με τη στοργική φροντίδα γονέων ευσεβών γαλουχούνται και αναδεικνύονται χρηστά μέλη της όποιας κοινωνίας. Αυτό είναι με απλά λόγια το αρχέτυπο της οικογένειας.

Τί γίνεται όμως σήμερα; Ακριβώς επειδή η οικογένεια είναι το θεμέλιο της κοινωνίας και η βάση του ήθους των ανθρώπων, ο διάβολος κάνει το πάν για να τη διαλύσει. Έχει επιστρατεύσει άθεους πολιτικούς, διεστραμμένους νομοθέτες, διαστρεβλωτές της Αλήθειας. Όλοι αυτοί χωρίς ντροπή νομοθετούν εξακολουθητικά εναντίον του Θεού και των ανθρώπων Του.

Έτσι ο θεσμός της οικογένειας ψυχорραγεί. Η ιερότητα της έχει καταλυθεί. Η μορφή της έχει ραγίσει. Τα μέλη της έπαψαν να νοιώθουν ανάμεσά τους τη παρουσία του Θεού, που ιεραρχεί τη ζωή των ανθρώπων. Αναπόφευκτα οδηγούνται στην απομόνωση, την αγωνία και το φόβο.

Μιά κατάσταση ηθικής σύγχυσης δημιουργείται με άμεση συνέπεια την απιστία και την αδιαφορία.

Χωρίς ηθικούς και πνευματικούς δεσμούς ο άνθρωπος γίνεται συνεπώς εγωκεντρικός και υλόφρων. Οι πνευματικοί οραματισμοί παραμερίζονται για χάρη του ευδαιμονισμού (Dolce Vita). Το ξεθεμέλιωμα της κοινωνίας στη πλήρη μορφή του.

Όχι όμως! Υπάρχουν ακόμα οι άνθρωποι του Θεού. Κοντά τους και εμείς. Πιστεύουμε ακράδαντα πως μόνο η Αλήθεια του Χριστού αξίζει. Πως η φωνή της Εκκλησίας είναι η αιώνια φωνή του Δημιουργού και

Θεού μας. Πιστεύουμε πως μία κοινωνία αληθινών ανθρώπων δεν μπορεί να υπάρξει χωρίς την οικογένεια που ευλογήθηκε και ευλογείται από το Θεό και την Εκκλησία Του.

Το πάν δεν χάθηκε ακόμα. Όσο πιά μεγάλες οι αντιξοότητες τόσο πιά μεγάλος και ο θρίαμβος. Αρκεί να φέρουμε πάλι το Χριστό στο σπίτι μας. Να γίνει **κατ' οίκον Εκκλησία**. Καιρός να ξαναμπει επικεφαλής της οικογένειας ο φυσικός αρχηγός και εμπνευστής της, ο Θεός.



Current Issues

JOY and the Christian Person

In the previous issue of our periodical, we dealt with the topic of Friendship, and its importance for the growing child and adolescent. Whenever someone is with their friends they are filled with enthusiasm and joy.

The faithful are characteristically people of Joy, as our Lord has said, “I will see you again, and your heart will Rejoice, and your Joy no one will take it from you”, and again, “Ask and you will receive, that your Joy may be full” (John 16:22, 24).

The Apostle Paul commands in the same spirit, “Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice” [Philippians 4:4]. When the Apostles Peter and John appeared in court for preaching about Jesus, they were flogged and allowed to go, and “they departed from the Council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name” (Acts 5:41). When the Apostles Paul and Barnabas were preaching in Pisidia, the Jews threw them out of the city, “And the disciples were filled with Joy and with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 13:52). We also read that during the Roman persecution of the Christians, the Martyrs were going to their death happily, with Joy.

The Gospel [Evangelion], which means Good News, is a book of Joyful messages for its adherents. Therefore, the Christian should be a person of Joy and optimism. It would not be too much to say that one cannot be a Christian if he is not a Joyful person.

It has been said that what feeds atheism is the lack of Joy among the Christians. The well-known British philosopher and novelist, Arthur Koestler, at one time said “When I see those of faith that are not Joyful, I console myself, that I am an atheist”, a crushing indictment, indeed!

The reason that many Christians appear without Joy in themselves, is due to the fact that it has not been cultivated within, not even as a theory. And yet, Joy is the fruit of real deep Faith, and also a proof of Faith, in addition to being a weapon against the non-faithful.

God gives us Joyful occasions every day. Sad events



also occur in our lives, almost daily. What do we do? We pay attention to the sad events, but not to the Joyful ones. With such an attitude, not even God can reach us to console us!

We have to take seriously the need of Joy for our spiritual wellbeing, and ignore the weaknesses and imperfections of human nature. If we wait until all difficulties disappear from our environment so we can experience Joy, we will not be Joyful ever. We should be people of Joy, but also people who easily accept Joy offered to us. And joy frequently is accompanied by smiling. A genuine smile from a peaceful face can infuse Joy to the other person.

We should not forget that the Spiritual Revolution which Jesus Christ started over 2000 years ago is continuing to this day, and we are part of that. It does imply hard work and sustained effort, but also includes Faith, Peace and Joy, which sustains everything that we do.

Από Τους Αγίους Της Εκκλησίας Μας

From the Saints of our Church

Ο Άγιος Ιάκωβος της Ευβοίας
(Η μνήμη του τιμάται 22^α Νοεμβρίου)

St Iakovos of Evia
(Commemorated 22nd November)

Ο Άγιος Ιάκωβος της Εύβοιας γεννήθηκε στο χωριό Λιβίστι της Μικράς Ασίας, το 1920. Μετά την καταστροφή της Σμύρνης και τον διωγμό των Ελλήνων από τους Τούρκους, οι Λυβισιώτες πρόσφυγες, εγκαταστάθηκαν στο χωριό Φαράκλα του νησιού της Ευβοίας. Εκεί ο Άγιος φοίτησε στο Δημοτικό Σχολείο και ζούσε την ζωή της Εκκλησίας, ψάλλοντας ύμνους και διαβάζοντας τις προσευχές στις διάφορες ακολουθίες.

Όταν ο Ιάκωβος ήταν εννέα χρόνων έσωσε τον μικρότερο αδελφό, που τον είχε δαγκώσει ένα φαρμακερό φίδι, διαβάζοντας μια προσευχή επάνω από το κεφάλι του.

Ο Άγιος ζούσε ασκητική ζωή, ενώ ακόμη ήταν λαϊκός. Υπηρέτησε στον Ελληνικό στρατό, και όταν απολύθηκε εργάστηκε για να μαζέψει αρκετά χρήματα για την προίκα της αδελφής του, και μετά την αποκατάσταση της ήταν ελεύθερος να πραγματοποιήσει το όνειρο του να γίνει μοναχός. Σε ηλικία 31 χρόνων μπήκε στο μοναστήρι του Οσίου Δαυίδ (του Γέροντος) ο οποίος στην είσοδο του Μοναστηρίου τον υποδέχθηκε θαυματουργικά, μολονότι είχε πεθάνει πριν περίπου 360 χρόνια!

Στο Μοναστήρι υπέφερε πολλούς πειρασμούς, ακόμη και από τους άλλους μοναχούς. Το 1952 εκάρη μοναχός και κατόπιν ιερέας. Σαν μοναχός, ήταν πολύ εργατικός, ταπεινός, υπομονητικός, υπάκουος και ασκητικός, μολονότι τον τυραννούσαν πολλές αρρώστιες. Πολλά βράδια τα περνούσε στη σπηλιά του Οσίου Δαυίδ με ολονύχτιες αργυπνίες, κάνοντας χιλιάδες μετάνοιες, διαβάζοντας από το Ψαλτήρι, και την Παρακλητική, και με την Προσευχή του Ιησού.

Ο Θεός χάρισε στον Άγιο πολλά πνευματικά χαρίσματα, όπως την ικανότητα να κάνει θαύματα, να διώχνει τα δαιμόνια από τους ανθρώπους, να μιλά με αγίους, ιδιαιτέρως με τον Όσιο Δαυίδ, τον οποίο θεωρούσε ως Ηγούμενο του, καθώς και με τον Άγιο Ιωάννη τον Ρώσο, και να βλέπει αγγέλους όταν λειτουργούσε.

Ηγούμενος της Μονής ανέλαβε το 1975, και κοιμήθηκε την ημέρα της εορτής των Εισοδίων της Θεοτόκου το 1991. Ανακηρύχθηκε Άγιος το 2017, και η μνήμη του εορτάζεται στις 22 Νοεμβρίου. Η Εκκλησία τον μνημονεύει ως τον «**Άγιο Ιάκωβο τον εν Ευβοία, του με συγχωρείτε**», θέλοντας έτσι να δείχνει και σε μας την ταπείνωση του και το ευαίσθητο της καρδιάς του. Είθε όλοι να έχουμε την ευλογία του.

St Iakovos Tsalikis was born in the village of Livisi, Asia Minor, in 1920. After the destruction of Smyrna by the Turks in 1922, and the forceful deportation of the Greeks, the Livisian refugees eventually settled in the small village of Farakla on the Greek island of Evia. Growing up in Farakla, St Iakovos attended primary school and became immersed in the life of the Church, where he would chant hymns and read prayers. His sanctity was evident from a young age and

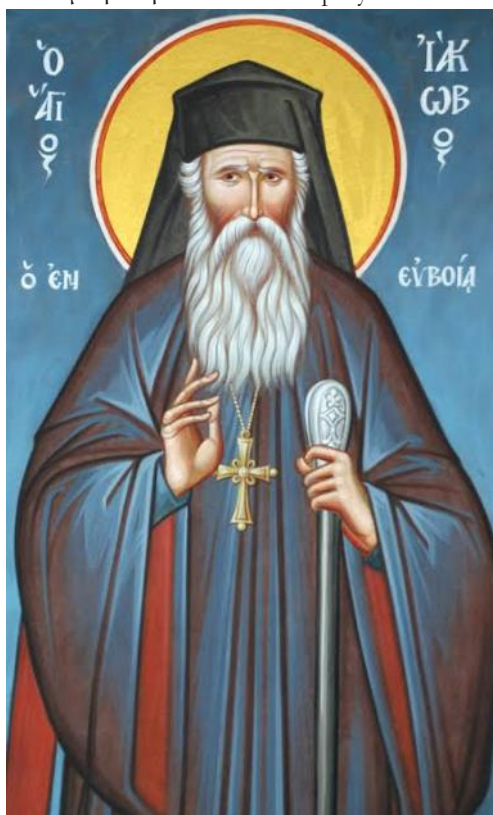
many of his fellow villagers would ask him to read prayers over them for healing. In one instance, when he was only nine, St Iakovos healed his brother from a snake bite after saying a brief prayer.

As a layman, St Iakovos lived an ascetic life. After serving in the army and saving enough money for his sister's dowry, he was free to pursue his dream of becoming a monk. At the age of 31 he entered the monastery of St David the Elder, being miraculously greeted at the gate by St David himself. Having endured many temptations at the monastery, even from his fellow monks, St Iakovos was tonsured a monk and then ordained priest in 1952. As a monk, he was hardworking, obedient and ascetic, even while tormented by many illnesses. He would spend his nights at the cave of St David in all night vigils where he would perform thousands of prostrations, read from the psalms and the Supplicatory can-

ons, and repeat the Jesus prayer. The ascetic feats of St Iakovos, coupled with his humility and patience in the face of many temptations formed him into a vessel of the Holy Spirit. As a priest, he would frequently serve the Divine Liturgy, and would see Angels in the sanctuary with him.

St Iakovos was given many spiritual gifts including the power to perform miracles and expel demons. He would directly converse with saints, especially St David, whom he considered his Abbot, and St John the Russian. Having been Abbot of the monastery since 1975, the holy ascetic passed away on the feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos in 1991.

St Iakovos of Evia was declared a saint in 2017, and his feast day will be celebrated on the 22nd of November. May we all have his blessing!



Questions & Answers

A clergyman of our Archdiocese answers ...

How do we rejoice in the Lord always ?

In his 4th Chapter to the Philippians, St Paul advises: **"Rejoice in the Lord always**. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:4-7).

Many decades ago this author's spiritual father said to the faithful, "If a Christian is not happy, then something is not right - he has not fully grasped the Christian message or learnt to live a Christian life".

If we are genuinely and honestly striving to be Christ-like, then these endeavours will not only lead us to the Kingdom, but also to happiness and peace in this life. Jesus said, "learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, **and you will find rest for your souls**" (Matthew 11:29). If we strive to be like Christ and humble, and gentle, without anger and bitterness, then we will find peace, "rest for our souls". Problems and heartache will be prevented. The Orthodox Christian, who with the help of the Church Fathers has learnt how to truly pray, to deeply experience the Divine Liturgy and other Church Services, and the Sacraments, and who also is growing in virtue, comes to experience "the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding". He or she comes to deeply understand what St Luke meant when he said, "You have known to me the ways of life; You will make me **full of joy** in Your presence" (Acts 2:28); and what Jesus meant when

He said, "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and **that your joy may be full**" (John 15:11). Countless Orthodox Christians throughout the ages testify that living close to Christ and His Church is beautiful.

The situation is quite different with worldly people, those who constantly give in to sin. At first someone may look at them and see some glamour and excitement. However, if one gets to truly know them one realises that any joy they have is superficial and

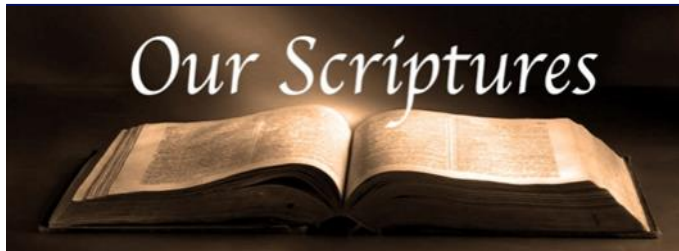
transient, and sooner or later they realise that their life is empty. Sooner or later their passions lead them to unhappiness, anger, resentments, feuds and other mistakes.

Coming back to **"Rejoice in the Lord always"**, the word

"always" is problematic. It is a fact that all people who live on this earth, if they live long enough, have to go through hardships and suffering. Can one have joy, or at least be content and have peace, in the face of suffering? Being close to the Christ's Church changes us, and one of the ways we change is that we can say with the Apostle Paul, **"we also glory in tribulations"** (Romans 5:3). Being close to the Church helps us to see the big picture, to focus on **"one thing"** that is **"needed"** (Luke 10:42), to be close to God. We then come to see the hardships of life in a different perspective. We remain positive through those hardships, strive to be at peace, and receive comfort from prayer. Indeed we come to see that suffering becomes redemptive, and promotes our spiritual growth.

† Fr D. K.





The parable of the Sower (Luke 8:5-15)

This parable is divided into three parts. The first part is the parable proper, showing how the seed is sown by the sower but requires a suitable environment to grow and yield a crop (v 5-8). The second concerns the nature of parables, and explains why Christ spoke in parables (v 9-10). The third is the explanation given by Christ to the Disciples of the initial parable (v 11-15).



Looking at the parable, the seed is the word of God - the Gospel (v 11). The first fell along the path, and Christ said that this was the devil taking the word away from their hearts (v 12). St Ephraim the Syrian notes that the devil is not allowed to penetrate the other soil where the seed has taken root, showing that if the heart is open to the word it cannot be taken away by external factors.

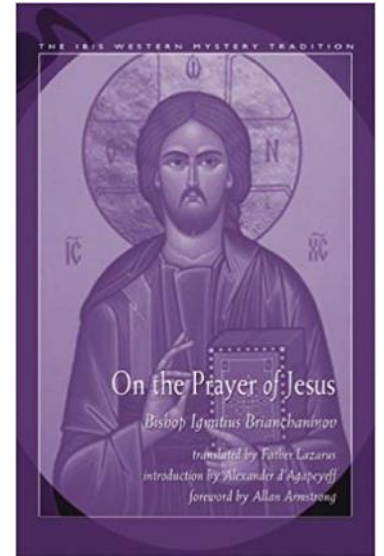
The rock is the soil that has some growth, but there is no root (v 13). St Theophylact of Ochrid finds that it depicts those who, “hear the word, and then do not endure temptations because of human weakness, and deny the faith”. This is differentiated from the external cares that are the cause of the seed falling among the thorns (v 14). As such, it is necessary to endure through all of the difficulties, lest we wither or be choked up (v 6-7). As Christians, we aspire to be fertile ground for the Gospel so that it is not we who live but Christ who lives in us. Despite the richness of the soil, without the seed there would be no fruit.

St Cyril of Alexandria, commenting on this parable, writes, “The parable points out to the eyes of the mind what is impossible to see with the eyes of the body”. According to St Theophylact, should we not understand at all or understand only partially it is so we, “not fall under greater condemnation for understanding the mysteries and then disregarding them”. This is why Jesus says through, “hearing they may not understand” (v 10).



On the Prayer of Jesus by Ignatius Brianchaninov. Published by Nicolas-Hays, Inc. 2006

The words of the Jesus prayer are familiar to all pious Orthodox Christians: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me the sinner. St Ignatius Brianchaninov was a 19th century Russian Orthodox bishop. He begins his work by placing the Jesus prayer firmly within the tradition and teaching of the gospels.



He recalls multiple examples from Holy Scriptures to show that the prayer has scriptural origins; that it is not conceived by monastics of later centuries. The main idea conveyed in his work is to show how to live and breathe Christ. The purpose of the prayer is to have Christ on one's mind and lips at all times and to call on Him with our emotions, our intellect, our bodies and with all our being. Living Christ involves permanent communion with Him, not only with our tongues or minds but also with the most insignificant of our day-to-day actions.”

He takes the reader through a history of Orthodox worship and explains how Orthodox Christians should conduct themselves in order to live a life in Christ.

The author jumps through the centuries and through the writings of many hesychast fathers to show the continuation of the sacred tradition of invoking the name of Jesus Christ and to exemplify the continued power brought about by repeated invocation. In such a short book, St Ignatius captures what it is to live a humble and God-fearing life. This is a book ideal for all thirsting to perfect themselves in truth.



A truly devout woman

Her life had begun in tragic circumstances even when she was in her mother's womb. In the late 1940s her father had died prematurely in his island village in the north east of Greece. He had left behind a young, grieving widow who already had in her care a few older children.

As she was growing up, Yasemi may have felt the absence of her father, but she also had the sense that she and her family were being protected by Panagia, the Mother of God. No matter what happened, later in her life, this sense of Panagia's benevolence never left her and it was obvious in her gestures, her radiant smile and the blessings she would give with so much generosity to those in need of a good word and a good example.

After her older brother married and migrated to Australia in the 1960s, she and her mother and the rest of her siblings

followed. Yasemi was a young woman at the time, and like so many of her generation, she quickly adjusted to life in Australia. She remained devoted to her mother, being the youngest child.

When Yasemi married, she had to move in with her husband's sister until they could afford to buy a house of their own. They shared the same kitchen, utensils and amenities and after they both had children their shared, common space became even more cramped. Often, Yasemi would be taunted by her sister in law and yet she never understood her use of irony. It was as if Panagia had erected a

protective wall around her and so she could remain composed and focused on raising her children in a peaceful way, despite the cynical remarks targeted at her young family.

Yasemi's elderly mother lived with the oldest son, according to the island tradition, and no matter how tense the relations may have been between her sister in law and her mother, Yasemi remained the peace builder. She made sure no severe word or feeling crossed her heart even when she was witness to

certain painful incidents. She chose to forego judgement as she had learnt the art of discernment from a young age. This was the peaceful path that the Mother of God had followed, and this was what she also wanted to remain faithful to throughout her own life.

Yasemi's husband faced health challenges in his later life, and these made him sullen

and short tempered during moments when he felt most anxious. He would express himself harshly and Yasemi would take on the guilt, saying and believing that it was her fault. Her apology and her appeasing nature would bring him back to his better self and so many potential confrontations were easily dissipated because of Yasemi's discernment and her example.

Yasemi may not have ever seen her father, but she had instead, the love of the most holy Mother of God instilled within her soul from a very young age. Panagia's love was, and is, her shield and the source of her joy throughout all of life's challenges.



Άγιοι Ανάργυροι

Η Εκκλησία μας τιμά και εορτάζει πολλούς Αγίους με το όνομα **Ανάργυροι**.

Έχουμε 3 ζεύγη αγίων Αναργύρων με τα ονόματα, **Κοσμάς και Δαμιανός**. Είναι οι άγιοι Ανάργυροι από την Ασία οι οποίοι εορτάζουν την 1^η Νοεμβρίου, από τη Ρώμη οι οποίοι εορτάζουν 1^η Ιουλίου και από την Αραβία που εορτάζουν τη 17^η Οκτωβρίου. Υπάρχουν 20 μέλη Αγίων Αναργύρων που ήταν όλοι τους γιατροί. Ως γιατροί πρόσφεραν τις υπηρεσίες αφιλοκερδώς. Επειδή η καρδιά τους δεν ήταν προσκολλημένη στα υλικά αγαθά και δεν αγαπούσαν τα αργύρια, ονομάστηκαν Ανάργυροι.

Οι Άγιοι Ανάργυροι Κοσμάς και Δαμιανός που εορτάζουν την 1^η Νοεμβρίου, ήταν αδέρφια δίδυμα και κατάγονταν από την Κιλικία της Ασίας. Ο πατέρας τους ήταν ειδωλολάτρης, και έγινε χριστιανός χάρη στην πιστή του γυναίκα **Θεοδότη**. Πέθανε όταν ο Κοσμάς και ο Δαμιανός ήταν σε μικρή ηλικία. Η μητέρα τους, **Αγία Θεοδότη**, που την τιμά η Εκκλησία μας στις 2 Ιανουαρίου, τους ανέθρεψε «εν παιδεία και νουθεσία Κυρίου». (Εφεσ.6,4)

Τα δύο αδέρφια τα διέκρινε μεγάλη ευφυΐα και επιμέλεια, γι' αυτό και σπούδασαν πολλές επιστήμες, ιδιαίτερα όμως, επιδόθηκαν στην ιατρική. Έγιναν άριστοι επιστήμονες, με καρδιά που ξεχείλιζε από την πίστη του Χριστού και την αγάπη στους ανθρώπους.

Θεράπευαν τις ασθένειες των ανθρώπων και όταν παρουσιάζονταν δύσκολες περιπτώσεις κατά τις οποίες επιστήμη αδυνατούσε να προσφέρει τη θεραπεία, τότε η θερμή προσευχή τους, έφερνε το ποθητό αποτέλεσμα.

Στους Αγίους Αναργύρους αποδίδουν την πρώτη μεταμόσχευση ποδιού, που είναι γνωστή ως «**θαύμα του μαύρου ποδιού**». Αντικατέστησαν το πόδι ενός ασθενούς που είχε πάθει γάγγραινα με ενός άλλου υγιούς Άραβα, ο οποίος μόλις είχε πεθάνει. Σχετική αγιογραφία-τοιχογραφία βρίσκεται στην Εκκλησία των Αγίων Αναργύρων στη Βέροια.



Οι άγιοι Κοσμάς και Δαμιανός δεν έδρασαν μόνο στην περιοχή της Κιλικίας, αλλά επιτέλεσαν, σημαντικό ιεραποστολικό και θεραπευτικό έργο και άλλες περιοχές. Οι Άγιοι ακόμα και σήμερα, μετά τόσους αιώνες, ενεργούν, συνδράμουν και βοηθούν όλους, όσους με πίστη και ταπείνωση τους προσεγγίζουν και ζητούν τη βοήθειά τους.

Ας ευχηθούμε οι Άγιοι Ανάργυροι να επισκέπτονται και τις δικές μας ασθένειες και να χαρίζουν την ευρωστία των ψυχών και τη θεραπεία των σωμάτων μας.



GREEK ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN SOCIETY

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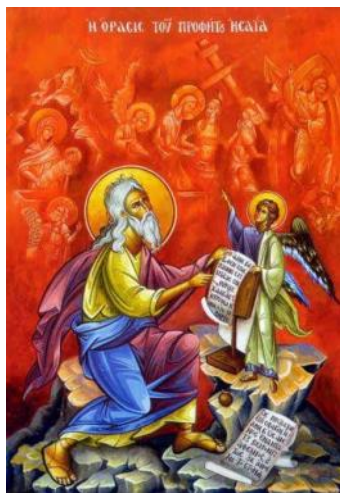
Find out more information about the history and activities of the Greek Orthodox Christian Society such as Sunday Schools, Youth Fellowships, the Sydney School of Byzantine Chant and Orthodox Bookstore, and subscribe to our bi-monthly update.

From The Old Testament



Vision of Isaiah

The 6th chapter of the Prophecy of Isaiah contains the remarkable account of the prophet's vision of God's throne and the heavenly court. While Isaiah was in the Temple, he saw the Lord in all His glory, "sitting upon a high and exalted throne," surrounded by the six-winged seraphim who cried out "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory" (Isaiah 6:3).



Falling to the ground, Isaiah confessed his unworthiness, saying, "Woe is me...for being a man, and having unclean lips ... I saw the King, the Lord of Hosts, with my eyes" (Isaiah 6:5). St John Chrysostom admires the humility of the Prophet, saying, "For such are all the saints: the greater honour they receive, the more they humble themselves."

One of the seraphim was then sent to Isaiah, having taken a live coal from the altar with tongs. It touched his lips with the coal, saying, "Behold, this has touched thy lips, and will take away thine iniquities, and will purge off thy sins" (Isaiah 6:7). These are the words spoken by the priest after receiving Holy Communion. St Gregory Palamas observes that this is also a prophecy of the Theotokos, who received the divine fire without being burnt, and like the tongs she is the means by which we receive God and are cleansed.

Like every divine revelation, this vision of Isaiah was not merely a figurative description or a projection of human imagination, but rather the self-expression of God. Although God transcends all things and cannot be contained by human expressions or images, He condescends to be seen by the prophets as a glorious King seated upon a lofty throne, surrounded by His heavenly hosts.

At each Divine Liturgy we mystically stand before the heavenly throne of God together with the cherubim and the seraphim. The glory which Isaiah spoke of is the uncreated energies of God, which pour forth from the throne and flood the world, flowing even to us and filling our hearts. Through His Incarnation and His Church, God invites every human to make our hearts his throne, so that He can be with us always.

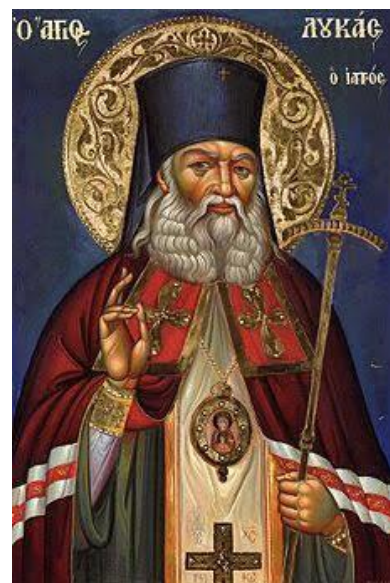


Holiness In Our Times

St Luke of Simferopol, the Doctor (1877-1961)

There are often many striking similarities between saints separated by decades or even centuries. St Luke the Evangelist, for instance, was mirrored by St Luke of Simferopol, who similarly was an artist, doctor and evangelist.

Born Valentin Felixovich Voino-Yasenetsky on 14 April 1877, he received an excellent secular education at the Kiev Academy of Fine Arts in drawing and subsequently at the University of Kiev in Medicine. He was married and had four children, but his wife, Anna, died at a young age.



The event which defined his life was the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 which established Communism in Russia. This had a direct impact on his work as a surgeon. Valentin would refuse to perform an operation without first praying before an icon of the Theotokos in the operating room, making the sign of the Cross on the patient with iodine. When Communist Party officials removed the icon, Valentin refused to return to surgery until it was returned. Soon afterward, a wife of a Communist Party official needed an operation, and specifically requested Valentin. When he refused to perform the surgery until the icon of the Panagia was returned, they complied and he returned to surgery.

In 1921, the 44 year old Valentin was called to the priesthood and within a few years was ordained a bishop with the name Luke. In this role he never stopped spreading the Orthodox Christian faith to the Russian people, who were constantly pressured by the Communists to abandon their religion. Luke was ultimately punished with eleven years exile for witnessing his faith.

Despite this, his abilities as a surgeon and as a spiritual father shone. He was awarded the Stalin Prize in 1946 for his contribution to medicine, and as a bishop guided his flock through his homilies. St Luke feared the Trisagion would not be chanted upon his death. His wish was granted. After his funeral in 1961, the people defied the Soviet state by chanting on the streets of Simferopol: "Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal have mercy on us".



What we Hear in Church



Hymn to the Theotokos Προστασία τῶν Χριστιανῶν ...

Προστασία τῶν Χριστιανῶν ἀκαταίσχυντε, μεσιτεία, πρὸς τὸν Ποιητὴν ἀμετάθετε, μὴ παρίδης, ἁμαρτωλῶν δεήσεων φωνάς, ἀλλὰ πρόφθασον, ὡς ἀγαθὴ, εἰς τὴν βοήθειαν ἡμῶν, τῶν πιστῶς κραυγαζόντων σοι· Τάχυνον εἰς πρεσβείαν, καὶ σπεῦσον εἰς ἱκεσίαν, ἢ προστατεύουσα ἀεὶ, Θεοτόκε, τῶν τιμώντων σε.

Protection of Christians that can never be put to shame, steadfast intercession to the Creator, we sinners beg you, do not overlook the voices of our prayers. But O good Lady, we implore you, quickly come unto our aid, we who are crying out to you with faith. Hurry to intercession, and hasten to supplication, Theotokos, you who are always protecting those who honour you.

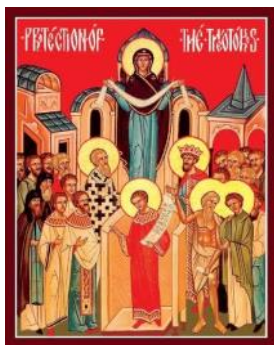
The provenance of this hymn is old, forming the first strophe of a much longer supplicatory kontakion to Panagia, possibly from as early as the 6th century. It is chanted primarily during the Holy Liturgy just before the Thrice-Holy Hymn.

How can we be so sure in Panagia's protection? According to St Gregory Palamas in his homily on Her Dormition, "She is so much closer to God out of those who are close to God, so much greater intercession does the Theotokos have than all other intercessions, I don't just mean of humans but even of all the angelic hierarchies."

St Nicholas Cabasilas similarly outlines how truly close the Theotokos is to God and why her intercessions have such power: "God, Who no place has ever encompassed, Who, even if all of creation were to become a thousand times larger, would not contain, the Virgin contained with her blood. And not simply did she contain Him, but she weaves with her blood such a robe, which is fitting in every way for the King."

This is why we can chant this hymn so boldly, knowing that because she is so close to Her Son who is our Creator, our prayers will be heard.

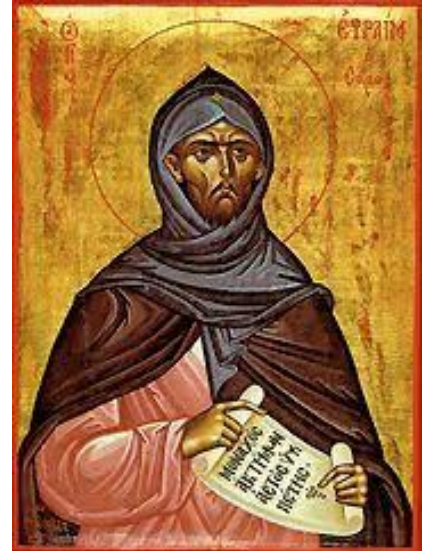
Orthodox Christians throughout the ages are instilled with these affirmations about the Theotokos from an early age. Being the Mother of God, she naturally assumes the role of Mother to all of us, especially to those who "cry out to her in faith".



From the Holy Father...

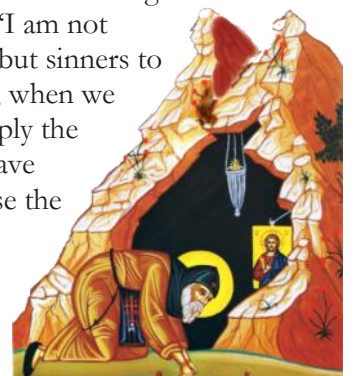
St Ephraim the Syrian (on Repentance)

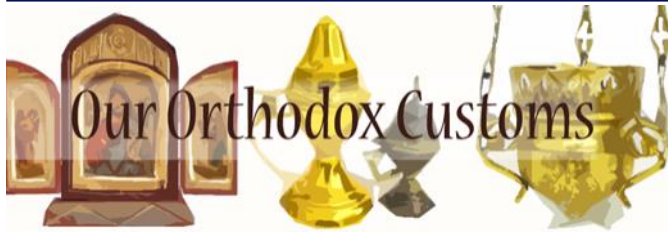
When St Ephraim was almost an adolescent, he had a curious dream. Out of his mouth sprouted a vine with many grapes. The height of the vine was great, and the branches reached across the earth. On the branches sat various species of birds flying from branch to branch feeding from the grapes. We understand this to be his God-given ability to preach, and we are the "birds" who are able to "feast" spiritually.



On the topic of repentance he begins with the words of Christ "There shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repents!" He proposes the following questions to us, "Why then, O sinner, do you sit, listless, and negligent? Why are you disheartened and in despair? If there will be joy in heaven at your repentance, what are you afraid of?" In order to stir our often insensitive hearts to repentance he brings before us the judgment of Christ, where we must all give account. He emphasises the necessity of a constant life long journey of repentance so that we may not be confounded at the tribunal where "ten thousands of angels and archangels shall wait with trembling, when the hidden things of darkness will be brought to life and books will be opened". St Ephraim tells us "repent, my brother, and then rid yourself of all fear".

He continues, "Do the works of repentance, O sinner, confiding in and looking to the infinite goodness and mercy of Christ, who says, 'I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance'." When we sin, when we fall, he encourages us to apply the remedy of tears while we have time for repentance, because the time for repentance is very short, but the Kingdom of Heaven has no end. Let us all make haste.





Komboskini

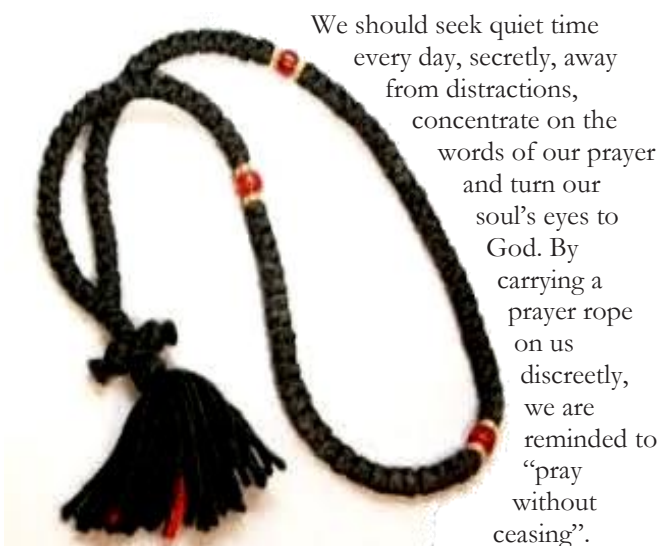
The Komboskini (κομποροϊόνι) or Orthodox prayer rope is used by Christians to assist their daily prayer rule. Traditionally it is made of black wool, knotted in the form of a loop, with coloured beads at intervals and a cross and tassel at its base.

The black colour is the colour of mourning or repenting for our sins and the wool symbolizes the flock of Christ, the Good Shepherd. The tassel at the end is used to wipe the tears of the repentant in prayer.

Prayer ropes come in different sizes most commonly with either 33 knots (representing Christ's earthly life), 50 or 100 knots.

The prayer rope is attributed to St. Pachomius (4th century). The devil would untie the simple knots he would make to count his prayers. Inspired by a vision from an angel of God, St. Pachomius was able to create a special knot composed of nine interconnected crosses (representing the nine angelic classes), that the devil was unable to untie. The devil cannot abide the sign of the Cross and so the komboskini becomes a spiritual weapon to fight against the evil one.

With the guidance of a spiritual Father, one is able to use the prayer rope to pray a set number of prayers. The rope is placed between the thumb and index finger and on each knot the Jesus Prayer is prayed, "Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on me (a sinner)", thus invoking the powerful name of the Lord. We can also pray "Most Holy Mother of God save us" or "Saint (name) intercede for us". Intercessory prayers can be made for family and friends in need and for the departed, "Give rest O Lord to the soul of your servant".

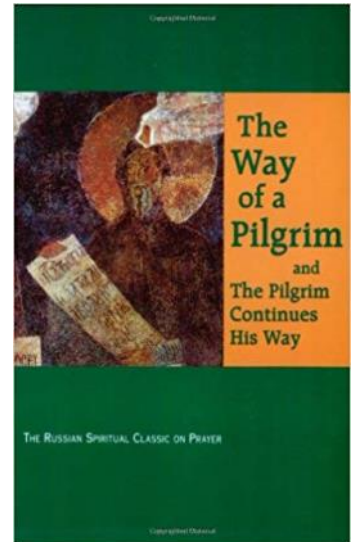


The Way of a Pilgrim

Hope Publishing House, 2nd Edition 1989

The Way of a Pilgrim is an all time classic much loved by generations of teenagers and adults. It chronicles the travels of an anonymous nineteenth century Russian Christian, and his adventures, spiritual inquiries, and inner change along his eye-opening and extraordinary journey.

The pilgrim sets out with nothing but a Bible, a rosary, and some dried bread. Various incidents arise during his journey: he meets his spiritual elders, he learns the Jesus prayer, he encounters a forester, he gets a job as a church watchman, he plans for a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, he visits with a pious family, and he departs for the Holy Land.



Through his journeys, his practice of the Jesus prayer, his readings of the Fathers of the Church in the Philokalia, and guidance of a spiritual father, the pilgrim becomes gradually more open to the promptings of God. He sees joy and plenty wherever he goes. He discovers the different meanings and methods of prayer as he travels to his ultimate destination, Jerusalem.

At one point, the pilgrim observes: "I spent the entire summer continuously repeating the Jesus prayer. I was very much at peace and often even dreamed that I was saying the prayer. If I happened to meet people during the day, each of them without exception seemed very dear to me, as if they were family, though otherwise I did not concern myself with them much. All thoughts seemed to vanish on their own, and I thought of nothing else but the prayer. My mind was recollected and attentive to it, while at times, and of its own accord, my heart would feel a warmth and a sort of pleasure."

The transformation of the pilgrim's inner life throughout this journey captivates the reader. He inspires us to pray the Jesus prayer so that through repentance we can also have an increasing understanding of our Lord Jesus Christ's providence and boundless love.

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Tel: (02) 9787 9779 E-mail: editor@lychnos.org
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NEWS & VIEWS

Sunday School Annual Picnic

On Monday 1st October, the Sunday Schools of Sydney held their annual Picnic at Centennial Park, attended by His Eminence Archbishop Stylianos, numerous clergy, parents, teachers and children. Following lunch, His Eminence warmly addressed the gathering, which was followed by various athletic races for the children! The day was a very enjoyable experience for all!

Sunday School Camp

This year's Sunday School Camp was held again at Vision Valley Conference Centre, Arcadia, from Wednesday 3rd to Friday 5th of October. The theme of the Camp was "In the footsteps of the Apostles" and 92 children, along with 21 volunteer adult leaders, participated. The children enjoyed the activities of rock climbing, archery, and sport, and the thrill of leaping off the edge with "power fan" and "flying fox" jumps. Particular blessings were the formal visits and lessons provided by Dr John Psarommatis and Mr Asimakis Tsomis. As always, the highlight of the Camp was the Divine Liturgy Service presided by Abbot Eusebios and the fathers from Pantanassa Monastery on Thursday morning.



His Eminence Archbishop Stylianos handing out an icon and blessing the children at the picnic



One of many races at the Sunday School picnic



Participants at this year's Sunday School camp



A presentation at the Sunday School camp

**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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