



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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The birth narrative in Luke 2 describes the humble birth of Jesus in a manger, wrapped in swaddling clothes. This great mystery of the incarnation of God and the opportunity for the salvation of man prompts the doxology in three parts from the angels, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men" (Luke 2:14).

The angels show us how we should respond to the birth of Jesus. Firstly, the angels praise God. We are made to praise God, and do not fulfil our potential until we do this. Secondly, the angels proclaim that peace has come to the earth. Thirdly, the angels announce that God's goodwill has been showered on mankind. This hymn of the angels becomes the heart of our worship. It is part of the opening sentence of the Great Doxology chanted just before the start of every Divine Liturgy.

The proclamation of the birth of Jesus speaks of peace on earth. How do we understand this? Did the birth of Jesus bring peace to the world? A review might point to pandemics, wars, natural disasters, crime and terrorism, and conclude that peace does not reign in the world. Yet, Jesus brings peace into the world because, as St Paul says, Jesus is our peace. Jesus shows us by His own example how to achieve peace: with humility, patience, lack of possessions, self-sacrifice and love of neighbour and even enemies. The Christian paradox is that these virtues bring peace.

This peace that Christ brings into the world is not thrust upon us. It has to be longed for, prayed for and loved. We have to acquire peace through a lifelong

struggle. The fundamental starting point is peace within ourselves. We cannot be fragmented or scattered people. Those who accept Jesus as our peace and live according to that peace will experience His Peace before the end of the world. Jesus said "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you" (John 14:27). There is a real gift of peace.

In Christ, there is no longer Jew or Gentile, male or female, free or slave (Galatians 3:28). Christians identify themselves with all people. We are to be at peace with everyone and everything, even if they don't want to be at peace with us. The Christian person, family and community is to be a model for the whole world of the peace that Christ has brought into the world. So, when will peace reign in the



world? At the end of the ages, Jesus will come in glory, establishing His Kingdom on earth. Then the fullness of peace will reign throughout the world.

St Seraphim of Sarov said the whole purpose of life is to acquire the spirit of peace, God's own peace. If we acquire the spirit of peace, which is already poured out on us, then thousands around us will be saved. If we do not have this peace within ourselves and among ourselves as Christians, then we are not Christians and we become part of the problem, rather than the solution.

May this Christmas be a time when we receive the good news of the birth of Jesus our Saviour like the shepherds, with simplicity, with awe, with humility, with purity of heart, so that we may see the glory of the Lord shining around us and experience his peace.



Τα Χριστούγεννα ζήσαμε το γεγονός της γεννήσεως και της ανακαινίσεως του ανθρώπου. Στα Θεοφάνεια θυμόμαστε λειτουργικά τη βάπτιστη του Χριστού που αγιάζει τα ύδατα για να μας καθαρίσει και να μας αναγεννήσει με τη δύναμη του δικού Του βαπτίσματος.

Η ευχή του Μεγάλου αγιασμού, «έν τῷ Ἰορδάνη βαπτισθῆναι κατεδέξω, ἵνα τὴν τῶν ὑδάτων φύσιν ἀγιάσας ὁ ἀναμάρτητος, ὁδοποιήσῃς ἡμῖν τὴν δι' ὕδατος καὶ Πνεύματος ἀναγέννησιν, καὶ πρὸς τὴν πρώτην ἡμᾶς ἀποκαταστάσῃς ἐλευθερίαν», δηλαδή, κατὰδέχτηκες να βαπτιστεῖς στον Ἰορδάνη για να αγιάσεις την φύση των υδάτων, Εσύ ο ἀναμάρτητος και να ανοίξεις δρόμο για μας για ἀναγέννηση δια ὕδατος και Πνεύματος και να μας ἀποκαταστήσεις στην πρώτη μας ἐλευθερία.

Παράλληλα η Εκκλησία αγιάζει με ειδική μεγαλοπρέπεια την φύση των υδάτων για να τονίσει τον ἀνακαινισμό της κτίσεως και φωτισμό του κόσμου, και ταυτόχρονα να δώσει το στίγμα του δικού της ενδιαφέροντος και της δικῆς της ἀγάπης για τη φύση στην οποία ζούμε, και πού πολύ ἔχουμε ἀνάγκη τόσο για τη σωματική μας υγεία και ἐπιβίωση ὅσο και για την ψυχική μας ἰσορροπία.

Αγιάζοντας η ἐκκλησία τα ὕδατα και φωτίζοντας την κτίση, συμβάλλει με τον πιο ἰδανικό τρόπο στην ἀποκατάσταση της προσωπικῆς μας σχέσης με το περιβάλλον και την Κτίση του Θεοῦ, που σήμερα τόσο ἀδίκαια μολύνεται και καταστρέφεται.

Ἡ ἐν Χριστῷ μεταμορφωμένη δημιουργία μας κάνει να μην ξεχνούμε την ἰδιαιτερότητα της κτίσεως και την ἀξία της για τη ζωή μας. Εδώ πρέπει να ἐπισημάνουμε πολύ σύντομα βέβαια, βασικά πράγματα, ὅπως αυτά βγαίνουν ἀπὸ το λόγο και την πράξη της Εκκλησίας.

Θεός και κόσμος δεν συγκρούονται οὔτε φυσικά ταυτίζονται. Το σύμπαν και η ζωή είναι στα χέρια του Θεοῦ. Αυτός είναι ο πατέρας και δημιουργός του. Λέγει ο Δαβίδ στον ψαλμό του «δική σου ἡμέρα,

δική σου είναι και η νύχτα. Εσύ ἔκανες το φως και τον ἥλιο. Εσύ ἔκανες ὅλα τα ωραία της γης. Εσύ ἔκανες το καλοκαίρι την ἀνοίξη και ὅλα τα ωραία Εσύ τα δημιουργήσες» (Ψαλμ. 73^ο 16-17).

Θεός και κόσμος είναι ἐνωμένος γιατί η κτίση είναι εικόνα του Θεοῦ. Ἀντανακλά στην ὑπαρξη και τη ζωή της, τη ζωή και την ἐνέργεια του Θεοῦ. Για αυτό και η κτίση μας οδηγεί στο Θεό. Στην ἀγάπη Του, στη δύναμή Του, στη Σοφία Του, στη δόξα Του.

Ἡ κτίση κηρύττει τον ποιητή, οι νόμοι της παιδαγωγούν τον ἄνθρωπο και τον οδηγούν στην ἀρετή. Μιλάει η δημιουργία με τη δική της γλώσσα για το μεγαλεῖο και τη δόξα Του Δημιουργοῦ.

Ἡ ορατή και ἀόρατη δημιουργία βρίσκονται σε ἕνα διαρκές πανηγύρι, «σὲ ὕμνεῖ ἥλιος· σὲ δοξάζει

σελήνη· σοὶ ἐντυγχάνει τὰ ἄστρα· σοὶ ὑπακούει τὸ φῶς· σὲ φρίττουσιν ἄβυσσοι· σοὶ δουλεύουσιν αἱ πηγαὶ ... πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις ὕμνησέ σε ἐπιφανέντα», ἀκούμε στο Μεγάλο Αγιασμό.

Ἡ κτίση δοξάζει το Θεό για το μεγαλεῖο Του και Τον ευχαριστεῖ. Με υλικά στοιχεία, τον ἄρτον και τον οἶνον, που

εἶναι ἀντιπροσωπευτικά της υλικῆς δημιουργίας, γίνεται το σῶμα και το αἷμα του Χριστοῦ με το οποίο τρέφεται και ζει ο ἄνθρωπος αἰώνια.

Στην ἀκολουθία του Μεγάλου Αγιασμοῦ, αυτές οι ἀλήθειες τονίζονται, ὥστε οι πιστοὶ να μην ξεχνούμε πως ο υλικός κόσμος, η κτίση γενικά ἔχουν ἀνεπανάληπτη ἀξία.

Να ευχαριστούμε το Θεό που μας αγιάζει και μας ἀπαλλάτει ἀπὸ την φθορά και μας ἀποκαθιστᾶ στην ἐλευθερία των τέκνων Του Θεοῦ. Αυτό είναι και το μήνυμα της τελετῆς του Μεγάλου Αγιασμοῦ.





The year 2021 is the year of the Greek Nation. It is celebrated both in Greece, and in the heart of every person with a drop of Greek blood in their veins, and is dedicated to the revolution of 1821. The revolution succeeded in throwing off the tyrannical occupation of the country by the Ottoman Turks. This freedom has been enjoyed for 200 years.

The Greek revolution was unlike any other before it or since. It was started by the people because of the unbearable suppression imposed by the Turks, which included: heavy taxes (head tax); forced conversion to Islam; banning of the national language and schools; being treated as second class citizens with few employment prospects and a hostile judicial system; the persecution and killing of people for their very deep Faith, thus becoming Christian Martyrs. These New Martyrs were reminiscent of the Martyrs of the early Church under the Romans.

The Greek people fought the Ottomans with inferior military equipment, but their morale was almost superhuman. They were fighting for their Orthodox Faith and the liberation of their country. Their motto was "Freedom or death!" Their banner was a white Flag with a blue cross across its length and breadth. Their leaders – Kolokotronis, Karaiskakis, Makriyiannis, Papaflessas, Kanaris, deacon Athanasios, and many more, dedicated themselves entirely to the revolution. They were all very religious, and their hearts belonged to God.

The achievements of the fighters were feats of valour and self-sacrifice. Many died, but the survivors saw about two-thirds of their country liberated. The objectives of all were realised: to save their Orthodox Faith; the Greek language; and, the Greekness of the Nation.

The revolution was conceived and planned by the Greek intellectuals of the diaspora. Three people formed the Mastermind of the Friendly Society (Φιλική Εταιρεία) effort: Skoufas; Xanthos; and, Tsakalof. At the local level, the fighters were supported both spiritually and materially by the majority of the clergy, by many Bishops, and with the blessings of the Patriarchs.

However, the honour of feeding *spiritually*, improving the *education* and stimulating the *patriotism* of the

masses, belongs to a humble monk-priest, known as Kosmas the Aetolian (1714 – 1779). He was a monk on Mount Athos but, hearing of the suffering of the people, he could not find peace in his heart. He went and met the Ecumenical Patriarch and asked for a letter of commendation so that he could tour the country, preach, and offer confession and Holy Communion to the people. The Patriarch was impressed, blessed him, and gave him what he wanted.

Father Kosmas immediately began touring the country. He toured Macedonia, the Islands of the Aegean sea, the north of the country, Epiros and south Albania which earlier was part of Byzantium. He electrified the people by his preaching, telling them that their most important possession was their *soul*, and that they should remain close to God. He made them proud of their inheritance, and encouraged them to live as true Christians. Illiteracy was rife so he persuaded the wealthy to donate money for schools, and the women to sell their gold cosmetics for the same purpose. So that people could at least learn to read and write, he established 210 primary schools that had six grades, and 1,100 "lower" high schools with the first three grades. He insisted that the people should speak Greek, so that they can understand the language of our Church, and become people of God.

Father Kosmas was beheaded by the Turks in 1779 at the incitement of the Jews following the Christians changing their bazaar from Sunday to Saturday, being the holy day of the Jews. The Church honours him as Saint, Martyr, and for being equal to the Apostles in his missionary zeal.

The Revolution owes its success to the Spirit which empowers one's Faith in God, and which strengthens the soul and turns the body into steel so it can fight against all odds, in order to make reality what one believes is their own and their right.

The faith of the Greek people, the gallantry of its fighters and their dedication to God and their ideals shone forth. It has been said that a country without a history cannot survive for long. Fortunately, the Greek Nation has a history going back at least 3000 years, replete with glorious periods and heroic events, such as the revolution of 1821.



"Grateful Hellas" by Theodoros Vryzakis

Από Τους Αγίους Της Εκκλησίας Μας

Ο Άγιος Γρηγόριος Νύσσης
(η μνήμη του τιμάται στις 10 Ιανουαρίου)

Ο Άγιος Γρηγόριος Επίσκοπος του Νύσσης γεννήθηκε το 335 μ.Χ. Ήταν εγγονός της Αγίας Μακρίνας της πρεσβυτέρας (14 Ιανουαρίου) και ήταν νεότερος αδελφός του Αγίου Βασιλείου του Μεγάλου (1 Ιανουαρίου) και της Αγίας Μακρίνας της νεωτέρας (19 Ιουλίου). Το 372 μ.Χ. χειροτονήθηκε από τον Μέγα Βασίλειο επίσκοπος της πόλης Νύσσης της Καππαδοκίας.

Ισχυρός υπερασπιστής της Ορθοδοξίας, πολέμησε ακούραστα την αίρεση των Αρειανών μαζί με τον αδελφό του, τον Άγιο Βασίλειο. Ήταν μια εποχή που ο Άγιος Βασίλειος πάλευε σχεδόν μόνος του και η Εκκλησία ήταν σε αναταραχή. Για αυτό το λόγο, ο Άγιος Γρηγόριος υπέμεινε σκληρούς διωγμούς από τους Αρειανούς, οι οποίοι διέδιδαν πολλές ψευδείς φήμες που τον οδήγησαν στην καθαίρεσή του ως Επίσκοπο Νύσσης για κάποιο διάστημα.

Ο Άγιος Γρηγόριος συμμετείχε σε πολλές Οικουμενικούς συνόδους όπως τη Σύνοδο της Αντιόχειας, όπου μίλησε κατά των αιρετικών που αρνούντο να αναγνωρίσουν την αδιάκοπη παρθενία της Θεοτόκου. Ο Άγιος Γρηγόριος ήταν επίσης ένα από τα βασικά πρόσωπα της Β' Οικουμενικής Συνόδου, που έγινε στην Κωνσταντινούπολη. Στη Σύνοδο αυτή, με πρωτοβουλία του Αγίου Γρηγορίου Νύσσης και του Αγίου Γρηγορίου του Θεολόγου, ολοκληρώθηκε το Νικαιο-Κωνσταντινουπολίτικο Σύμβολο της Πίστεως.

Ως πρόσωπο, ο Άγιος Γρηγόριος Νύσσης υπήρξε φλογερός υπερασπιστής των ορθοδόξων δογμάτων και ζηλωτής διδάσκαλος του ποιμνίου του. Ήταν επίσης στοργικός πατέρας για τα πνευματικά του παιδιά και το ποιμνίο του, και μεσολάβησε για αυτά ενώπιον των δικαστηρίων. Ήταν γνωστός για τη συμπόνια, την υπομονή και την αγάπη του για την ειρήνη.

Ο Άγιος Γρηγόριος Νύσσης κοιμήθηκε εν Κυρίω σε ηλικία εξήντα περίπου ετών το 394 είτε το 395 μ.Χ. Μαζί με τους συγχρόνους του, τους Άγιους Βασίλειο τον Μέγα και Γρηγόριο τον Θεολόγο, ο Άγιος Γρηγόριος Νύσσης βοήθησε να απομακρυνθεί η Εκκλησία από τις αιρέσεις και να διαμορφωθεί το φρόνημα της Ορθοδοξίας.

Ονομάστηκε «ο Πατέρας των Πατέρων» λόγω της βαθύτητας των έργων του. Οι ομιλίες, οι επιστολές και τα σχόλια του Αγίου Γρηγορίου ενέπνευσαν μεταγενέστερους Πατέρες όπως τον Άγιο Μάξιμο τον Ομολογητή και τον Άγιο Γρηγόριο τον Παλαμά. Το βιβλίο του «Η ζωή του Μωυσή» δείχνει την κατανόησή του για τη μυστική φύση της Παλαιάς Διαθήκης και τη βαθιά πνευματικότητά του.

From the Saints of our Church

St Gregory of Nyssa
(Commemorated on January 10)

Saint Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa, was born in 335AD. He was a grandson of St Macrina the Elder (January 14), and was a younger brother of Saint Basil the Great (January 1) and St Macrina the Younger (July 19). In 372AD, he was consecrated by Saint Basil the Great as bishop of the city of Nyssa in Cappadocia.

A strong defender of Orthodoxy, he fought tirelessly against the Arian heresy with his brother, Saint Basil. It was a time when St Basil was almost fighting on his own, and the church was in turmoil. For this reason, Saint Gregory endured harsh persecution by the Arians, who spread many false rumours which led to him being deposed as Bishop of Nyssa for some time.

Saint Gregory participated in many Church councils such as the Council of Antioch, where he spoke out against

heretics who refused to recognise the perpetual virginity of the Mother of God. Saint Gregory was also one of the key figures of the Second Ecumenical Council, held in Constantinople. At this Council, on the initiative of Saint Gregory of Nyssa and Saint Gregory the Theologian, the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Symbol of Faith (the Creed) was completed.

As a person, Saint Gregory of Nyssa was a fiery defender of Orthodox dogmas and a zealous teacher of his flock. He was also a loving father to his spiritual children and flock, and

interceded for them before the courts. He was known for his compassion, patience and love of peace.

Saint Gregory of Nyssa fell asleep in the Lord at around sixty years of age in either 394 or 395AD. Together with his contemporaries, Saints Basil the Great and Gregory the Theologian, Saint Gregory of Nyssa helped to steer the Church away from heresies and towards Orthodoxy.

He has been called “the Father of Fathers” due to the profound insights of his works. Saint Gregory’s homilies, letters and commentaries inspired later Fathers such as Saint Maximus the Confessor and Saint Gregory Palamas.

His *Life of Moses* showcases his understanding of the mystical nature of the Old Testament, and his deep spirituality.



Questions & Answers

A clergyman of our Archdiocese answers ...

How can we share in the joy of Christ's birth?

I suspect that the readers of *Lychnos* are aware of how terribly commercialised Christmas has become. My answer to your question on how can we share in the joy of Christ's birth is to meditate on the real meaning of Christmas, and to also allow the example of Christmas to change our mindset and the way we relate to one another. I will answer your question by using a sermon on the Nativity by Saint Gregory Palamas. This very spiritual saint put it as follows:

"The pre-eternal and almighty Word is now born according to the flesh, without home, without shelter, without dwelling, and placed as a babe in the manger, seen by men's eyes, touched by their hands, and wrapped in layers of swaddling bands."

St Gregory then refers to the devil who fell due to pride, and to how much destruction pride causes us. He says:

"The very Word of God from God emptied Himself in an indescribable way, came down from on high to the lowest state of man's nature, and indissolubly linked it with Himself, and in humbling Himself and becoming poor like us, He raised on high the things below, or rather, He gathered both things into one, mingling humanity with divinity, and by so doing He taught everyone that humility is the road which leads upwards, setting forth today Himself as an example before men and holy angels alike... That is why God who sits upon the cherubim is set before us as a babe on earth... Having become flesh, He appears to our senses and can be seen by bodily eyes. He who defines all things and is limited by none is contained in a small, makeshift manger...

He who possesses the riches of inexhaustible treasures submits Himself voluntarily to such great poverty that He does not even have a place at the inn; and so He enters into a cave at the time of His birth, who was brought forth by God timelessly and impassibly and without beginning... He who is by nature Lord of all is now ranked with the servants and enrolled with them (Luke 2:1-6), clearly making humble service to others no less

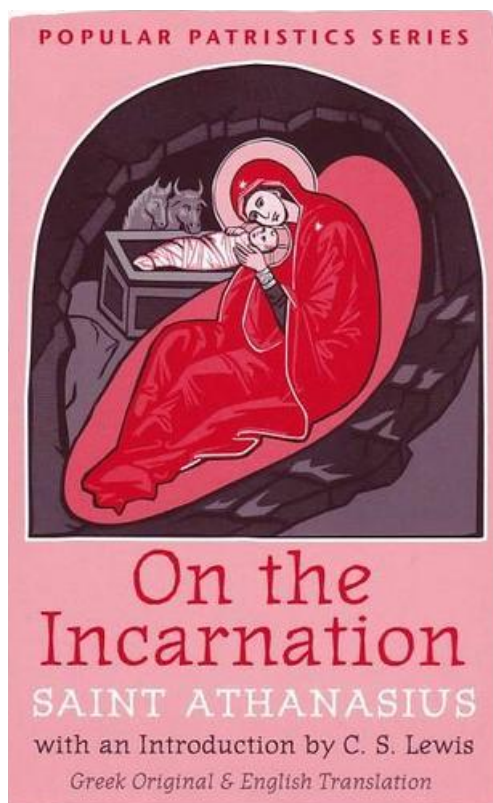
honourable than the exercise of lordship, or rather, showing the servants as having greater honour than the earthly ruler."

In summary then, the Church calls us to meditate on and come to appreciate the Incarnation, as St Athanasius put it, "God became man so that man might become god". The Church also calls us to learn from and be inspired by the example of Christ and strive to be humble; to want to serve rather than to feel entitled and focus on our own needs.

At the birth of Christ the angels announced to the shepherds "peace on earth." This peace, which "surpasses all understanding" can become our peace, and we can pass it

onto others, if we live according to the Gospels. The following prayer expresses it nicely. "Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace... O, Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love; for it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; it is in dying that we are born again to eternal life."

† Fr D. K.





Count John Kapodistrias (1776-1831) was born on 11 February 1776 in the Ionian island of Corfu. He belonged to an ancient aristocratic Corfiote family, which had emigrated to Corfu from Istria in 1373. He studied medicine, philosophy and law in Italy.

At the age of 24 Kapodistrias became secretary of the Ionian legislative council. He listened to the voice of the Ionian people and the democratic changes he initiated were gladly accepted by them. This would prove a stark contrast to the reception he received for the changes he later made in Greece. At the age of 31 Kapodistrias was appointed military governor. He became famous throughout Greece when he successfully turned back Ali Pasha of Ioannina. During this period he met Theodoros Kolokotronis who greatly influenced the Greek nationalism and patriotism in Kapodistrias. Kolokotronis admired Kapodistrias' diplomatic ability.

The political and ethical worth of Kapodistrias impressed foreign ambassadors. He was recruited by the Russians and was so successful that by the age of 39 he was the joint Foreign Minister of Russia. His success drew enemies in Austria and in the Russian court. These forces later joined to undermine Kapodistrias, accusing him of using Russian foreign policy as a weapon for Greek independence. He, therefore, took leave of the Czar and tried to capitalise on his international fame as a diplomat by working for the Greek cause from Geneva, Switzerland.

During the revolution Kapodistrias avoided becoming involved with the various political factions in Greece. He sought only to unite the Greeks. The Allied powers and the Greeks saw that Kapodistrias was a uniting force. On 6 April 1827 the Assembly, on Kolokotronis' proposal, unanimously elected the 51 year old Count John Kapodistrias as President of Greece for a term of seven years. Kapodistrias accepted the nomination encouraged by the knowledge that he had the support of the Allies and the Greek nation. Kapodistrias travelled throughout Europe seeking financial support. He met the British Undersecretary of War who asked him, "what is Greece?" Kapodistrias answered:

"The Greek Nation is a Nation which never stopped its existence. Greeks after the fall of 1453 continued to speak the language of their fathers, which is the Greek language, and remained Orthodox under the protection of the Holy Church."

When the same person had asked him what the borders of this Nation should be, he answered:

"The borders of Greece have been carved by those whose blood has been shed in massacres which took place at Kydonies, Cyprus, Mesolongi, Chios, Crete, Psara. Those borders have been defined by the ancient geographer Strabo. From Macedonia and Epirus to Crete and from Ionian islands to Asia Minor."

On 6 July 1827 the Treaty of London was signed by the representatives of England, France, and Russia whereby Greece was to be autonomous under Turkish suzerainty. The Treaty was rejected by the Sultan who believed that he had effectively crushed the Revolution. On 20 October 1827, the Sultan's fleets in Navarino were destroyed by the Allied powers.

Escorted by three Allied warships, Kapodistrias arrived in Nauplion, Greece on 19 January 1828 aboard HMS *Warspite*. On the following morning he attended a Thanksgiving Service at the Church of St George in the company of the Allied captains. Ibrahim still controlled nearly all the Peloponnese, continental Greece was almost entirely Turkish, and Crete had been brutally suppressed. The only territories acknowledging his authority was the city of Nauplion and a few Aegean islands such as Aegina, Poros, and Salamis. Upon seeking funds his Finance Minister told him, "The Treasury was not only empty, it was also non-existent." The Greek citizens were in a desperate condition. There were no crops, as their fields had been destroyed over the seven years of the revolution, and no farm animals could be found. Starvation and destitution had reached epidemic proportions and the Greek people were desperate. Additionally, there were no schools, no hospitals, no teachers, no doctors, and no laws. Kapodistrias had to create a State from nothing.

One of the committees he established evaluated the state of the Orthodox Church in Greece. Of primary concern to Kapodistrias was its organisation, the theological and spiritual education of the priests, and the relationship of the Church of Greece with the Ecumenical Patriarchate - for which he saw the administrative responsibility in the former and the spiritual leadership in the latter, which remained in captivity.

Kapodistrias on the 2002 Greek 20 lepta (20 cent) and 1983 500 Drachmae



Kapodistrias

He undertook many critical national actions, such as:

- persuading the National Assembly at Aegina on 30 January 1828 to transfer its powers for three months exclusively to himself to prosecute the war effort, undertake domestic reforms so Greece could be self-sufficient, and to negotiate the boundaries of Greece with the foreign European powers who wanted to exclude Crete and Samos;
- reorganising the army under Dimitrios Ypsilantis and Andreas Metaxas, whom he commanded to push the boundaries of Greece as far as possible and reconquer territory lost to the Ottoman military during the civil wars;
- opening an orphanage in Aegina for war orphans; &
- dealing with England's machinations to undermine him, and facing the hostility of local landowners who felt that their power was threatened by him.

The Mavromichalis family were not prepared to cooperate with a central organisation and refused to pay taxes to the Greek government. Despite their protests Kapodistrias had charged Petrobey Mavromichalis with high treason and imprisoned him for nine months without trial. On 9 October 1831 at the age of 55, Kapodistrias set out to attend an early morning church service at the Church of St Spyridon in Nauplion. As he walked towards the Church entrance Constantine Mavromichalis fired a concealed pistol from close range and George Mavromichalis stabbed Kapodistrias through the heart. Kapodistrias collapsed into the arms of his attendants. His one-armed body guard fatally shot Constantine who was soon after finished off by other body guards. The angry crowd threw his body into the sea. George was later captured and killed by firing squad. The death of the influential and much loved Kapodistrias was lamented by the majority of the Greek people. Kolokotronis in his memoirs wrote:

"When the people of Tripolis heard the terrible news they were struck dead. They abandoned their factories



and their work, and walked aimlessly through the streets stunned with grief."

The endearing characteristic of Kapodistrias was his pious Christian faith. Upon his arrival to Greece he attended a thanksgiving service. On his death, he was attending a Divine Liturgy service. On his description of the Greeks to the foreign powers, he emphasised that they never stopped confessing their Orthodox faith.



Earlier in 1819 Kapodistrias had written to his father that the historical existence of the Byzantine Greeks was fermented with faith. The fact that they were preserved at all is a result of the Greeks' sincere petitions in tears, God's divine providence, the intercessions of the Miracle working Saints and the Ever Virgin Theotokos. At another time Kapodistrias wrote, "the Christian religion preserved the Greeks and their language and the nation and the ancient glorious memories and granted to them again their national existence, which is their pillar of strength." He linked the cause of the revolution not to the European powers and their assistance but to the continuing historical traditions of the nation and its spiritual reserves. As President he revealed to J.B. Georges Bory de saint Vincent: "firstly I am a Greek because I was born in this country, I am Greek from my father and my mother. I am Greek with the grace of God who bestowed upon me the governorship of this poor people. I am Greek from birth, from a clean heart, from the way I feel, from my responsibilities, and from my faith."

We best understand John Kapodistrias when we examine his philanthropic acts, and enter into his faith. All of his fortune was given to the homeless and the orphans of his country. His life as a doctor and later as a diplomat was aimed at alleviating human misery. His actions were performed in a God-fearing and loving fashion. Everything he did was in recognition of the duty and responsibility bestowed upon him by God and in love for his fellow Greeks and the Greek nation. He established a sound Orthodox education in all schools to enable his compatriots to learn their faith and to thank God for preserving the Greek nation over the 400 year occupation. With the best intentions he attempted to assist the Orthodox Church of Greece to grow under the spiritual guidance of the Ecumenical Patriarch. His spiritual qualities and leadership skills are much admired and inspirational, and he has left an enduring legacy in the minds of the grateful Greek generations that have followed.



Ο Μέγας Αντώνιος είναι μεγάλος Άγιος τής Ορθόδοξης Έκκλησίας και ο πρώτος ασκητής του Χριστιανισμού πού θεμελίωσε τον υγιή Μοναχισμό.

Έζησε στα χρόνια των αυτοκρατόρων Διοκλητιανού και Μαξιμιανού μέχρι και την εποχή τού Μεγάλου Κωνσταντίνου και των παιδιών του. Τό μεγαλύτερο μέρος τής ζωής του το έζησε ως ασκητής στην έρημο. Ο Μέγας Αντώνιος πέθανε το 356 μ.Χ.

Πρόβλεψε με θαυμαστή ακρίβεια το θάνατο του, ο οποίος συνέβηκε σε ηλικία των εκατόν πέντε ετών. Η μνήμη του γιορτάζεται από την Ορθόδοξη Εκκλησία στις 17 Ιανουαρίου.

Μία από τις τελευταίες επιθυμίες τού Οσίου ήταν να μη φανερωθεί ο τόπος της ταφής του. Ωστόσο, οι μοναχοί πού ασκήτευαν κοντά του έλεγαν ότι κατείχαν το ιερό λείψανο του το οποίο επί Ιουστιανού (τό 561 μ.Χ.), κατατέθηκε στην Εκκλησία τού Αγίου Ιωάννου τού Προδρόμου στην Αλεξάνδρεια και από εκεί αργότερα (τό 635 μ.Χ.), μεταφέρθηκε στην Κωνσταντινούπολη.



Ο Βίος του και η υποδειγματική συνεπειά του αποτελούν αιώνια πηγή, απ' όπου μπορούν οι άνθρωποι κάθε εποχής να αντλήσουν ζωντανά διδάγματα. Η άσκηση και η απομόνωση όπως την εννοεί ο Μέγας Αντώνιος δέ σημαίνει τέλεια αδράνεια τού σώματος αλλά ισόρροπη συνάντηση με την ψυχή.

Η Προσευχή και η νηστεία αποτελούν ένα μέρος από τη ζωή τού μοναχού, βοηθητικά μέσα απαραίτητα για την ανθρώπινη τελείωση. Δίδασκε στους μαθητές του να μην θεωρούν τίποτε ανώτερο από τήν αγάπη τού Χριστού και να μη νομίζουν ότι στερούνται κάτι αξιόλογο με την αποχή από τα κοσμικά αγαθά.

Θύμιζε επίσης ότι η ανθρώπινη ζωή είναι εφήμερη σε αντίθεση με τον μέλλοντα αιώνα. Καταληκτικά έλεγε ότι πρέπει να κοπιάζουμε για την απόκτηση αιώνιων αγαθών, πού είναι οι αρετές όπως ή σωφροσύνη, η φρόνηση, η αγάπη και η σύνεση.

Πρέπει να μη λέμε ότι δεν είναι δυνατόν στον άνθρωπο να επιτύχει ενάρετη ζωή, άλλα μόνον ότι δεν είναι εύκολο.

Orthodox Youth Groups (Ορθόδοξες Χριστιανικές Ομάδες)

Dear Teenager,

Come to fellowship («Ομάδα») and you will find a Person who loves you more than anyone else – a Person who is a father, brother, and a good friend to you – *all at once*. That Person is our Lord Jesus Christ.

At Ομάδα you will find friends whom you can trust and who have the same goals in life as you. Learn all about your Church at Ομάδα and how to live your Orthodox Faith.

Ομάδα organises two major camps per year, sporting activities, bush walks and other fun activities.

Even if you receive religious education at School or attend a Greek Orthodox College, you will still benefit enormously from being at Ομάδα.



Christian Youth Groups for young people aged 14-18 are held in the following Parishes:

For Boys

Transfiguration, Earlwood (Saturdays 4 - 6:30 pm)
All Saints, Belmore (Fridays 6 – 8 pm)
Resurrection, Kogarah (Fridays 6:30 – 8 pm)
St Ioannis, Parramatta (Saturdays 5 – 6:45 pm)

For Girls

Transfiguration, Earlwood (Fridays 6:30 - 8 pm)
All Saints, Belmore (Fridays 6:30 – 8 pm)

From The Old Testament



Jael and Sisera (Judges 4:17-23)

The book of Judges records that the Israelites fell away from God after arriving in the Promised Land. Having fallen into idolatry, Israel was enslaved for twenty years to King Jabin of Canaan. When the Israelites realised their sin and repented, Deborah and Barak led them to victory over the Canaanite army led by Sisera. However, the victory was not complete because Sisera fled the battlefield. In fleeing, Sisera reached the tent of Jael, who was the wife of Heber the Kenite.

Jael received Sisera and gave him a blanket. When Sisera asked for water, Jael instead gave him milk. Sisera then asked Jael to watch outside the tent and lie if someone asked after him. When Sisera fell asleep, however, Jael took a tent peg and a hammer and she drove the peg into his temple, killing him. When the Israelites reached her tent, Jael showed them Sisera's corpse. The Bible then records that "on that day God subdued Jabin king of Canaan before the sons of Israel" (Judges 4:23).

It is easy for us to think that there is no spiritual benefit to reading such a gruesome Bible story. There is, however, much to learn despite the violence. The results of the sins of Israel in falling away from God are made clear in the violence, and are a cautionary tale of the results of a society abandoning God. Jael is part of this estranged society, murdering and breaching the rules of hospitality, but she did so to defeat God's enemies.

However, we can also understand Jael to represent Christ, the Theotokos, and the Church. She is a type of Christ as she defeats sin (personified by Sisera) through the wooden tent peg, as Christ defeated sin through the wood of the Cross.

Jael is also called "blessed above women" (Judges 5:24), foreshadowing the Theotokos who also participated in salvation.

Finally, according to St Ambrose, Jael represents the Church as she, a foreigner, achieves the victory which Israel could not.

May we also understand from this passage that everything in the Old Testament is divinely inspired and is there for our benefit.



St Zenobius

Metropolitan of Tetri-Tskaro

St Zenobius was born on 14 September 1896 with the name Zacharias. He was from Chernigov in Russia, and lost his father when he was three years old and his mother when he was eleven. He lived a humble childhood in poverty and entered the Monastery of Glinsk.

After being conscripted into the army during World War I, he was tonsured a monk with the name Zenobius in 1917. When the Communists closed the Monastery, Zenobius was ordained deacon and then hieromonk, serving until 1930 in the Church of St Nicholas in Sukhum. Along with other monks in exile, he lived a nomadic life to avoid the Communists.

When there was a surprise passport check which would have led to Fr Zenobius' arrest, he fled into the forest. Entering a secluded clearing, he hid there but soon realised that it was the den of a ferocious bear. When the bear arrived and saw the Saint light a fire, the bear went away and spent the night close to the Saint without attacking him.

In 1930, Saint Zenobius was placed in prison where he contracted malaria. He was repeatedly arrested and later exiled. Throughout his exile and punishments, he witnessed for Christ and won the respect of other exiled criminals, guards and judges.

After his release in 1950, Patriarch Callistratus of Georgia appointed St Zenobius as Rector of the St Alexander Nevsky Church in Tbilisi and elevated him to Archimandrite, and later to Bishop of Stephanovan. Despite these elevations, he remained an ascetic in the world, deeply devoted to the Jesus Prayer and asceticism, and keeping a monastic prayer rule and performing all of the daily offices.

In 1972, St Zenobius was elevated to Metropolitan of Tetri-Tskaro. As a hierarch and spiritual father, he emphasised patience, humility and prayer. St Zenobius knew the day of his death in advance. On that day, he specifically gathered all the monks from the Glinsk Monastery who lived in Georgia, took Holy Communion and surrendered his soul to the Lord on 23 February 1985.



What we Hear in Church



“I have begotten you from the womb before the morning star” (Psalm 109:3/110:3)

We hear a series of prophecies in the often cited Psalm 109, many of which are sung on Christmas day. Verse 3 is one such example. It is chanted on Christmas day by way of prokeimenon in the matins service, and as the entrance hymn following the small entrance during the Divine Liturgy.



Verse 3 proclaims the first birth of Christ, who is referred to as the “morning star.” It is not the only place in which this description is used.

It also appears in Revelation 22:16: “I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.”

Saint Athanasius interprets Psalm 109:3 as follows: “If then ‘the Offspring of David’ be the ‘Bright and Morning Star’, which the Offspring from God preceded; so that the sense of the Psalm is this, ‘I have begotten You from Myself before Your appearance in the flesh;’ for ‘before the Morning Star’ is equivalent to ‘before the Incarnation of the Word.’” In other words, Saint Athanasius explains that the morning star is Jesus and the womb is God’s; the Psalm is foretelling that Christ was born (not created) of God, rendering Him God Himself. This finds support in the Creed: “light from light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one essence with the Father.”

Accordingly, the Offspring, the Incarnate Word, is the morning star. God tells us in the Psalm that this morning star was born from His womb before He became the morning star. In other words, Christ has two births. His first birth is timeless; the second, on the other hand, occurs in time, in a stable, in Bethlehem, of Mary, humbly and meekly. The Psalmist and the Church remind us, and proclaim, on the great feast of Christmas Who precisely is being born on this day.



Christology - St Nektarios of Pentapolis

Saint Nektarios of Pentapolis, in his preface to *Christology*, writes that: “Our chief aim in compiling the book... was to strengthen the faith of Christians; so they may become firm and immovable in the faith, live worthily of the Gospel of Christ, being frightened in no way by the adversaries (Philippians 1:28); that they may live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.”

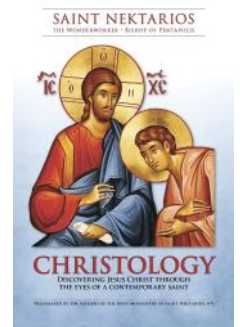
This book does what Saint Nektarios sought for it to accomplish. First published in Greek in 1900, it has lost none of its relevance for a contemporary Western audience.

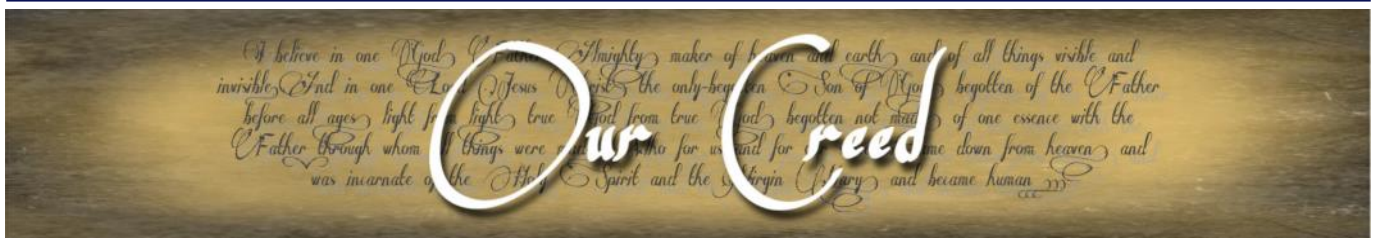
In *Christology*, Saint Nektarios expounds on the reasons for Christ becoming incarnate and human. The first part of the book deals with the expectation among all of humanity, and not just the Israelites, for the coming of a Saviour. In doing so, he makes use of various mythologies including Greek, Egyptian and even Asian. This use of extra-biblical sources such as histories, literature, and philosophy is featured throughout the book and shows the great learning of the Saint. They also assist us in rationalising the great mystery of the Incarnation.

The second part shows us that Christ is God and Man, again providing evidence from Christian and secular sources. This part draws from both the Old and New Testaments in revealing Christ to be the long-awaited Messiah. Saint Nektarios emphasises Christ’s Divinity and the great change to humanity that occurred as a result of Christ’s earthly ministry.

The third and fourth parts of the *Christology*, in commenting on God’s revelation to the world and the brilliance of the Christian faith, make clear the timeless treasures of the Christian faith. It shows a practical appreciation of the beauty and the simplicity of our faith, and reinforces a fundamental understanding that the life of each Christian is centred in having a personal relationship with Christ, and in attaining virtues in His likeness.

Christology is a unique book, and is a testament to the learning of Saint Nektarios and his deep love for Christ. This love can be seen throughout the book, which allows us to better understand Christ and brings us ever closer to Him.





And rose on the third day according to the Scriptures.

“Why do you mingle the ointments with your tears full of pity, O women disciples?” Thus the Angel who was shining in the tomb cried to the myrrhbearing women, ‘See for yourselves the empty tomb and understand, that the Saviour has risen from the sepulchre.’” (*Resurrectional Evlogetaria, Sunday Matins*)

Every Sunday morning, the hymnology of our Orthodox Church fills the ears and hearts of her faithful with an abundance of references to the central event of the Orthodox Christian faith; the glorious Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Why is Christ’s Resurrection central to Christianity?

St Paul offers a potent answer in 1 Corinthians 15:17: “And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!” It is through Christ’s Resurrection – and that alone – that mankind is liberated from death, sin, and the devil.

The Creed states that Christ “rose on the third day” to underline the fact that He had really died. The Jews believed that the spirit of a person hovered around the body for three days, giving hope that they might return to life during that time period. St Athanasios the Great comments that if Christ had risen earlier, “someone might have said that He had not died at all, or that death had not fully touched Him...”

Christ’s Resurrection is a fulfilment of that foretold in the Scriptures. Old Testament references to the Resurrection were highlighted by the Apostles Peter and Paul in their preaching to the early Church (see Acts 2:24-31; 13:33-37).

When Martha expressed the belief that her brother Lazarus would “rise again in the resurrection at the last day,” Christ magnificently proclaimed “I am the Resurrection and the Life. He who believes in Me,

though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?” (John 11:24-26).

Do we believe this? Do our decisions, our reactions and stance before various events we face, reflect this belief?

God is Life. Communion with Him is eternal life experienced here and now. Communion with Him is true being. For the person who abides in Christ, death - the enemy of fallen mankind - is neutralised and no longer holds fear. There is no person more free than this person.

St Athanasios the Great writes: “For as when a tyrant has been defeated by a genuine king and bound hand and foot, all those that then pass by

mock him, hitting and reviling him, no longer fearing his fury and barbarity because of the victorious king; in this way death also having been conquered and scorned by the Saviour on the cross, and bound hand and foot, all those in Christ who pass by trample on him [death], and witnessing to Christ they mock death, jeering at him, and saying... O death, where is your victory? O hell, where your sting?” Is this not the very stance we see embodied by the millions of men and women, young and old? Throughout the centuries, under the hostile Roman Empire, the Ottomans in Greece and in liberation therewith, the

Communists in the former Soviet Union, and more recently when attacked by Islamist extremists in Middle East countries such as Iran, Syria, and Libya, these faithful Christians have eagerly witnessed for Jesus and leapt to their martyrdom, knowing death to be powerless through Christ!

Let us also joyfully confess, bearing witness to a world held hostage by the fear of death, that “if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord’s.” (Romans 14:8).





30th Anniversary of the Election of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I

The 30th Anniversary of the Election of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I was celebrated on 22 October 2021. A number of guests spoke at the commemorative gathering, including: His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia; former Abbot Stephanos Pantanassiotis; and, Professor Michael Anthony. A recording can be viewed on YouTube or social media.



Episcopal Ordination of four Bishops

Spring has seen the Greek Orthodox Church blossom with the historic Episcopal ordinations of four additional new Bishops to tend the faithful flock in various States across Australia. The ordinations were presided by His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia:

- + His Grace Bishop Kyriakos of Sozopolis on Saturday 13 November 2021
- + His Grace Bishop Christodoulos of Magnesia on Sunday 14 November 2021
- + His Grace Bishop Evmenios of Kerasounta on Saturday 20 November 2021
- + His Grace Bishop Bartholomew of Charioupolis on Sunday 21 November 2021.



Consecration of the Church of St Catherine



The Church of St Catherine, Mascot NSW was consecrated on its Feast day, 25 November 2021, by His Eminence Archbishop Makarios and His Assistant Bishops.

Glory be to God!