



# ΛΥΧΝΟΣ

A GREEK ORTHODOX PERIODICAL FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

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

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## Stand Well

One of the many wonderful parts of the Orthodox Church is the celebration of the Holy Saints. On October 26 we commemorate the life of the Great Martyr Saint Demetrios, the Myrrh-gusher. Many of the Saints, such as Saint Demetrios, stood firm in their faith during great tribulations. His life has much to teach us.

St Demetrios was born in 270AD in Thessaloniki, which was under Roman jurisdiction, and came from a noble family. His parents were secret Christians, and he was baptised and raised in the Christian faith.

When Saint Demetrios' father passed away, the Emperor Galerius Maximianus (305-311), recognising the Saint's virtues and education, appointed him to his father's position as proconsul (governor) of Thessaloniki. He was also appointed commander of the Roman forces in Thessaly. His main duties were to defend Thessaloniki from barbarians, and to eliminate Christianity.

However, instead of persecuting Christians, he taught the Christian faith openly to the people, and he overthrew pagan customs and the worship of idols. The Emperor was enraged when he heard that the newly-appointed proconsul was a Christian, and that he had converted many to Christianity.

Knowing his fate, the Saint ordered his faithful servant Saint Lupus (23 August) to distribute his wealth to the poor. He began to pray and fast, preparing himself for martyrdom. The Emperor summoned Saint Demetrios, who bravely confessed his Christianity and denounced the falsehood of the idols. The Emperor then ordered the Saint be thrown into prison.

At the time, the Emperor staged games at the circus for amusement. He challenged Christians to fight with the champion, Lyaeos. A Christian named Nestor went to Saint Demetrios, asking for his blessing to fight the barbarian. With the blessing and prayers of Saint

Demetrios, Nestor defeated Lyaeos: "For as you brought to naught the boasts of Lyaeos, imparting courage to Nestor in the stadium..." (hymn of Saint Demetrios).

The furious Emperor ordered the execution of the holy Martyr Nestor (27 October) and had Saint Demetrios impaled in prison (26 October, 306). Saint Lupus was later beheaded after using his master's imperial ring and blood soaked tunic to work many miracles.

During the seventh century a miraculous flow of fragrant myrrh was found coming from Saint Demetrios' tomb and so he is called "the Myrrh-gusher." The tomb containing his relics is now in the crypt of the church of Saint Demetrios in Thessaloniki. Saint Demetrios is revered as the patron Saint of Thessaloniki.

As Saint Nestor sought God's grace and strength through Saint Demetrios, we too should turn to the Holy Saints as God's intermediaries, praying to them for help and protection. The Saints were people like us, many of whom also lived in times of tribulation. Despite these circumstances, they chose to put their faith into action and their lives teach and inspire us to do likewise. Now more than ever we should turn to the Saints for inspiration and

remember how they suffered, that they never lost faith and truly believed that God was always with them. As the hymn of Saint Demetrios says: "The world has found you a great champion in time of peril ... invoke Christ God for us, that He may grant us His Great mercy."

In that light, every Divine Liturgy invokes us to "stand well" (στώμεν καλῶς). Saint Paul encourages us to put on the "whole armour of God" as Saint Demetrios did and "stand" (Eph 6:13-14). We can look to the Saints as examples, take courage from their lives and "stand well" in the face of tribulation as they did. We may utilise these words as our motto to navigate difficult times and turn to God and the Saints for comfort.





**Σ**την Αγία Γραφή γίνεται πολλές φορές λόγος για τους Αγγέλους. Από το πρώτο βιβλίο τη Γένεση, μέχρι και το τελευταίο βιβλίο, την Αποκάλυψη, είναι πάμπολλα τα χωρία που μιλούν για τους Αγγέλους. Τους παρουσιάζουν πάνω στον ουρανό να υμνούν και να δοξάζουν με σεβασμό κι αγάπη το άπειρον μεγαλείο του Θεού. Τους παρουσιάζουν να κατεβαίνουν στη γη, να παίρνουν τη μορφή ανθρώπων και να συναναστρέφονται με τους ανθρώπους. Να επικοινωνούν, να τους προστατεύουν και να τους βοηθούν.

Ο Απόστολος Παύλος στο Α' κεφάλαιο της επιστολής του στους Εβραίους, μας λέγει για τους Αγγέλους «**πάντες εισί λειτουργικά πνεύματα εις διακονίαν αποστελλόμενα διά τους μέλλοντας κληρονομείν σωτηρίαν**». Με απλά λόγια «είναι όλοι οι Άγγελοι πνεύματα που υπηρετούν και στέλνονται για εκείνους που πρόκειται να κληρονομήσουν σωτηρία».

Δεν έχουν υλικό σώμα. Δεν υπάγονται στους φυσικούς νόμους. Δεν παθαίνουν φθορά. Δεν παθαίνουν ταχύτητα. Η Εκκλησία μας τους ονομάζει αΐλους. Δεν έχουν σάρκα και οστά.

Ο Άγιος Ιωάννης ο Δαμασκηνός μας δίνει μια θαυμάσια περιγραφή των Αγγέλων. Μας λέει - σε απλή γλώσσα - «**οι Άγγελοι έχουν λογικό και σκέψη, αποκτούν γνώση και σοφία, έχουν ελευθερία βουλήσεως και πρωτοβουλία. Τα προσόντα αυτά τους τ'άδωσε ο Θεός. Δεν περιορίζονται μέσα σε υλικά τείχη. Πνεύματα, καθώς είναι, δεν εμποδίζονται από υλικά εμπόδια, ούτε από το διάστημα του χώρου. Είναι ταχυκίνητοι, που να μπορούν από τη μία στιγμή στην άλλη να περιέρχονται όλο το κόσμο. Δεν είναι βέβαια πανταχού παρόντες. Δεν μπορούν να είναι την ίδια στιγμή και στον ουρανό και στην γη**».

Εδημιουργήθησαν από τον Θεό αναμάρτητοι και αγαθοί, όπως οι Πρωτόπλαστοι. Καλλιέργησαν τις αρετές και είναι αιωνίως αφοσιωμένοι στον Θεό.

Ποιά είναι το έργο τους; Βέβαια εμείς δεν τα γνωρίζουμε όλα, αλλά είναι έργα πνευματικά.

Πρώτιστο έργο τους να υμνούν, να δοξολογούν και να ευχαριστούν τον Θεό. Αυτό το κάνουν χωρίς να τους διατάζει ο Θεός.

Ο Θεός δεν έχει ανάγκη να δοξάζεται από τα πλάσματά Του. Αλλά οι Άγγελοι που είναι τόσο προοδευμένοι πνευματικά, βλέπουν τα μεγαλειώδη έργα του Θεού. Θαυμάζουν τη θεία σοφία και παντοδυναμία και ξεσπούν αυθόρμητα σε ατέλειωτη δοξολογία προς τον Θεό. Ο Προφήτης Ησαΐας στο γνωστό όραμα, είδε τα εξαπτέρυγα Σεραφείμ να πετούν γύρω από το θρόνο του Θεού και να ψάλλουν τον τρισάγιο ύμνο που κι εμείς επαναλαμβάνουμε στη Θεία Λειτουργία «**Άγιος, άγιος, άγιος, Κύριος Σαβαώθ, πλήρης πάσα η γη της δόξης Αυτού**» (Ησ. ΣΤ' 1-3).



Ένα άλλο έργο τους είναι να μας εξυπηρετούν με αγάπη και να μας βοηθούν στο μέγα έργο της σωτηρίας μας. Μας παρακολουθούν ημέρα και νύχτα, από τη στιγμή που βαπτιστήκαμε. Μας περιφρουρούν από αναρίθμητους σωματικούς και πνευματικούς κινδύνους. Μας εμπνέουν σκέψεις αγαθές, μας καθοδηγούν στο δρόμο της αρετής.

Είναι οι πιστοί φύλακες και οδηγοί μας. Παραστέκουν στις θλίψεις μας. Μας ενισχύουν στα καλά έργα. Μας εκπροσωπούν μπρος στο θρόνο του Θεού και εκπροσωπούν το Θεό στη

ψυχή μας.

Και μεις ας τους αγαπήσουμε με όλη μας τη καρδιά και μάλιστα αυτόν που μας όρισε ο Θεός σαν τον φύλακα Άγγελο της ζωής μας. Να μην τον στενοχωρούμε και να μην τον λυπούμε.

Ιδιαίτερα θ'άπρεπε να επαναλαμβάνουμε κάθε βράδυ την ευχή προς τον φύλακα Άγγελο, του Μικρού Αποδείπνου.

*«Άγιε Άγγελε, ο εφεστώς της αθλίας μου ψυχής και ταλαιπώρου μου ζωής, μη εγκαταλίπης με τον αμαρτωλό,... κράτησον της αθλίας και παρειμένης χειρός μου και οδήγησόν με εις οδόν σωτηρίας... σκέπασόν με...και διαφύλαξόν με από πάσης επηρείας του αντικειμένου...και πρέσβευε υπέρ εμού προς τον Κύριον...Αμήν».*

# Atheism in Reverse

In the previous issue of this periodical, we dealt with the development of Atheism, and the different ideological streams that were used to support its spread in the European landscape. In the beginning, the system of "Scholasticism" was set up ostensibly to help people find answers to the problems they had with their Faith, e.g. divine revelations, God's grace, and other Christian teachings. The system appeared to support the existence of God, but without connection to the Church. The result was that history was distorted by "Relativism" (aligning teachings and dogmas to the concepts of the current society). "The Renaissance" with its spectacular scientific and technological advances, had a great effect on the masses, leading to the belief that science and not faith, are more important in life.

Soon the existence of God was seriously questioned, a view that quickly gained credence, some preaching that if there is no God, there is no immortality either, so man himself can be God. The most vocal and irrefutable argument against this irrational idea, was put forth by Dostoevsky: "God or nothing. Without the God of the Christians, we do not know the beginning or the end of things. Life is without meaning, because it would be without spiritual, infallible or eternal bases."

The rationalist talks about problems, never about mysteries, the unknown or the unreasonable. Knowledge is control and the rationalist cannot believe that a man cannot have everything under his control. Nothing can escape the power of reason and logic. But reason and logic without God are impossible.

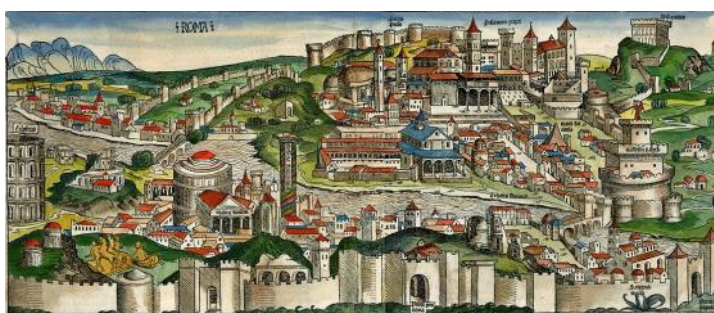
The societies of Western Europe found themselves in this spiritual poverty at the end of the 20th century. The people believed the atheists and the materialists, who then abandoned the people to fend for themselves. The people now appear to be in a state of confusion and without ideals that sustained them in the past. In the meantime, Immanuel Kant and Heinrich Heine (both German, philosophers, socialists, and friends), described the God of the Western spiritual civilisation, but such a God was not the God of Christianity, nor that of the Apocalypse.

After the Great Schism between the East and West, Christianity in the West during the Middle-ages became dominated by a synthesis of Roman law and Greek philosophy. In this deviation, it was Augustine who taught in the West the importance of paganistic philosophy, so that Christian theology would become more acceptable to the ordinary people, as paganism, a polytheist faith, was the religion of the peasants. Augustine was the one who changed the basis of theology from "apophatic" (negative), to "cataphatic" (positive), in fact to rationalistic theology. His theological ideas remained more or less dormant until the 9th century, and continued till the 13th century. Thomas Aquinas was a strong supporter of Augustine, and could only find minor errors in his theology. However, others later found significant problems with it.

The God of "cataphatic" (positive) theology, is not the God who became man. His ways and his thoughts are not like ours. We cannot know Him, just by talking about Him: "the knowledge of God is innate inside us, by virtue of our nature," according to St John Damascene. When our inner self gets in touch with God (in prayer, Holy Communion or confession), we feel that God is above everything else, without beginning, or end, is unchangeable, without substance, cannot be seen, cannot be known, cannot be described, is eternal. As for Thomas Aquinas, his defence for the existence of God, consists of his "proofs", or the "five ways", being those which Plato and Aristotle used to teach their students.

The scandal of Western Roman Christianity is due to the fact that it is exclusive and unique, in addition to its demand that salvation exists only in the Church of Christ, and that the truth is the privilege of the selected. The condition of Faith and Divine knowledge cannot be perceived by the rest – they hear the words but they have no meaning, they see but cannot understand, and when shown the way, they derive no benefit.

The profane and the sacrilegious cannot have in their possession the holy treasure of the Living God.



## Από Τους Αγίους Της Εκκλησίας Μας

**Η Αγία Ανθούσα**  
(η μνήμη της τιμάται στις 13ης Νοεμβρίου)

**Σ**τις 13 Νοεμβρίου, η Ορθόδοξη Εκκλησία τιμά έναν από τους κορυφαίους θεολόγους και αγίους της, τον Ιωάννη τον Χρυσόστομο. Δεν υπάρχει κατάλληλο υπερθετικό για να περιγράψει την εξαιρετική προσφορά του Αγίου Ιωάννη στη χριστιανική πίστη. Την ίδια ημέρα, τιμούμε επίσης την Αγία Ανθούσα, τη μητέρα του Ιωάννη του Χρυσοστόμου.

Η Αγία Ανθούσα γεννήθηκε στην Αντιόχεια περίπου το 347 μ.Χ. Ήταν μια έξυπνη γυναίκα που παντρεύτηκε τον Σεκούνδο, αξιωματικό του στρατού. Μαζί το ζευγάρι απέκτησε έναν γιο, τον οποίο ονόμασαν Ιωάννη. Σε ηλικία είκοσι ετών, η Ανθούσα έγινε χήρα και έμεινε να μεγαλώνει μόνη της τον γιο της. Η Ανθούσα επέλεξε να μην ξαναπαντρευτεί, αποφασίζοντας ότι το καθήκον της απέναντι στον Θεό και το παιδί της είχε μεγαλύτερη σημασία από το να επιδιώξει έναν νέο γάμο.

Η Ανθούσα ανέθρεψε τον Ιωάννη επιμελώς στη πίστη του Χριστού, ενώ παράλληλα φρόντισε να εκπαιδευθεί από τους καλύτερους καθηγητές της εποχής. Η Ανθούσα είχε μια πολύ πραγματική και οικεία αγάπη για τον Χριστό, την οποία μοιράστηκε με τον γιο της. Η βαθιά επιρροή της μητρικής καθοδήγησής της τονίζεται από τον Ιωάννη, ο οποίος, σε ηλικία δεκαοκτώ ετών, επέλεξε να μην ακολουθήσει την κοσμική φιλοσοφία, αλλά να αφιερώσει τη ζωή του στον αγώνα για το Χριστό. Η Αγία Ανθούσα αναπαύθηκε στον Κύριο γύρω στο έτος 407 μ.Χ., έχοντας ζήσει μια ζωή αφιερωμένη στην υπηρεσία του Θεού και στην ανατροφή του παιδιού της στην πίστη.

Ενώ δεν υπάρχουν πολλά γραπτά για τη ζωή της, η Αγία Ανθούσα αποτελεί έμπνευση και παράδειγμα για όλους τους Χριστιανούς. Ως μητέρα, η Αγία Ανθούσα έκανε ό,τι περνούσε από το χέρι της για να εξασφαλίσει την καλύτερη ζωή στον γιο της, μια ζωή που δεν είχε τις ρίζες της στις κοσμικές ανέσεις ή απολαύσεις, αλλά στον Κύριο και Σωτήρα μας Ιησού Χριστό. Το επίκεντρο της 13ης Νοεμβρίου είναι κυρίως στην γιορτή του Αγίου Ιωάννου του Χρυσοστόμου, αλλά ίσως είναι και ενδεικτικό της σταθερής προθυμίας της Αγίας Ανθούσας να βάλει τον γιο της μπροστά από τον εαυτό της. Ωστόσο, η επιρροή της δεν μπορεί να υποτιμηθεί. Η Αγία Ανθούσα είναι φωτεινό παράδειγμα για όλους τους Χριστιανούς και όχι μόνο για τις μητέρες. Η ζωή της είναι παράδειγμα αγάπης, θυσίας, και πίστης για την απόκτηση της Βασιλείας του Θεού.

## From the Saints of our Church

**St Anthousa**  
(Commemorated on 13 November)

**O**n November 13, the Orthodox Church commemorates one of its most preeminent theologians and saints, John Chrysostom. There is no appropriate superlative to describe St John's extraordinary contribution to the Christian faith. On that same day, we also commemorate St Anthousa, the mother of John Chrysostom.

St Anthousa was born in the city of Antioch in approximately 347 AD. She was an intelligent woman who married Secundus, an officer in the army. Together the couple bore a son, whom they named John. At the age of twenty, Anthousa became a widow and was left

to raise her son by herself. Anthousa chose not to remarry, deciding that her duty to God and her child was of greater importance than pursuing a new marriage.

Anthousa raised John diligently, immersing him in the faith while also having him educated by the most accomplished professors of the age. Anthousa possessed a very real and intimate love for Christ which she shared with her son. The profound influence of her maternal guidance is highlighted by John who, at the age of eighteen, chose not to pursue worldly philosophy but rather to dedicate his life to struggling towards Christ. St Anthousa would repose in the Lord around the year 407 AD, having lived a life dedicated to serving God

and raising her child in the faith.

While there are no extensive writings on her life, St Anthousa stands as an inspiration and example to all Christians. As a mother, St Anthousa did all that was within her power to ensure the best possible life for her son, a life that was rooted not in worldly comforts or pleasures but in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Perhaps the focus of November 13 primarily being on the feast day of St John Chrysostom is quaintly representative of St Anthousa's constant willingness to put her son ahead of herself. However, her influence cannot be underestimated. St Anthousa is a shining example to all Christians, and not just mothers. Through her life she has provided us all with an example of love, sacrifice, and faith in the Kingdom to come.

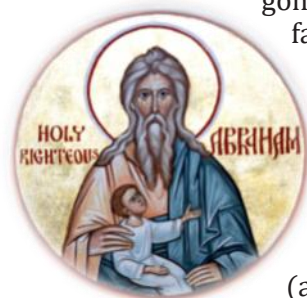


# Questions & Answers

A clergyman of our Archdiocese answers ...

## *Abraham, Joseph, Moses and Jesus all spent time in Egypt before returning to Israel. What is the significance of Egypt?*

**E**gypt was already a great civilisation by the time it is first mentioned in the Bible. Abraham had gone to Egypt when there was a famine where he lived in Canaan.

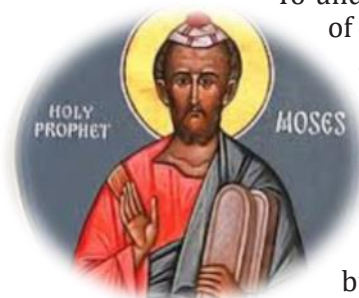


A few generations later, Joseph was sold into slavery and taken to Egypt. During the great famine, his whole family (and therefore the whole Israelite nation) moved to Egypt.

Four hundred years later, it was Moses who delivered the Hebrews out the slavery and oppression of Egypt into the Promised Land. And of course, Jesus was taken by Joseph and Panagia to Egypt as a toddler, under divine providence, to escape from Herod's murderous rage.



To understand the significance of Egypt, we need to look at the significance of the Passover, which is the central event of the entire Old Testament.



When God appeared to Moses in the burning bush, He revealed His calling to lead the

Israelites out of Egypt. After many trials with the Egyptian pharaoh and after many plagues, he prepared the Israelites for the exodus. He ordered them to select lambs, to kill them, and to place some blood on the two doorposts and the lintel of their houses. Standing up, clothed and ready to escape, they were to eat the lambs in the night. At midnight, the Lord slew the Egyptian firstborn. The

houses marked with blood were spared. During the tumult, the Israelites began to escape, crossing the Red Sea, sojourning through the desert, eventually arriving at the Promised Land.

All subsequent generations remember this event, as the great sign of God's fidelity and favour to his people.



In Jesus Christ, the ultimate meaning and universal purpose of the Passover and Exodus are revealed and accomplished. Jesus Christ is Himself the New Passover. He is the Passover Lamb, which is slain for the deliverance and liberation of all people from the powers of evil. The real "pharaoh" is the devil. He holds all men in slavery. The real deliverer is Jesus. He leads the people from the captivity of sin and death into the "promised land" of the Kingdom of God.

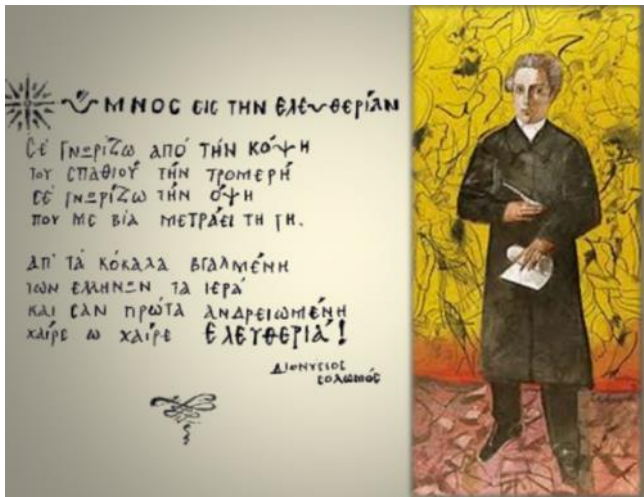
Thus, Egypt represents the state of sin; the foreign land mentioned in the parable of the Prodigal Son. It is a representation of the worldly mentality; the condition of the soul held hostage by the passions. Thus, our spiritual life is our exodus from this land of slavery into the promised land of the Kingdom of God.

When Jesus with Joseph and Panagia escaped to Egypt, and ultimately returned, it prefigured His own descent into Hades followed by His resurrection. His visit to Egypt cleansed that land of the stain of idolatry and sin, so that through the desert fathers and other saints, the land of Egypt would become the cradle through which so many men and women would attain holiness. Likewise, when we welcome Christ into our hearts through repentance, He cleanses it so that we too can escape the clutches of sin and attain eternal life.





## Spirituality and freedom in Dionysios Solomos' poem



**D**ionysios Solomos, who is widely acknowledged as the national poet of Greece, was born on April 8, 1798 on the island of Zakynthos. From a young age he immersed himself in the life of the Church and yearned for the Independence of his country. The religiosity in Solomos' work is so prevalent and incessant that it can hardly go unnoticed. His poems include many religious ideas, images, expressions, events and persons, both biblical and historical. Two outstanding poems that constitute an integral part of the Greek psyche and show the poet's intrinsic nature are "The Hymn to Liberty" and the "The Free Besieged". These two poems which were written approximately 200 years ago, inspired by the events of the Greek Revolution of 1821, are highly regarded and express what every Greek soul recognises when they hear the word "ελευθερία" (freedom).

"The Hymn to Liberty" is a landmark poem which praises the struggle of the Greeks and provides an insight into Solomos' character showing that, apart from being an advocate of the Greek nation's struggle for freedom, he also had a deep religious faith. This poem was written in 1823 and it highlights the significance of freedom to the Greek cause. The Greeks had yearned for their autonomy since 1453 and this is revealed by the fact that there were 123 failed attempts at gaining independence from the Ottoman empire prior to 1821. The more they were suppressed, the harder the Greek nation struggled for its freedom, yet all this was done within the framework of their Orthodox faith. The author of the poem salutes the personified image of Freedom and exhorts the Greek people to continue fighting for both their freedom and

faith. Rudyard Kipling's noteworthy translation conveys the atmosphere of Solomos' demotic Greek.

There are a number of historical events which are covered by "The

Hymn to Liberty", which also happens to be the longest national anthem in the world, containing 158 verses.



These include the Fall of Tripolitsa (23 September 1821) which was the Turkish stronghold of the Peloponnese, the Greek victory at the Battle of Dervenakia (26 – 28 July 1822), the first Siege of Mesolongi (25 October – 31 December 1822), a number of naval engagements, including the burning of the Turkish flagship near Tenedos (November 1822), as well as the Hanging of Patriarch Gregory V, on Easter Sunday, 1821. The poem encapsulates all these events because they show the faith, the courage, the determination and the resolution that the Greeks possessed in the lead up to, and during the early years of, the Greek Revolution. Solomos completes the poem advising the Greek fighters to unite and stop the internal strife and discord that had started developing within the ranks.

Solomos' emphasis of the spiritual dimension of "The Hymn to Liberty" is shown in the following extract, where both the value of the faith and the homeland to the Greek fighters is expressed. Religion becomes the guide and standard-bearer of the Greek struggle and the most sacred of Christian symbols, the Cross, becomes once again the defender of the Christian world. This is reminiscent of Constantine the Great raising the Cross of Christ at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge.

148. **Have no care for such distinctions.**  
All the blood shed on this earth  
For this homeland, our religion,  
Is to us of equal worth.

149. **On this blood, then, pledge allegiance,**  
To your faith and homeland, too,  
Swear you won't let rank divide you  
And embrace like brothers do.

We knew thee of old,  
Oh, divinely restored,  
By the light of thine eyes  
And the light of thy Sword.

From the graves of our slain  
Shall thy valour prevail  
As we greet thee again —  
Hail, Liberty! Hail!

# The Revolution

## Solosmos "The Hymn to Liberty" and "The Free Besieged"

150. Such great struggles lie before you!  
So much more before you're through!  
Victory's yours if you're united.  
Act as one: it will follow you!

151. Oh, you people known for bravery,  
Raise on high the Cross of Christ,  
And with one voice send the word out,  
'Kings of earth, here turn your eyes!'



Solosmos' masterpiece "The Free Besieged" discusses the struggles of the defenders of the city of Mesolongi, who succeeded in holding their city for an entire year despite their numerical inferiority, and lack of food and supplies. In the end, they decided to make one last desperate attempt at freedom, a heroic exodus. So, on April

10, 1826, they opened the gates of the city and every last person inside the city came out to fight one last battle, in hopes that the women and children would manage to escape. "The Free Besieged" does not have a continuous narrative but consists of a series of scenes and glimpses that occurred during the last days of the siege of Mesolongi. One of the most well-known passages of this poem includes:

Utter quiet of a tomb over the plain reigns.  
A chirping bird takes a seed & the poor mother complains.  
Hunger has darkened their eyes but on them she swears.  
A brave Souliot stands apart and his misery bears.  
"Why am I holding you my poor blackened musket  
You are a burden now to me, and the Saracen knows it."

In the above passage the poet uses two images that express the desolation of the landscape and the anguish of the besieged inhabitants. The mother, who represents all the besieged, is called upon to stand up and resist the hunger that overwhelms her. Her decision will determine whether her exhausted body, or the strength of her soul, will prevail. The great ordeal of hunger managed to bend the Souliotis warrior's iron will and endurance. He stands aside and lets despair

pour out of his soul. His weeping reveals the bitterness he feels in the face of both his physical weakness and his lack of ammunition. His soul stands upright but his body has betrayed him. The second passage of the text praises the joy of nature, which acts as a temptation for the besieged. Nature is at its best time of life, creation and love, unlike the people of Mesolongi who are besieged by the enemy. The human soul appears divided between the longing for life and the high sense of duty and heroic death.

The goal of the besieged must be the conquest not of life but of moral and spiritual freedom. It is the enormity of their final decision that will lead them to death but also give them moral attainment. As a matter of fact, they were besieged, but on a spiritual level, their soul remained untamed, free, something that was amply demonstrated by the heroic exit of Mesolongi to avoid slavery. The essence for Solosmos is this: the body may be perishable and overcome by hardships; but what is unbreakable and remains unchanged and untamed is the spirit and the limitless psychic powers of man, and this is what elevates the heroes of Mesolongi to sacred symbols of all Greece.

Solosmos' legacy has left us many characteristics to be proud of. Even though he was raised in a foreign environment and Italian was his first language, he came to appreciate the value of the Greek language to such an extent that at 25 years of age he wrote a hymn that became and still is the national anthem of both Greece and Cyprus. He grew up in the Church and read the Bible often. Although he was not appreciated during his lifetime, many of the giants of modern Greek poetry show great respect towards his achievements. "That is why the years and times will pass and the Muse will build temples in Greece and will find more pure and more worthy, more famous ministers and even Solosmos will stand on the top ...", as Palamas said. But also our Nobel Prize-winning poet Elytis is not wrong to suggest:

Wherever evil finds you, brothers,  
wherever your minds are clouded,  
you remember Dionysius Solosmos  
and remember Alexander Papadiamantis.  
The lily that knows no lies will rest the  
face of martyrdom with the little tincture  
of the glaucus on his lips.

(Elytis "Axion Esti")

# Υπακοή

**Μ**ε το να φάνε τον απαγορευμένο καρπό ο Αδάμ και η Εύα έδειξαν όχι μόνο ανυπακοή στο Θεό, αλλά και την υπερηφάνεια τους. Οι Πατέρες μας λένε ότι η υπερηφάνεια και η αγάπη προς τον εαυτό μας είναι η πηγή όλων των παθών και των πτώσεων. Η προέλευση κάθε πτώσης έγκειται στο γεγονός ότι κάθε άνθρωπος που προσκολλά τη σκέψη του στο δικό του θέλημα, υπακούει μόνο στον εαυτό του. Έτσι συγχύζεται ο νους του και τα πάθη τον αναστατώνουν.

Κάποιος μπορεί να ρωτήσει: «Πώς ασκείται η ελεύθερη βούληση, που είναι θεϊκό δώρο, εάν ένα άτομο κάνει υπακοή;» Αυτό ίσως φανερώνει έναν περιορισμό στην κατανόηση του τι είναι η υπακοή. Η ελευθερία δεν χάνεται ποτέ, ακόμη και στην πιο αυστηρή μοναστική υπακοή. Η ελευθερία παραμένει αναπόσπαστο κομμάτι της ανθρώπινης φύσης μας. Ωστόσο, το πώς εκδηλώνεται αυτή η ελευθερία είναι άλλο θέμα. Στην καρδιά της, η υπακοή δεν είναι η καταστροφή της θέλησης, ή απλά «το να κάνεις αυτό που σου λένε». Η υπακοή υπερβαίνει την απλή υποταγή, με την οποία συνήθως συγχέεται. Στις Γραφές η εντολή της υπακοής δεν είναι μια εντολή μηχανικής υποταγής σε μια αρχή (θεϊκή ή ανθρώπινη). Η υποταγή της ανθρώπινης βούλησης σε οποιαδήποτε εξωτερική εξουσία μέσω χειραγώγησης, εξαναγκασμού ή βίας αποτελεί παραβίαση της εντολής του Θεού. Η υπακοή δεν είναι παθητική υποταγή των ηττημένων στον νικητή. Μάλλον, επιλέγεται ελεύθερα, ως εθελοντική αμοιβαία συνεργασία.

Ο Άγιος Πορφύριος λέει ότι «δεν μπορώ να σας δώσω ένα παράδειγμα για το τι είναι η πραγματική υπακοή. Δεν είναι ότι έχουμε μια συζήτηση σχετικά με την αρετή της υπακοής και στη συνέχεια λέω «πήγαινε να κάνεις μια τούμπα» και υπακούς. Αυτό δεν είναι υπακοή. Πρέπει να είστε εντελώς ξέγνοιαστοι και να μην σκέφτεστε καθόλου το θέμα της υπακοής, και στη συνέχεια ξαφνικά σας ζητείται να κάνετε κάτι και είστε έτοιμοι να το κάνετε με χαρά». Αυτό είναι το φρόνιμα τις μοναχικής απάντησης «να είναι ευλογημένο».

Το να είμαι υπάκουος σημαίνει να μαθαίνω να κάνω επιλογές που ευνοούν την ελευθερία, την αγάπη και τη χαρά όχι μόνο στη ζωή μου, αλλά και στη ζωή του αδελφού μου. Δεν είναι τόσο θέμα να είμαι υπάκουος σε έναν άνθρωπο (ή το αντίστροφο), αλλά στο να είμαστε υπάκουοι μαζί στον Θεό που είναι η πηγή όλων των αγαθών. Η υπακοή, με άλλα λόγια, είναι αμοιβαία – αυτό που κάνουμε μαζί και όχι αυτό που κάνω μόνος μου. Η αρετή της υπακοής εμφανίζεται στο πλαίσιο της

εμπιστοσύνης, αγάπης, και της προσωπικής σχέσης μεταξύ δύο ανθρώπων εν Χριστώ, η οποία αποκαλύπτει από μόνη της την παρουσία του Χριστού (Μτ. ΙΗ΄ 20). Η υπακοή απαιτεί ένωση εμπιστοσύνης με τον Θεό. Είναι μια κίνηση της καρδιάς προς τον Θεό και όχι μια δήλωση του εαυτού μας.

Ο Χριστός ήρθε για να θεραπεύσει πρώτα τη θέλησή μας, να μας διδάξει την υπακοή παραδίδοντας το δικό μας θέλημα στο Θείο του θέλημα, με τον ίδιο τρόπο που ο ίδιος υπέβαλε πρόθυμα την ανθρώπινη θέλησή Του στο Θεϊκό Του θέλημα. Ο Χριστός μας απελευθέρωσε από την ανομία της πεσμένης περήφανης θέλησής μας. Μας ελευθέρωσε μέσω του Σταυρού και της Ανάστασής Του, αλλά και μέσω της υπακοής και του ζωντανού παραδείγματος Του. Ο Άγιος Παύλος είπε ότι ο Ιησούς ήταν υπάκουος στον Θεό Πατέρα Του «μέχρι θανάτου, θανάτου δε σταυρού» (Φιλ. Β΄ 8). Στην πραγματικότητα, ο Ιησούς υπάκουσε στον Πατέρα σε όλα όσα έκανε: «Αν και ήταν Υιός, έμαθε μέσα από τα παθήματά του την υπακοή. Έτσι ολοκλήρωσε το έργο κι ανακηρύχθηκε από το Θεό αρχιερέας, όπως ο Μελχισεδέκ, κι έγινε η αιτία να σωθούν για πάντα όλοι όσοι υπακούνε σ' αυτόν» (Εβρ. Ε΄ 8-9).



Στην ορθόδοξη πνευματική μας παράδοση, εφαρμόζεται η βασική αρετή της υπακοής: στον Κύριο, στο Ευαγγέλιο, στην Εκκλησία (Ματ. ΙΖ΄

17), στους ηγέτες της Εκκλησίας (Εβρ. ΙΓ΄ 7), στον πνευματικό πατέρα, στους γονείς και στους πρεσβύτερους. «Να υπακούτε λοιπόν σε κάθε ανθρώπινη εξουσία» (Α Πετ. Β΄ 13, Ρωμ. ΙΓ΄ 1), ο ένας στον άλλον από ευλάβεια προς τον Χριστό (Εφ. ΣΤ΄ 21), στην παρακολούθηση των θείων ακολουθιών, τη συχνή υποδοχή των Μυστηρίων, την τήρηση των νηστειών, την ελεημοσύνη, την απόκτηση του πνεύματος της φιλανθρωπίας κλπ. Δεν υπάρχει πνευματική ζωή χωρίς υπακοή, ούτε ελευθερία ούτε απαλλαγή από αμαρτωλά πάθη και πόθους. Η υπακοή μας στις εντολές και η πειθαρχία στο Θεό είναι το αποκλειστικό σημάδι της αγάπης μας για τον Πατέρα και τον Υιό Του.

«Αν με αγαπάτε, τηρήστε τις εντολές μου ... Εκείνος που κρατάει τις εντολές μου και τις εκτελεί, αυτός με αγαπάει· κι αυτός που με αγαπάει θ' αγαπηθεί από τον Πατέρα μου, κι εγώ θα τον αγαπήσω και θα του φανερώσω τον εαυτό μου ... Όποιος με αγαπάει, αποκρίνεται ο Ιησούς, θα τηρήσει το λόγο μου. Κι ο Πατέρας μου θα τον αγαπήσει, και θα έρθουμε σ' αυτόν και θα κατοικήσουμε μαζί του» (Ιωάν. ΙΔ΄ 15, 21-24).



## From The Old Testament



### Psalm 81 (82)

1 God stood in the assembly of gods; He judges in the midst of gods, saying, 2 "How long will you judge unjustly, And favour the persons of sinners?" 3 Judge an orphan and a poor man; Justify a humble and poor man; 4 Rescue a poor and needy man; Deliver them from a sinner's hand. 5 They do not know nor understand; They carry on in darkness; All the foundations of the earth shall be shaken. 6 I said, "You are gods, And you are all sons of the Most High. 7 But you die like men, And like one of the rulers, you fall." 8 Arise, O God; judge the earth, For You shall inherit all the Gentiles.

**T**his well-known Psalm is chanted during the Vespereal Liturgy for Pascha. It describes God coming to judge the assembly of those who judge the earth, who did not advance the cause of the disadvantaged but were themselves sinners.

The first verse states: "God stood in the assembly of gods." Interpreted in isolation, it can seem as though there are multiple gods. Alternatively, Orthodox tradition instructs us to look to the other Psalms, in which "the gods of the nations are demons."

However, Saint Nicodemus the Hagiorite places the verse into its proper context, as referring to those who take on the heavenly duties of God on the earth. In the Old Testament this meant the Scribes and the Pharisees, who judged with pride those people around them.

As a result, this verse is prophetic in foreseeing Christ standing in the midst of the Scribes and Pharisees and quoting verse 6 of this Psalm (John 10:34-36): "I said, 'You are gods and you are all sons of the Most High.'"

This verse also leads the faithful to understand that as we were created in the image and likeness of God, we are considered children of God. We are all called, in St Athanasius the Great's words, to become "gods by grace." Even though all are unworthy of this title, according to St Dionysius the Areopagite, everyone who "strives to be enlightened by divine matters and tries as hard as possible to imitate God deserves to be called divine."

Verse 8 from this Psalm is often repeated at the Paschal Vespereal Liturgy, and says: "Arise, O God, judge the earth; for You shall inherit all the Gentiles." To quote St Nicodemus, "this is indisputably about Christ's resurrection from the dead." May we become His inheritance in the midst of the world.



### Hieromonk Nikodimos Kalligiannakis

**B**orn Emmanuel Kalligiannakis in 1926 in Krousonas, Heraklion, Crete, he worked in the family vineyards and olive groves by day and studied the Synaxarion by night. From a young age, he loved attending the church services and was never absent.

Farewelling his family, he left for the monastery of Saint Anthony at Vrontisi, where he was tonsured a monk with the name Nikodimos. He eventually settled at the Monastery of Koudouma and was ordained deacon and priest. Later, he was also made a confessor and spiritual father and served as abbot for two years.



He confessed many, his prayer healed the sick, and he freed the demon-possessed. However, his spiritual gifts and visions attracted attention. Therefore, in 1963, he left from Crete to escape to Mount Athos, where he would remain for the next twenty years.

Father Nikodimos was associated with the Koutloumousiou Monastery, joining several scetes attached to it and becoming their director. He was a confessor and spiritual father of monks, lay people and the students of the Athonite school. He even served as a confessor to Saint Paisios while he was associated with the same Monastery.

Once, when there was not enough oil to light all the candles, he prayed to the Theotokos, the Archangels and Saint Panteleimon (to whom the scete was dedicated) and all the candles lit on their own with a bright light. They remained lit for him to read the services and extinguished on their own at dawn.

When pilgrims asked him for advice regarding salvation, Father Nikodimos simply told them: "Let your hearts be lit with love for God, and your eyes be filled with tears of sympathy for your brothers." In this way, his virtues drew many souls to the Orthodox faith.

Falling ill, he returned home to the Monastery of Saint Irene in Krousonas, where the nuns cared for him. Foreseeing his death on July 17, 1986, he prepared by receiving the holy mysteries and completing his life with the Jesus prayer on his lips.

# Book Review

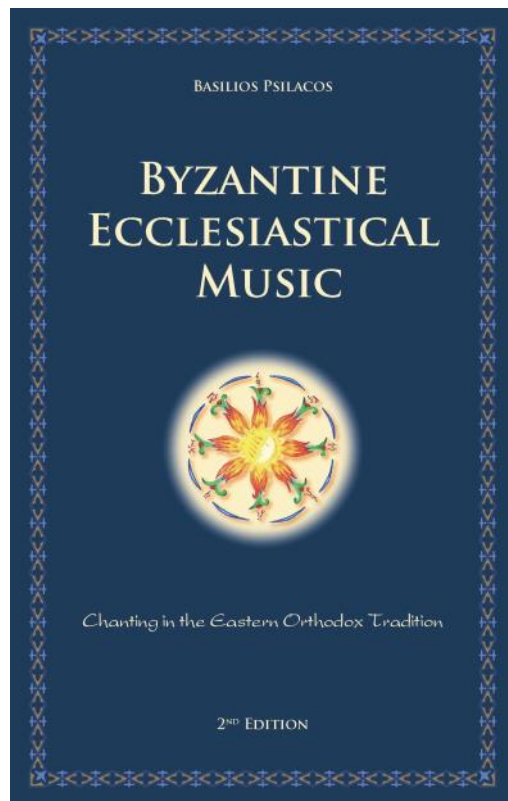
The new and enriched second edition of *Byzantine Ecclesiastical Music: Chanting in the Eastern Orthodox Tradition* (2020) authored by Basilios Psilacos, chanter and Lecturer at St Andrew's Greek Orthodox Theological College, comes as a welcome addition to the teaching of Byzantine Chant in the English speaking world.

Indeed, it is the first textbook of Byzantine music to be produced and published in Australia. Also, the first edition has been used as a textbook in other jurisdictions and settings, for example in the United States of America by the Holy Cross Theological Seminary, St Raphael School, and others.

These are not its only points of merit. The author is himself a product of the Greek Orthodox Diaspora, Australian-born but educated in Byzantine Music by eminent teachers in both Australia and Greece. This unique blend means that the textbook masterfully adapts musical concepts and subjects, originally available in difficult specialised Greek, for prospective students who are most comfortable in the English language.

An additional advantage of the book which must also be noted and commended, is that it provides a balanced mix of theory and practical exercises within one package, something which was not always available, even for students using textbooks written originally in Greek. In fact, many experienced chanters will remember learning their Byzantine Music notation through the ubiquitous thin yellow coloured textbook by the Byzantine Music educator of memory, Ioannis Margaziotis. Some exercises in the present textbook are sourced from that book.

Whilst eminently accessible, such books were very light on the theory of Byzantine Music and one had to either rely on their teacher being able to fill the void in theoretical knowledge, or purchase a bespoke Byzantine Music theory written in a dry, academic Greek that sounded like something written in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which some were.



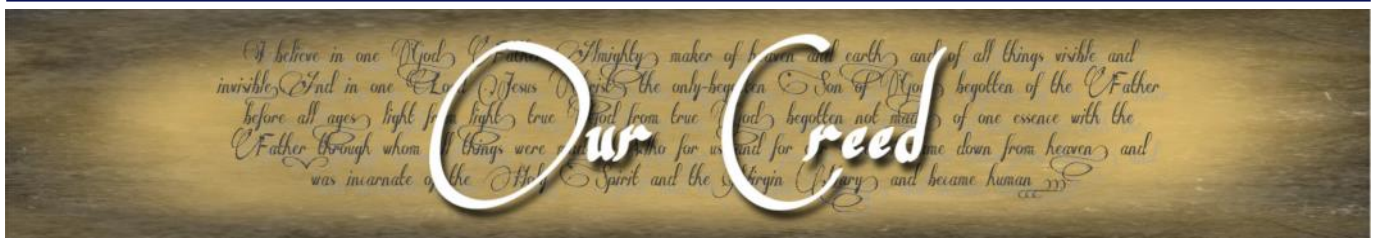
Mr Psilacos used a traditional approach in authoring this book, by carefully consulting material from over twenty Byzantine Music theory and practical books published over a span of two centuries, including even the handwritten notes of his own teacher. He has produced a work that is balanced, accessible and pleasant to read. Not only does the present textbook supply a manageable mix of theory and practical exercises, but it does so in idiomatic English. This is certainly a rare combination that makes both the teaching and learning of Byzantine Chant a much more pleasant experience.

The second edition comes with an additional 50 practical exercises, all of which are now supplemented by freely available recordings by the author (see <https://soundcloud.com/psilacos>).

Frequent references are made to the need for a teacher. Byzantine Chant was always passed on from mouth to ear. Like any practical art, it cannot be learnt from a text alone.

However, as a teaching aide, a textbook, and a reference book, this book admirably fills a void in the dissemination and education of Byzantine Church Music within the English-speaking Orthodox world.





**A**nd was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried.

Just as the climax of the liturgical calendar for Orthodox Christians each year is Holy Week and Pascha, Article 4 of the Creed brings us to the climatic events of Christ's saving work for mankind - His death and His resurrection.

Christ Himself alluded several times to His upcoming death as we read in the Gospels. This is particularly evident in the Gospel according to Mark, where our Lord's journey towards His Passion and Crucifixion is characterised by a sense of great determination and haste.

"Now they [disciples] were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed." (Mark 10:32) The disciples were fearful because although they did not yet fully understand Who Christ was and what His mission was, He had warned them "... the Son of Man must suffer many things... and be killed..." (Mark 8:31). Yet our Lord proceeded towards His Passion with full knowledge of the events to come and with eagerness to accomplish them.

The "voluntary passion" of our Lord is especially emphasised in the hymnology of Holy Week, but also at every Divine Liturgy - "He came and fulfilled all the divine plan for us, and on the night He was given up, or rather gave Himself up, for the life of the world..."

Further, Christ signified the specific type of death He would encounter - Crucifixion - when He said "and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself" (John 12:32).

Why, we may wonder, was this the way in which Christ died for us? Why with such shame and ignominy (for the Cross was the Romans' most dreaded instrument of torture)?

St Athanasios the Great provides various insights in his work "On the Incarnation."

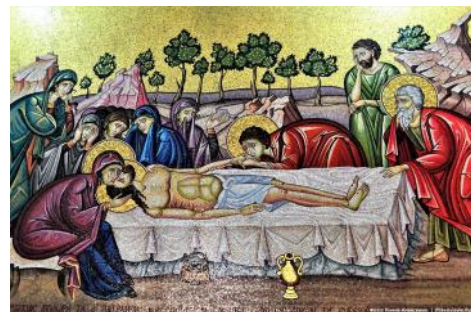
The holy father emphasises the significance of Christ's death being a public affair i.e. not carried out in secret, but taking place in full view for all to see. The perception of Christ's death would have important repercussions on people's belief in His Resurrection: "How then could the end of death, and the victory over it, be demonstrated, unless summoning it in the sight of all He proved it to be dead, being annulled thereafter by the incorruptibility of the body?"

He also states that "the Life of all, our Lord and Saviour Christ, did not devise a death for His own body, lest He should appear fearful of some other death, but He accepted and endured on the cross that inflicted by others, especially by enemies, which they reckoned fearful ... and shameful, in order that this being destroyed, He might Himself be believed to be Life, and the power of death might be completely annihilated."

That the Church fathers included the name of the Roman procurator "Pontius Pilate" in the Creed proclaims the truly historical nature of Christ's crucifixion.

That Christ actually "suffered, and was buried" is also purposefully stated, as even from the time of the Apostles, the Christians were faced by heretics (Docetists) who taught that Christ only "seemed / appeared" to be human, and to suffer and die on the Cross, thus rejecting His human nature and redemptive work for our salvation.

The image of the Crucified Christ with His outstretched arms is a visible reminder to us of God's universal, timeless, all-encompassing embrace over humanity. May it move us to turn to Him, and run to Him, asking for His great mercy of which we are all in need.





## 2021 Seminar Series

A series of seminar talks have been provided over Zoom during the Sydney lockdown period. Recordings of these talks can be accessed through [Lychnos.org](http://Lychnos.org), or the the Greek Orthodox Christian Society YouTube site. The topics covered were:

### “O God, You are my protector, Your mercy shall go before me”

The first Zoom seminar was held on Sunday 12 September at 4pm. The topic title covered the series as a whole, and is sourced in Psalm 58: 10-11. Dr John Psarommatis highlighted how God is the protector of the faithful, God has immense love for humankind, and how His mercy in a way “pursues” us in order to provide us with comfort and relief. He also gave some words of encouragement to all experiencing the long Sydney and Melbourne lockdowns.



### “The obligations of the living towards the ones who have fallen asleep”

The second seminar was held on Saturday 18 September at 7pm. His Grace Bishop Elpidios of Kyaneon, Archbishopal Vicar of Western Australia, spoke on the obligations which those who are living have to the departed. As they have left this world to enter into the next, only those of us left on Earth can pray for their souls.



It is our duty to unceasingly pray for the salvation of their soul, to honour their departure from this life with a holy kiss at their funeral, to faithfully offer acts of charity and kollyva on their behalf and to ask our priest to pray for them during the Divine Liturgy. In this way, we offer their souls comfort and can ensure their entry into the Kingdom of God.

### “The Cross-Bearing Christian”

The third seminar took place on Sunday 26th September at 4 pm. The Abbot of the Holy Monastery of Pantanassa, Geronda Eusebios Pantanassiotis, first spoke about the meanings of the Holy Cross for Christians through the ages, where before Christ’s sacrifice, the cross was a symbol of suffering and humiliation. However, it was Christ’s death and resurrection which transformed this symbol into the emblem of the Church, a symbol of God’s infinite love for humanity, and the path towards salvation. He followed on by saying that it is our duty as Christians to become fortified by the Cross and follow on its path, constantly struggling in repentance in order to renew our spiritual lives. This struggle for Christ involves denying ourselves and our passions to reveal our true selves, as we were received in Baptism. In carrying their crosses, Christians should act without complaint and engage in war with themselves every day, with Christ fighting alongside them. In this way, Christians are able to follow Christ and strive towards Paradise, where freedom from oneself comes through the Cross.



Forthcoming talks will address “[Kollyva and Communion: An 18th Century Crises on Mt Athos](#)” by Very Rev. Father Anastasios Bozikis, the “[Inner Spiritual Life](#)” by His Grace Bishop Silouan of Sinope, and “[Comfort one another - Taking on the suffering of others and the power of prayer](#)” by Very Rev. Father Dimitri Kokkinos.