



REUNION

The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil
(The Basilians - The Basilian Fathers)



Volume 15 No. 1 OF THE CHURCH OF MAN WITH GOD January, 2007 A.D.

~ CONCERN FOR THE WEAK MINDED, THE WEAK OF WILL ~

*From Metropolitan Archbishop Paul, S.S.B.
To the flock entrusted into my care:*

There are many types of what are considered to be the weak of mind or will, some of which really are not weak. By way of example, the submissive, especially in a dominant - submissive relationship, usually is the one who controls the relationship. And there are the weak who continually fall into sin, but who continually battle sin, and because they do not give up but continue to battle, really are not



**Father Dcn. Dismas
(Francis X. Grant), S.S.B.**

It is with sorrow for ourselves, and joy for him, that we note that Father Dismas has Fallen Asleep in the Lord, on 5 October 2006 A. D. Archbishop Paul was with him until a few hours before Father Dismas closed his eyes in eternal rest. The Archbishop expressed great sorrow at the loss of his brother in Christ, and joy on his immersion in the Charity of God.

Memory Eternal !

More than any member of the Clergy in
(Continued DISMAS on page 6)

THE MAIN WAY BAAL WAS WORSHIPED BY THE CARTHAGINIANS AND THE JEWS WHO ABANDONED GOD

The idol of Baal had a large furnace in its belly. Its face had a gaping mouth with a hinged tongue. Living aborted babies, new born babies, and children were thrown onto the tongue which tilted on its hinges dropping the children into the fire. It was common for five hundred and more children at a time to be "sacrificed" - murdered - in this way **BY THEIR PARENTS**.

If just the thought of this makes you sick, why are you not sick at the thought of modern day abortion. There really is no difference.

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TO WHAT EXTENT CHARITY

God's Charity for us is beyond the ability of any creature to measure. He desires to help us in every manner possible. While His ability to help us is total, we have the ability to block His assistance to us. We have the ability to decline His assistance. We have the ability to not seek His assistance. God

(Continued CHARITY on page 24)

weak.

There is another type which seems to drift into bad situations, such as drug users. But since many if not most drug users knowingly and willfully do things which harm others in the course of obtaining drugs, and even sell drugs or "hook" others on drugs so-as-to obtain a temporary discount, or an additional "fix", these too are not really weak of will.

Then there are those who seem to exist on the edges of society, or even the
(Continued WEAK on page 6)

THE WISE BEGGAR SEEKS THE FREEDOM FOUND IN THE NATURAL ORDER OF GOD THE SUPREME

(A series of Related Articles in this Issue. Part 1 of 6.)

WHY WAIT? BE PREPARED NOW!

Accept the alms already given and give likewise.

Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ - God, makes it very clear that some very horrible events will take place

(Continued 1 OF 6 on page 24)

CBS - THE NETWORK - HAS OVERTLY ATTACKED CHRISTIANITY

On 16 December 2006 A. D., CBS used its program **48 Hours** to attack the basic foundation of Christianity, the Virgin Birth of Christ. It attacked the conception of Christ as being by the overshadowing of the Ever Virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit, and at one point called the conception of Christ the result of adultery (fornication) by the Virgin Mary.

(Continued CBS on page 6)

PUBLICATION NOTICE

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The sole purpose of this publication is to comply with the teachings and instructions of Jesus Christ, second person of the Trinity God, and to further His kingdom.

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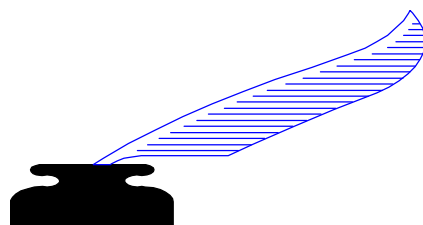
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+ Paul, S.S.B.,
 Publisher .

+ *The Basilians - The Basilian Fathers* +

LETTERS

(The Editors reserve the right to reject any submissions, and to edit as necessary. Letters must be typed, single space, signed, and include the sender's name address, and day and evening telephone numbers - If your typed letter is accompanied by an ASCII DOS Text copy on a floppy, we will thank you with extra prayers - Ed.)



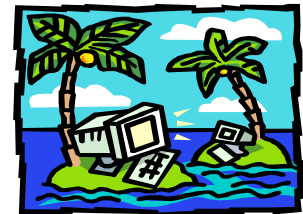
WORLD WIDE WEB:

The direct connection to the computer which functions as the message, file, and communications center for The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil, is:

http://www.reu.org
telnet://reu.org

Issues of REUNION, in color, in Adobe PDF and HTML, are available at:

http://www.reu.org/public/news.htm



On Line Chat Room: at the main web site log-in http://www.reu.org
You have to register with the system before you can use it, and it is best to send e-mail to set a "chat schedule".

**Current Active Mailing Lists
 Originating From BasilNet ReuNet
 HIOC BBS**

The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil - The Basilian Fathers

Each ML has its own rules, which are posted in the ML on a regular basis. Abbreviated commands are also in the signature of each ML message sent via e-mail. You must have permission from the appropriate ML administrator to gate a ML.

PRAYERS

Prayer requests operates under a simple premise. When we pray for each other we fulfill a portion of our Christian duty. Prayers for the living and for the dead are allowed and welcome. Those who make prayer requests agree to include the prayer requests of all who make them here. Prayer requests **MUST** be moral and for moral

(Continued WEB on page 3)

If you wish to receive **REUNION** please see **** above, and fill in your name and address below and send to:
REUNION
 Holy Innocents Orthodox Church
 311 Hickory Avenue
 Harahan, Louisiana 70123

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____
 State _____ Zip _____

(Continued WEB from page 2)

purposes . . . hopefully morality will not have to be defined at length (i.e.: use common sense).

Participants and subscribers agree to honor the moral prayer requests posted, and to pray for those intentions and persons for at least one week.

BIBLE-DAY

Every day we try to post a Chapter of one of the Books of the Bible on the ML for discussion. This began with Genesis, Chapter 1, and continued to the end of Genesis, and so on to the next Book. Discussion is not limited to the Chapter posted each day. We use the Douay-Rheims translation which, while it sometimes has editorial comments biased against the Orthodox Church, is a basically a good, non political translation.

SERMONS

A place to exchange sermons by Christians. POSTERS must be, and certify they are: male; duly ordained Priests, Deacons, Ministers, or seminarians of, a Christian Church, Jurisdiction, or Religion; that the Creed of the Council of Nicea is the Creed, or expresses the basic dogma, of the Church of which each participant is a member. Rabbi may participate and post. (Us Christians may learn something). ANYONE may RECEIVE the ML.

When you post in this ML you must provide your church/religious affiliation in the post.

STUDIES

The STUDIES ML is a list which studies Orthodoxy and the Theology/Dogma of the Holy Catholic Apostolic Church. We attempt to have the text of what ever book/publication we are using posted in pertinent parts during the discussions. This is a slow moving ML, primarily because most people do not wish to or have the time to or are not inclined to read and study as is required for participation in a ML

such as this. However, for those who do, it is well worth the effort.

ONE-BODY

This is a mailing list designed to promote and further reunification of the Holy Orthodox Catholic and Apostolic Church with the Holy Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church and all other Jurisdictions of the Body of Christ; and to bring each and every human being into union with Christ Jesus our Lord.
Activity - very light.

REU_PUB

This ML sends REUNION (publication) to its subscribers, without the pictures and graphics which are in the paper publication. The ML does support discussion, and discussions encouraged. Mainly used for those who desire to receive the Newsletter but do not have access to the WWW (each issue is available on-line), those for whom telephone access to the BBS part of the system is not readily available, and those to whom we can not send a free print copy.

If you are already registered to use the message and file center for the Basilian Fathers, you may link to the listserver directly by logging in, selecting SUBSCRIBE MAILING LISTS in the menu and entering your e-mail address for the ML to which you wish to subscribe. If you are not already registered as a "user" you may go to the log-in menu, register, and then use the automatic system.

Or,

You can e-mail commands to the listserver using the addresses and commands below:

**BasilNet ReuNet HIOC BBS
Listserver E-mail Commands**

If you experience problems with the ML or listserver you may contact the system administrator (sysop) via e-mail to Sysop@reu.org

User Commands

subscribe
Subscribe to an email list.

E.G.:
To subscribe to a mailing list, send a message to:
listserver@reu.org
In the message area put:
subscribe studies
subscribe sermons
subscribe prayers
subscribe bible-day
subscribe one-body

unsubscribe
Unsubscribe from an email list.

inactive
Make yourself inactive on the list. This is good for when you leave on vacation, or just don't want any email for a while.

active
Make yourself active on the list again.

get
Request an information file from the server. The list administrator may set up files for you to retrieve that may contain various information. Do not use a file extension.

help
Retreives this information.

info
Retrieves information on email lists hosted by this server

Please note: our e-mail system uses spam filters which are set very strictly, to the extent they even block out entire networks if those networks have a history of sending, relaying, or otherwise being involved in sending spam to our system. Many of the words in our spam filter are sometimes used in non-spam e-mail. If your e-mail is bounced, you may log on to the BBS and contact whomever it is you desire directly in Conference mail area 0 (zero), so we can add your e-mail address to our filter by-pass.

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THE BASILIAN FATHERS

(The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil)

WHEN WE TEACH WE SHOULD NOT PRESUME TOO MUCH

In literature - books, plays, etc. - it is rare for any character to even be noted as relieving himself, to eliminate bodily waste. Even in Westerns, where the cowboys subsist on a diet in which beans and coffee are the main ingredients, elimination of bodily waste is rarely mentioned.

The author presumes you know and realize this elimination will take place in the course of nature, and also presumes (hopefully he is correct in his presumption) you really are not interested in this aspect of the ongoing activities.

When we teach others we often make similar presumptions: that certain facts we know and beliefs we profess are known and possessed by those whom we are teaching.

This presumption often is not accurate.

We actually teach others constantly. Everything we do or say, and how we do what we do and say what we say, teaches others. Even in doing something as mundane as purchasing groceries, we are teaching others. Therefore, we must always be careful, and always attempt to teach what is good.

In teaching settings more formal than purchasing groceries, such as discussing anything with others, we should not presume the others have the same foundation or knowledge base as have we.

As in the Western, where readers who are familiar with certain aspects of life are not interested in having them fully explored and explained, and often not interested in even having them mentioned, so too are those whom we teach not interested in having certain matters, foundations and basics, with which they are familiar, fully rehashed, explained, and explored. But often this must be done for the person whom you are teaching may have a basic misunderstanding, such as the person who views Christianity as a philosophy rather than a faith wherein Jesus Christ is God and God is a Trinity of Persons in one Substance.

We therefore should carefully ascertain the level of knowledge possessed by the one being taught. We need not convince them to believe, but merely to comprehend, especially divergences in positions and beliefs.

This really can not be done in depth during a three minute conversation in the grocery store check out line. But the basics can be presented even in such light conversation.

In a more formal setting the areas of common and divergent understanding can be, and should be, more fully explored.

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OUTLINE OF THE STUDIES CURRICULUM OF THE SOCIETY OF CLERKS SECULAR OF SAINT BASIL

Even those of us who have been Priests for many years should, from time to time, review various components of basic studies. The passage of time, life's experiences, and the corrupting influence of the world and society, can warp our perspective as well as sharpen and clarify our perception and understanding. With this in mind, this overview of some of the sources of the basics is given, with the suggestion you peruse these works from time to time.

If you are a Priest and have never read these books, we strongly suggest you do. If you have, but it has been many years, read Lossky, McCloskey, and Meyendorff again. You will appreciate them much more now, than you first read them.

The syllabus comments are retained - their value should be obvious.

Minor Orders -

The Holy Bible: Old Testament and New Testament is required reading and should be a permanent part of one's library. One should have a working familiarity with The Bible - without which familiarity one will not progress in studies, orders, or life. However, we

(Continued SSB NEWS on page 5)

(Continued SSB NEWS from page 4)

are not impressed by ready quotes and cites to passages. We are impressed by comprehension. We use the Douay Rheims edition. The Douay Rheims edition does contain some "Rome rules and Orthodox are mistaken" editorial comments. However, it was translated before anyone in the West had an "axe to grind" or protest against authority to substantiate by slanting a translation, it uses archaic language which in and of itself is explicit in meaning, avoids modern intentional "unisex" and "political correctness"; it is the translation we use in the English language Divine Liturgy; and it is the translation we use. An ASCII DOS text version is available at our web site, <http://www.reu.org> (try the link <http://www.reu.org/public/bible/bibl.htm>). It also is available in many Church and Religious stores, and from Tan Books and Publishers <http://www.tanbooks.com/> , TAN Books and Publishers, Inc. 2020 Harrison Ave. Rockford, IL 61105 1-800-437-5876 .

The Orthodox - Basilian Catechism (No. 1), available at our web site, <http://www.reu.org> (try using the link <http://www.reu.org/public/liturgys.htm>) in Adobe PDF, Hypertext, and ASCII DOS text formats, or a comparable work. While they are available, a paper printed edition will be provided free to applicants who have been accepted for studies. This Q & A format catechism should be read for comprehension and familiarity.. "Testing" does not require answers as direct quotes: comprehension of material being the benchmark.

The Divine Liturgy - one must be completely and thoroughly familiar with of one's primary rite (Eastern or Western), particularly with the Liturgical duties and functions of the status or position sought, and with all lower positions, and able to perform those functions. Eastern Rite must be functional in the Liturgies of both St. John and St. Basil. Western Rite must be functional in the Gregorian Rite as used by The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil. Latin Triditine Rite must be functional in that rite as

used by The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil. The Gregorian Rite is available on the SSB web site <http://www.reu.org> (try using the link <http://www.reu.org/public/liturgys/litidx.htm>)

Sub Diaconate -

General Church History and Early Theological Development - such as The Church History of Saint Eusebius (<http://www.reu.org/public/theological/major.htm>), Books I through X, The Life of the Blessed Emperor Constantine, by Eusebius Pamphilus, Books I through III (one point of focus: the relevancy of relationship between secular government and Church governance/dogmatic considerations at that time and now); ORIGEN DE PRINCIPIIS

(<http://www.reu.org/public/origen/orig.htm>) Preface through Book IV; and some of the works of and about Saint Basil the Great, such as: St. Basil, Treatise de Spiritu Sancto Ch I through XXX, Hexaameron, funeral Oration of St. Gregory Naziazen, (an exploration of modern scientific concepts juxtaposed to those concepts presented by Saint Basil, in works such as in On the Firmament, the Luminous Bodies, and any perceived problems of assimilation between the two, should be explored).

Saint Augustine: CONFESSIONS and Enchiridion (<http://www.reu.org/public/theological/major.htm>)

Catholicity and the Church, John Meyendorff, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood New York, (1983, or later edition) ISBN 0-88141-006-3, Athens Printing Company, NY, NY, should be available through Light and Life Publishing Company and possibly through Pauline Books and Media .

Marriage an Orthodox Perspective, by John Meyendorff, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood New York, (1984, or later edition) ISBN 0-913836-05-2, should be available

through Light and Life Publishing Company and possibly through Pauline Books and Media .

Diaconate -

Theology for Beginners, F. J. Sheed, Sheed & Ward, N.Y., copyright 1957 (1962 or later edition) Sheed and Ward Inc., LC Cat. No. 57-10174.

The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church, by Vladimir Lossky, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood New York, (1976, or later edition), ISBN 0-913836-31-1.

The Orthodox Way, Kallistos Ware, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood New York, (1986, or later edition), ISBN 0 913836 58 3.

Priesthood -

St. John Chrysostom, Six Books On the Priesthood, available on the SSB web site at <http://www.reu.org/public/theological/patolo.htm> Patrology Vol XVII, and also generally, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood New York.

Theology and Sanity, F. J. Sheed, (new, enlarged edition, new preface), Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., Huntington, Indiana 46750, Second Edition 1978 or later, ISBN 0-87973-854-5, LC Cat No. 78-62340.

When You Are Angry With God, Pat McCloskey, Paulist Press, New York/Mahwah, Paulist Press, 997 Macarthur Boulevard, Mahwah, New Jersey 07430, copyright 1987, ISBN 0-8091-2869-1

Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes, by John Meyendorff, Fordam University Press (1974, 1976, or later edition).

And, of course, the **History of the Formation of The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil.**

(Continued SSB NEWS on page 6)

(Continued SSB NEWS from page 5)

Suggested PUBLISHERS: Light and Life Publishing Company, 4808 Park Glen road, Minneapolis, MN 55416 (<http://www.light-n-life.com>) : (952) 925-3888 Fax: (952) 925-3918 (International) Fax: (888) 925-3918 (U.S. and Canada), Pauline Books and Media, Daughters of Saint Paul, 50 Saint Pauls Avenue, Boston, MA 02130-3491 (<http://www.pauline.org>) .

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(Continued DISMAS from page 1)

modern times, Father Dismas was acutely aware of man's, and especially his own, unworthiness to be in Holy Orders. Hence he chose the name of Dismas, The Good Thief. Where many others seem to acquire a swagger in their walk upon ordination, he who had with difficulty learned humility, seemed to attain the greatness of humility upon ordination. Yet he remained a manly person. All of his life he was one who found happiness in just being with family and friends - not feeling compelled to always be talking or doing something, but just in being with them - something which few people can comprehend in this world of meaningless noise and un-guided movement. His devotion to the Ever Virgin Mother of God, Mary Most Holy, and her expressed desire of her Son, for reunification of the Church, and his humility marked by obstinacy or, as he put it, "hard headiness", and his prayerfulness could be imitated to great spiritual gain by the imitator.

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(Continued WEAK from page 1)

edges of civilization.

Amongst these are many of those who are prostitutes, especially part-time prostitutes (those who use it to supplement their other income), and especially those who seem unable to earn a living via other means. In many instances the lack of employment opportunities and other, honest economic factors, can be the impetus into that activity. But far more often the driving factor is it is a simple means by which to obtain money for the purchase of drugs.

Others who often live on the edges of society and civilization are the mentally ill for whom there is no institutional setting and for whom there has been provided no treatment - especially where treatment is possible.

Where there is no form of possible treatment for certain forms of the homeless mentally ill, then there can and should be a strong concern. And when honest economic factors preclude or interfere with a person's earning a living, then there should be a strong concern. That concern should be a driving, heart rendering, force.

But for those who have willfully joined the ranks of those for whom we have concern, our concern should be focused more on the utter waste of a life. The waste of a life which could have had some measure of temporal happiness, instead of mental stupor, or temporary euphoria at controlling someone or something, or at "breaking all the rules". A life which could have had some measure of meaningfulness in that it worshiped God instead of the nothingness it does worship. A life which could have ended in eternal happiness, instead of that in which it appears to be most likely to end.

This is where our concern should lie, where it should focus. It should focus here because even if you are one of those who is foolish enough to not believe in God, acting as though you did believe in God and following what God has indicated is proper, will make your own life much more enjoyable. Unless, of course, you are one of those who preys upon, who uses, those for whom we should have concern. In that instance you are just another of those for whom the intelligent and wise ones have concern.



+ Paul, S.S.B.

(Continued CBS from page 1)

The program was presented in the form of a scholarly discussion, with frequent cuts to Roman Catholic Mass, Orthodox Icons, used a background of familiar Christmas songs as well as background music of what sounded like Western liturgical music.

It attacked the truthfulness of the four Gospels, and even referred to several fake writings which were presented as valid, such as the "Gospel of Philip" and the "Gospel of Thomas", which the program stated were written before the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. In actuality, the writings which the program states are older than the four Gospels, have been proven to have been written long after the four Gospels.

The program promoted the concept, that the Biblical relation of the conception of Christ, His virgin birth, the murder of the Holy Innocents, the flight into Egypt, and Christ's early life, are all metaphoric. It further promoted the idea that the metaphoric approach does not invalidate anything because the metaphoric approach supports the true purpose of the New Testament which is to present a new way for society to function.

In attacking the Divinity of Christ and the Virgin Birth, CBS attacked the foundations of Christianity, for without these, Jesus Christ was just another man. That obviously was the intent of CBS. +

IMITATION OF CHRIST

By Thomas a Kempis

Several issues ago we began serializing the Imitation of Christ by Thomas a Kempis. Many things interfered with our continuation of that presentation.

We now continue where we "left off".

IMITATION OF CHRIST

By Thomas a Kempis

BOOK ONE

The Fourteenth Chapter

Avoiding Rash Judgment

Turn your attention upon yourself and beware of judging the deeds of other men, for in judging others a man labors vainly, often makes mistakes, and easily sins; whereas, in judging and taking stock of himself he does something that is always profitable.

We frequently judge that things are as we wish them to be, for through personal feeling true perspective is easily lost.

If God were the sole object of our desire, we should not be disturbed so easily by opposition to our opinions. But often something lurks within or happens from without to draw us along with it.

Many, unawares, seek themselves in the things they do. They seem even to enjoy peace of mind when things happen according to their wish and liking, but if otherwise than they desire, they are soon disturbed and saddened. Differences of feeling and opinion often divide friends and acquaintances, even those who are religious and devout.

An old habit is hard to break, and no one is willing to be led farther than he can see.

If you rely more upon your intelligence or industry than upon the virtue of submission to Jesus Christ, you will hardly, and in any case slowly, become an enlightened man. God wants

us to be completely subject to Him and, through ardent love, to rise above all human wisdom.

The Fifteenth Chapter

Works Done in Charity

Never do evil for anything in the world, or for the love of any man. For one who is in need, however, a good work may at times be purposely left undone or changed for a better one. This is not the omission of a good deed but rather its improvement.

Without charity external work is of no value, but anything done in charity, be it ever so small and trivial, is entirely fruitful inasmuch as God weighs the love with which a man acts rather than the deed itself.

He does much who loves much. He does much who does a thing well. He does well who serves the common good rather than his own interests.

Now, that which seems to be charity is oftentimes really sensuality, for man's own inclination, his own will, his hope of reward, and his self-interest, are motives seldom absent. On the contrary, he who has true and perfect charity seeks self in nothing, but searches all things for the glory of God. Moreover, he envies no man, because he desires no personal pleasure nor does he wish to rejoice in himself; rather he desires the greater glory of God above all things. He ascribes to man nothing that is good but attributes it wholly to God from Whom all things proceed as from a fountain, and in Whom all the blessed shall rest as their last end and fruition.

If man had but a spark of true charity he would surely sense that all the things of earth are full of vanity!

The Sixteenth Chapter

Bearing with the Faults of Others

Until God ordains otherwise, a man ought to bear patiently whatever he cannot correct in himself and in others. Consider it better thus -- perhaps to try

your patience and to test you, for without such patience and trial your merits are of little account. Nevertheless, under such difficulties you should pray that God will consent to help you bear them calmly.

If, after being admonished once or twice, a person does not amend, do not argue with him but commit the whole matter to God that His will and honor may be furthered in all His servants, for God knows well how to turn evil to good. Try to bear patiently with the defects and infirmities of others, whatever they may be, because you also have many a fault which others must endure.

If you cannot make yourself what you would wish to be, how can you bend others to your will? We want them to be perfect, yet we do not correct our own faults. We wish them to be severely corrected, yet we will not correct ourselves. Their great liberty displeases us, yet we would not be denied what we ask. We would have them bound by laws, yet we will allow ourselves to be restrained in nothing. Hence, it is clear how seldom we think of others as we do of ourselves.

If all were perfect, what should we have to suffer from others for God's sake? But God has so ordained, that we may learn to bear with one another's burdens, for there is no man without fault, no man without burden, no man sufficient to himself nor wise enough. Hence we must support one another, console one another, mutually help, counsel, and advise, for the measure of every man's virtue is best revealed in time of adversity -- adversity that does not weaken a man but rather shows what he is.

The Seventeenth Chapter

Monastic Life

If you wish peace and concord with others, you must learn to break your will in many things. To live in monasteries or religious communities, to remain

(Continued IMITATION on page 8)

(Continued **IMITATION** from page 7)

there without complaint, and to persevere faithfully till death is no small matter. Blessed indeed is he who there lives a good life and there ends his days in happiness.

If you would persevere in seeking perfection, you must consider yourself a pilgrim, an exile on earth. If you would become a religious, you must be content to seem a fool for the sake of Christ. Habit and tonsure change a man but little; it is the change of life, the complete mortification of passions that endow a true religious.

He who seeks anything but God alone and the salvation of his soul will find only trouble and grief, and he who does not try to become the least, the servant of all, cannot remain at peace for long.

You have come to serve, not to rule. You must understand, too, that you have been called to suffer and to work, not to idle and gossip away your time. Here men are tried as gold in a furnace. Here no man can remain unless he desires with all his heart to humble himself before God.

The Eighteenth Chapter The Example Set Us by the Holy Fathers

Consider the lively examples set us by the saints, who possessed the light of true perfection and religion, and you will see how little, how nearly nothing, we do. What, alas, is our life, compared with theirs? The saints and friends of Christ served the Lord in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness, in work and fatigue, in vigils and fasts, in prayers and holy meditations, in persecutions and many afflictions. How many and severe were the trials they suffered -- the Apostles, martyrs, confessors, virgins, and all the rest who willed to follow in the footsteps of Christ! They hated their lives on earth that they might have life in eternity.

How strict and detached were the

lives the holy hermits led in the desert! What long and grave temptations they suffered! How often were they beset by the enemy! What frequent and ardent prayers they offered to God! What rigorous fasts they observed! How great their zeal and their love for spiritual perfection! How brave the fight they waged to master their evil habits! What pure and straightforward purpose they showed toward God! By day they labored and by night they spent themselves in long prayers. Even at work they did not cease from mental prayer. They used all their time profitably; every hour seemed too short for serving God, and in the great sweetness of contemplation, they forgot even their bodily needs.

They renounced all riches, dignities, honors, friends, and associates. They scarcely allowed themselves the necessities of life, and the service of the body, even when necessary, was irksome to them. They were poor in earthly things but rich in grace and virtue. Outwardly destitute, inwardly they were full of grace and divine consolation. Strangers to the world, they were close and intimate friends of God. To themselves they seemed as nothing, and they were despised by the world, but in the eyes of God they were precious and beloved. They lived in true humility and simple obedience; they walked in charity and patience, making progress daily on the pathway of spiritual life and obtaining great favor with God.

They were given as an example for all religious, and their power to stimulate us to perfection ought to be greater than that of the lukewarm to tempt us to laxity.

How great was the fervor of all religious in the beginning of their holy institution! How great their devotion in prayer and their rivalry for virtue! What splendid discipline flourished among them! What great reverence and obedience in all things under the rule of a superior! The footsteps they left

behind still bear witness that they indeed were holy and perfect men who fought bravely and conquered the world.

Today, he who is not a transgressor and who can bear patiently the duties which he has taken upon himself is considered great. How lukewarm and negligent we are! We lose our original fervor very quickly and we even become weary of life from laziness! Do not you, who have seen so many examples of the devout, fall asleep in the pursuit of virtue!

The Nineteenth Chapter The Practices of a Good Religious

The life of a good religious ought to abound in every virtue so that he is interiorly what to others he appears to be. With good reason there ought to be much more within than appears on the outside, for He who sees within is God, Whom we ought to reverence most highly wherever we are and in Whose sight we ought to walk pure as the angels.

Each day we ought to renew our resolutions and arouse ourselves to fervor as though it were the first day of our religious life. We ought to say: "Help me, O Lord God, in my good resolution and in Your holy service. Grant me now, this very day, to begin perfectly, for thus far I have done nothing."

As our intention is, so will be our progress; and he who desires perfection must be very diligent. If the strong-willed man fails frequently, what of the man who makes up his mind seldom or half-heartedly? Many are the ways of failing in our resolutions; even a slight omission of religious practice entails a loss of some kind.

Just men depend on the grace of God rather than on their own wisdom in keeping their resolutions. In Him they confide every undertaking, for man,

(Continued **IMITATION** on page 9)

(Continued IMITATION from page 8)

indeed, proposes but God disposes, and God's way is not man's. If a habitual exercise is sometimes omitted out of piety or in the interests of another, it can easily be resumed later. But if it be abandoned carelessly, through weariness or neglect, then the fault is great and will prove hurtful. Much as we try, we still fail too easily in many things. Yet we must always have some fixed purpose, especially against things which beset us the most. Our outward and inward lives alike must be closely watched and well ordered, for both are important to perfection.

If you cannot recollect yourself continuously, do so once a day at least, in the morning or in the evening. In the morning make a resolution and in the evening examine yourself on what you have said this day, what you have done and thought, for in these things perhaps you have often offended God and those about you.

Arm yourself like a man against the devil's assaults. Curb your appetite and you will more easily curb every inclination of the flesh. Never be completely unoccupied, but read or write or pray or meditate or do something for the common good. Bodily discipline, however, must be undertaken with discretion and is not to be practiced indiscriminately by everyone.

Devotions not common to all are not to be displayed in public, for such personal things are better performed in private. Furthermore, beware of indifference to community prayer through love of your own devotions. If, however, after doing completely and faithfully all you are bound and commanded to do, you then have leisure, use it as personal piety suggests.

Not everyone can have the same devotion. One exactly suits this person, another that. Different exercises, likewise, are suitable for different times, some for feast days and some again for weekdays. In time of temptation we

need certain devotions. For days of rest and peace we need others. Some are suitable when we are sad, others when we are joyful in the Lord.

About the time of the principal feasts good devotions ought to be renewed and the intercession of the saints more fervently implored. From one feast day to the next we ought to fix our purpose as though we were then to pass from this world and come to the eternal holyday.

During holy seasons, finally, we ought to prepare ourselves carefully, to live holier lives, and to observe each rule more strictly, as though we were soon to receive from God the reward of our labors. If this end be deferred, let us believe that we are not well prepared and that we are not yet worthy of the great glory that shall in due time be revealed to us. Let us try, meanwhile, to prepare ourselves better for death.

"Blessed is the servant," says Christ, "whom his master, when he cometh, shall find watching. Amen I say to you: he shall make him ruler over all his goods." [4]

[4] Luke 12:43, 44.

The Twentieth Chapter The Love of Solitude and Silence

Seek a suitable time for leisure and meditate often on the favors of God. Leave curiosities alone. Read such matters as bring sorrow to the heart rather than occupation to the mind. If you withdraw yourself from unnecessary talking and idle running about, from listening to gossip and rumors, you will find enough time that is suitable for holy meditation.

Very many great saints avoided the company of men wherever possible and chose to serve God in retirement. "As often as I have been among men," said one writer, "I have returned less a man." We often find this to be true when we

take part in long conversations. It is easier to be silent altogether than not to speak too much. To stay at home is easier than to be sufficiently on guard while away. Anyone, then, who aims to live the inner and spiritual life must go apart, with Jesus, from the crowd.

No man appears in safety before the public eye unless he first relishes obscurity. No man is safe in speaking unless he loves to be silent. No man rules safely unless he is willing to be ruled. No man commands safely unless he has learned well how to obey. No man rejoices safely unless he has within him the testimony of a good conscience.

More than this, the security of the saints was always enveloped in the fear of God, nor were they less cautious and humble because they were conspicuous for great virtues and graces. The security of the wicked, on the contrary, springs from pride and presumption, and will end in their own deception.

Never promise yourself security in this life, even though you seem to be a good religious, or a devout hermit. It happens very often that those whom men esteem highly are more seriously endangered by their own excessive confidence. Hence, for many it is better not to be too free from temptations, but often to be tried lest they become too secure, too filled with pride, or even too eager to fall back upon external comforts.

If only a man would never seek passing joys or entangle himself with worldly affairs, what a good conscience he would have. What great peace and tranquillity would be his, if he cut himself off from all empty care and thought only of things divine, things helpful to his soul, and put all his trust in God.

No man deserves the consolation of heaven unless he persistently arouses himself to holy contrition. If you desire true sorrow of heart, seek the privacy of your cell and shut out the uproar of the

(Continued IMITATION on page 15)

CHILDREN'S PAGE

The Orthodox - Basilian Catechism

Q. 501. By what name is a bishop's diocese sometimes called?

A. A bishop's diocese is sometimes called his see. The diocese of Constantinople, on account of its authority and dignity, is called the Holy See of Constantinople, and its bishop is called, All Holiness, and first Amongst Equals. Each Church Jurisdiction which is a Patriarchate is called a Holy See, including the Patriarchate of Rome, whose Patriarch is called the Holy Father or Pope of Rome to distinguish him from other Churches which also use the title Pope, such as the Coptic Church. Pope means father.

Q. 502. What do we call the right by which St. Peter or his successor has always been the head of the Church and of all its bishops?

A. We call the right by which St. Peter or his successor has always been the head of the Church, and of all its bishops, the Primacy of St. Peter or of the Pope. Primacy means holding first place.

Q. 502. What is meant by The Primacy of St. Peter, or the Primacy of the Pope of Rome?

A. By the Primacy of St. Peter, or of the Pope of Rome, is meant holding first place. It means the Pope of Rome holds the place of First Amongst Equals, amongst the ancient Patriarchal Sees and Bishops of the Church. Primacy does not mean ruler, as can be seen by St. Peter's asking St. James to call the first council of the Church in Jerusalem, to determine whether or not Gentiles must become Jews before becoming Christians. However, in the year 1054 AD, the Roman Pope tried to make everyone in the Church subject to his personal authority, and this, along with other political matters, caused a split in the Church. The Patriarch of Constantinople is now the First Amongst Equals for the Orthodox Church, and modern Roman Popes have indicated a

willingness to forego their claim of being absolute ruler of the Church, so there is hope for reunification of the Church. If this happens, most reasonable Orthodox are more than willing to have the Pope of Rome reassume the title and position of First Amongst Equals.

Q. 503. How is it shown that St. Peter or his successor has always been the head of the Church, but that he is not the absolute ruler of the Church?

A. I. It is shown that St. Peter or his successor has always been the head of the Church:

1. From the words of Holy Scripture, which tell how Christ appointed Peter Chief of the Apostles and head of the Church.

2. From the history of the Church, which shows that Peter and his successors have always acted and have always been recognized as the head of the Church.

II. It is shown that St. Peter's power was not absolute, but shared amongst all the Bishops, because when Gentiles wanted to become Christians, St. Peter did not decide they did not have to become Jews first, but rather, he asked St. James, who was Bishop of Jerusalem, to call a council of all the Bishops of the Church. St. James called this First Council of the Church, and the Holy Spirit guided all the Bishops to agree that Gentiles did not have to become Jews before becoming Christians.

Q. 504. How do we know that the rights and privileges bestowed on St. Peter were given also to his successors?

A. We know that the rights and privileges bestowed on St. Peter were given also to his successors, because the promises made to St. Peter by Our Lord were to be fulfilled in the Church till the end of time, and as Peter was not to live till the end of time, they are fulfilled in his successors. When the Roman Pope tried to claim this authority for himself in the year 1054 AD, the Church de-

creed this Primacy transferred to the Patriarch of Constantinople.

Q. 505. Did St. Peter establish any Church before he came to Rome?

A. Before he came to Rome, St. Peter established a Church at Antioch and ruled over it for several years.

Q. 506. Who are the successors of the other Apostles?

A. The successors of the other Apostles are the Bishops of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

Q. 507. How do we know that the bishops of the Church are the successors of the Apostles?

A. We know that the bishops of the Church are the successors of the Apostles because they continue the work of the Apostles and give proof of the same authority. They have always exercised the rights and powers that belonged to the Apostles in making laws for the Church, in consecrating bishops and ordaining priests.

Q. 508. Why did Christ found the Church?

A. Christ founded the Church to teach, govern, sanctify, and save all men.

Q. 509. Are all bound to belong to the Church?

A. All are bound to belong to the Church, and he who knows the Church to be the true Church and remains out of it cannot be saved.

Q. 510. Is it ever possible for one to be saved who does not know the Catholic Church to be the true Church?

A. It is possible for one to be saved who does not know the Catholic Church to be the true Church, provided that person:

1. Has been validly baptized;
2. Firmly believes the religion he professes and practices to be the true religion, and
3. Dies without the guilt of mortal sin

(Continued CATECHISM on page 11)

CHILDREN'S PAGE

(Continued CATECHISM from page 10)
on his soul.

Q. 511. Why do we say it is only a possibility for a person to be saved who does not know the Catholic Church to be the true Church?

A. We say it is only a possibility for a person to be saved who does not know the Catholic Church to be the true Church, because the necessary conditions are not often found, especially that of dying in a state of grace without making use of the Sacrament of Penance.

Q. 512. How are such persons said to belong to the Church?

A. Such persons are said to belong to the "soul of the church"; that is, they are really members of the Church without knowing it. Those who share in its Sacraments and worship are said to belong to the body or visible part of the Church.

Q. 513. Why must the true Church be visible?

A. The true Church must be visible because its founder, Jesus Christ, commanded us under pain of condemnation to hear the Church; and He could not in justice command us to hear a Church that could not be seen and known.

Q. 514. What excuses do some give for not becoming members of the true Church?

A. The excuses some give for not becoming members of the true church are:

1. They do not wish to leave the religion in which they were born.
2. There are too many poor and ignorant people in the Church.
3. One religion is as good as another if we try to serve God in it, and be upright and honest in our lives.

Q. 515. How do you answer such excuses?

A.
1. To say that we should remain in a false religion because we were born in it is as untrue as to say we should not heal

our bodily diseases because we were born with them.

2. To say there are too many poor and ignorant in the Church is to declare that it is Christ's Church; for He always taught the poor and ignorant and instructed His Church to continue the work.

3. To say that one religion is as good as another is to assert that Christ labored uselessly and taught falsely; for He came to abolish the old religion and found the new in which alone we can be saved as He Himself declared.

Q. 516. Why can there be only one true religion?

A. There can be only one true religion, because a thing cannot be false and true at the same time, and, therefore, all religions that contradict the teaching of the true Church must teach falsehood. If all religions in which men seek to serve God are equally good and true, why did Christ disturb the Jewish religion and the Apostles condemn heretics?

LESSON TWELFTH:

On the Attributes and Marks of the Church

Q. 517. What is an attribute?

A. An attribute is any characteristic or quality that a person or thing may be said to have. All perfections or imperfections are attributes

Q. 518. What is a mark?

A. A mark is a given and known sign by which a thing can be distinguished from all others of its kind. Thus a trademark is used to distinguish the article bearing it from all imitations of the same article.

Q. 519. How do we know that the Church must have the four marks and three attributes usually ascribed or given to it?

A. We know that the Church must have the four marks and three attributes usually ascribed or given to it from the

words of Christ given in the Holy Scripture and in the teaching of the Church from its beginning.

Q. 520. Can the Church have the four marks without the three attributes?

A. The Church cannot have the four marks without the three attributes, because the three attributes necessarily come with the marks and without them the marks could not exist.

Q. 521. Why are both marks and attributes necessary in the Church?

A. Both marks and attributes are necessary in the Church, for the marks teach us its external or visible qualities, while the attributes teach us its internal or invisible qualities. It is easier to discover the marks than the attributes; for it is easier to see that the Church is one than that it is infallible.

Q. 522. Which are the attributes of the Church?

A. The attributes of the Church are three:

1. authority, infallibility, and indefectibility.

Q. 523. What is authority?

A. Authority is the power which one person has over another so as to be able to justly exact obedience. Rulers have authority over their subjects, parents over their children, and teachers over their scholars.

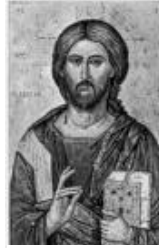
Q. 524. From whom must all persons derive whatever lawful authority they possess?

A. All persons must derive whatever lawful authority they possess from God Himself, from whom they receive it directly or indirectly. Therefore, to disobey our lawful superiors is to disobey God Himself, and hence such disobedience is always sinful.

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ICON # 4



ICON # 7



ICON # 11



ICON # 19

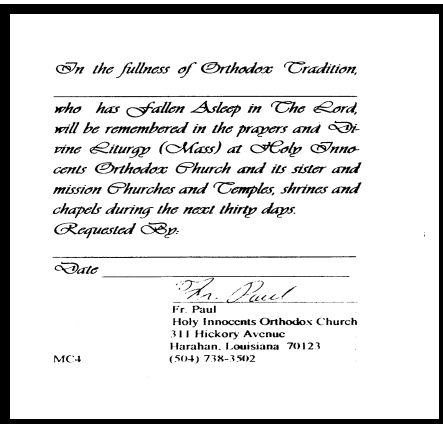


ICON # 26

DIVINE LITURGY CARDS

These 4 1/4” by 5 1/2 “ (folded) Icon cards feature the above Icons, and open to reveal prayer intentions for the living and for those who have Fallen Asleep in The Lord.

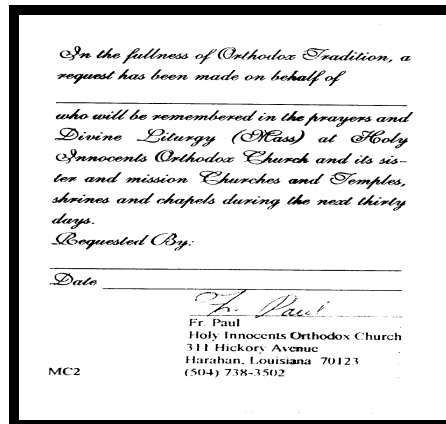
For those who have Fallen Asleep in The Lord, Icon # 19 graces the cover, with the following text (reduced here to fit in this



column) inside:

General Intentions For the Living, for weddings, illnesses, general need, and for the sake of prayer itself, etc., cards, have Icons nos. 4, 7, 11, and 26 are available on the covers. All the Icons are full color printed cards.

The text on the inside of the cards for the living is given above, again reduced here to fit inside the column.



These cards are very beautiful, bamboo or light gray in color, but they are only a product - some-

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Like Monasteries which obtain donations for their Icons, or sell Icons

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+

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(Continued **IMITATION** from page 9)

world, as it is written: "In your chamber bewail your sins." There you will find what too often you lose abroad.

Your cell will become dear to you if you remain in it, but if you do not, it will become wearisome. If in the beginning of your religious life, you live within your cell and keep to it, it will soon become a special friend and a very great comfort.

In silence and quiet the devout soul advances in virtue and learns the hidden truths of Scripture. There she finds a flood of tears with which to bathe and cleanse herself nightly, that she may become the more intimate with her Creator the farther she withdraws from all the tumult of the world. For God and His holy angels will draw near to him who withdraws from friends and acquaintances.

It is better for a man to be obscure and to attend to his salvation than to neglect it and work miracles. It is praiseworthy for a religious seldom to go abroad, to flee the sight of men and have no wish to see them.

Why wish to see what you are not permitted to have? "The world passes away and the concupiscence thereof." Sensual craving sometimes entices you to wander around, but when the moment is past, what do you bring back with you save a disturbed conscience and heavy heart? A happy going often leads to a sad return, a merry evening to a mournful dawn. Thus, all carnal joy begins sweetly but in the end brings remorse and death.

What can you find elsewhere that you cannot find here in your cell? Behold heaven and earth and all the elements, for of these all things are made. What can you see anywhere under the sun that will remain long? Perhaps you think you will completely satisfy yourself, but you cannot do so, for if you should see all existing things, what would they be but an empty vision?

Raise your eyes to God in heaven and pray because of your sins and shortcomings. Leave vanity to the vain. Set yourself to the things which God has commanded you to do. Close the door upon yourself and call to you Jesus, your Beloved. Remain with Him in your cell, for nowhere else will you find such peace. If you had not left it, and had not listened to idle gossip, you would have remained in greater peace. But since you love, sometimes, to hear news, it is only right that you should suffer sorrow of heart from it.

The Twenty-First Chapter Sorrow of Heart

If you wish to make progress in virtue, live in the fear of the Lord, do not look for too much freedom, discipline your senses, and shun inane silliness. Sorrow opens the door to many a blessing which dissoluteness usually destroys.

It is a wonder that any man who considers and meditates on his exiled state and the many dangers to his soul, can ever be perfectly happy in this life. Lighthearted and heedless of our defects, we do not feel the real sorrows of our souls, but often indulge in empty laughter when we have good reason to weep. No liberty is true and no joy is genuine unless it is founded in the fear of the Lord and a good conscience.

Happy is the man who can throw off the weight of every care and recollect himself in holy contrition. Happy is the man who casts from him all that can stain or burden his conscience.

Fight like a man. Habit is overcome by habit. If you leave men alone, they will leave you alone to do what you have to do. Do not busy yourself about the affairs of others and do not become entangled in the business of your superiors. Keep an eye primarily on yourself and admonish yourself instead of your friends.

If you do not enjoy the favor of men, do not let it sadden you; but consider it

a serious matter if you do not conduct yourself as well or as carefully as is becoming for a servant of God and a devout religious.

It is often better and safer for us to have few consolations in this life, especially comforts of the body. Yet if we do not have divine consolation or experience it rarely, it is our own fault because we seek no sorrow of heart and do not forsake vain outward satisfaction.

Consider yourself unworthy of divine solace and deserving rather of much tribulation. When a man is perfectly contrite, the whole world is bitter and wearisome to him.

A good man always finds enough over which to mourn and weep; whether he thinks of himself or of his neighbor he knows that no one lives here without suffering, and the closer he examines himself the more he grieves.

The sins and vices in which we are so entangled that we can rarely apply ourselves to the contemplation of heaven are matters for just sorrow and inner remorse.

I do not doubt that you would correct yourself more earnestly if you would think more of an early death than of a long life. And if you pondered in your heart the future pains of hell or of purgatory, I believe you would willingly endure labor and trouble and would fear no hardship. But since these thoughts never pierce the heart and since we are enamored of flattering pleasure, we remain very cold and indifferent. Our wretched body complains so easily because our soul is altogether too lifeless.

Pray humbly to the Lord, therefore, that He may give you the spirit of contrition and say with the Prophet: "Feed me, Lord, with the bread of mourning and give me to drink of tears in full measure." [5]

(Continued **IMITATION** on page 16)

(Continued **IMITATION** from page 15)

[5] Ps. 79:6.

The Twenty-Second Chapter Thoughts on the Misery of Man

Wherever you are, wherever you go, you are miserable unless you turn to God. So why be dismayed when things do not happen as you wish and desire? Is there anyone who has everything as he wishes? No -- neither I, nor you, nor any man on earth. There is no one in the world, be he Pope or king, who does not suffer trial and anguish.

Who is the better off then? Surely, it is the man who will suffer something for God. Many unstable and weak-minded people say: "See how well that man lives, how rich, how great he is, how powerful and mighty." But you must lift up your eyes to the riches of heaven and realize that the material goods of which they speak are nothing. These things are uncertain and very burdensome because they are never possessed without anxiety and fear. Man's happiness does not consist in the possession of abundant goods; a very little is enough.

Living on earth is truly a misery. The more a man desires spiritual life, the more bitter the present becomes to him, because he understands better and sees more clearly the defects, the corruption of human nature. To eat and drink, to watch and sleep, to rest, to labor, and to be bound by other human necessities is certainly a great misery and affliction to the devout man, who would gladly be released from them and be free from all sin. Truly, the inner man is greatly burdened in this world by the necessities of the body, and for this reason the Prophet prayed that he might be as free from them as possible, when he said: "From my necessities, O Lord, deliver me." [6]

But woe to those who know not their own misery, and greater woe to those who love this miserable and corruptible

life. Some, indeed, can scarcely procure its necessities either by work or by begging; yet they love it so much that, if they could live here always, they would care nothing for the kingdom of God.

How foolish and faithless of heart are those who are so engrossed in earthly things as to relish nothing but what is carnal! Miserable men indeed, for in the end they will see to their sorrow how cheap and worthless was the thing they loved.

The saints of God and all devout friends of Christ did not look to what pleases the body nor to the things that are popular from time to time. Their whole hope and aim centered on the everlasting good. Their whole desire pointed upward to the lasting and invisible realm, lest the love of what is visible drag them down to lower things.

Do not lose heart, then, my brother, in pursuing your spiritual life. There is yet time, and your hour is not past. Why delay your purpose? Arise! Begin at once and say: "Now is the time to act, now is the time to fight, now is the proper time to amend."

When you are troubled and afflicted, that is the time to gain merit. You must pass through water and fire before coming to rest. Unless you do violence to yourself you will not overcome vice.

So long as we live in this fragile body, we can neither be free from sin nor live without weariness and sorrow. Gladly would we rest from all misery, but in losing innocence through sin we also lost true blessedness. Therefore, we must have patience and await the mercy of God until this iniquity passes, until mortality is swallowed up in life.

How great is the frailty of human nature which is ever prone to evil! Today you confess your sins and tomorrow you again commit the sins which you confessed. One moment you resolve to be careful, and yet after an hour you act as though you had made no resolution.

We have cause, therefore, because of our frailty and feebleness, to humble ourselves and never think anything great of ourselves. Through neglect we may quickly lose that which by God's grace we have acquired only through long, hard labor. What, eventually, will become of us who so quickly grow lukewarm? Woe to us if we presume to rest in peace and security when actually there is no true holiness in our lives. It would be beneficial for us, like good novices, to be instructed once more in the principles of a good life, to see if there be hope of amendment and greater spiritual progress in the future.

[6] Ps. 24:17.

The Twenty-Third Chapter Thoughts on Death

Very soon your life here will end; consider, then, what may be in store for you elsewhere. Today we live; tomorrow we die and are quickly forgotten. Oh, the dullness and hardness of a heart which looks only to the present instead of preparing for that which is to come!

Therefore, in every deed and every thought, act as though you were to die this very day. If you had a good conscience you would not fear death very much. It is better to avoid sin than to fear death. If you are not prepared today, how will you be prepared tomorrow? Tomorrow is an uncertain day; how do you know you will have a tomorrow?

What good is it to live a long life when we amend that life so little? Indeed, a long life does not always benefit us, but on the contrary, frequently adds to our guilt. Would that in this world we had lived well throughout one single day. Many count up the years they have spent in religion but find their lives made little holier. If it is so terrifying to die, it is

(Continued **IMITATION** on page 17)

(Continued IMITATION from page 16)

nevertheless possible that to live longer is more dangerous. Blessed is he who keeps the moment of death ever before his eyes and prepares for it every day.

If you have ever seen a man die, remember that you, too, must go the same way. In the morning consider that you may not live till evening, and when evening comes do not dare to promise yourself the dawn. Be always ready, therefore, and so live that death will never take you unprepared. Many die suddenly and unexpectedly, for in the unexpected hour the Son of God will come. When that last moment arrives you will begin to have a quite different opinion of the life that is now entirely past and you will regret very much that you were so careless and remiss.

How happy and prudent is he who tries now in life to be what he wants to be found in death. Perfect contempt of the world, a lively desire to advance in virtue, a love for discipline, the works of penance, readiness to obey, self-denial , and the endurance of every hardship for the love of Christ, these will give a man great expectations of a happy death.

You can do many good works when in good health; what can you do when you are ill? Few are made better by sickness. Likewise they who undertake many pilgrimages seldom become holy.

Do not put your trust in friends and relatives, and do not put off the care of your soul till later, for men will forget you more quickly than you think. It is better to provide now, in time, and send some good account ahead of you than to rely on the help of others. If you do not care for your own welfare now, who will care when you are gone?

The present is very precious; these are the days of salvation; now is the acceptable time. How sad that you do not spend the time in which you might purchase everlasting life in a better way. The time will come when you will want just one day, just one hour in which to make amends, and do you know

whether you will obtain it?

See, then, dearly beloved, the great danger from which you can free yourself and the great fear from which you can be saved, if only you will always be wary and mindful of death. Try to live now in such a manner that at the moment of death you may be glad rather than fearful. Learn to die to the world now, that then you may begin to live with Christ. Learn to spurn all things now, that then you may freely go to Him. Chastise your body in penance now, that then you may have the confidence born of certainty.

Ah, foolish man, why do you plan to live long when you are not sure of living even a day? How many have been deceived and suddenly snatched away! How often have you heard of persons being killed by drownings, by fatal falls from high places, of persons dying at meals, at play, in fires, by the sword, in pestilence, or at the hands of robbers! Death is the end of everyone and the life of man quickly passes away like a shadow.

Who will remember you when you are dead? Who will pray for you? Do now, beloved, what you can, because you do not know when you will die, nor what your fate will be after death. Gather for yourself the riches of immortality while you have time. Think of nothing but your salvation. Care only for the things of God. Make friends for yourself now by honoring the saints of God, by imitating their actions, so that when you depart this life they may receive you into everlasting dwellings.

Keep yourself as a stranger here on earth, a pilgrim whom its affairs do not concern at all. Keep your heart free and raise it up to God, for you have not here a lasting home. To Him direct your daily prayers, your sighs and tears, that your soul may merit after death to pass in happiness to the Lord.

The Twenty-Fourth Chapter
Judgment and the Punishment of Sin

In all things consider the end; how you shall stand before the strict Judge from Whom nothing is hidden and Who will pronounce judgment in all justice, accepting neither bribes nor excuses. And you, miserable and wretched sinner, who fear even the countenance of an angry man, what answer will you make to the God Who knows all your sins? Why do you not provide for yourself against the day of judgment when no man can be excused or defended by another because each will have enough to do to answer for himself? In this life your work is profitable, your tears acceptable, your sighs audible, your sorrow satisfying and purifying.

The patient man goes through a great and salutary purgatory when he grieves more over the malice of one who harms him than for his own injury; when he prays readily for his enemies and forgives offenses from his heart; when he does not hesitate to ask pardon of others; when he is more easily moved to pity than to anger; when he does frequent violence to himself and tries to bring the body into complete subjection to the spirit.

It is better to atone for sin now and to cut away vices than to keep them for purgation in the hereafter. In truth, we deceive ourselves by our ill-advised love of the flesh. What will that fire feed upon but our sins? The more we spare ourselves now and the more we satisfy the flesh, the harder will the reckoning be and the more we keep for the burning.

For a man will be more grievously punished in the things in which he has sinned. There the lazy will be driven with burning prongs, and gluttons tormented with unspeakable hunger and thirst; the wanton and lust-loving will be bathed in burning pitch and foul brimstone; the envious will howl in their grief like mad dogs.

Every vice will have its own proper
(Continued IMITATION on page 18)

(Continued **IMITATION** from page 17)

punishment. The proud will be faced with every confusion and the avaricious pinched with the most abject want. One hour of suffering there will be more bitter than a hundred years of the most severe penance here. In this life men sometimes rest from work and enjoy the comfort of friends, but the damned have no rest or consolation.

You must, therefore, take care and repent of your sins now so that on the day of judgment you may rest secure with the blessed. For on that day the just will stand firm against those who tortured and oppressed them, and he who now submits humbly to the judgment of men will arise to pass judgment upon them. The poor and humble will have great confidence, while the proud will be struck with fear. He who learned to be a fool in this world and to be scorned for Christ will then appear to have been wise.

In that day every trial borne in patience will be pleasing and the voice of iniquity will be stilled; the devout will be glad; the irreligious will mourn; and the mortified body will rejoice far more than if it had been pampered with every pleasure. Then the cheap garment will shine with splendor and the rich one become faded and worn; the poor cottage will be more praised than the gilded palace. In that day persevering patience will count more than all the power in this world; simple obedience will be exalted above all worldly cleverness; a good and clean conscience will gladden the heart of man far more than the philosophy of the learned; and contempt for riches will be of more weight than every treasure on earth.

Then you will find more consolation in having prayed devoutly than in having fared daintily; you will be happy that you preferred silence to prolonged gossip.

Then holy works will be of greater value than many fair words; strictness of life and hard penances will be more pleasing than all earthly delights.

Learn, then, to suffer little things now that you may not have to suffer greater ones in eternity. Prove here what you can bear hereafter. If you can suffer only a little now, how will you be able to endure eternal torment? If a little suffering makes you impatient now, what will hell fire do? In truth, you cannot have two joys: you cannot taste the pleasures of this world and afterward reign with Christ.

If your life to this moment had been full of honors and pleasures, what good would it do if at this instant you should die? All is vanity, therefore, except to love God and to serve Him alone.

He who loves God with all his heart does not fear death or punishment or judgment or hell, because perfect love assures access to God.

It is no wonder that he who still delights in sin fears death and judgment.

It is good, however, that even if love does not as yet restrain you from evil, at least the fear of hell does. The man who casts aside the fear of God cannot continue long in goodness but will quickly fall into the snares of the devil.

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Elias in the chariot

ANNIVERSARY OF THE FALL FROM GRACE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

This month is the anniversary of the Fall From Grace of the United States of America. On January 22nd, will be the anniversary of the United States Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade*; the decision which legalized abortion in the USA and led to its legalization throughout the world.

This path to hell began with the legalization of contraceptives, which gave free reign to the strongest of natural earthy desires, that of reproduction, of sex. It has culminated in the virtually total debasement of humankind..

God has consistently prohibited abortion, and the Church has consistently taught that abortion is never permitted. Those politicians who defend any right to an abortion, even those who would restrict abortion to instances of rape, incest, or to prevent the death of the mother, are in total opposition to God and to His expressed will.

There is a serious difference between a mother who obtains an abortion, and a politician who supports the ability to obtain an abortion and an abortionist. A woman who obtains an abortion may be confused, panicked, and not clear in her thoughts. But both the politician who supports the ability to obtain an abortion and the abortionist are not in panicked and confused states. They have the time to reflect on their positions, they know that God opposes abortions, and that the Church, teaching the Will of God, opposes abortion under any circumstances. Remember, abortion is not a right; having an abortion is an ability, not a right.

Therefore, politicians who support the ability to obtain an abortion, and government officials who do likewise, and abortionists, are all in open, knowing, willful defiance of the Will of God.

Such persons can not receive Holy

(Continued **FALL** on page 19)

(Continued FALL from page 18)

Communion. At the time of their death they can not receive Holy Anointing (The Last Rites) unless they repent of their pro-abortion stance, and if they die without repentance, they can neither be buried with the benefits of the Liturgies for the Dead nor can they be buried in Hallowed ground. There can only be the hope they repented before they died, and prayers made for them in hope of that repentance.

But if such people die without repentance, they probably go to hell when they die.

There really is no difference between pro abortion politicians and Adolph Hitler, between abortion doctors and Dr. Josef Mengele.

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Archangel Michael

**ABORTION AND
GOVERNMENT PEOPLE
- and -
CHANGING FROM
FILTHY WATER
TO
CLEAN WATER
TO
THE FINEST WINE**

We are like water pots. We are filled with water, and in the course of our natural life, that water becomes dirty with use or stale from not being used.

Our Lord wishes to empty us of that filthy, stale water which we contain, that water which constitutes our substance, and fill us with clean water. And then, He wishes to change that clean water into the finest of wine.

Wine warms man's heart, and a good wine is tasty and refreshing. We are like the bride and bridegroom at Cana. We think we have the best that we can have, and then what we have ends. Jesus wants to replace what we have with something better, with the best that there is.

But to receive what Jesus wants to give to us, we must pour out our dirty water and allow Jesus to replace it with clean water. We must allow Jesus to replenish the temporary world of this life with the permanent and better world of the life to come. We must accept Divine Love without reservation and give that Divine Love in return without reservation, to everyone. To do this we must hate evil and cleave to that which is good, to God. We must assist to be good, not just each other, but also all those whom it is possible for us to assist. We do this by the example of our own lives, which must include frequent and fervent prayer.

Our concern for each other must be real concern, not just platitudes. When we are really concerned for each other, we rejoice with those who are joyful, and weep with those who weep, knowing the joy they know and the sorrow they know

- not feeling their pain, but knowing their sorrow.

And when someone wrongs us, even though we resist the wrong and even attempt to correct the wrong, we must not curse the wrongdoer nor seek revenge. Rather, we must pray they receive God's blessings, and in God's blessings, we must pray they attain salvation. And we must willingly and intentionally desire the wrongdoer receive God's blessings.

All of this is in accordance with The Way, the human life Our Saviour Jesus Christ lived and taught. If we become filled with His blessings, we will live such a life; but in order to receive His blessings we must attempt to live such a life. He will take that attempt and make it become reality, and in that reality we will become more blessed than we can possibly imagine.

Therefore cast off all that is not in accordance with The Way taught by Our Saviour, so He can fill you with that which is so desirable that your heart has not even begun to imagine it. For He will fill you with Himself.

Ref: Rom 12:6-16; John 2:1-11

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LEAVE THE PRISON OF SIN AND JOIN THE WEDDING FEAST

The wedding feast at Cana took place on the third day, and on the third day Christ rose again from the dead. The wedding feast celebrated the union of a man and a woman into a new person, the married person. And the resurrection of Christ marked the reunion of mankind with God, the marriage of Christ to His Church.

The water of Cana was changed into wine, and on the Cross Christ was drained of the last drop of blood and water, even from the pericardial sack. At Divine Liturgy water is mixed with the wine which is to be consecrated and changed in to the Blood of Christ, just as Christ permeates all who compose His Church, without changing them from being who they are. Just as we join Christ and the Blessed Trinity God, without changing who He is or who we are. But, while what God is does not change, what we are does change.

The water was changed into wine, into something different and better. And we are changed into something different and better by Christ.

Just as Saint Peter was released from the chains of prison, so too are we released from the prison of sin if we but follow the Angel of God the Father, the Holy Messenger of God the Father, Christ Jesus our Lord. But if we do not follow Him, we remain in the prison of sin which leads to death, just as Saint Peter would have been killed the next day had he not followed the Angel.

The Ever Virgin Mary, Mother of God, lead the waiters to obey her Son, and today she continues to lead us to obey and follow her Son. She was the first to be a follower of her Son, in her acceptance of God the Father's request she become the Mother of God. She has never failed to continue to follow Him, and to lead others to Him.

Because the wedding feast received the

benefit of the best wine ever made, it continued as a happy event, and became an even happier event. So too does the Church find eternal happiness in Christ, and the life of each person who follows Christ changes from an ordinary existence into the experience of eternal happiness.

The water which flowed from Christ's heart on the Cross, is the water of life, the water of Baptism wherein we are changed and become one with the Wine which gladdens man's heart. Christ in us, we in Christ, each retaining individuality and identity, and yet each immersed and intermixed in, with, and into the other. Each of us humans restricted only by the merits we have earned, yet each of us sharing to the fullest of our capacity to share, with that capacity ever increasing.

Just as a married man and woman each remain an individual, yet are one person, the married person, so too do we each remain an individual, yet be one with Christ in His bride, the Church.

Some people are like sparrows in the winter. They peck away through the leaves, seeking nourishment, hopping and fluttering here and there. They must keep a lookout for snakes and large rodents, and even the occasional larger predator, which will devour them as they search. They bathe in the dust of the road, seeking to quiet the vermin with which they are infested, and in the dirty water of the ditches which line the road, seeking to preen their feathers.

But we can be cleansed with the Baptismal waters which flow from the Sacred Heart of Jesus on the Cross. Once cleansed, we can have the occasional vermin of sin removed and our feathers preened back to perfection by the cleansing Blood of Christ in Sacramental Absolution. And we need not seek out nourishment under the leaves, or fear the pile of grain in a field may be a trap, for we have the Body and Blood of Christ in the Sacred Eucharist, and He has told us His flesh is food indeed and His blood is drink indeed.

The prison of sin is a familiar place. Some would rather the monster they know, than chance the unknown. But Christ is not unknown, for Christ is God, and therefore known to all mankind. Even to those who know Him not, He is known.

Christ is the Wine which does not destroy. Christ is the Wine which nourishes. Christ is the Wine which does not cause illness. Christ is the Wine which cures illness. Christ is the Wine which does not stain. Christ is the Wine which cleanses to brilliant light. Partake fully of the Wine of Life, the Water of Eternal Nourishment, Christ Jesus The Lord.

Ref: Rom 12:6-16; John 2:1-11

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LEVELS OF RELIGIOUS TEACHING

Our Saviour is always our Saviour, and He also is always our Teacher. He teaches us through the Dogma which has been revealed to us by God. Whether it be the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit, who has made any particular revelation, is immaterial, in-so-far as the truth and the importance of that revelation is concerned, for all that has been revealed by God is true, and all that has been revealed by God is important.

Truth does not change. Everything that has been consistently taught as Dogma by The One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church is still taught by the Orthodox part of the Church, but there are individuals within the Orthodox part of the Church who teach error. The same is true for the Roman part of the Church, and for the Coptic, Chaldean, and other parts of the Church. It is therefore very important that you know the of the Dogma of the Church, and be able to distinguish amongst Dogma, Theology, Beliefs, and Tradition.

Everything in the Creed of Nicea as prayed by the Orthodox Church is dogma. The phrase, "and the Son", added by the Roman Church, is not dogma, and to the best of our knowledge has never been proclaimed as dogma by the Roman Church.

Theology is an accumulation of theories based in dogma. Dogmatically, the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father alone, as stated in the Nicene Creed as prayed by the Orthodox Church. The Creed as prayed by the Roman Church before the Great Schism of 1054 A.D., was exactly the same as prayed by the Orthodox Church. But some Galic Roman Theologians misread one of the theological works of Saint Augustine of Hippo, and expressed the theological opinion or theory, that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. Eventually this theological theory was included in the Roman prayer which is entitled the Nicene Crede, but the Roman version is

not the Nicene Creed because it does not follow the text of the Creed adopted as dogma by the First Council of Nicea, and approved by the Second Council of Nicea. Because it contradicts the dogmatically proclaimed and confirmed Nicene Creed, which does not have the filioque clause, the Roman Nicene Creed is not dogmatic, but is theological, and it constitutes theological as well as dogmatic error.

This is one of the best examples of the difference between dogma and theology, because it compares exactly the same thing, but in two different versions.

That God is a Trinity of Persons is, the Father, he Son, and the Holy Spirit, is dogma.

That we should not kill, and the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," is not just a Commandment of God, but is also part of the natural law. Because it is part of the natural law, it is something which we know, innately, in our human nature. Parts of the application of this commandment are dogmatic, such as it being a prohibition against abortion. But other parts of its application are theological, because we have not had full application of that law revealed to us in a manner which we can readily apply. Thus, how it applies to legal executions is currently a theological matter, and is constantly under theological discussion. To execute a person for stealing a leaf from someone's lawn, would, dogmatically, be wrong. But to execute a dangerous murderer is a matter for theological discussion.

Belief may be based in dogma, or dogmatically related, or in theological considerations, but it may be totally divorced from them. A belief may be necessary for salvation, or it may not, depending on the nature of the belief. If it is dogmatic, it is necessary for salvation, but if it is not dogmatic, it is not necessary for salvation. Since a dogmatic belief is a matter of faith, examples of non-dogmatic belief will be helpful. The appearance of the Blessed

Virgin at Fatima is approved by the Roman Church and many Orthodox Churches, as is her appearance and that of Christ and the Father at Soufanieh. But if you do not believe in these appearances, you can still attain salvation. But the Medjugoria situation has not been approved by the Roman or any Orthodox Church, and has actually been determined by the Roman Church to be a fake. But if you believe in it, you can still attain salvation, though you are believing something which, while it probably has not been condemned, has been declared to be false. In failing to believe an apparition or in believing in one which has been declared to be false, one runs the risk of contradicting the Church, and in so doing, contradicts the only earthly entity empowered by God with the authority to make such decisions. So, one runs the risk of committing a sin of disobedience. The messages proclaimed in approved apparitions may be dogmatic, and therefore must be believed.

Finally we come to tradition. Tradition, for the Church, is not just a matter of, "that is the way we always do this", or of, "that is what we have always understood or believed." Tradition can be considered to be that which has a history which is of being supportive of holiness.

Always make sure your dogma is true, and that your theology, beliefs, and traditions are dogmatic, for then you will have God as the foundation for your life.

Ref: Col. 3:12-17; Luke 2:42-52

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THE TEMPLE (CHURCH) IS THE GATE-HOUSE TO OUR FATHER'S HOUSE

When our Saviour was teaching in the temple at age twelve years, He was in His Father's house, in the temple of His Father. Today, we, as members of The One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, also worship in the temple of God the Father. And just as Christ was in the temple teaching, so too, today, in all Orthodox Churches, Christ is physically present and active.

We build these places of worship and call them churches, and in so doing we build temples to God the Trinity. Here we pray to each person of the Blessed Trinity in varying ways, but the prime prayer we pray is the Divine Liturgy. The Divine Liturgy is directed primarily to God the Father, and so we can rightly say that each of these temples is a temple to God the Father.

But God the Son is perpetually physically present in each of these temples, and His physical presence is signified by the red sanctuary lamp. But only signified by that lamp, for if the lamp is extinguished, Christ remains.

As we gather to worship in this temple, we gather in the the House of God, in the House which contains many mansions.

But there are many who gather in houses of worship which are not within the House of God. These worshipers say and some actually believe their house of worship is dedicated to God in a proper manner and that they worship God in a proper manner, but they do not.

The temple where we worship, and every other church of The One Holy Catholic an Apostolic Church, can more properly be thought of as a gate-house giving passage way into the House of the Lord God the Father. Thus, those who worship in a true and proper temple, which is of the true Church, such as this one, worship in the physical presence of Christ Jesus in the

Holy Eucharist. And those who worship in other churches, do not worship in the physical presence of Christ Jesus.

If we obey God, when we die, we will find that this gate-house leads to an entrance where we will receive our final cleansing and be clothed with the glorification which our Saviour has judged is proper to our individual lives. And if we have not obeyed God, we will find the gates barred against our entrance.

But those who do not worship in a temple of The One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church will find the have built and lived in a gate-house which is not connected to the House of God. It is connected to nothing, and they have nowhere to go. Some of these may be lead by Christ to some portal into the House of God if they have done the best they could to do God's will, but if they had been in the Church founded by Christ, they would not have had to find another way of entry.

Just because someone worships, lives, or otherwise is in a real gate-house to Heaven does not mean that person will gain entry to Heaven. There are many who leave the the gate-house. Some are physically present, but elsewhere spiritually. Some leave physically and spiritually. And some never enter.

A few persons come into the Lord's temple and stay. These will require the least cleansing before entry into God's House. But most come and go. Of those who come and go, it is those who try their best to stay, who will be cleansed and gain entry into the House of the Father of our Saviour.

Learn as much as you can about the Faith taught by Christ so that you can monitor the Bishops and Priests who serve the church, the temple, you attend. Be sure they lead you in true prayer: in prayer which is meaningful, and not in prayer which sounds nice but is without any real substance. If the attitude of your Bishop or Priest is: look at me, look at what I know, look at what I do; then he needs an attitude adjust-

ment. But if his attitude is: I do all these things using God's own power and it scares me or gives me concern because of my unworthiness or for reasons which I can not express; then you have a Bishop or Priest who may possesses the beginnings of wisdom and perhaps the beginnings of holiness.

The Bishop is the attendant of God's temple, and the Priest is his assistant. Without the Bishop, there is no Sacred Eucharist, no physical presence of Christ, and that church is just another building just like a heretic's church. So, if the Bishop is not a true Bishop, if he does not believe in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, if he does not have good Priests, there is a horrible problem in that temple, for there is no one to serve the worshipers and no one to serve God as only the Bishop can serve.

Remember, where the Bishop is, there also is the Church. Pray that all Bishops will listen to Christ as He teaches them, and ignore the multitude of temptations ever present. And remember: just as a good Bishop is a temple, a gate-house to Heaven, so too is every true follower of Christ. Keep the temple that is you clean, and its doors open, so that others may enter Heaven through you.

Ref: Col. 3:12-17; Luke 2:42-52

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A LITTLE REVIEW ABOUT HONORING GOD

Let us quickly review some of the prayers we pray in Divine Liturgy of The Holy Name of Jesus, and some of the Scripture readings and prayers which refer to Christ's Name.

In the name of Jesus let every knee bow of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth; and let every tongue confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father. (Philip 2:10-11)

At the name of Jesus, not only in His manifested presence, but in just making reference to Him, every knee shall bend, and every tongue confess He is God. There are no options. You can defiantly say you do not kneel at His name and do not confess He is God, but you will do these things in all eternity. You can with shame and concern admit that you do not usually kneel at the mention of His name, or when reference is made to Him. But that shame and that concern confess He is God and your belief this is so. Every creature is subject to this: every saint and angel and all the unusual persons in Heaven, every person and every frog, horse, and creature on Earth and in the universe, and all the damned in Hell including the Devil himself.

And after eight days were accomplished, that the child should be circumcised, his name was called JESUS, which was called by the angel before he was conceived in the womb. (Luke 2:21)

It is not just in His divine nature that ultimate respect is due to Our Saviour, but also in His human nature. Though He has two natures, He is one Person, and that Person is fully and completely God, co-eternal with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

O God, Who didst appoint Thine only-begotten Son to be the Savior of the human race, and didst command that He be called Jesus, mercifully grant that we may enjoy in heaven the vision

of Him Whose holy name we venerate on earth.

Implicit in this prayer is, if we do not venerate His holy name, we obviously do not wish to go to Heaven.

Be it known to you all and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God hath raised from the dead, even by him, this man standeth here before you, whole. This is the stone which was rejected by you the builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other. For there is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved. (Acts 4:8-12)

God is the only not-created. Everything else is created, and all of creation rests on Christ as its foundation.

My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord, and let all flesh bless His holy name. (Ps. 144:21)

Thy name, O Jesus, is oil poured out, therefore the maidens have loved Thee. (see Cant. 1:2)

My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord: and let all flesh bless His holy name for ever. (Ps. 144:21)

I will extol Thee, O God, my King, and I will bless Thy holy name, Jesus, for ever (see Ps. 144:1)

I will praise Thee, O Lord my God, with my whole heart, and I will glorify Thy name for ever; for Thou, O Lord, art sweet and mild, and plenteous in mercy to all that call upon Thee. (Ps. 85:12, 5)

All the nations Thou hast made shall come and adore before Thee, O Lord, and they shall glorify Thy name: for Thou are great, and dost wonderful things. (Ps. 85:9-10)

All of these show different aspects of why and how we should love and honor God. We could discuss the numerous

occasions where God is shown no respect, such as in the TV shows Seinfeld and The Simpsons, or the dumb blonde expression, "Oh my God!" But that is not necessary. Those who wish to go to Hell will have their wish fulfilled. Today we are concerned with those who wish to praise God

Even if we have no material possessions, no source of income, ill health, rags for clothing, food from the garbage dump, and everyone dislikes us, we exist and in that existence is the potential for eternal happiness. For that opportunity we thank God, honor Him, and love Him.

Ref: Acts 4:8-12; Luke 2:21

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St. Thomas, Doubting Thomas



(Continued **CHARITY** from page 1)

will not impinge on these abilities we possess, for they are part of the free will He has made intrinsic to us.

God knows what is in our minds and in our hearts. He knows whether or not we are inclined to follow Him, His teachings, and His desires. He knows what we want, and what we wish to avoid. But it is surprising how often we really do not know these things about ourselves. God could react to our innermost wishes, but since we may not have carefully thought out these wishes, it is best if we thoughtfully talk with God; if we thoughtfully pray to God. It is in talking and praying in that manner that we will best be prepared for real prayer, and also achieve true introspection - true knowledge of ourselves.

Our Saviour did not deny the requests of the leper and of the centurion. He fulfilled their requests for they were reasonable, thought out, realistic, requests which acknowledged Christ is God. They were requests which acknowledged God is in control, and that mankind has no ability to usurp God's power or place. And the requests were granted completely and fully, without regard to the secular allegiances of the one making the request. Our Saviour was doing one of the things which God does; He was helping those who requested help from Him.

But understand something very important: God will not help us to sin. If the centurion had asked Jesus to cure his servant so the servant could go kill innocent babies, the outcome may have been different. If the leper had asked to be cleansed so he could engage in sin more easily, the outcome may have been different.

We also should help those who request our assistance, without regard as to whether the one being assisted is friend or foe. We should help those who wish to harm us if they request our help, but this does not mean we must help them

to harm us. It just means we should help them emerge from their difficulties. If they are hungry and without means to provide their own food, we should help them but this does not mean we should become the main course of the meal.

And if they reject our assistance, then the situation is no different than when one of us refuses God's help.

It is important to realize Our Saviour did not require the leper become one of His disciples. Nor did He require that of the centurion, or of the centurion's servant. So too should we not require those we assist become Christians. If those we assist respond to God's grace through our actions, then they will act in accordance with that response and in accordance with God's grace. But if we require the ones we assist listen to our preaching so-as-to receive assistance, then we are not acting in a Christlike manner.

Gifts must be free, without conditions.

When we sin, in a very real sense we become enemies of God. We harm Jesus in His passion and cross with every sin we commit, for each sin must be included in His passion, cross, and death. Each sin requires sacrifice by Christ to the Father for the sinner to obtain reconciliation with God. Each sin is an insult to God, a cause of pain and suffering to Jesus, and by sin the sinner declares he is to some extent an enemy of God. But God did not and does not withhold help from those of His enemies who request help, and neither can we if we are to become Godlike.

So, unless we are doing something like physically placing a gun in the hands of someone who wishes to shoot us - in which instance we are helping them to sin; when we help those who hate us, we are doing what we are supposed to do.

Ref: Rom 12:16-21; Mat. 8:1-13

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(Continued **1 OF 6** from page 1)

before He comes the second time. And He makes it very clear that when He does come for what we term The Second Coming, there will be not even one person, human, angel, physical, spiritual, or anything else which exists of any nature what-so-ever, which will have even the slightest doubt as to Who and What He IS. Even the dust, electrons, black holes, and everything in between and outside of them will acknowledge Him.

There are many who study Matthew 24:15-35 and also the Apocalypse - the Revelation of Saint John - and other prophetic portions of Holy Scripture. If they study these for the purpose of learning more about God, for the purpose of better worshiping and following God, their studies are beneficial. Even if they are just curious, their studies can be beneficial.

But if they study so they will have knowledge not available to anyone else with the intention of keeping that knowledge private so they can have an advantage, or feel superior to those without such knowledge, they are fools, for this is nothing more than the old Gnostic heresy. Even worse, if they study for the purpose of knowing something in an attempt to adjust their actions so that they can be sure they are prepared for the "end of the world", we must ask them, why wait? It makes much more sense to prepare now, especially when one has no means of knowing if one will live until the second coming. If you knew the end of the world or the second coming were to be one hundred days from this instant, would you spend the next ninety-nine days sinning and the last day repenting? If you made that plan, how would you be certain that you would live the full one hundred days? It is very possible you would live only for one more day, or for twenty more days, and never see the one hundred days - or even die half way through day ninety-nine.

Knowing the day of the second coming

(Continued **1 OF 6** on page 25)

(Continued 1 OF 6 from page 24)

may be beneficial, but Christ has already informed us it is known only to the Father and that the Father is keeping that knowledge to Himself. Therefore, guessing is senseless. What is very important is what Christ told us will happen. It is important to study this passage so we may have a good concept of both the horrors and of the blessings; to study the way of life taught by Christ - God so we comprehend it and the "why" of it, so we can and will Follow The Rules.

When one considers true reality, what is really of importance, all of us are very much like the homeless, like beggars who think they are living on the side of the road, but really are living in the wilderness.

In literature we often read a passage wherein a beggar calls out, "Give alms to the poor. Give alms to the poor. Receive blessings for giving alms to the poor."

We often fail to realize we are that beggar. We are the poor. We are poor in what really matters. We are poor in Grace, poor in that which the Holy Spirit ourpours upon us, poor in the essence of God.

Jesus told us there are many rooms in His Father's house. Each of us has a room in God's house, a room which God has prepared for us. But whether or not we occupy that room depends us, on what we think and do or omit doing; on how we live the life which God has given to us.

Some look at God's house and never attempt to enter. Some look around the outside and see the entrance mat which says, "wipe your feet," and decide they do not wish to follow the rules, they do not wish to wipe their feet, they like being dirty, and they leave. Some wipe their feet and find their accommodations are in the guest house. They are displeased, for they think they deserve the main house, and leave. Others realize the guest house also is a school.

They study for a while, then, thinking they will never be able to pass the final exam, leave before they take that final test. Others attempt to cheat, and are expelled. Some refuse to bath or shower or change their clothes and are expelled because they stink up the house. Many stay but seem to never seem to be able to pass any of the exams, or very few of them. Some of these leave in despair of ever learning or passing. Others seem to never be able to put the correct shoe on the proper foot and constantly stumble. But if they persevere they will eventually, instinctively, correctly dress themselves. And of those who seem to never be able to pass a test, many do persevere and eventually pass the test - even if they have to stay after school, or go to Summer School, engage a special tutor, or, which is the most common, learn in the study hall with the assistance of the other students who learn from each other as well as from the teacher - they are determined to graduate to the Manor House and live with God for all eternity.

We are created beggars, for even our existence and our life are gifts from God. We accept these, the first alms, which God gives to us. Let us accept the remaining alms which God offers: the temporary housing in the guest house which we enter through Baptism, the school in life in the Church, the nourishing food of the Eucharist, the healing medicine of Confession and Absolution, and the reward of passing the final exam.

Ref: Col. 1:9-14; Mat. 24:15-35

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THE WISE BEGGAR SEEKS THE FREEDOM FOUND IN THE NATURAL ORDER OF GOD THE SUPREME (A series of Related Articles in this Issue. Part 2 of 6.)

BEGGAR, BEG NOW, DO NOT WAIT

In literature, when the beggar calls out, "Give alms to the poor! Give alms to the poor!" the beggar knows he is poor. He knows he lacks the means of living, the means by which he can sustain his life. He knows he is dependant on others, and their generosity, if he is to exist, and if he is to do more than just exist. Everything he has was supplied to him by someone else. If he is foolish, he has anger and envy towards those who sustain his life. If he is wise, he is appreciative towards those who sustain his life, and even more appreciative towards those who provide him with more than what is needed to sustain life - with luxuries. The foolish beggar rejoices if one of his patrons suffers financial reverses or if an evil befalls one of those who gives him donations. But the wise beggar wishes every blessing upon those who help him.

The foolish beggar envies the ones who give him alms when they celebrate festive occasions. But the wise beggar, in his gratitude towards those who help him, wishes he could show that gratitude when his patrons celebrate special occasions.

The foolish beggar has no self respect, and no respect for those who assist him. But the wise beggar respects himself and those who assist him.

Very often the foolish beggar does not realize, or refuses to acknowledge, the fact that he receives his sustenance from others. The wise beggar knows and acknowledges this fact, and is very appreciative towards those who assist him.

The only thing the foolish and wise beg-

(Continued 2 OF 6 on page 26)

(Continued 2 OF 6 from page 25)

gar share or have in common is that without the assistance of others, they would not survive; they would die.

Even in what they do with what they receive, the foolish and the wise beggar differ. The foolish beggar uses up what he receives and grubs after more. The wise beggar attempts to use what he receives to the best advantage, and to better himself, and if possible, to better or to assist others.

From the instant of our creation each of us was and remains dependant on someone else for everything we need and everything we desire. In the womb, at the breast, in the crib, toddling, learning, working, raising our own children, in health, sickness, and death, we are dependant on others; and whether we like it or not, realize it or not, we are beggars.

Look at the gift we have received from our Patron. The gift of existence, life, and the potential of everlasting happiness in union with our Patron, who is God. Every person who has, does, and will exist, receives this gift. There never has been, is not, and never will be anyone or anything which has not received at least one aspect of this gift, that aspect being the gift of existence.

Once the gift is given, it can not be denied in total, but it can be denied in part. No one can cease to exist, and once created God will not withdraw that gift. A person can stop the gift of life only in part, for while one can kill their physical body, one can not kill the spiritual part of their self, nor can anyone prevent the eventual reunification of their body, soul, and spirit. But anyone can deny the gift of everlasting happiness in union with God simply by rejecting God, or by rejecting His rules for us which is the same as rejecting God.

There is only one religion which professes belief in God, worships God, and propounds a way of life, in a manner which is in harmony with the gifts which God has given to us. That reli-

gion is the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, with the Orthodox part of that Church fulfilling that role better than any other part of the true Church or any other religion. The Roman portion comes in a far distant second to the Orthodox portion.

All of this is very plain, very simple, very easy to ascertain and to know. Why then do so many people not acknowledge these things? Why do many people pretend to have uncertainty as to which set of rules is the correct set actually established by the real God? Why do so many people express uncertainty as to the real existence of God, and as to which religion is the true religion?

We have the answer from what we learned in childhood. The seven deadly or capital sins, namely: Pride, Covetousness, Lust, Anger, Gluttony, Envy, and Sloth. One or more of these is the root of the denial of those who deny God, or His gifts to us, whether in toto or in part.

It simply does not make sense to deny one's status as beggar, nor does it make sense for one to deny the truth of God in the manner He has given for His Church to present.

If one were to wait until there is seen a gigantic cross or crucifix shining in the sky from East to West, or until the Son of Man is seen coming in a cloud resplendent with power and majesty, one would have waited until too late. If one were to wait until after death, when the knowledge will bear certainty for those who doubt, one again would have waited until too late. And any attempt to attack the rules, especially an attacked based in a personal concept of fairness or justice, denies the fact that one is a beggar, dependant on the Patron who gives as He wills, in accordance with fairness and justice which is His, and His alone, to determine.

Ref: Rom. 13: 11-14; Luke 21: 25-34

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**THE WISE BEGGAR SEEKS
THE FREEDOM FOUND IN
THE NATURAL ORDER OF
GOD THE SUPREME
(A series of Related Articles in
this Issue. Part 3 of 6.)**

**THE WISE BEGGAR
RECEIVES WHAT HE HAS
REALLY DESIRED, BUT
FOOLISH ONE, . . . , WHO IS
TO KNOW WHAT HE WILL
RECEIVE - ONLY GOD
KNOWS**

Art thou he that art to come (Mat. 11:2)?

With this question Saint John the Forerunner, the Baptist, fulfilled and completed his role as the Forerunner, the one who announced He for whom all of creation had awaited.

Himself a beggar, Saint John knew from the time he was in the womb, exactly Who and What his cousin Jesus Christ is. Saint John knew why he himself preached, and Whose way he prepared. He sent his followers to Jesus with the question so that his followers would also know the true Christ.

When Satan and the other fallen angels revolted against God, the revolted against the natural order that God is the ultimate and all else is beholden to and subject to God. In attacking the natural order these fallen angels introduced evil, and are the spirits of evil, and, evil spirits. Their habitation ceased to be in Heaven, and Hell was created for them. Knowing of the physical world, they attempted to infest it, and to lead it to join them in Hell. The evil spirits were successful when the presented Eve with carefully selected bait, and then with Adam through Eve, again using carefully selected bait. With the fall of Adam and Eve, physical creation left God. Adam, Eve, Able, and the wise amongst mankind have been seeking, and begging, to return to God ever

(Continued 3 OF 6 on page 27)

(Continued 3 OF 6 from page 26)

since. But these wise beggars could not return to God in the type of relationship which had existed before the fall of Adam. They could not return because humans were incapable of repairing the damage which had been wrecked by Adam. Only God could repair the damage.

So the wise amongst mankind begged for God to repair the damage, and waited for God to do what was needed to repair the damage.

The foolish amongst mankind did not seek anything better than that which this world has to offer. So when told the Saviour was here, they looked for worldly signs that Jesus Christ was the Saviour. And He gave them many worldly signs that He is the Saviour. He raised the dead, cured the incurable, fed thousands without there being any place from which to procure food, calmed the seas in the midsts of storms, and did many other things which are impossible. These foolish beggars hoped Jesus would give them all of the delights of the flesh and of this physical world. They were disappointed, for what He offered was only eternal salvation and happiness through union with God for all eternity. And that was not what they desired, and is not what they desire even to this very day.

But the wise beggars were delighted with what Jesus Christ offered. They desired that special relationship with God that had existed before the fall of Adam. When they discovered what would be through and because of Christ was even better than that relationship, they were ecstatic.

No one but God knows what is in a person's heart, or why a person does what they do, or is what they are. But we can look to this physical world for outward examples of good and ill effects, of wise and foolish choices.

Of course, not every one who matches the appearance about to be given is one of these, and while, not every drunk, or

drug user, or sexual pervert, or sexual glutton, looks wasted, worn, and sickly, and acts irrationally, many of them do, and most of them eventually do.

And that is the appearance of the soul of the foolish beggar, of the one who has no desire to follow the rules. The physical body of the foolish beggar may appear to be healthy, but that soul is covered with scabs and running sores which are signs of the disease within which rots out what little life is inside. It is irrational, choosing willfully to be weak, diseased, and miserable, so that it can feed the desires of its body, fully knowing its body will die leaving the soul with no delights what-so-ever. It does this so it can show and prove it neither needs nor desires God, and that it is supreme over God for it rejects God's rules and the natural order where God the Creator of all, even of that soul, is supreme over all else.

And while not every person who is clear of eye and mind is also free from the sins we mentioned, the soul which is wise is clear of eye and firm of mind. It well may have battle scars, and may be constantly healing from minor wounds, but it is healthy, and will recover from those wounds. The more scars it has, the more obvious it has had a difficult time in overcoming evil, but the healed scars numbering more than the still open wounds show it has steadily strengthened. It must be constantly vigilant, for the enemy is sneaky, wily, wise in the ways of deceit, and very strong. But the wise soul knows the rules established by God lead to eternal happiness through union with God for all eternity. That soul has read the signs, and is so strong it finds nothing demeaning in acknowledging the truth, that the natural order of God being supreme is good and desirable.

The wise beggar receives what he has really desires, but foolish one . . . God help him if he actually receives what he says he desires.

Ref: Romans 15:4-13; Mat.. 11:2-10

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THE WISE BEGGAR SEEKS THE FREEDOM FOUND IN THE NATURAL ORDER OF GOD THE SUPREME
(A series of Related Articles in this Issue. Part 4 of 6.)

THE PATRON INDEBTED HIMSELF TO THE BEGGARS AND FULFILLED HIS OBLIGATION BEYOND THE BEGGARS' DREAMS.

So, why do the beggars attack their benefactor?

The Jews were very anxious to know whether or not Saint John was the Christ because the Jews were the people who had received the promise from God, that all of mankind would be redeemed. But most of the Jews thought the promise applied only to themselves, and not to the Gentiles, even though the Prophets had said the Christ would also be the salvation of the Gentiles.

In making His promise to mankind God the Father actually obligated Himself to provide for our salvation. The Supreme Being, the Patron, became indebted to the beggars. Being perfect, God met and fulfilled that obligation in a manner totally beyond the expectations of the beggars. Being perfect, He fulfilled it not to the bare amount as would a person paying a sum of money that was due, but fulfilled it as though an inexhaustible treasury had its doors opened and the gold coins of grace were poured out in a never ending cascade. All each person had to do was to scoop up the gold, but if a person turned away from the treasure that person would not receive the treasure.

Being God, the Father not only provided the means for salvation, but also the mediator and the teacher, in the Person of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ - God, gives us the ultimate

(Continued 4 OF 6 on page 28)

(Continued 4 OF 6 from page 27)

example that willfully and intentionally harmonizing your own free will to that of another is not enslaving your free will and yourself to another. The plan for the redemption of mankind was through the taking on of human nature by God the Son, and thereafter living a human life and all that accompanies human life except commission of sin. That plan included teaching by word and example, the ending of His human life in His own sacrificial suffering and death, and the proof of His truth in His resurrection. This plan was accepted by Jesus Christ God the Son, and enacted exactly in accordance with the will of God His Father.

Without in the least diminishing His freedom and independence, God the Son followed the will of God the Father, not for His own betterment or gain, but for the betterment and gain of those subservient to Him. The Divine obligation to save the beggars could have been fulfilled with the flash of a thought. Instead, it was fulfilled in a manner which left no doubt as to how the beggars were to proceed so as to receive payment. When one considers this fact, that God the Son had no problem with making His will harmonious to that of God the Father, why do humans have a problem with the concept of doing the same?

But when we look at many of the beneficiaries of God's humbling Himself through becoming human, living as human, suffering, death, and continuing to provide protection and guidance after His resurrection even though most humans would have just taken it easy in Heaven; when we look at many of these beneficiaries we find people who are unwilling to even appear to be subservient even though they have the example of God Himself serving and continuing to serve.

By what warped process does the creature, the created, attempt to place itself above the creator. Perhaps some people believe their own day dreams. Perhaps they believe the types of science fiction stories where the super computer made

by humans takes over the world, and think they can do the same. But in the real world there can be no contest as to who is supreme. Besides, even just thinking along those lines is being ungrateful. Is that ungratefulness an indicator of the problem? Perhaps. But, perhaps the answer to what is their problem is found in Isaias, where it is written: **26:7. The way of the just is right, the path of the just is right to walk in. 26:8. And in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, we have patiently waited for thee: thy name, and thy remembrance are the desire of the soul. 26:9. My soul hath desired thee in the night: yea, and with my spirit within me in the morning early I will watch to thee. When thou shalt do thy judgments on the earth, the inhabitants of the world shall learn justice. 26:10. Let us have pity on the wicked, but he will not learn justice: in the land of the saints he hath done wicked things, and he shall not see the glory of the Lord.**

All of creation awaited the coming of The Christ. He has come, and though He has returned to Heaven, yet He remains with us.

He will fulfill the remainder of His promise, and will come again in splendor and glory such that there will be no doubt as to His reality. But all doubt as to His reality will have already been removed for most people at the end of the physical life of each person. At that time each person will know their eternity, for each will receive the judgment promised by God.

Right now, while we are still able to beg, it behooves us to thank our benefactor by forming ourselves into a thank you gift acceptable to God. He has told us what kind of gift is acceptable to Him: a humble, contrite, heart. A heart which acknowledges the supremacy of God, and which acknowledges its own failure to fully and properly accept the gifts of existence and salvation given to it by God.

Let each of us resolve to accept these gifts as fully and as properly as is possi-

ble for us.

In reality, each of us knows most if not all of our faults. our failures to properly accept the gifts from God. And the wise amongst us have been working on correcting these faults, these failures.

Continue to try to correct these failures. Do not be disheartened when the faults do not evaporate. It was not easy for Jesus to be tortured to death, and it will not be easy for us to correct the cause of His sufferings - the cause being our sins. But it can be done.

Ref: Philipp 4:4-7; John 1:19-28; Isaias 26:7-10; and St. Augustine, discourse on the Psalms

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Saints Florus and Laurau, brothers who lived in Illyria in the second century, were masons who built a what was supposed to be a pagan temple but they dedicated it to Christ for which they were killed. In Russia, especially Novgorod and the North, they are considered healers; and in other places patrons of horses depicted with St. Michael giving them herds of horses

**THE WISE BEGGAR SEEKS
THE FREEDOM FOUND IN
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GOD THE SUPREME
(A series of Related Articles in
this Issue. Part 5 of 6.)**

**WHEN WE BEG GOD, ARE
WE PREPARED TO RE-
CEIVE?**

There is an aspect of sin which is a form of positive, but this concept should not be carried too far.

Everyone asks God to help them from time to time during the course of their life. The child who did not study for an exam asks God to help them know the answers. A soldier asks God to make the incoming rounds miss. A person traveling down a wet road asks God to stop the car when it is skidding into an accident. A person in debt asks God to provide some extra money. People getting married, if they are wise, ask God to be an active part of their marriage.

From time to time we all beg God for something. We should realize that when God does provide something in response to our prayers, He Himself accompanies that which He has provided.

God actually accompanies His answer to our prayers, even if what He provides is not that which we requested but something else. We should therefore always be prepared to receive God, especially when we have requested His assistance.

Being prepared to receive God means we must be as free from sin, and the effects of sin, as is possible. We must prepare a place within ourselves to receive God. Just as, if God were to come to your house for a visit, you would wish to have a clean, comfortable place for Him to sit, and something nice for Him to eat, and a clean dish upon which to serve it, so too should you wish yourself to be a decent place for Him to come. Since God does not like sin, we know

the more one has overcome sin and the effects of sin, the better prepared that one is to receive God.

It can be very discouraging to continually attempt to overcome your sins, yet continue to commit the same stupid sins over and over again.

If it were easy to overcome sin, to stop committing the same sins over and over again, what would happen? Would you suddenly begin to worship God more often and more perfectly? Or, would you likely begin to become more satisfied with your spiritual life, become complacent, and eventually, very slowly, drift away from thinking about God and worshipping God, and then be worse off than you were?

Your sins can help keep you focused on God. This is not to mean we should be happy we sin, for it would be best if we were to never sin again. But given human nature, it is not likely any of will cease sinning until the time of our physical death. Be happy and thankful if your sins are not of the caliber of a murderer for hire, or a serial killer, or of a power mad tyrant, or a pimp. These, much more serious sins, can be the death of a soul.

But the lesser sins, terrible as they are, can provide us with a form or type of positive, for they remind us of our deficiencies and give us goals which can be attained. They give us the goals of not committing them ever again. They also give us the goal of becoming more and more acceptable to God.

In doing this we prepare the way for God to be in us as He is in Heaven.

But removal of sin and the effects of sin should not be the extent of our preparation. We must replace sin and its effects with something else, otherwise we will just have a big, empty place for God to visit, or for Him to make a home.

We should prepare a place with which He will be comfortable. If someone we like, admire, and upon whom we wish

to make a good impression, were to come visit, we would not only clean up the house and ourselves, but also try to find out what they like in the way of food and accommodation, provide those things, and inform ourselves regarding topics which they like to discuss.

So in preparing for God, knowing He will accompany that for which we ask from Him, we should not only clean up our souls, but also adorn ourselves with God Himself, for nothing is more appropriate.

In making these preparations we should learn more about God, not by guessing about passages from the Bible, but by reading what the Early Church Fathers, especially the Desert Fathers, have written about God. Why read what the Fathers of the Church have written about God? Because they have been successful in establishing good relationships with God. You would not ask a glutton how to prepare to receive a health trainer, so why ask the Devil how to receive God?

But if all you desire is what you can get from God without having to accept God as well, then you will receive nothing from God other than continued existence. Eventually you will at least internally acknowledge your mistake, but if that acknowledgment is after your physical life has ended, that acknowledgment will have come too late to be of any use to you.

Too often we are like a dog which has focused on the roast beef sandwich someone is holding. Do not focus on the sandwich, focus on the One holding the sandwich.

Ref: 1Cor:4:1-5; Luke 3:1-6

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**THE WISE BEGGAR SEEKS
THE FREEDOM FOUND IN
THE NATURAL ORDER OF
GOD THE SUPREME
(A series of Related Articles in
this Issue. Part 6 of 6.)**

CHRIST'S PEACE

Glory to God in the highest: and on earth peace to men of good will. (Luke 2:14)

These words are a proclamation of the heavenly army. These words are a promise and a blessing from the heavenly army which only speaks to mankind that which God Himself has directed it to speak. This therefore is a promise, prophecy, and blessing from God, and especially from God the Father Himself.

We hear many people mention peace. Those who follow God's rules, those who pick and chose which of His rules they will follow, and those who follow no rules, all speak of peace.

There is even a religion which has several names, one of which is peace, but this is one of the most violent of religions for peace to members of that religion means submission to their will.

But there is a true peace. The peace which is Divine. The peace which is perfect for it is, as it were, a character trait of God Himself.

This is the peace which was proclaimed and promised by the heavenly army, and it is the same peace for which the wise beg.

But, from whom do people beg that peace? The foolish seek to establish it in and of themselves. The wise seek to establish it by bringing as many people as possible, including themselves, to true following of Christ - not the pick and chose what you want from Christ type of following, but the full acceptance of everything, including rules, from Christ.

Christ's Peace is not just freedom from worry, or freedom from war; it is not freedom from anything. It is the fullest of ever increasing happiness - happiness of a type and nature which is better than any happiness ever experienced or even contemplated.

In the course of seeking this perfect peace, one factor becomes very evident. Before any one can truly receive peace, be at peace, live in peace, he must first make peace with God.

And in order to make peace with God, one must be of good will. Not just avoid being bad or evil, but actually be: of ___ good ___ will. Good Will. Will. One's **WILL** must be **GOOD**.

Anyone can play mental and semantic games which are lies to one's self. But simple truth demands one acknowledge that the **GOOD** which is required for this peace be the unreservedly following of the teachings and practices of Jesus Christ, God, second Person of the Blessed Trinity. After all, it was on the day of His birth that the promise, prophecy, and blessing was made by the heavenly army.

And note well that the words were spoken by the heavenly **army**. They were not spoken by the heavenly diplomatic corps, for there is no heavenly diplomatic corps. Diplomats are given to compromise and concession, and there can be no compromise, no concession, with God, for there can be no compromise, no concession, between good and evil. For the same reason they were not spoken by the heavenly politicians, or the heavenly senate, neither of which exists. Nor were these words spoken by the heavenly choir, which does exist. They were spoken by the heavenly army, the only unbeaten and unbeatable armed forces in all of creation. The army to which we justifiably believe every citizen of heaven belongs.

If you desire to know good will, look to the heavenly army, where every member is one of good will. If you desire to see this army, look up around the chal-

ice and paten which hold the blood and body of Christ at the Consecration in Divine Liturgy for the entirety of heaven is there at the time.

It is indicative of what true Christians must be, that the heavenly army voiced this proclamation from God. There will be no wishy - washy in heaven. There will be none of those who equivocate. There will be no pansy waists. No wooses. There will only be the firm and strong of faith, who were of faith, hope, and charity - Divine Love - while in this life.

We often hear it said that the spirit of Christmas is peace, or giving, selflessness, joy, happiness, family and friends gathering together, good memories. Charles Dickens had Ebenezer Scrooge make the best response to such thoughts, "Bah! Humbug!"

The spirit of Christmas is Christ - God.

With that realization we give Glory to God in the highest, and urge you to do the same. And we pray and work, and urge you to do likewise, that there will be on earth peace to men of good will; that all persons become of good will. Those who decline this invitation are on their own.

Ref: Titus 2:11-15; Luke 2:1-14

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(Continued CONTENTS from page 32)

presumptions: that certain facts we know and beliefs we profess are known and possessed by those whom we are teaching. 4

OUTLINE OF THE STUDIES CURRICULUM OF THE SOCIETY OF CLERKS SECULAR OF SAINT BASIL Even those of us who have been Priests for many years should, from time to time, review various components of basic studies. 4

IMITATION OF CHRIST By **Thomas a Kempis** Several issues ago we began serializing the Imitation of Christ by Thomas a Kempis. Many things interfered with our continuation of that presentation. We now continue where we “left off”. 7

CHILDREN’S PAGE *The Orthodox - Basilian Catechism* 10

PRODUCTS 12, 13, 14

ANNIVERSARY OF THE FALL FROM GRACE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA This month is the anniversary of the Fall From Grace of the United States of America. On January 22nd, will be the anniversary of the United States Supreme Court decision in Roe v. Wade; 18

ABORTION AND GOVERNMENT PEOPLE - and - CHANGING FROM FILTHY WATER TO CLEAN WATER TO THE FINEST WINE We are like water pots. We are filled with water, and in the course of our natural life, that water becomes dirty with use or stale from not being used. Our Lord wishes to empty us of that filthy, stale water 19

LEAVE THE PRISON OF SIN AND JOIN THE WEDDING FEAST The wedding feast at Cana took place on the third day, and on the third day Christ rose again from the dead. The wedding feast celebrated the union of a man and a woman into a new person, the married person. And the resurrection of Christ

marked the reunion of mankind with God, the marriage of Christ to His Church. 20

LEVELS OF RELIGIOUS TEACHING Our Saviour is always our Saviour, and He also is always our Teacher. He teaches us through the Dogma which has been revealed to us by God . . . Truth does not change. 21

THE TEMPLE (CHURCH) IS THE GATE-HOUSE TO OUR FATHER’S HOUSE When our Saviour was teaching in the temple at age twelve years, He was in His Father’s house, in the temple of His Father. Today, we, as members of The One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, also worship in the temple of God the Father. And just as Christ was in the temple teaching, so too, today, in all Orthodox Churches, Christ is physically present and active. 22

A LITTLE REVIEW ABOUT HONORING GOD Let us quickly review some of the prayers we pray in Divine Liturgy of The Holy Name of Jesus, and some of the Scripture readings and prayers which refer to Christ’s Name. 23

THE WISE BEGGAR SEEKS THE FREEDOM FOUND IN THE NATURAL ORDER OF GOD THE SUPREME (A series of Related Articles in this Issue. Part 2 of 6.) BEGGAR, BEG NOW, DO NOT WAIT In literature, when the beggar calls out, “Give alms to the poor! Give alms to the poor!” 25

THE WISE BEGGAR SEEKS THE FREEDOM FOUND IN THE NATURAL ORDER OF GOD THE SUPREME (A series of Related Articles in this Issue. Part 3 of 6.) THE WISE BEGGAR RECEIVES WHAT HE HAS REALLY DESIRED, BUT FOOLISH ONE, . . . , WHO IS TO KNOW WHAT HE WILL RECEIVE - ONLY GOD KNOWS *Art thou he that art to come* (Mat. 111:2)? 26

THE WISE BEGGAR SEEKS THE FREEDOM FOUND IN THE NATURAL ORDER OF GOD THE SUPREME (A series of Related Articles in this Issue. Part 4 of 6.) THE PATRON INDEBTED HIMSELF TO THE BEGGARS AND FILLED HIS OBLIGATION BEYOND THE BEGGARS’ DREAMS. So, why do the beggars attack their benefactor? The Jews were very anxious to know whether or not Saint John was the Christ because the Jews were the people who had received the promise 27

THE WISE BEGGAR SEEKS THE FREEDOM FOUND IN THE NATURAL ORDER OF GOD THE SUPREME (A series of Related Articles in this Issue. Part 5 of 6.) WHEN WE BEG GOD, ARE WE PREPARED TO RECEIVE? There is an aspect of sin which is a form of positive, but this concept should not be carried too far. Everyone asks God to help them from time to time during the course of their life. The child who did not study for an exam asks God to help them know the answers. 29

THE WISE BEGGAR SEEKS THE FREEDOM FOUND IN THE NATURAL ORDER OF GOD THE SUPREME (A series of Related Articles in this Issue. Part 6 of 6.) CHRIST’S PEACE *Glory to God in the highest: and on earth peace to men of good will.* (Luke 2:14) These words are a proclamation of the heavenly army. These words are a promise and a blessing from the heavenly army which only speaks to mankind that which God Himself has directed it to speak. This therefore is a promise, prophecy, and blessing from God, and especially from God the Father Himself. 30

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CONTENTS

TOPIC/TITLE

Page

~ **CONCERN FOR THE WEAK MINDED, THE WEAK OF WILL** ~
From Metropolitan Archbishop Paul, S.S.B. To the flock entrusted into my care: There are many types of what are considered to be the weak of mind or will, some of which really are not weak. By way of example, the submissive, especially in a dominant - submissive relationship, usually is the one who controls the relationship. 1

THE MAIN WAY BAAL WAS WORSHIPED BY THE CARTHAGINIANS AND THE JEWS WHO ABANDONED GOD
 The idol of Baal had a large furnace in its belly. Its face had a gaping mouth with a hinged tongue. Living aborted babies, new born babies, and children were thrown onto the tongue which tilted on its hinges 1

TO WHAT EXTENT CHARITY
 God's Charity for us is beyond the abil-

ity of any creature to measure. He desires to help us in every manner possible. While His ability to help us is total, we have the ability to block 1

THE WISE BEGGAR SEEKS THE FREEDOM FOUND IN THE NATURAL ORDER OF GOD THE SUPREME (A series of Related Articles in this Issue. Part 1 of 6.)

WHY WAIT? BE PREPARED NOW! Accept the alms already given and give likewise. 1

Father Dcn. Dismas (Francis X. Grant), S.S.B. It is with sorrow for ourselves, and joy for him, that we note that Father Dismas has Fallen Asleep in the Lord, on 5 October 2006 A. D. 1

CBS - THE NETWORK - HAS OVERTLY ATTACKED CHRISTIANITY On 16 December 2006 A. D., CBS used its program 48 Hours to attack the basic foundation of Christianity, the Virgin Birth of Christ. It attacked the conception of Christ as being by the overshadowing of the Ever Virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit, and at one point called the conception of Christ the

result of adultery (fornication) by the Virgin Mary. 1

PUBLICATION NOTICE 2

LETTERS 2

WORLD WIDE WEB: 2

THE BASILIAN FATHERS (The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil) WHEN WE TEACH WE SHOULD NOT PRESUME TOO MUCH In literature - books, plays, etc. - it is rare for any character to even be noted as relieving himself, to eliminate bodily waste. Even in Westerns, where the cowboys subsist on a diet in which beans and coffee are the main ingredients, elimination of bodily waste is rarely mentioned. The author presumes you know and realize this elimination will take place in the course of nature, and also presumes (hopefully he is correct in his presumption) you really are not interested in this aspect of the ongoing activities. When we teach others we often make similar
(Continued CONTENTS on page 31)

The American Indians (whether of North, Central, or South America) and the Europeans who settled in the Americas, did not think alike for their cultures, religions, and other factors, were extremely different. Many of what they valued were the same, such as the necessities of life, some luxuries, and a good life for themselves and their families. But what each considered necessities, luxuries, and a good life, and the means by which they were to be obtained, often differed and that difference was, in some instances, so great as to create a barrier against mutual understanding or commonality in thought. Without common standards there was conflict. Cultures can over come these barriers with the passage of generations. But good and evil can never over come these barriers - evil must eventually fail for good has already triumphed.

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