



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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Welcome Your Eminence

Καλῶς ἦλθατε Σεβασμιώτατε

Στις 25 Μαρτίου 2019 ως γνωστόν, κοιμήθη εις Κύριον ο πρώην Αρχιεπίσκοπος Αυστραλίας κ.κ. Στυλιανός. Σύσσωμος ο Ορθόδοξος Ελληνισμός της Αυστραλίας θρήνησε την αποδημία του ποιμενάρχη του. Νοιώσαμε για λίγο σαν χαμένοι, κάπως σαν ορφανοί. Το ερώτημα πρόβαλλε εύλογα μαζί και αμείλικτα στα χείλη μας.

Και τώρα ποιός; Ποιός θα πάρει το τιμόνι; Ποιός θα ποδηγετήσει την Εκκλησία; Ποιός θα αγιάσει τον πόνο μας; Οι προσευχές όλων των πιστών ενώθηκαν. Έγιναν «οσμὴ ευωδίας πνευματικής».

Και ο Ὑψιστος τις δέχτηκε και ανταποκρίθηκε. Με το στόμα της Αυτοῦ Θειοτάτης Παναγιότητος του Οικουμενικού Πατριάρχου μας κ.κ. Βαρθολομαίου και της περὶ Αυτόν Ιεράς Συνόδου, δόθηκε για μας η απάντηση.

Ο Άγιος Χριστουπόλεως κ.κ. Μακάριος εξελέγει παμψηφεί, νέος Αρχιεπίσκοπος Αυστραλίας, Υπέρτιμος και Έξαρχος Πάσης Ωκεανίας.

Δεν τον ξέραμε οι πολλοί. Τρέξαμε, ψάξαμε στο διαδίκτυο. Να μάθουμε για τον νέο Αρχιεπισκόπο μας. Είδαμε, μάθαμε και θαυμάσαμε.

Στις 18 Ιουνίου, 2019, αναβρασμός στο διεθνή αερολιμένα του Σίδνεϋ. Έρχεται ο Ποιμενάρχης μας.

Εκατοντάδες πιστών Ορθοδόξων αφηφούν το χειμωιάτικο κρύο. Κλήρος και λαός μαζί βροντοφωνάζουν «ΑΞΙΟΣ». Σε ένα παραλήρημα χαράς και ενθουσιασμού οι Εκκλησιαστικοί Ὑμνοι μπλέκονται με τους Εθνικούς Ὑμνους.

Και κείνος, νάτος μπροστά μας, ὅλος αγάπη, φωτεινός και ταπεινός.

Στο χαμόγελό του το κρύο του χειμώνα υποχωρεί. Στη συγκίνησή του γλυκιά θαλπωρή ακουμπά τις καρδιές μας. Τα πατρικά του λόγια αποδιώχνουν τους ὅποιους ενδοιασμούς. Πάσαμε να νοιώθουμε χαμένοι και ορφανοί. Ο Πνευματικός μας Πατέρας είναι εδώ. Έτοιμος να πλοηγήσει το σκάφος της Εκκλησίας στους Αντίποδες.

Και εμείς, τα πνευματικά του παιδιά, έτοιμα και πειθήνια να τον ακολουθήσουμε στη πορεία του.

Πορεία για την Αλήθεια, το Φως, και τη δόξα του Χριστού. Πορεία της Ορθοδοξίας μας δια μέσου των Αιώνων.

Σεβασμιώτατε, Καλῶς ἦλθατε.

On the 25th March 2019 as is known, the former Archbishop of Australia, Stylianos slept in the Lord. The whole body of the Greek Orthodox Church of Australia mourned the passing of its Shepherd. For a short while, we all felt like we were lost, somewhat like orphans. The question naturally and inevitably came to our lips: Who would come now? Who would take the rudder? Who would guide the Church? Who would sanctify our collective pain? The prayers of all the faithful were united. They became “a sweet-smelling spiritual fragrance.”

And the Lord accepted those prayers and responded. Through the mouth of His All-Holiness, the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, together with the Holy Synod of the Great Church of Christ, an answer was given.



The Bishop of Christoupolis, Makarios was elected unanimously, to be the new Archbishop of Australia, Most Honourable Exarch of All Oceania.

He was unknown to most of us. We hurried to find more details, we searched the internet to learn about our new Archbishop. We found out, we learnt much about him, we marvelled at his gifts.

On 18th June 2019, an excited atmosphere arose at Sydney International Airport. Our new Shepherd was about to arrive!

Hundreds of Orthodox faithful defy the winter cold. Clergy and laity together exclaim “AXIOS – He is Worthy!” In an atmosphere of delirious joy and enthusiasm, Church Hymns mingle with National Anthems.

And there he was, in front of us, full of love, full of light and humility.

At his smile, the winter cold draws back. At his own emotional reaction, a sweet comfort touches our hearts. His fatherly words chase away any hesitation. We ceased feeling lost and orphaned. Our Spiritual Father was here. Ready to pilot the ship of the Church in the Antipodes.

And we, his spiritual children, ready and willing to follow his journey.

A journey towards Truth, Light and the Glory of Christ. The journey of our Orthodoxy through the Ages.

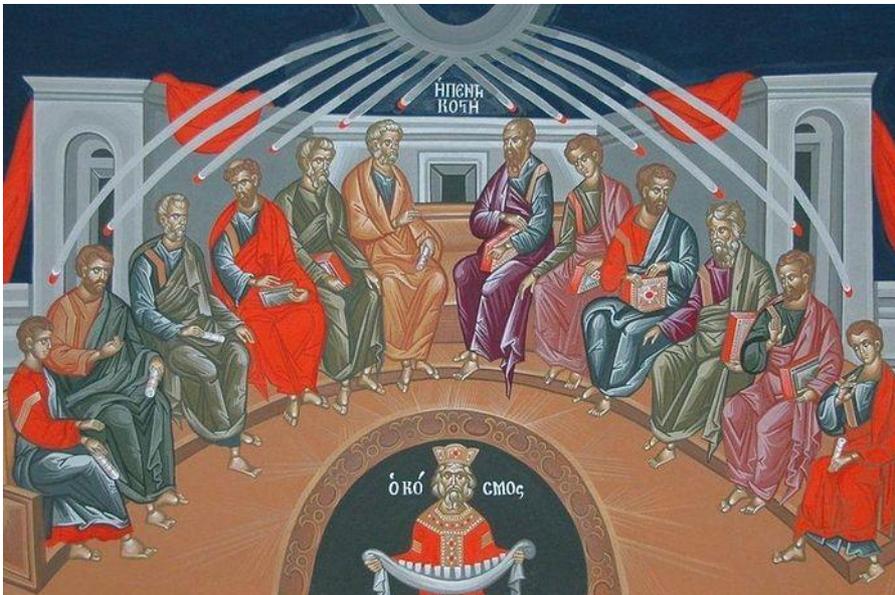
Your Eminence, Welcome!

ΠΕΝΤΗΚΟΣΤΗ

«**Π**εντηκοστήν εορτάζομεν, και Πνεύματος επιδημίαν». Την Πεντηκοστή εορτάζομε σήμερα, την άφιξη του Αγίου Πνεύματος, ψάλλει χαρμόσυνα η Εκκλησία. Ήρθε σαν φλόγα φωτιάς, και κάθισε επάνω στο κεφάλι κάθε μαθητή του Κυρίου.

Ήλθε από τον Ουρανό, με ήχο μεγάλου θορύβου, σαν δυνατός άνεμος, που γέμισε ολόκληρο το σπίτι όπου ευρίσκονταν οι απόστολοι και οι μαθητές. Ήλθε

και καθάρισε τις ψυχές τους από τις αμαρτίες τους, τις εσφαλμένες ιδέες που είχαν για τον Θεό και την σωτηρία τους. Ήλθε και φώτισε τον νου τους να καταλάβουν όσα τους είχε πει ο Διδάσκαλος όταν ήταν μαζί τους. Τότε δεν τα καταλάβαιναν.



Τώρα έγιναν διαφορετικοί άνθρωποι – δεν φοβόταν πιά τους Ιουδαίους, μιλούσαν γλώσσες άγνωστες μέχρι τότε σ' αυτούς. Ο Πέτρος, που τρεις φορές αρνήθηκε τον Χριστό την νύχτα της δίκης του, μίλησε στο απέραντο πλήθος για τον Χριστό με πρωτοφανή παρρησία, και καταπληκτική σοφία. Δεν φοβήθηκε να κατηγορήσει τους Ιουδαίους ότι αυτοί ήταν υπεύθυνοι για την σταύρωση του Χριστού, ενώ συνάμα τους καλεί να μετανοήσουν και να βαπτιστούν στο όνομα Του. Το θάρρος της ομιλίας του, και η σοφία του λόγου του, συγκίνησε 3000 ψυχές να μετανοήσουν και να βαπτιστούν εις το όνομα του Χριστού, και έγιναν έτσι οι πρώτοι πιστοί της Εκκλησίας.

Τα καταπληκτικά γεγονότα που συνέβησαν την ημέρα της Πεντηκοστής, είναι ανεπανάληπτα στην ιστορία του Χριστιανισμού. Το γεγονός όμως που ξεχωρίζει από όλα τα άλλα συμβάντα, είναι **ο θόρυβος, ο άνεμος, ή βία** - με τα οποία

ανήγγειλε το Άγιο Πνεύμα την άφιξή του στον κόσμο. Θαρρείς και θέλει να μας πει, ότι όχι μόνο πρέπει να δεχόμαστε της αλήθειες που μας απεκάλυψε ο Υιός του Θεού χωρίς να καθυστερούμε με ανούσιες αμφιβολίες, αλλά και να ενεργούμε, με βία, με ταχύτητα, να τις εφαρμόζουμε στη ζωή μας.

«Πάντα χορηγεί το Πνεύμα το Άγιον», είναι η πηγή όλων των χαρισμάτων της θεότητας της Αγίας Τριάδος, στους ανθρώπους. Καθαρίζει την ψυχή, αναγεννά τον άνθρωπο, και εξαγνίζει τους πιστούς. Αυτό γίνεται ανάλογα με το πόσον ο άνθρωπος έχει την ικανότητα να δεχθεί τις δωρεές του. Δίδει σοφία στον νου εκείνου που δέχεται σοφία, γνώση σ' εκείνον που έχει τη δύναμη του λογικού, χάρισμα ιαμάτων σ' εκείνον που είναι εκ φύσεως φιλόανθρωπος (Μάξ.Ομολογητής).

Δίδει μεν το Πνεύμα το Άγιον, αλλά έχει και απαιτήσεις. Ζητά από τον καθένα που του προσφέρει τις δωρεές του, να παραδεχθεί αμέσως τι του δίνεται, να συμμορφώσει την ζωή του σύμφωνα με τις δωρεές που έλαβε, και ο ίδιος να γίνει πνευματικός οδηγός σε όλους εκείνους που το αγνοούν. Όσον για την επιτυχία της προσπάθειας του πιστού, αυτή είναι εξασφαλισμένη, διότι το Πνεύμα το Άγιον ενεργεί την προσπάθεια.

Αυτό το Πνεύμα χρειαζόμαστε για να καρποφορήσουμε πνευματικά. Ο άγιος Σεραφεΐμ του Σάρωφ, αυτό ευχόταν σ' εκείνους που ζητούσαν την ευλογία του:

«Κοίταξε, να αποκτήσεις το Άγιο Πνεύμα».

Questions & Answers

A clergyman of our Archdiocese answers ...

What is the Church's position on controversial end of life issues ?

Firstly the Church is often at pains to point out that human life is by its very nature sacred, that is, it is intrinsically good and deserves respect and protection. Secondly, the Church and many thoughtful people are aware that suffering can be redemptive: through suffering we can grow spiritually and in other ways. Indeed, it could be that proponents of euthanasia or physician-assisted suicide do not have a deep understanding of the purpose of suffering.

Active euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide is forbidden by the Orthodox Church. The word "euthanasia" comes from Greek words and literally means "good death." Fr Stanley Harakas declares, "The only 'good death' for the Orthodox Christian is the peaceful acceptance of the end of his or her earthly life with faith and trust in God and the promise of the Resurrection."

Active euthanasia then, is clearly rejected by the Church; only God can decide when life is to end. What is more difficult to be clear about is the issue of not treating someone with an incurable illness. This needs thoughtful and prayerful consideration on a case-by-case basis.

At one end of the spectrum is someone in the very late stages of an incurable disease who develops some superadded medical problem. The question comes up as to whether this other medical problem should be treated. If such a person truly is in the late stages of an irreversible disease, then it would be best "to respect the dying process" (as expressed by the Orthodox writer, Fr John Breck). In other words, he would recommend not to treat, and especially not to use extreme measures such as life support machines. Fr Breck says there is a fundamental difference between "killing" and "letting die." The purpose of life is not to live on this earth forever, but to get to Heaven. In such a situation there is a need to emphasize dignity, the spiritual care of this person, to call the priest (and not leave this too late), and involve palliative care services.



At the other end of the spectrum is cases that many of us have witnessed. They also have an incurable disease, but are not in the late phase. They or their proxy accept some medical treatment, and because of this they improve and live several more months. In those months they achieve a lot, much more than they achieved in years. They seek reconciliation with family members and friends, and reconciliation with God through a very good Confession, they may give valuable advice to loved ones, etc.

What is very difficult is cases that fall in between the two extremes we just mentioned. This author feels he should present it as follows: we do need to respect the wishes of the patient or their health-care proxy, otherwise we risk lapsing into a form of "paternalism", (though some limited paternalism may be appropriate in some situations). In trying to make this difficult decision we do have to consider the pre-existing situation of the patient. For example, for a very long time they may have been fully dependent due to severe dementia, and now they have developed severe pneumonia. If after careful consideration we still find it difficult to decide whether or not to treat, then, "opt for life", though not necessarily by using extreme measures.

† Fr D. K.

Από Τους Αγίους Της Εκκλησίας Μας

Ο Άγιος Αθανάσιος, ο Αθωνίτης
(η μνήμη του τιμάται 5 Ιουλίου)

Ο Άγιος Αθανάσιος ο Αθωνίτης είναι ο ιδρυτής της οργανωμένης κοινοβιακής μοναστικής ζωής στο Άγιο Όρος.

Γεννήθηκε στο Τραπεζούντα (στη σημερινή βορειοανατολική Τουρκία) γύρω στις 920 μ.Χ., παίρνοντας τα όνομα, Αβραάμ. Ορφανός από νεανική ηλικία, υιοθετήθηκε από μία ευσεβή μοναχή που τον έμαθε πώς να ασκείται με την προσευχή και την νηστεία.

Αργότερα, βρίσκεται στα βασιλικά ανάκτορα της Κωνσταντινούπολης, και με την μαθητεία του κοντά στον μεγάλο ρήτορα Αθανάσιο, διακρίνεται για τις γνώσεις του, που ξεπερνούν κι αυτές του διδασκάλου του. Συνειδητοποιεί πως η μυστηριακή ζωή της Εκκλησίας είναι ο μόνος τρόπος ζωής με την οποία θά πρέπει κανείς να διαπρέψει, και τηρεί μια αυστηρή άσκηση στον εαυτό του. Ζει μόνο με κριθαρόψωμο και νερό και κοιμάται σε ένα σκαμνί.

Όταν ο Άγιος Μιχαήλ Μαλεΐνός, ηγούμενος του μοναστηριού του όρους Κυμινά, ήρθε στην Κωνσταντινούπολη, ο Αβραάμ άνοιξε τη καρδιά του σε αυτόν, εκφράζοντας την επιθυμία του να γίνει μοναχός. Ο Άγιος Μιχαήλ δίδαξε πολλά στον Αβραάμ, και ο Αβραάμ κείρεται μοναχός και πέρνει το όνομα, Αθανάσιος.

Με περισσότερες αγρυπνίες, νηστείες και κόπους, ο Άγιος Αθανάσιος φτάνει σε υψηλότερα επίπεδα αγιότητας και του δόθηκε ευλογία να μονάσει μακριά από τό μοναστήρι του Κυμινά. Έτσι, φτάνει τελικά ψηλά στον Άθωνα που, ως ερημίτης, δίνει όλη τη προσπάθεια του στην ασκητική ζωή υπομένοντας πολλές επιθέσεις του διαβόλου. Η φήμη του σιγά σιγά φέρνει άλλους μοναχούς στη περιοχή, και με την οικονομική βοήθεια του Αυτοκράτορος Νικηφόρου Φωκά και αργότερα του Ιωάννη Τσιμισκή, τα λίγα κελιά που είχε κτίσει ο Άγιος έγιναν το πρώτο κοινοβιακό μοναστήρι του Αγίου Όρους, της Μεγίστης Λαύρας.

Δημιουργεί αυστηρό κανόνα της κοινοβιακής μοναστικής ζωής βασισμένο στη παλαιά μοναστική παράδοση της Παλαιστίνης. Η Παναγία του παρουσιάστηκε πολλές φορές και τον βοήθησε σε όλες τις προσπάθειές του.

Ο Άγιος Αθανάσιος εκοιμήθη το έτος 1030 μ.Χ. και κάθε χρόνο η μνήμη του τιμάται μεγαλοπρεπώς στο Άγιο Όρος.

From the Saints of our Church

St Athanasius, the Athonite
(Commemorated 5th July)

St Athanasius the Athonite is attributed the honour of being the founder of monastic (Κοινοβιακό) life on the Holy Mountain (Mt. Athos) in Greece.

He was born in Trepezond (or Trabzon) in modern North East Turkey around 920AD, and was given the name Abraham. Orphaned at a young age, Abraham was adopted by a pious nun who taught him asceticism through fasting and prayer.

Finding himself at the Byzantine court, and under the tutelage of the great orator Athanasius, Abraham excelled in his studies surpassing even the expertise of his tutor.

Recognizing that the mystical life was what he should strive to excel in, he only ate barley bread and water, slept only on a stool, leading a strict and abstinent life.

When St Michael Maleinos, abbot of Kyminas monastery, arrived at Constantinople, Abraham opened his heart to him, and expressed his desire to become a monk. St Michael taught Abraham much in the quest for salvation. Abraham was tonsured a monk and given the name Athanasius.

Vigils, fasting, long daily and nightly toils led to St Athanasius attaining greater holiness and he received the blessing to find solitude away from Kyminas.

Finding himself one day at an extremity on Mt Athos, he directed all his focus to the ascetical life, battling countless attacks from the adversary. With financial assistance from Nicephorus Phocas, and later on emperor John Tsimiskis, the few cells that St Athanasius built grew into the Holy Monastery of Great Lavra, with many desiring the monastic life flocking there.

He developed a cenobitic monastic rule along the discipline of the old Palestinian monasteries, which was underpinned by strictness and structure. St Athanasius was privileged to encounter the Holy Theotokos many times, and she greatly assisted him in his endeavours.

St Athanasius reposed in the Lord around 1030 AD. His feast day is greatly celebrated in Mount Athos.



CURRENT ISSUES

Orthodox Students in an anti-Christian Environment

The title follows the advice of Jesus to his disciples: “I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore, be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.” (Matt 10:16)

Academic teachers almost universally enjoy challenging students to question authority, yet are taken aback when their own authority is questioned. They know that they are addressing a class of impressionable minds, and almost make a sport of attacking the positions of the students.

The Orthodox Christian student must refuse to be intimidated and discouraged. Most of these teachers took years to acquire the knowledge and the skill to successfully defend their belief system, including their atheism. They only ask you to question the authority of those who have instructed you so far, such as your parents, religious teachers, or others with upright morals, but are highly indignant when their authority is questioned. Their pattern of teaching is nothing new, for there have been antagonists like them from before recorded history. Their arguments are nothing new, there were teachers of atheism and other false teachings who confronted the Apostle Paul when he was preaching the gospel in Athens. The arguments may be new to you, but you should know these challenges to the faith have been answered by many apologists since the beginning of Christianity. And what is unfortunate is that many textbooks, no matter of what category, mostly expound an anti-Christian viewpoint.

Christianity may be ridiculed as being closed-minded and backward-looking, but academics do not claim to be insulated from the same unhealthy trait. It is interesting that Christian writers expounding the



Christian Faith are often accused of being biased, while secularist thinkers expose their own arrogance, hypocrisy and narrow mindedness, disallowing others their freedom of opinion. Dismissing the faith of young people, these pompous academics move to crush that which they do not understand.

Surely, we who possess the Ultimate Truth, all we can do is not to be discouraged or intimidated? Is there no active defence or even attack, not with the purpose of harming or embarrassing those who ridicule our Faith?

In whatever way you enter a debate with your academic teacher, you must remember that you must

behave within the boundaries of your Christian principles. Some tips:

- Remember, your teacher is a better debater than you, so don't place yourself in his scope. If you do, expect to be blown out of the water.
- Don't be embarrassed by your commitment to your Orthodox faith. Experienced Christian academic teachers have discovered that most students are secretly wishing to find a spiritual basis for the meaning of life. They will secretly envy you for your faith.
- Commit yourself to the Orthodox Fellowship in your Institution. Not as a periodic visitor, but as an active and creative member.
- Get to know your faith, so you can defend it with robust arguments. This needs lot of study and research on your part.

“Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” (1 Timothy 4:12)



What we Hear in Church



Dismissal Hymn of the Holy Fathers

Ἵπερδεδοξασμένος εἶ, Χριστέ ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν, ὁ
φωστῆρας ἐπὶ γῆς τοὺς Πατέρας ἡμῶν θεμελιώσας,
καὶ δι' αὐτῶν πρὸς τὴν ἀληθινὴν πίστιν, πάντα
ἡμᾶς ὁδηγήσας· πολυεὺσπλαγχνε, δόξα σοι.

You are glorified above all, Christ our God, who
established our Fathers as beacons on the earth,
and through them guided us all to the true faith. O
highly compassionate, glory to you!

“Among the ministers of God some were outstanding for the word of wisdom, others for their severity of life and patient endurance, others were adorned by their moderation. Some among them were honoured for their length of years, others shone with youth and spiritual energy, some had just reached the road of priestly ministry.” (Eusebius of Caesarea, *Life of Constantine*)

The Church celebrates the Sunday of the Holy Fathers of the 1st Ecumenical Synod (9 June this year), one week before the feast of Pentecost (16 June). The Holy Fathers were called together by the Emperor Constantine the Great to settle some outstanding practical and theological issues that threatened to divide the Church.

Many of the Bishops and Priests who gathered at the town of Nicaea in 325 A.D. had suffered for their faith during the recent persecutions of Christians. Some were blinded, some had limbs amputated. They had patiently endured these, as the Church Historian, Eusebius described, out of their love for Christ. For them, what was being discussed was not some dry, academic argument but basic essential issues of dogma, (the faith and teachings that had been passed down from the Apostles), and life itself. The crucial question was, “Is Christ God-Man, or just a Godly Man as the Arian’s falsely claimed?”

The Council’s decision had Ecumenical significance because, as the late Archbishop Stylianos of Australia wrote: “Every synod, which deals with matters affecting the essence of the Church can be called ecumenical, irrespective of its reception by the entire Christian Church according to a majority vote. What is sufficient is that the teaching formulated by the synod corresponds to the genuine spirit of the Church.” The Holy Fathers themselves lived and suffered for the Faith they taught. This is why they were able to correctly guide the Church for all ages and why our Church honours them as “beacons”, who “guided us all to the true faith.”

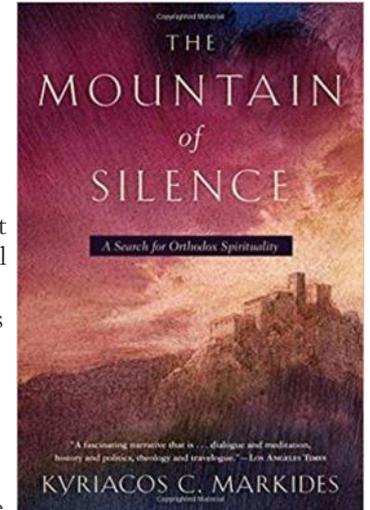


The Mountain of Silence

Kyriakos C. Markides

Published by Doubleday, 2001

The *Mountain of Silence* explores the conversations of Kyriakos C. Markides and Father Maximos concerning the relevance that Athonite spirituality holds for those living in the world today. It centres around the spiritual knowledge acquired by Father Maximos during his time spent on Mount Athos as the spiritual child of Saint Paisios, which he passes on to Kyriakos through a series of discussions throughout the book.



The book begins with Kyriakos’ quest to find a mystical spiritual tradition, which leads him to explore various forms of yoga and meditation. This search for spirituality eventually leads him to visit Mount Athos where he meets Father Maximos for the first time. On his second trip to Mount Athos, Kyriakos discovers that Father Maximos has moved to Cyprus and decides to visit him for a deeper experience of Athonite spirituality.

Upon entering the monastery we are treated to the personal dialogue between the two. The majority of the time is spent discussing logismoi. In the words of Father Maximos these are “much more intense than simple thoughts. They penetrate into the very depths of a human being. They have enormous power.” He then goes on to talk about their destructive power likening them to an infection which can affect one’s spiritual bloodstream. Each stage of the deathly logismos is detailed, starting from assault and moving to interaction, consent, captivity, and finally passion.

Markides then arrives at the crux of the book “The Threefold Way.” This refers to the spiritual stages required to attain divinisation or theosis. The soul’s journey towards God begins with catharsis, or the purification of the soul from egotistical passions. It is then followed by the stage of photisis, or the enlightenment of the soul before finally coming to the stage of theosis, union with God.

This book is highly recommended to anyone who wishes to learn more about asceticism and spirituality.

Orthodox Saints of the World

Part II - Spreading the Way

The followers of the Way, as described in the first chapters of the Acts, were Jews centered around Jerusalem. While the Faith entered Roman society under the veil of Judaism, quite soon it became separated.

In the time of the Apostles' preaching, the Way spread from Jerusalem to Antioch, where St Peter preached and baptised and where the followers of the Way were first called Christians (Acts 11:19-26). It spread to many other cities and areas of the Middle East and surrounding areas including: Greece (where the greatest of the Apostles St Paul preached); Egypt (St Mark); Armenia (St Phillip); Asia Minor, Persia, and Scythia (St Andrew); Rome (Sts Peter and Paul); and as far as India (St Thomas).

It is important to note that the Gospel spread purely orally at that time from the Apostles to their followers. The New Testament was written and steadily compiled over the 1st century and it took another 200 years for the current canon to be accepted by the Church.

The most important decision the Church had to make during the 1st century was whether the Gentiles (non-Jews) could be received into the Church without being required to follow the ritual requirements of the Mosaic Law. Based on St Paul's understanding of the Old Testament and on Saint Peter's testimony about how the Roman centurion Cornelius received the Holy Spirit (Acts 10-11), the first Council of the Church (which was held in Jerusalem in 49AD) decided that Gentile converts would not be subject to the Mosaic

Law (Acts 15). Presided over by St James the Brother of the Lord and the first Bishop of Jerusalem, this council is considered the prototype of all subsequent Church councils.

The Church was founded in each place as a local community. It often met in private houses, such as that of Sts Priscilla and Aquila; first in Ephesus in Asia Minor (where the Apostle John also preached) (1 Cor 16:19) and then in Rome (Rom 16:3-5). These early congregations were led by Bishops or Presbyters who received the laying-on-of-hands (Ordination) from the Apostles. (Acts 14:23) As the Apostles themselves were called to spread the Gospel throughout the whole world, they did not serve as Bishops (ie. local leaders) of any particular Christian community.

Each of the early Christian communities had its own unique character and challenges, as the New Testament writings reveal. St Luke writes that the first Church in Jerusalem "continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and communion, in the breaking of the bread, and in prayers." (Acts 2:42) The bonds of love and faith were so strong among the first Christians that they "had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need." (Acts 2:44-45).



Κυριακή των Αγίων Πάντων

Οι Άγιοι Πάντες είναι το αποτέλεσμα της Πεντηκοστής, της ελεύσεως του Παρακλήτου στον κόσμο. Ταυτόχρονα όμως είναι, λόγω της ένωσης τους με τον Θεό, και οι ίδιοι Πεντηκοστή. Αντανακλούν δηλαδή την χάρη και το φως του Χριστού στον κόσμο.

Ο Άγιος Σεραφείμ του Σαρώφ έλεγε «Σώσε τον εαυτό σου και θα σώσεις άλλους χίλιους γύρω σου». Δηλαδή, γίνε κατοικητήριο του Αγίου Πνεύματος και η άκτιστη χάρη που θα σε καλύπτει θα αλλοιώσει τις ψυχές όσων σε περιβάλλουν. Πράγματι η χάρη του Αγίου Πνεύματος, αν και αόρατη και ακατάληπτη, προκαλεί την «καλήν αλοίωσιν» στις ψυχές των ανθρώπων με την παρουσία της.

Όταν λοιπόν, τιμούμε τους Αγίους, τιμούμε την χάρη και την αμέριστη αγάπη του Θεού που κατοικεί μέσα τους. Γιά τον λόγο αυτό τα λείψανα των Αγίων είναι πολλές φορές άφθαρτα και ευωδιάζουν. Επειδή στα χοϊκά σώματα των Αγίων εγκατοίκησε ο Θεός

και η παρουσία του μαρτυρείται και μετά τον θάνατον.

Γι' αυτό η ζωή και τα έργα των Αγίων, το αίμα των Μαρτύρων, τα δάκρυα των Οσίων, η ακράδαντη πίστη και η ελεύθερη συνκατάθεση τους να εγκολληθούν την αγάπη του Θεού, δείχνουν και αποτελούν την καλή ομολογία και μαρτυρία Ιησού Χριστού, που πρέπει και εμείς να βιώσουμε και να εφαρμόσουμε και στην δική μας ζωή. Αυτό είναι το πρώτο μας μέλημα, πάνω απ' όλα τα ανθρώπινα έργα. Ολόκληρος ο κόσμος δεν αξίζει όσο οι άγιοι αυτοί άνδρες, και τίποτα δεν συγκρίνεται μ'αυτούς.

Σήμερα η Εκκλησία προβάλλει μπροστά μας τα εκλεκτά παιδιά της, τους Αγίους, και μας καλεί να τους μιμηθούμε. Ας πάρουμε την

απόφαση. Ας συγκινήσει τις καρδιές μας το ιδανικό της αγιότητας. Να αγωνισθούμε φιλότιμα, επικαλούμενοι τις πρεσβείες τους ώστε να επισκιάσει και εμάς η χάρη του Κυρίου μας.



Εκοιμήθη εις Κύριον ...

Με μεγάλη λύπη η Ορθόδοξος Χριστιανική Ένωση, αναγγέλλει την εις Κύριον αποδημία του αδελφού **Φειδία Κυριακίδη**, εις την Λεμεσό Κύπρου, το Σάββατο 1η Ιουνίου. Ο αδελφός Φειδίας ήταν ένας εκ των πρώτων στελεχών που ίδρυσαν την Ένωση, το 1955, με την ευλογία της Ιεράς Αρχιεπισκοπής Αυστραλίας, και τα μέλη της εργάζονται εις το ιεραποστολικό έργο της Εκκλησίας.

Βιογραφικά στοιχεία και η συμβολή του εκλιπόντος αδελφού θα παρουσιασθούν εκτενέστερα στο επόμενο τευχος του Λύχνου.

He slept in the Lord ...

It is with deep sadness that the Greek Orthodox Christian Society announces the repose of our brother in the Lord, **Pheidias Kyriakidis**, on Saturday 1st June in Limassol Cyprus. He was one of the founding members who established the Society in 1955, with the blessings of the Archdiocese of Australia. Since its establishment the Society's members have sought to assist the Church's missionary endeavours.

His biography and contribution to the work of the Society will be presented in the next edition of *Lychnos*.

From The Old Testament



The Ascension of the Prophet Elijah (2 Kings 2:11-14)



At the conclusion of his earthly ministry Prophet Elijah is accompanied by his disciple Elisha when he is suddenly taken up to heaven alive in a whirlwind by a chariot with horses of fire. On his way to Heaven, Elijah throws down his mantle to Elisha, who describes Elijah as “father.” We learn many things from this blessed event.

St Irenaeus of Lyons states that this event is proof of the possibility of the Resurrection. It shows that nothing stands in the way of the assumption of the body into heaven for those who are alive. It also has significance for the bodily assumption of the Theotokos after her Dormition.

In discussing St Paul’s Epistle to the Colossians, St John Chrysostom said that the translation of Elijah is an example of the importance of faith, as God’s blessings are beyond human comprehension and reason:

“Tell me, how did Elijah ascend in a chariot of fire? Fire burns, it does not carry aloft. How does he live for such a long time? In what place is he? Why was this done? ... Behold how God taught us little by little ... He instructed us, not by words, but by actions.”

St Ambrose writes that the chariot of Elijah and the fire are not seen by us, but are prepared so that the “just may ascend, the innocent be borne forth, and life may not know death.”

In calling Elijah “father” Elisha shows us that the relationship of spiritual father and child is not an invention by the Church, but one which is present throughout the Old Testament.

Finally, the mantle of Elijah falling to Elisha is also of significance, as it is one of the ways by which Elisha was shown to be the successor of Elijah and through it he worked many miracles. This emphasises the power of items belonging to holy people.



Mother Maria (Skobtsova) of Paris (1891-1945)

Born in Latvia in 1891 to faithful Christian parents, Elizaveta Pilenko was led to atheism at the tender age of fourteen, after the unjust and devastating death of her father. Shortly after, her widowed mother moved the family to St Petersburg where ‘Liza’ was attracted to the political scene, saying “My spirit longed ... to combat the injustice of the world.”

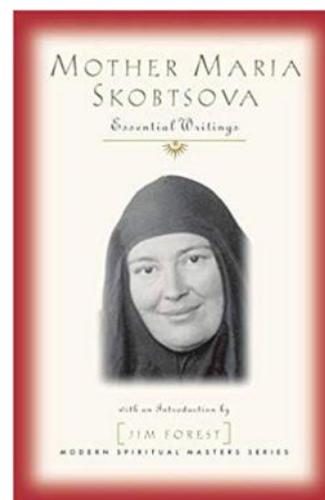
Slowly her earlier attraction to Christ revived as she contemplated His sacrifice and love on the Cross, saying “He also died. He sweated blood. They struck His face.” Eventually, it dawned on her that the peoples’ real need was not for revolutionary theories and political activism, but for Christ. Thus, with a deep desire to proclaim the simple word of God, she became the first woman to study at the Theological Academy of St Petersburg.

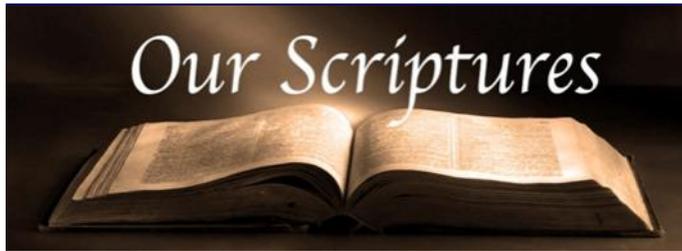
She would go on to endure WWI and the civil war which followed the Bolshevik coup of 1917. In her home town on the Black Sea she acted as Mayor to save anyone in danger of the firing squad. Having risked her life, she finally fled to Paris where she devoted herself to serving fellow refugees.

In Paris she met Metropolitan Evlogy who in 1932 encouraged her to become a nun. Her consent was subject to her remaining “in the world”, so that she could open her arms to the suffering. With Metropolitan Evlogy’s blessing she took the name Maria. She cultivated “monasticism in the world” by setting up houses of hospitality in Paris for the elderly, homeless, unemployed and the distressed.

Under the Nazi occupation of France in WWII, Mother Maria sheltered and saved many Jewish people who were hunted by the Gestapo. This eventually led to her arrest and ultimately to her death in the gas chambers of Ravensbrück concentration camp on Good Friday 1945. She was posthumously awarded the Yad Vashem by Israel and was canonised in 2004.

Mother Maria emerged as a most fascinating Saint of the 20th century. Her example challenges each of us to a life centred not only on personal struggle, but also of love through sacrifice for “the other”, in whom we must see the image of Christ.





Sunday of the Fathers of the Fourth Ecumenical Council (John 20:1-10)

This is the Epistle Reading of the Sunday of the Fathers of the Fourth Ecumenical Council (14 July), and it was at this Council in 453 that the Church denounced Monophysitism as a heresy. The reading starts with St Paul telling Titus, his disciple, to affirm to his flock that they should continue living virtuous lives filled with good works.

It continues with St Paul contrasting the good in the virtuous life with the folly of “foolish questionings, genealogies, strife and disputes about the law” (Titus 3:9).

St John Chrysostom’s explanation of this verse assists us to understand why this passage is read on this day. He explains that it is not worthwhile to engage in prolonged contentions with a person who is “perverted [from the truth] and predetermined not to change his mind.”

The next verse says to “avoid a factious man after the first and second warning” (Titus 3:10). St Cyprian of Carthage and St Ambrose of Milan interpret this as applying in the case of heresy. St Basil the Great states that those who cause scandal should be avoided in this way “as a heathen and a publican.” In the end, St Paul writes that these people are “self-condemned” (Titus 3:11).

After greetings to members of Titus’ flock, St Paul writes to “let our people be careful to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they may not be unfruitful” (Titus 3:14). St John Chrysostom elaborates that being “careful to maintain good works” is to “not wait for those who are in want to come to them, but that they seek out those who need their assistance.”

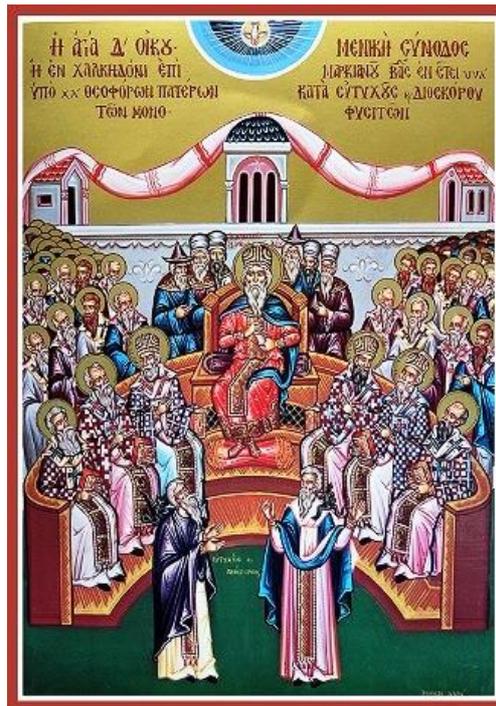


From the Holy Fathers...

Fourth Ecumenical Council

Emperor Marcian convened the Fourth Ecumenical Council in the city of Chalcedon in 451AD to deal with controversy concerning Christ’s nature.

Proponents of Monophysitism argued that in the person of Jesus Christ the human nature was absorbed into the divine nature, like a cube of sugar dissolves in a cup of water. Thus, they claimed that the incarnate Christ was left with only one nature, the Divine (Greek *mono-one*, *physis-nature*).



As the 630 delegates were gathered in the church of Saint Euphemia where her holy relics were housed, the Orthodox hierarchs and their opponents wrote down their confessions of faith on separate scrolls. They opened the saint’s tomb, placed both scrolls upon her, and sealed the tomb. After three days of strict fasting and prayer the tomb was opened with St Euphemia holding the Orthodox confession in her right hand, while the scroll of the heretics lay at her feet.

The Council rejected the one nature position, and proclaimed that while Christ is a single, undivided person, He is not

only from two natures but in two natures, divine and human. The bishops also emphasised the unity of Christ’s person. They stated their belief in “one and the same son ... perfect in Godhead and also perfect in humanity, truly God and truly human ... acknowledged in two natures without confusion, without change, without division, without separation in natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son ...”



SACRAMENTS

BAPTISM

Holy Baptism is the first of the seven sacraments of the Orthodox Church. It is the mystery of starting anew, of dying to an old way of life and being born again into a new way of life in Christ. It is, “for the remission of sins” and for entrance into the Church.

There are many symbolic actions in the Baptismal service, both visible and invisible. The visible part involves the actions taken by the priest. The invisible part involves the sanctifying Grace that comes from the Holy Spirit that fills the body and soul of the person receiving the Sacrament.

Baptism begins with the rejection of Satan and the acceptance of Christ. The exorcism commences in the narthex (entrance) of the church where the priest calls upon the sponsor (godparent) of a child to renounce, on their behalf, the devil and all his works. This is done facing west where the sun disappears. The priest then faces east where the sun rises, and asks the godparent to unite himself with Christ who is the Light of the world. The sign of the cross is made on the child’s body as a sign of victory and union to Christ.

With the entry into the main part of the church, the godparent is asked to read the Nicene Creed, which is the confession of the true faith that will be passed on to the child. Because the godparent speaks on behalf of the child and cares for his spiritual life he himself must be a member of the Church.

At this time the godparent names the child expressing his individuality in the Church, and the child also receives the name “Christian”, bearing the name of Christ.

The priest makes the sign of the cross three times over the water and says, “Let all adverse powers be crushed beneath the signing of your most precious Cross.” The infant is baptised in their naked state to signify the putting off of the ‘old man’.

Olive oil is blessed by the priest and then applied to the child’s forehead, breast, back, hands, feet, ears, mouth in order to dedicate them to the service of Christ.

The godparent then covers the entire body of the child with the prayer that he will be protected from sin and the evil one.



Baptism is then performed by the three-fold immersion in the baptismal font in the name of the Holy Trinity. As the water closes over the head it is like being buried in a grave and entering Christ’s death and entombment. When the newly baptised emerges from the water it is being resurrected into a new life in Christ.

The priest then cuts (tonsures) four locks of hair from the child’s head in the form of a cross. This is a first offering to God in gratitude for all the blessings received from Him.

In the Orthodox Church the Sacrament of Chrismation is given immediately following Baptism. We will speak of Chrismation in the next issue.

Following this the child is clothed in traditionally new white garments to signify the purity of the soul that has been washed from sin.

The priest walks together with the godparent and the child around the font three times chanting, “For as many of you as have been baptised in Christ, have put on Christ” (Gal 3:26). Tradition states that at this moment God assigns the newly illumined child a guardian angel to stay with him till the end of his life.

The child has become a full member of the church and as such can now receive the precious Body and Blood of Christ in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. In doing so a lighted candle is brought with the newly illumined child, which is symbolic of Christ being the Light of the world.



NEWS and VIEWS

Selection and Enthronement of his Eminence Archbishop Makarios

Following the falling asleep of our beloved Archbishop Stylianos the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, unanimously elected His Grace Bishop Makarios of Christoupolis as our new Primate and Father on 9 May 2019.

His Eminence Archbishop Makarios' Enthronement took place on the feast day of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, Saturday 29 June 2019, at the Holy Cathedral of the Annunciation of the Theotokos. His All Holiness, the Ecumenical Patriarch, was represented by His Eminence Metropolitan Stephanos of Tallinn and All Estonia. Also present were visiting Hierarchs, the Assistant Bishops, the Clergy of the Archdiocese, the Monastics, other Orthodox representatives and denominations, and a joyous multitude of pious Faithful. Representatives of the Commonwealth and State governments attended as well.

On Sunday 30 June 2019 His Eminence Archbishop Makarios presided at the multi-hierarchical Divine Liturgy at the Holy Cathedral. Both services were live-streamed across Australia and the world. May His Eminence's years be many.



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