



# ΛΥΧΝΟΣ

A GREEK ORTHODOX PERIODICAL FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

«Λύχνος τοῖς  
ποσὶ μου ὁ  
νόμος σου καὶ  
φῶς ταῖς τρίβοις  
μου»  
Ψαλμ 118, 105

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**I**n the Dismissal Hymn for the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos, we chant the following about the Theotokos: “You were transported to life, as you are the Mother of Life.”

At one level, this reflects on the events of the Dormition. Three days prior to her repose the Archangel Gabriel informed the Theotokos that she would fall asleep, and that she would be taken to Heaven to be with her Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The Apostles were called from all parts of the world to farewell her and participate in her funeral. The one exception was Thomas, who was taken to the tomb of the Theotokos at Gethsemane three days after, and met her as she ascended. When the tomb was opened, all who had kept continuous vigil found it empty. Her body joined her soul, both being transported to life.

At another level “transported to life” reflects on the life and virtue of the Theotokos as the Mother of Christ. With the exception of the consequences of ancestral sin, the Theotokos was completely without sin. Her purity and her chastity throughout her life were so great that death was not able to contain her.

Reflecting on the Feast of the Dormition, St John of Damascus consistently connects the Theotokos with life. She gave life to Christ, who created the universe and said, “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life” (John 14:6).

In being “transported to life” the Theotokos was taken before anyone else to be with her

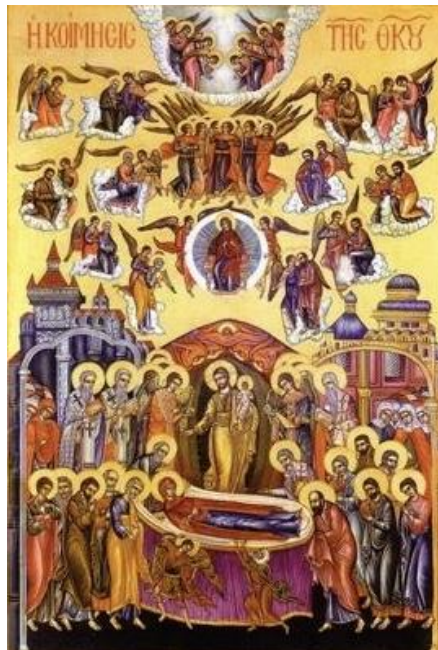
Son in eternal life. In that way, the Theotokos is an example for the spiritual life of all Orthodox Christians. To quote Fr Alexander Schmemmann, “Mary’s not the great exception. She’s the great example.” Death cannot contain anyone who works at attaining purity, chastity and humility, who flees from sin in all of its forms, and who cultivates a deep love for God. St Andrew of Crete states that the Theotokos led the way for humanity to achieve incorruptibility, and it is time for the faithful to follow that path towards life.

But how is this to be done? St John of Damascus begs his listeners to flee from sin by describing the revulsion the Theotokos has for evil, and the great love she has for virtue. The way for us to “make our own remembrance of her into a rich monument” is to adopt purity as a way of life, as she did.

It should also be remembered that the Theotokos’ role as the Mother of Life is not confined to her earthly life. It continues to this day and will continue eternally. The tomb of the Theotokos at Gethsemane is

itself a place of life, with many miracles and healings occurring there. The many ongoing miracles of the Theotokos and her intercessions to Christ also show how she wishes for all of humanity to have life alongside her.

Let us then pray to the Theotokos, seeking her guidance and intercessions at all times so that we too may acquire the live-giving virtues that she showed us throughout her earthly life, and continues to show us through her intercessions and miracles.





**Μ**ε αυτή τη λέξη άρχισε ο Κύριος το κοσμοσωτήριο έργο Του πάνω στη γη. Τη μετάνοια επίσης κήρυττε και ο «μείζων των προφητών» ο Ιωάννης ο Βαπτιστής. Και οι Απόστολοι το ίδιο, αυτήν εκήρυτταν, «μετανοήσατε και επιστρέψατε εις το εξαιλεθῆναι υμών τας αμαρτίας» (Πραξ. γ' 19). Δηλ. μετανοήστε και γυρίστε πίσω κοντά στο Θεό έχοντας στο εξής ζωή ενάρετη και εγκολπωθείτε με πίστη τον Ιησού για να εξαιλεθούν οι αμαρτίες σας (Ερμ. κου. Τρεμπέλα).

Επομένως η μετάνοια αποτελεί το πιο ουσιώδες στοιχείο της πνευματικής ζωής. Η θεία χάρις χωρίς τη μετάνοια μένει μακριά από τον άνθρωπο.

Σύμφωνα με τα λόγια του Κυρίου μας, η μετάνοια είναι ο δρόμος που οδηγεί στη Βασιλεία των ουρανών. «Μετανοείτε· ήγγικε γαρ η Βασιλεία των ουρανών» (Ματθ. δ' 17). Δηλ. μετανοείτε, διότι πλησίασαν οι ημέρες που ο Μεσσίας θα εγκαθιδρύσει και στη γη τη Βασιλεία των ουρανών με τη νέα, πνευματική, άγια και ουράνια ζωή που θα μεταδίδεται μέσα στην Εκκλησία Του (Ερμ. κου. Τρεμπέλα).

Οι Άγιοι Πατέρες μας διδάσκουν πως με την αμαρτία απομακρυνόμαστε από τη ζωή που είναι ο Χριστός. Έτσι ξεπέφτουμε κι από τη θεία Του χάρη. Κινούμεθα αντίθετα από το Θεό και το θείο Του θέλημα. Έτσι έρχεται η πνευματική νέκρωση. Σ'αυτή τη κατάσταση ο άνθρωπος ζει μέσα στο απελπιστικό σκοτάδι της αμαρτίας και παντελώς αγνοεί την ωραιότητα της θείας ζωής. Δεν μπορεί να καταλάβει τη φρικτή κατάστασή του. Το ίδιο και η καρδιά του – που είναι το κέντρο της ύπαρξής μας – γεμάτη από πάθη καθώς είναι, παραμένει ακάθαρη, σκοτεινή και πονηρή, χωρίς φως, παρηγοριά και ελπίδα.

Μια σύντομη ματιά στον κόσμο γύρω μας θα μας πείσει πως στη μεγάλη πλειοψηφία της, η

σημερινή μας κοινωνία πορεύεται μακράν του Θεού, και πως προτιμά το σκοτάδι από το φως. Γι'αυτό και συνεχώς οδηγούμεθα όλο και περισσότερο σε αδιέξοδα.

Για τους Χριστιανούς, και μάλιστα τους Ορθοδόξους, υπάρχει η λύσις. «Μετανοείτε». Και δεν εννοούμε απλά μια τυπική εξομολόγηση αλλά μια ολοκληρωτική αλλαγή ζωής. Μόνο όταν η θεία χάρις φωτίσει τη καρδιά μας, τότε βλέπουμε τα πάθη μας, την ερήμωση τη πνευματική. Εάν πάρουμε την απόφαση γι'αυτή την αλλαγή, η θεία χάρις μας δίνει δύναμη και ενισχύει τη θέλησή μας για ακόμη μεγαλύτερη μετάνοια.

Καθαίρεται ο νους μας, η καρδιά μας εξαγνίζεται με τα δάκρυα της μετανοίας. Αισθανόμαστε μέσα

μας το ξεχείλισμα της χάριτος και της αγάπης του Θεού.

Μα για να μείνουν αυτά μέσα μας, καλούμεθα σε αγώνα πνευματικό. Με τη μελέτη των ευαγγελικών εντολών, αποκτούμε ταπεινωση. Μας ελκύει η πνευματική ζωή. Η πνευματική αγρυπνία και ιδιαίτερα η προσευχή γίνεται τρόπος ζωής. Ένας καινούργιος άνθρωπος κτίζεται μέσα μας -

«καρδιαν καθαράν κτίσον εν εμοί ο Θεός» (Ψαλ. 50).

Φυσικά όλα αυτά που προαναφέραμε είναι ακατανόητα για τον σημερινό άνθρωπο. Αυτόν, που δεν ζει στο πνευματικό κλίμα της Ορθοδοξίας, που τρέφεται από τον εγωισμό του, την αυταρέσκεια του, και την έπαρσή του. Όμως είναι βίωμα και ζωή της Ορθοδόξου Εκκλησίας μας. Αυτή συνεχώς θα μας φωνάζει:

- Μετανοείτε – για να ξαναγυρίσει η Αγάπη του Θεού στη ζωή σας.
- Μετανοείτε – για να πνεύσει η αύρα του Αγίου Πνεύματος στη ζωή σας.
- Μετανοείτε – η πιο γενναία, μα και πιο αναγκαία προτροπή των καιρών μας.



# Atheism

**L**ong before the Son of God was born as man, God spoke to Moses and told him, “You shall have no other gods before me” (Ex 20:3). And elsewhere he orders him to tell His people: “Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.” (Deut 6:4).

God addressed these words to His own selected people. He had given them their own land, with Jerusalem to become their capital city and “The city of the great King” (Ps 47:3).

Christ’s Incarnation established a new covenant which included those who in the past were not His people. In this manner the New Israel that was created was the Church. It is the Kingdom of God on earth, the “upper Jerusalem” which Christ talked frequently about. The foundations of this Kingdom cannot be broken or breached (Heb 12:8).

The “City of God” was established by the Resurrection of Christ. Man becomes a member of this victory of Christ, and retains his citizenship with his true and sincere Faith in Him. At those times the early Church did not have to deal with atheism.

During the Middle Ages (5<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> Centuries) there was confusion in the West about the Faith.

People wanted to understand the content of their Faith in view of the new way of thinking. A system of in-depth study of theology and philosophy, “scholasticism”, was created. Its main aim was to find answers to the problems presented by Faith, eg divine revelations and other Christian teachings. It was taught at all universities, and appeared to support the existence of God, but without connection to His Church. The end result was that history was distorted by “Relativism” (aligning of Christian dogmas and teachings to the ideas and concepts of the current society of the time). Now, rationalism replaced Faith, power replaced Divine grace, and vainglory replaced immortality.

As the “renaissance” (14<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> centuries), with its spectacular scientific advances was coming to an end, a new movement made its appearance, “romanticism”, which aimed to improve society and better the life of humankind. They believed that reason, objectivity, and rational analysis “falsify reality,” and leave little room for: human creativity, emotional life of the person, aesthetic experience, literature, etc. Unfortunately, it did not survive beyond the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century to pursue its objectives.

What was said so far refers to Western viewpoints regarding God and His relationship to man.

The Orthodox faithful, however, do not understand atheism only as a theoretical denial, or indifference to the existence of God. Instead, atheist in Greek means “one without God”, that is “α = without”, “Θεός = God”. Thus an atheist is the person who does not belong to Him, which means he belongs to His adversary, the Devil. In fact, to be an atheist means for one NOT to be in a state of “Theosis” [be like God], which God decreed to be attained through His Church.

The attitude of “thinking” people in the 20<sup>th</sup> century can be viewed as being against the existence of God, as well as the teachings of the Church and the Bible, much to the despair of the remainder of the population of Western Europe. These thinking people are well known figures, eg Isaac Newton, Charles Darwin, Michael Bakunin, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Friedrich Nietzsche, etc.

Each of them had their own ideas about God and the Church, albeit variously deviating from the true nature and purpose of both. Is there a name for these people? “Christian Atheists”? Perhaps for some.

There was optimism when, during the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, the Ecumenical Movement for the re-union of the divided Christendom appeared. In spite of its original objectives, these were changed at about the end of the century. The group became involved in the distribution and even supply of weapons, the distribution of contraceptives in poor countries, as well as political activism. Its original objective having failed, it now tries to act as a catalyst for the unification of all humanity, independent of their religious principles.

For the faithful Orthodox, all the theological systems described so far, including the Ecumenical Movement, do not agree with the teachings of the Gospel. All these people who are fighting against God, the Apostles and the Church fathers, must realise that they are fighting against God’s scheme of salvation of humanity - which is His Church.

Looking for a new Christianity means searching for another God different from Him who was revealed in Jesus Christ. The other god is not a real god, and another church of Christ is not a real Church!



## Από Τους Αγίους Της Εκκλησίας Μας

**Ο Άγιος Βαβύλας**  
(η μνήμη του τιμάται 4 Σεπτεμβρίου)

**Ο** Άγιος Βαβύλας ήταν ο δωδέκατος Επίσκοπος Αντιοχείας (237-253 μ.Χ.). Υπηρέτησε τους Χριστιανούς πολίτες της Αντιόχειας στα χρόνια των διωγμών, και φρόντισε ιδιαίτερα για τις χήρες και τα ορφανά. Ο Άγιος Ιωάννης ο Χρυσόστομος ήταν από την Αντιόχεια και στην ομιλία του για τις Πράξεις των Μαρτύρων είπε ότι ο Άγιος Βαβύλας «έσωσε αυτό το ιερό πλοίο [την Εκκλησία] σε θύελλα και ταραγμένη θάλασσα και κύματα». Ανέφερε την ώρα που ο Άγιος Βαβύλας βρισκόταν έξω από την εκκλησία και αρνήθηκε να αφήσει τον επισκέπτη ειδωλολάτρη αυτοκράτορα να μπει στην εκκλησία για να παρακολουθήσει τη Θεία Λειτουργία. Τον διέταξε αντιθέτως να πάρει τη θέση του μεταξύ των μετανοούντων, για το ρόλο του σε έναν φόνο.

Κατά τη διάρκεια του διωγμού του Δεκίου (250 μ.Χ.) ο Άγιος Βαβύλας έδωσε ακλόνητη ομολογία πίστης και ρίχτηκε στη φυλακή. Τον έβαλαν σε βαριές αλυσίδες και του δόθηκε η επιλογή, είτε να θυσιάσει στα είδωλα, είτε να πεθάνει. Παρά τα βασανιστήρια που υπέστη ο Άγιος Βαβύλας, τρία αδέρφια που ήταν πνευματικά παιδιά του Αγίου δεν τον εγκατέλειψαν. Αυτά τα νέα παιδιά υπέστησαν βασανιστήρια, αλλά κανένα από αυτά δεν απαρνήθηκε τον Χριστό. Τελικά, ο Άγιος Βαβύλας και οι σύντροφοί του εκτελέστηκαν το 253 και εορτάζονται στις 4 Σεπτεμβρίου.

Ο Άγιος Βαβύλας είναι επίσης πολύ γνωστός για γεγονότα που συνέβησαν μετά το θάνατό του. Ήταν ένας από τους πρώτους Αγίους που έγινε ανακομιδή τον Λειψάνων του, στο προάστιο Δάφνη της Αντιοχείας γύρω στο 350 μ.Χ., από τον Καίσαρα Κωνσταντίο Γάλλο. Ο Άγιος Ιωάννης Χρυσόστομος το περιγράφει σαν «να φέρναν έναν γιατρό στους αρρώστους» και να αντιμετωπίσει έτσι τους ειδωλολάτρες στον πλησίον Ναό του Απόλλωνα.

Ο Άγιος Ιωάννης αναφέρει επίσης τα ακόλουθα γεγονότα: Όταν ο ειδωλολάτρης αυτοκράτορας Ιουλιανός ο Παραβάτης πήγε στο Ναό του Απόλλωνα για να λάβει μια προφητεία, ο δαίμονας στο άγαλμα απάντησε: «Οι νεκροί με εμποδίζουν να μιλήσω, αλλά σπάσε τους τάφους, σκάψε τα κόκαλα, και απομακρυνε τους νεκρούς». Με αυτό, ο δαίμονας έκανε γνωστό ότι η δύναμη του Αγίου τον εμπόδιζε να μιλήσει. Ο Αυτοκράτορας στη συνέχεια μετέφερε τα λείψανα του Μάρτυρα, αλλά με αυτόν τον τρόπο δημιούργησε μια θριαμβευτική πομπή των λειψάνων του σε όλη την Αντιόχεια. Μόλις το φέρετρο έφτασε στην πόλη, ένας κεραυνός κατέστρεψε το άγαλμα στο Ναό και έκαψε την οροφή. Έτσι, οι Άγιοι κάνουν γνωστή τη δόξα του Θεού.

## From the Saints of our Church

**St Babylas of Antioch**  
(Commemorated on September 4)

**S**aint Babylas was the twelfth Bishop of Antioch (237-253 AD). He served Antioch's Christian citizens well during the years of Christian persecution, and especially cared for the vulnerable widows and orphans. Saint John Chrysostom was from Antioch, and in his homily on the Acts of the Martyrs said that Saint Babylas "saved this holy ship [the Church] in storm and choppy sea and waves." He reported on the time that Saint Babylas stood outside of the church and refused to let the visiting pagan emperor enter the church to witness the Divine Liturgy. He ordered him instead to take his place among the penitents for his part in a murder.

During the Decian persecution (250 AD) St Babylas made an unwavering confession of faith and was thrown into prison. He was placed in heavy chains and given the choice to either sacrifice to the idols or die. Despite the tortures that Saint Babylas was enduring, three young brothers who were spiritual children of the Saint did not abandon him. These young boys suffered tortures, but none of them renounced Christ. In the end, Saint Babylas and his companions were executed in 253, and are commemorated on September 4.

Saint Babylas is also well known for events that occurred after his death. He was one of the first saints to have his relics moved, or 'translated', to the suburb of Daphne in Antioch by Caesar Constantius Gallus around 350 AD. In St John Chrysostom's words it was like "bringing a physician to the sick," as his presence

counteracted the ungodly activities of the pagans at the nearby Temple of Apollo.

Saint John also relates the following events in his sermon: When the pagan Emperor Julian the Apostate went to the Temple to receive a prophecy, the demon in the statue replied: "The dead prevent me from uttering, but break open the graves, dig up the bones, move the dead." By this, the demon made known that the power of the Saint prevented him from speaking. The Emperor then moved the Martyr's relics, but in doing so created a triumphant procession of his relics throughout Antioch. As soon as the coffin reached the city, a thunderbolt destroyed the statue in the Temple and burned the roof. Thus, even in death, the Saints make known the glory of God.



# Questions & Answers

A clergyman of our Archdiocese answers ...

## What do we Learn from the Transfiguration?

**T**he story of the Transfiguration of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is amazing! Jesus takes three of His disciples to Mount Tabor and there, in front of them, and surrounded by Moses and Elias, He transfigures and shows them His divine nature. You can read the story in the New Testament in Matthew 17:1, Mark 9:2 and Luke 9:28.

Some of the important lessons from this revelation by Jesus are as follows:

### The Authority of Jesus Christ

Our Lord Jesus Christ transfigures in the presence of Moses and Elias. Moses is the liberator of the Jews. He brought the law to the people. Elias is one of the most powerful and dramatic prophets of the Old Testament – demonstrating God's power and authority time and again. Even at the end of his life, Elias does not die. Rather, he is taken up.

Apostle Peter is completely awestruck when witnessing the Transfiguration. He suggests building three tabernacles, but the voice of the Father from Heaven elevates Jesus above Moses and Elijah. There is room for only one tabernacle. In 2 Peter 1:16-17, Peter recalls this event and reaffirms the authority placed upon Jesus Christ in this event: "we ... were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honour and glory when such a voice came to him from the Excellent Glory: 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased'."

### Glory

Jesus is transfigured on the mountain. His divine glory becomes visible to those with Him. This visually reinforces Christ's role as God among us, and God's glory is revealed in our Lord Jesus. Jesus says to his disciples "If you had known Me,

you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him."

Learning more about Jesus is learning more about God. In 2 Corinthians 4:6, St Paul writes that Jesus is the light of God's glory: "For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

### Our Own Transformation

The Apostle Peter (2 Peter 1:2-4) invites us to become partakers of God's divine nature. As we learn more about Christ, we should become more like Him. St Paul (Ephesians 2:19-22) describes Christians as growing into a temple of God – a place where God lives. To what extent do we allow God to live in us? In Galatians 2:20, St Paul describes himself as completely taken over by Christ. His life, his words, his thoughts and all his energy are taken up with the will of Christ.

Finally, St Paul (2 Corinthians 3:7) contrasts the glory and brilliance of the new covenant as overwhelming that of the old. This culminates with us looking to God and the unfading reflection of His glory we should have within us – unhidden from those around us.

This is exactly what the Saints of our Church have done throughout the ages. They have been normal people who voluntarily transfigured themselves into living vessels for the glory of God to shine forth, through them, into the world. Their bright halos in their icons represent this light of God.

Do you accept the authority of Jesus Christ as God? Do you honour His glory? Do you allow Him to shine His light, through you into the world?

† Fr N. S.





# New Martyr

In commemorating the 200 years of Greek Independence we focus in this issue on the lives of some of the New Martyrs of 1821.

These heroic Saints witnessed for their faith during the retaliations of the Ottoman Empire against the Greeks and Orthodox Christians.

## St Dorotheos (Proios), Metropolitan of Adrianople (+ 1821)

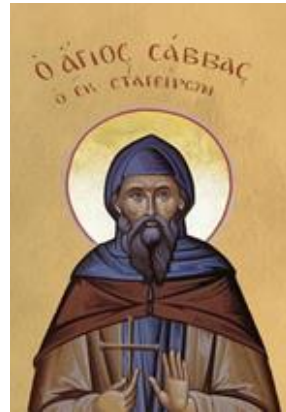
St Dorotheos was born and educated on the island of Chios, and later studied in Patmos, Italy and France. It was through his studies that he became one of the leading scholars of the Greek Enlightenment, and even edited the first edition of the *Rudder* of St Nicodemus the Hagiorite.



Dorotheos' faith and studies led to him being ordained a Deacon in 1786. He taught at the School of Chios under St Athanasios of Paros. He took on a role as a private tutor to the children of the ruler of Wallachia in 1796, and subsequently went to Constantinople when the ruler was executed by the Ottoman Turks in 1799. It was there that he was made an Archimandrite.

In 1807, Dorotheos was ordained Metropolitan of Philadelphia in Asia Minor, and in 1813 he was transferred to the Metropolis of Adrianople. In both cities, he focused on education and training future clergy. In 1820 he was appointed to the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and he was there when the Greek Revolution broke out in March 1821.

Along with other hierarchs, Metropolitan Dorotheos was taken prisoner in April 1821. After an Ottoman ship was destroyed by fire in the harbour of Mytilene, St Dorotheos was hanged alongside his brother hierarchs St Joseph of Thessalonica, St Gregory of Derkon and St Joannicius of Trnovo on June 3 1821. Hence, these hierarchs are commemorated on June 3.



## The New Martyr Savvas of Stageira (+ 1821)

The town of Stageira in the region of Chalkidiki is best known for being the birthplace of the philosopher Aristotle. It was also the birthplace of the monk Savvas from the Konstamonitou Monastery of Mount Athos, who witnessed for Christ during the 1821 Revolution.

There are differing accounts of his martyric end. Some sources say that Savvas died along with four other monks as part of the revolt in Chalkidiki in 1821. More authoritative sources, however, say that Savvas knew that he was going to be a martyr and that he died alongside a lay person from Stageira at the hands of the Turks passing by Zographou Monastery on Mount Athos.



## The New Martyr Zafeirios of Chalkidiki (+ 1821)

At the outbreak of the Revolution in 1821, many families in Chalkidiki fled to neighbouring Mount Athos and took refuge in the monasteries. The young St Zafeirios, a child with firm faith, was amongst them.

The Russian Monastery of Saint Panteleimon on Mount Athos has a record which explains that Pasha Abu Bout, an Ottoman governor, ordered his men to occupy the Holy Mountain and capture any people from Chalkidiki hiding there. Many were slaughtered and received the crown of martyrdom.

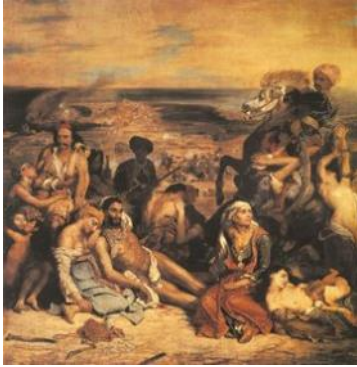
Zafeirios was amongst 70 children who were taken to Thessaloniki, where the Pasha planned to convert them all to Islam and raise them as Turks. Of the 70 children, Zafeirios alone held fast to his faith and refused to convert. He was brutally murdered and is counted amongst the courageous New Martyrs of the Revolution. He is commemorated on June 11.

# Years of 1821

## The Holy New Martyrs of Crete (+ 1821-1822)

Soon after the onset of the Greek War of Independence, revolts broke out against Ottoman Turkish rule across the island of Crete. The Ottomans took revenge on the Greeks of Crete in response to these revolts, and to the other Greek successes on the mainland.

Many thousands were executed for their faith, with nine hundred killed on 23 and 24 June 1821 in Heraklion, and eighty others in the Diocese of Knossos. Priests and monks visiting Crete from the Monastery of Vatopedi on Mount Athos with the Girdle of the Theotokos were also killed.



Targeted most severely in the massacre known as “o megalos arpentēs” (the great ravage) were the hierarchs of the Church of Crete who had gathered in Heraklion for a meeting of the Holy Synod. Saint Gerasimos, Archbishop of Crete was executed first, followed by Saints and Bishops Neophytos of Knossos, Joachim of Cheronissos, Hierotheos of Lampesa, Callinicus of Diopolis, Zacharias of Siteia and Joachim of Petra.

In 1822, there were further martyrdoms of Christians. The abbots of the monasteries of the Diocese of Rethymnon, and its Bishop Gerasimos, were martyred. Bishops Callinicus of Kydonia and Melchizedek were also martyred alongside monks, nuns and lay people from across their dioceses. These Saints are commemorated together on June 23 each year.

## The Holy 1241 New Martyrs of Naousa (+1822)

Each year on the Sunday of Thomas, our Orthodox Church remembers the Holy 1241 New Martyrs of Naousa.

During the Greek War of Independence, there was a revolt in the region of Macedonia by the Greeks which was brutally put down by the Ottoman troops. The Greeks were besieged in the town of Naousa, and when Naousa fell to

the Ottomans on Bright Thursday of 1822, the massacres started.



The first to be killed were the five priests of the Church of Saint George, followed by many of the other faithful who wished to protect their church from being desecrated. By the time the three days of massacre allowed

by Islam finished on Thomas Sunday, 1241 faithful Orthodox Christians were joined to Christ – for whom they witnessed and were martyred.

## Four Holy New Martyrs of Rethymno (+ 1824)

Brothers Angelis and Manuel, sons of John Tetzepes, and their cousins George and Nicholas, sons of Constantine Tetzepes, were well off married men. They fought from 1821



to 1824, until the Turks regained power.

When the Christians were called to pay taxes the cousins, who had

been Cryptochristians, also went to pay. All had thought that they were Muslims. They, however, declared that they were Christians from their youth and that they were waiting to unite themselves to Christ in martyrdom.

Mehmet Pasha failed to convert them and had them beheaded on 28 October 1824 by the Venetian wall's Great Gate. Their relics were buried at the Monastery of Arkadi. Some of their relics were taken to Russia by a Russian ship captain, who was docked in port at the time. Their four skulls are kept in a Rethymno church bearing their name, and they have worked many miracles.

May all of these saints, and the many others who witnessed for their faith following the Revolution, intercede for us.

# Αγία Ευφημία

«Η Πανεύφημος Αγία Ευφημία ως Κριτήριο Ορθοδοξίας και Ορθοπραξίας εναντίον των αιρετικών».  
«Υμείς εστε το φως του κόσμου»

**Η** Εκκλησία μας γιορτάζει και τιμά στις 16 Σεπτεμβρίου την Αγίαν Ευφημίαν την Πανεύφημον και Μεγαλομάρτυρα. Η Αγία μαρτύρησε για τον Χριστό στο διωγμό του Διοκλητιανού το 303 μ.Χ. Η πίστη της και η αγάπη της για το Χριστό ολοκληρώθηκαν με την πανεύφημη σοφία της. Είναι γνωστό πως χάρι σε θάυμα που η Αγία επετέλεσε στήριξαν οι ορθόδοξοι αλώβητη την πίστη τους. Η Δ' Οικουμενική εν Χαλκηδόνι Σύνοδος το 431 μ.Χ. καταδίκασε την αίρεση του Μονοφυσιτισμού. Οι αιρετικοί εκπροσωπούμενοι από τον Ευτυχή, λανθασμένα υπεστήριξαν ότι στο Πρόσωπο του Χριστού, η ανθρώπινη φύση απερροφήθη από τη Θεία του φύση. Με άλλα λόγια η ανθρώπινη φύση του Χριστού εξηφανίζετο.

Οι Άγιοι Πατέρες, φωτισμένοι από το Άγιο Πνεύμα και με πλήρη επίγνωση του Ευαγγελίου και της Ιεράς Παραδόσεως από τα Αποστολικά χρόνια μέχρι των ημερών τους, θέσπισαν το δόγμα περί του προσώπου του Κυρίου ημών Ιησού Χριστού, ότι δηλαδή ήταν δύο φύσεις και δύο ενέργειες: Η Θεία και η ανθρώπινη, ασυγχύτως και ατρέπτως ηνωμένες.

Συνέταξαν λοιπόν τούς δύο τόμους, ο τόμος των ορθοδόξων και ο τόμος των αιρετικών. Άνοιξαν τη Λάρνακα της Αγίας Ευφημίας και τοποθέτησαν μέσα τούς δύο τόμους, αποφασίζοντας να αφήσουν την Αγία Ευφημία να υποδείξει ποιοι είναι σωστοί και ποιοι λάθος. Το πρωί που άνοιξαν όλοι μαζί τη Λάρνακα είδαν το μέγα θαύμα. Την Αγία να κρατά σφιχτά στην αγκαλιά της το

τόμο των ορθοδόξων και να πατά στα πόδια της τον τόμο των αιρετικών (Συναξάριο Αγίου Νικοδήμου του Αγιορείτου).

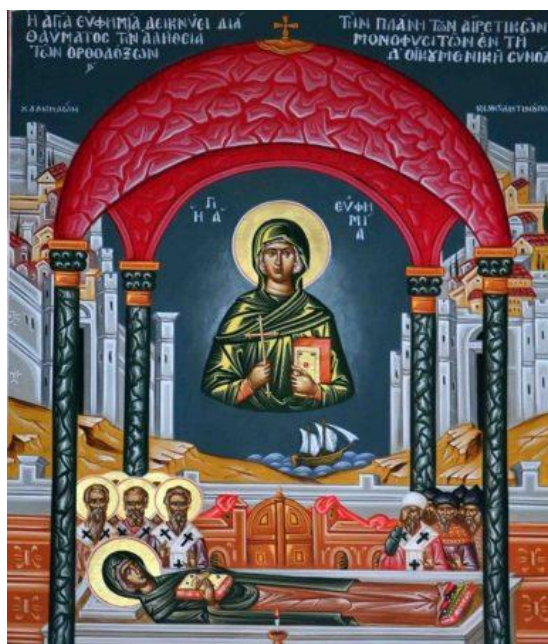
Η Εκκλησία μας τονίζει ιδιαίτερα τη θαυματουργική αυτή ενέργεια της Αγίας Ευφημίας, γιατί στήριξε την Ορθόδοξη πίστη και ζωή για πάντα. Το γεγονός δηλαδή ότι η ανθρώπινη φύση μας σώζεται και κατά χάριν «Θεούται» με τη μετοχή μας στη ζωή του Χριστού, που έγινε άνθρωπος για να κάνει τον άνθρωπο θεό (Μ. Αθανάσιος).

Η Εκκλησία μας προβάλλει το μεγάλο αυτό γεγονός και πανηγυρίζει στις 11 Ιουλίου, η μάλλον την Κυριακή που θα πέσει μεταξύ 11 – 17 Ιουλίου. Τη Κυριακή αυτή διαβάζεται στις Εκκλησίες μας η περικοπή από το Ευαγγέλιο του Ματθαίου που είναι παρμένη από την «Επί τού όρους ομιλία του Κυρίου». Εκεί ο Ιησούς υπενθυμίζει στους Χριστιανούς όλων των αιώνων «Υμείς έστε το φως του κόσμου».

Κάθε φορά που επιδιώκουμε και ζούμε με την αλήθεια την αγάπη και τη δικαιοσύνη είμαστε το φως του κόσμου.

Αυτό το φως που δεν φοβάται τα σκοτάδια και δεν κρύβεται γιατί είναι το φως που πηγή του έχει «το φως των ανθρώπων», τον ίδιο Ιησού Χριστό. Αυτό το φως ποτέ δεν θα σβήσει όσο και αν το επιβουλεύονται το σκοτάδι και τα όργανα του άρχοντος του σκότους γιατί πηγάζει απ' Αυτόν που ήταν, είναι, και θα είναι, το Φως το αληθινόν.

Είθε και μείς με τις πρεσβείες της Αγίας Ευφημίας πάντα αυτό το φως να ακολουθάμε.





## From The Old Testament



### Ruth

**R**uth, the great-grandmother of King David, is a role model to us all. She is one of only three women to have a Biblical book named after her, and one of the few women and non-Jews named in St Matthew's genealogy of Jesus.



Her story begins in Bethlehem with a man named Elimelech, who had a wife Naomi and two sons. When famine struck, the family travelled to the idolatrous country of Moab to live. The Fathers teach that we

are like Elimelech when, due to temptations and difficulties, we leave the Church to find haven in other places.

In Moab, Elimelech's sons married Moabite women - one married Ruth and the other married Orpah. As time passed, Elimelech and his two sons passed away, leaving just Naomi and her two daughters-in-law.

Naomi, seeing these deaths as punishment for leaving Bethlehem, decides to return to Bethlehem. Full of nobility, Naomi gives Ruth and Orpah permission to stay in Moab and re-marry. Ruth, however, refuses to leave Naomi and says, "wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God" (Ruth 1:16). In sacrificing her easy life in Moab, the Fathers teach that Ruth represents us when we take steps to abandon our sins.

The pair then return, and Ruth works hard every day in the fields to obtain bread for herself and Naomi. The owner of the fields is Boaz, an Israelite who loves God and obeys His commandments. Boaz notices Ruth and admires her sacrifices for Naomi.

Eventually, Boaz and Ruth marry and have a son, Obed, the father of Jesse, the father of David. In this way, a woman from an idolatrous nation played an important role in the history of Israel.

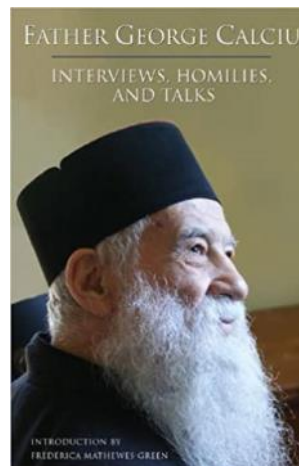
Ruth willingly accepted God's invitation, given through Naomi, to leave Moab and come to the Truth. Ruth did not waver in her new way of life but showed herself to be a hardworking and obedient daughter filled with humility. May we emulate her.



## Holiness In Our Times

### Fr George Calciu

**I**magine spending 21 years in prison for your faith in Jesus Christ. George Calciu (1925-2006) lived in Romania during the communist era (1944-1989). While a young man, his medical studies were cut short when he was imprisoned for his deep religious convictions and outspoken criticism of the communist regimen. He was tortured until he denied Christ and was then forced to torture others toward the same end. He admired the imprisoned priests, who endured and forgave their tormentors. He was released after 16 years imprisonment in 1964.



He then completed a degree in French literature, married and started a family. During this time, strengthened by his sufferings in prison, he also studied theology and was ordained to the priesthood in 1973, at the age of 48.

Father George drew many young people to Christ. He taught French and New Testament studies at the Theological Seminary in Bucharest until he was abruptly dismissed in 1978 for his defence of religious freedom and human rights.

In 1978, the communist regime renewed its attack on the Church. In defiant response, Fr George delivered seven homilies to young Romanians, one homily building on the next, during each Wednesday of Lent. He covered topics such as Christ's invitation, heaven and earth, faith and friendship, suffering, death, resurrection and Christ's forgiveness.

Predictably, Fr George was soon arrested and sentenced to 10 years in prison. Despite beatings, torture, and deprivation, he did not deny his faith. In prison, he served the Liturgy, converted prisoners and forgave his tormentors. In 1984, Western leaders intervened to secure his release. Soon after, he was exiled and spent the rest of his life as the priest of Holy Cross Church in Alexandria, America.

How did Fr George endure? Fr George said "If we have God, we shall never collapse from the pain of this world. During our most atrocious suffering, we suddenly discover oases of light and sacred joy. If the world oppresses us, then Jesus comforts us; if we are sad, our joy is Jesus." May his example motivate the faithful, especially young people, toward a renewed commitment to Christ.



## What we Hear in Church



### Φως ιλαρόν – O Gladsome Light

Gladsome light of the holy glory of the holy, blessed, heavenly, immortal Father, O Jesus Christ: arriving at the hour of sunset and having seen the evening light, we praise the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, God. It is worthy for You to be praised at all times with happy voices, O Son of God and Giver of life; and therefore the world glorifies you.

**T**his well-known hymn is chanted during the Vespers service, at the conclusion of the 'entrance' with the priest holding the Holy Bible or censor. Once the priest reaches the solea, having silently said the 'Prayer of the Entrance,' he proclaims loudly "Wisdom, arise."

It is at this point that the clergy and the people chant this beautiful, powerful hymn, which is considered one of the oldest in the Orthodox Church.

During the persecutions under the Emperor Diocletian (284 – 305), Saint Athenogenes was sentenced to death by burning. Tradition tells us that as the Saint approached the fire, he chanted this hymn in praise of the Holy Trinity. It has been found in writings dating back to the fourth century.

The hymn begins by addressing Jesus as our joyful light of the "holy glory of the holy, blessed, heavenly, immortal Father."

The Holy Glory is the Father's and Jesus is the light of that glory. By becoming human, Jesus spread His light and the glory of God to the world: "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12).

Jesus is praised as the Light which illumines humankind's darkness. Jesus reigns in the Glory of the Father, that He had "before all ages."

This moving description, and the tone in which it is sung, fills us with wonder at our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and His Father, our God.

The hymn continues in praise of the Holy Trinity and affirms that it is "worthy" to praise Jesus "at all times with happy voices."

As Jesus showed us the way to eternal life: "I am the way and the truth and the life" (John 14:6), it is meet for all to glorify His name.



### Orthodox Journey: The Neomartyrs Podcast Series

**T**he *Neomartyrs* is a podcast series (July 4<sup>th</sup> – September 12<sup>th</sup>) presented by the Greek Orthodox Christian Society through the *Orthodox Journey* podcasts. The series explores the lives of the Orthodox saints martyred under Ottoman rule.

It develops several themes, all of which are guided by the lives of the neomartyrs.

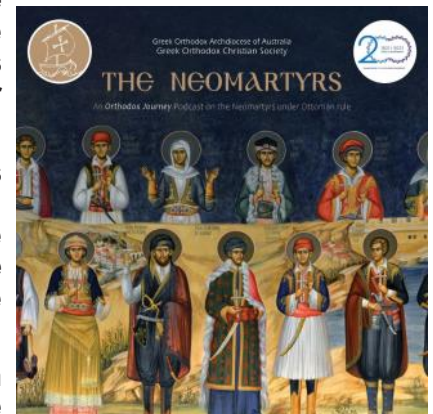
The foundation was laid in the first episode with the life of Saint Kosmas the Aetolian. It highlights the circumstances that the Orthodox Christians faced under Turkish occupation. From there, the series goes on to explore why the Ottoman Empire and Islam were so hostile to the neomartyrs, and looks at the neomartyrs in Greece and throughout the Ottoman Empire.

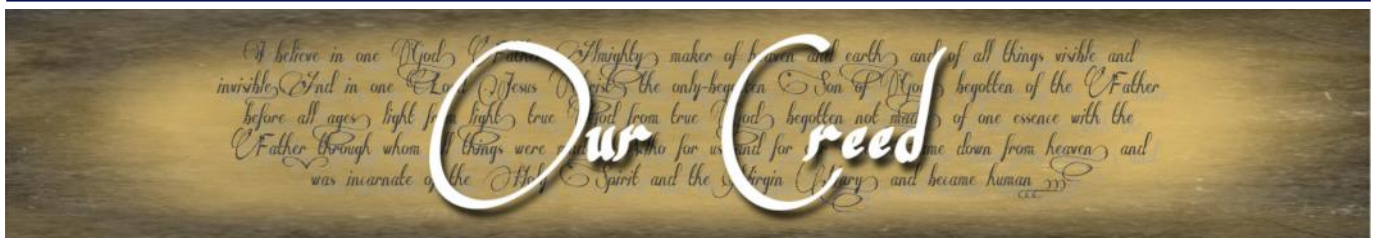
Listening to this series enables us to understand the history and the times in which the neomartyrs lived. We are encouraged by the example set by some of the neomartyrs in how they lived their lives. This series, podcast in 2021 on the 200th anniversary of the Greek Revolution, is a timely reminder of the sacrifices made during the Ottoman era.

We will hear that, "It was a period in which to proclaim one's belief in Christ was to resign oneself to a life of harassment and hardship."

We can draw the links from the struggles that the neomartyrs faced to what we face in our world today. Although the physical circumstances differ, the spiritual challenges remain timeless. By understanding not just how they remained unyielding before temptations, but also by reflecting upon their virtues and steadfastness, we can gain strength for our own spiritual struggle.

The *Neomartyrs* can be accessed on YouTube, through a search for the Greek Orthodox Christian Society Sydney, and on all good podcast platforms through *Orthodox Journey*.





**W**ho for us and for our salvation, came down from Heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became human.

The concluding phrase of the third article of our Creed, “and became human”, contains profound theological depth and far-reaching consequences for our salvation. The attempt to define who Christ is proved to be the greatest point of contention for the Church over many centuries, forming the focal point of many Ecumenical Councils. To this day, the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ ‘provokes’ every person of faith to consider their own human nature and spiritual potential as children of God.

The Fourth Ecumenical Council, held at Chalcedon in 451, declared in its famous Definition of Faith that the Lord Jesus Christ is to be confessed as “...one and the same Son, the same perfect in divinity and perfect in humanity, the same truly God and truly man, of a rational soul and a body; of one essence with the Father as regards His divinity, and the same of one essence with us as regards His humanity; like us in all respects except for sin...”

The same Church fathers described the union of the two natures in the unique Person of Christ as being: “without confusion, without change, without division, without separation.” The various Christological heresies tended to emphasise either the divine or the human nature in Christ, at the expense of the other. This had drastic soteriological consequences for man. St Gregory the Theologian, at pains to defend that the Son of God assumed our human nature in its fullness (flesh and soul), impressively declares: “What is not assumed, is not healed, and what is united to God is saved.”

The “hypostatic union” of the divine and human natures in Christ (ie. their union in the single divine hypostasis of the Son of God), has significant consequences. One of these is the

so-called “communication of attributes” which refers to the unique reciprocity taking place between the two natures in the Person of Christ - where the one shares their attributes with the other.

Why is this important?

Through this “communication of attributes” Christ’s assumed human nature is exalted, perfected and deified by His divine nature, without ceasing to remain created and human, just as His divine nature remains uncreated and divine. As His human nature (coming from the womb of the Virgin Mary), is our human nature, herein lies the magnificent mystery of the healing of our sick nature, which fell ill from the fall. Through the intimate hypostatic union of the two natures in Himself, Christ pours divinity into all of human nature.

We are each called to share personally in this healing offered to us by Christ. How? Through communion with Him. For example, we are united with Christ by grace when we venerate the Holy Gospel, icons, relics; when we pray, and when we participate in the liturgical worship of the

Church. The ultimate participation in Christ occurs through the Mystery of the Holy Eucharist, in which we partake of His deified body and blood of and become “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Pet. 1:4).

The Evangelist John poignantly confesses: “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life...” (1 John 1:1). The Son of God united with our human nature in order to come and dwell among us – as one of us – in a historical time and place, to teach us, and ultimately to heal and restore us. What magnificent condescension! Glory be to God.

*The next edition on “Our Creed” will focus on the last phrase of Article 3: “and became human”*





# News & Views



## Sunday School Picnics

**T**he parish of St Stylianos, Gymea, organised an enjoyable Sunday School picnic at which His Grace Bishop Emilianos of Meloa was present and blessed the children.



St Catherine, Mascot, parish also had a successful and enjoyable Sunday School picnic.

