



REUNION

The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil
(The Basilians - The Basilian Fathers)
THE ORTHODOX CATHOLIC CHURCH OF THE AMERICAS



Volume 22 No. 4 OF THE CHURCH OF MAN WITH GOD October, 2012 A.D.

~ MY RETIREMENT ~
~ FINAL PRINT EDITION ~
~ FUTURE OF THE WEB SITE ~

From Metropolitan Archbishop Lee S. Mc Colloster, S.S.B.
To the flock entrusted into my care:

MY RETIREMENT

I have retired and resigned from all administrative duties and positions in and with The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil, the Church, and related organizations, effective October 1, 2012. This is something



which I have desired for many years. I neither sought, nor desired, the offices from which I so happily withdraw, and had attempted to resign from them in the year 2004, and again in the year 2006, but my resignation was rejected.

My health and age were amongst the considerations in making this decision.

I will continue with my functions in and associated with Holy Innocents Orthodox Church, and as an Archbishop, for once a Priest (or Bishop) always a Priest (or Bishop). Holy Innocents will continue to function both as a Parish and as a Retreat House. And I will continue to be available to those who seek my assistance.

FINAL PRINT EDITION

This will be the final **PRINT** edition of **REUNION**.

The economic situation of our country has steadily deteriorated over the past few years. Our ability to publish has grown steadily weaker with that economic deterioration, while at the same time publication expenses have steadily increased.

This is not an attempt to solicit contributions - though donations will not be rejected. (Send them to Holy

Innocents Orthodox Church, 25401 Lorin Wall Road, Holden, Louisiana 70744.) It simply is a fact situation which must be faced.

We intend to continue publishing **REUNION** with distribution / circulation through the Internet. As they are now, copies will be available on our web site (<http://www.reu.org>) or (<http://www.reu.org/public/reunion.htm>) and through our e-mail mailing list.

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WHAT IS NECESSARY FOR YOU TO FORGIVE? Revenge!! Why???

Both the Good Thief, Saint Dismas, and Gestas, the thief who mocked Christ, had offended God and mankind with their sins. Crucified and dying on the Cross, Our Lord offered eternal salvation to each of them. We know the Good Thief, Saint Dismas, accepted. Our Lord continued His mission of offering eternal salvation as He was actually engaged in the offering of Himself as the perfect, eternal, sacred sacrifice and sacrificial offering.

Christians are taught that we must emulate Christ, that we must follow His example. We are able and should offer our sufferings of all types in union with Christ in His Passion, but there is another aspect of emulating Christ in His passion which is always open to us. It is in forgiving those who have wronged us, in praying for those whom we ourselves have wronged, and for ourselves

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HONEST ANTICIPATION OF CHRISTMAS SERVES TO DIMINISH THE IMPORTANCE OF MATTERS WHICH DO NOT SERVE SALVATION

Advent is the official time of anticipation of the birth of the Saviour, of preparation for the celebration of His birth.

For thousands of years all of humankind anticipated His birth or His arrival - there being a multitude of opinions as to what He would do, how He would do what ever He did, and what it would mean to individual

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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; or, in plain language, to get as many of our sorry selves to heaven as is possible.

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Print on paper publication is no longer available due to costs, though paper copies are often available at Holy Innocents Orthodox Church

We try to publish between four and twelve issues per year, but do not guarantee to so do due to staffing and finances.

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*Most Rev. Lee S. Mc Colloster,
 Publisher*

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.)

Q. Dear Archbishop Lee,

(Continued LETTERS on page 4)

WORLD WIDE WEB:

The direct connection to the computer which functions as the message, file, and communications center for Holy Innocents Orthodox Church, is:
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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, HOLY INNOCENTS ORTHODOX CHURCH BBS (HIOC BBS)

Each ML (Mailing List) 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 or SysOp 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 purposes . . . hopefully morality will not

(Continued WEB on page 3)

(Continued WEB from page 2)

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

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Most of the mailing lists then send out a welcome message.

Some of the mailing lists use the mailing list name as the sender's address. Some use the sender's name, and others use Fr. Paul, or father.paul@reu.org on behalf of whoever the one who originated the message. We will bring some consistency to this sometime in the future, probably.

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(Continued **ARCHBISHOP** from page 1)

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You may also subscribe to the e-mail edition by sending a request via the USPS (regular mail) with your e-mail address clearly printed (preferably typed) [see the subscription coupon on page 2], or by telephoning your request.

This is the twenty-second year of publication of **REUNION**. There is something about the "feel" of a paper printed publication which will never be matched by electronic text. It is with deep regrets that the paper printed format will only be maintained for file copies and a few copies which will be distributed at Holy Innocents.

Some copies of **REUNION** have been sent out by private individuals. These gracious people have also experienced the steep increase in cost associated with paper print production and distribution through the regular mails. We thank them for their dedication through the years. They will welcome the relief of no longer experiencing the financial and time / labor burdens associated with paper print publication.

You will note the print publication of this issue was delayed. The reason; lack of money, until now, to do what was required for publication.

If you desire to continue to receive **REUNION**, it will only be available as indicated above.

Undoubtedly we will lose many readers because of these changes. I will miss each of you more than I am able to express.

FUTURE OF THE WEB SITE

We are also uncertain as to whether or not we will be able to continue providing our Internet web site.

The computer program we use will soon receive a major upgrade. This will require our obtaining a new computer with a newer operating system. This new upgrade will be more complicated than the current system and we may not be up to the task of setting it up. We may keep the present system running until the program and the computer system itself simply stop functioning. There also are new federal regulations which may increase our costs to access the Internet and to run a web site.

AND, there are indications our Internet provider will increase their fee - perhaps beyond what we are able to afford.

HELLO

Some may, after contemplation, be inclined to interpret the foregoing as some form of "good-bye" from me. To counter that impression - unless God has plans otherwise - I personally look forward to continuing in my Priestly (Archbishoply??) function. **REUNION**, and our web site are parts of that function.



++ *Lee, S.S.B.*

God, please help me love You

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CHRIST BLESSING CHILDREN

This excerpt from the letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians is delightfully succinct and blunt.

(From the feast of Saint Paul the Hermit, 15 January.)

Phil. 3:7-12 3:7. But the things that were gain to me, the same I have counted loss for Christ. 3:8. Furthermore, I count all things to be but loss for the excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ, my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them but as dung, that I may gain Christ. 3:9. And may be found in him, not having my justice, which is of the law, but that which is of the faith of Christ Jesus, which is of God: justice in faith. 3:10. That I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings: being made conformable to his death, 3:11. If by any means I may attain to the resurrection which is from the dead. 3:12. Not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect: but I follow after, if I may by any means apprehend, wherein I am also apprehended by Christ Jesus.

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(Continued **LETTERS** from page 2)

You often use the phrase, "**God, please help me love You**" in e-mail and regular letters. Ar you asking God to help you love me?

A. No, I am asking God to help me love Him. In my morning prayers I ask God to help me love Him, and I often ask this of Him several times each day. If I love God more and more, then I will be inclined to follow Him more and more, and to ever increasingly avoid straying from His direction. I also desire to love God more than I now do. He loves me infinitely and I really desire to reciprocate . . . totally. As love for God increases in this world there is an increase in the level and breadth of the conflict between good and evil in this world. With an increase in love for God will come an increase in those who attain eternal salvation, and also an ever increasingly dramatic perception of the demarcation or separation between good and evil.

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(Continued **FORGIVE** from page 1)

for the wrongs and sins we have done. But think about adding some spiritual spice, as it were, to our intentions, motivations, our very forgiving others itself, and the entire process. What would be necessary to actually *“feel”* our participation in the supreme divinity through our forgiving?

When we forgive others we often begin with the intellect. We wish to forgive, intend to forgive, will to forgive, and in that process we begin to forgive and we forgive. It basically is an intellectual activity.

But when Christ forgives it is much more than an intellectual activity, much more than an act of His will. It is an emotional, physical, spiritual, active act of the entirety of that Divine Person. How could a mere creature possibly emulate Christ in that process?

Well, it is very easy.

First, back up to the beginning of the forgiveness process. We will use a very simplistic approach, but the clarity of concepts the approach reveals is most important.

Do you want anyone who has wronged you to go to Hell? Do you want anyone to go to Hell? If the answer to either is yes, then you have a problem. Very simply, Jesus does not want anyone to go to Hell, but if they knowingly reject Him there is no place else for them to go. Remember in the Lord’s Prayer, the Our Father, we pray, “forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.” If you originally answered, “yes,” have you reconsidered? Is the answer now, no? If the answer originally was, “no,” hopefully it has remained, “no”.

Do you want anyone who has wronged you to go to Purgatory? Do you want anyone to go to Purgatory? If your answer is provisional, such as, “I would rather they go to Purgatory rather than go to Hell,” you are on the correct path. But with the same considerations regarding going to Hell, a better desire would be that those who have wronged us, and everyone, begin reconciliation with God, atonement, purification,

and anything else requisite for eternal union with God, now, in this life.

Now we are able to add flesh, sinew, muscle, and most important, soul, to the skeleton of the intellectual activity / process of forgiveness.

Amongst the reasons we forgive those who have wronged us is that we desire they attain eternal salvation, we do not desire them to suffer eternal damnation, and, upon contemplation, we would like for them to be involved in some process which would atone for the wrongs they have done, for their sins, particularly those against us. Some process which would lessen the severity and duration of any purification process, especially in Purgatory. We wish them to be united with Christ in Heaven for all eternity. If at least these reasons are not amongst those reasons we forgive, then we are not emulating Christ. We may state that Christ forgives because it is in His divine nature as well as in His persona to forgive, with these reasons being ancillary human comprehensible allegory. But these reasons are much more than allegory. They are essential.

Though not essential to forgiving, we probably would appreciate those who have wronged us, stop doing it, and also repair what damage or harm they have inflicted or done *if possible*. This also is in accordance with forgiving as Christ forgives, for acceptance of forgiveness reaches greater and greater levels of maturity as the wrongdoer, the sinner, relinquishes the wrongdoing, moves away from the wrongdoing, attempts to and with varying levels of success stops doing the wrongdoing, and even attempts or at least desires to repair the wrong.

We will add two more considerations, and then wrap this in a very nice, easy to use, means by which we are able to actually *“feel”* our participation in the supreme divinity, in the divine wonderfulness.

First, we know we are all sinners because God has told us, in Proverbs, that even the just man (and woman) sins seven times a day. From this we are able to deduce we

have wronged others; at the very least we have wronged God. Second, those beneficial desires we have for those who have wronged us are also desires we have for ourselves for the wrongs we have done.

Let us now combine these concepts into practical use.

In this concept use of the word sin is avoided. This is because we are merely humans and therefore incapable of knowing whether or not another person has sinned even though they have wronged us, and even though we would consider some of the wrongs we have experienced to be sins were we to have inflicted them upon someone else. Only God is capable of judging the sinfulness of our fellow human beings. Therefore, we pray regarding the wrongs.

Simply pray to God forgiving those who have wronged us, *praying also in atonement for the wrongs they have done*, also asking forgiveness for the wrongs we have done, atonement for the wrongs we have done, and repair for the wrongs or harm we have caused.

Should we also pray for repair of the wrongs we have experienced? If we do, we may subconsciously condition our forgiveness or some aspect or level of it, upon repair or the level of repair we experience or receive. If we do not also pray for repair of the wrongs we have experienced, it is possible a cavalier attitude or something similar could taint the forgiveness. Perhaps a simple openness to repair of the wrongs we have experienced is the best approach. But desire to repair the wrongs we ourselves have caused is essential - even if actual repair seems to be impossible.

We may simply pray in almost any manner as an act of forgiveness, even a simple mental, “I forgive . . .” with the desire and intention of assisting in effecting atonement, repentance, and an orientation to Our Lord Jesus Christ, God.

Some formal prayers are very helpful as well.

(Continued **FORGIVE** on page 6)

(Continued FORGIVE from page 5)

The Lord's Prayer or Our Father, and the Hail Mary and the Rosary or Rule of the Mother of God are particularly suited to these purposes. There also is the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, from Roman Catholic Saint Sister Faustina:

To pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, using a regular Rosary, begin with: Our Father....., Hail Mary....., Apostles Creed.

Then, on the OUR FATHER BEADS, pray: Eternal Father, I offer You the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of your dearly beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world.

On the HAIL MARY BEADS, pray: For the sake of his sorrowful Passion have mercy on us and on the whole world.

Then, THREE TIMES, pray: Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

Numerous Saints have advised us to strive to unite with Christ. Praying for forgiveness for ourselves and for others is a simple means of uniting ourselves with Christ in a manner in which we actually experience that union, at least for a little while at first, and, perhaps, eventually, forever.

Ref: Is. 59:1-4; Luke 23:39-43

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Wisdom Chapter 4

The difference between the chaste and the adulterous generations: and between the death of the just and the wicked.

4:1. How beautiful is the chaste generation with glory: for the memory thereof is immortal: because it is known both with God and with men.

4:2. When it is present, they imitate it: and they desire it, when it hath withdrawn itself, and it triumpheth crowned for ever, winning the reward of undefiled conflicts.

4:3. But the multiplied brood of the wicked shall not thrive, and bastard slips shall not take deep root, nor any fast foundation.

4:4. And if they flourish in branches for a time, yet standing not fast, they shall be shaken with the wind, and through the force of winds they shall be rooted out.

4:5. For the branches not being perfect, shall be broken, and their fruits shall be unprofitable, and sour to eat, and fit for nothing.

4:6. For the children that are born of unlawful beds, are witnesses of wickedness against their parents in their trial.

4:7. But the just man, if he be prevented with death, shall be in rest.

4:8. For venerable old age is not that of long time, nor counted by the number of years: but the understanding of a man is grey hairs.

4:9. And a spotless life is old age.

4:10. He pleased God, and was beloved, and living among sinners, he was translated.

4:11. He was taken away, lest wickedness should alter his understanding, or deceit beguile his soul.

4:12. For the bewitching of vanity obscureth good things, and the wandering of concupiscence overturneth the innocent mind.

4:13. Being made perfect in a short space, he fulfilled a long time.

4:14. For his soul pleased God: therefore he hastened to bring him out of the midst of iniquities: but the people see this, and understand not, nor lay up such things in their hearts:

4:15. That the grace of God, and his mercy is with his saints, and that he hath respect to his chosen.

4:16. But the just that is dead, condem-

neth the wicked that are living, and youth soon ended, the long life of the unjust.

4:17. For they shall see the end of the wise man, and it shall not understand what God hath designed for him, and why the Lord hath set him in safety.

4:18. They shall see him, and shall despise him: but the Lord shall laugh them to scorn.

4:19. And they shall fall after this without honour, and be a reproach among the dead for ever: for he shall burst them puffed up and speechless, and shall shake them from the foundations, and they shall be utterly laid waste: they shall be in sorrow, and their memory shall perish.

4:20. They shall come with fear at the thought of their sins, and their iniquities shall stand against them to convict them.

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COMMON (???) SENSE

"THE DEBT CEILING"

(Thanks Marc)

Democrats don't understand THE DEBT CEILING.

Republicans don't understand THE DEBT CEILING.

Libertarians don't understand THE DEBT CEILING.

NO ONE understands THE DEBT CEILING.

SO - Allow me to explain ...

Let's say you come home from work and find there has been a sewer backup in your neighborhood. Your home has sewage all the way up to the ceilings.

What do you think you should do? Raise the ceilings or pump out the sewage?

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IMPEDING FREE WILL

When we are conceived, created, we are spirit and soul, and but one cell as of yet undivided. Yet we are completely human with that most wonderful of gifts named free will.

Part of the significance of free will is achieved when a person thinks and acts not just in accordance with what ever stimulates the senses, imagination, thoughts, or mind, but expands beyond reacting so-as-to initiate and incorporate planning, building, innovation, and similar qualities, characteristics, traits, and practices. For free will includes not simply whether or not we will attempt to be, or will be, in harmony with God, but also the “how”, the “why”, and even the “when”, “where”, “what”, and “who”, associated with that harmony or separation, with or from God, and each thought and act associated therewith.

We know the angels made their decisions as to whether or not they would be in harmony with and serve God instantaneously at some point, while we humans make that decision over the period and span of our individual lives. The reasons for the difference in that decision making process are based partially in the reality that angels and humans exist differently as well as have different natures. But the free will is the same - based in and being a form of image of the divine free will.

That is one of the reasons why the raising of children is such a delicate and important matter. For, while it is true that God implants as part of our human nature, and within the essence of every human, the basics of His commandments and instructions to us, we learn their application first to ourselves; and by inference and realization that other humans have

desires and needs similar to our own, we extrapolate the application of them to others.

The angels, holy and evil, know God’s standards with absolute certainty. Humans have the basics inscribed in their essence at the instant of conception, the instant of creation, but those basics are intended to grow, mature, and flower in each human as the individual grows in experience, knowledge, and hopefully in maturity.

When that maturation process is warped, stifled, or denied, an ungodly horror occurs. Often this occurs through neglect by those with the responsibility to rear a child. But it also occurs when that which is false is presented as being true. It also very often occurs through intentional destruction, denial, or control of the free will or the exercise thereof - which is quite different from the holy guidance

desired by God.

There is a great difference between informing or making information available to another so that the other will have the best information on which to exercise their free will, and presenting that which is warped or that which is false, as being accurate and true. The greatest offence, however, is the denial or impeding of another’s divine right to exercise their free will - at least as it effects themselves.

If we exclude the potential that Osama bin Laden simply was a cruel and evil person, and accept his motivation was based in his perception and appreciation of Islamic morality, and that in-so-far-as the Koran and Islamic teaching allowed, he abhorred the killings, injuries, destruction, damage, and harm he initiated, caused, and inspired, the reality remains that he attempted to deny others the divinely granted right and ability to exercise their free will. That in and of itself is

within the highest rankings of evil, within the highest and most forbidden of sins, almost equal to sin against the Holy Ghost, almost equal to “spitting on God”; in many ways a sin greater and more evil than many forms of murder.

Children have not the experience, training, or maturity required to be able to validly, fully exercise their free will. They require guidance be imposed upon them from time to time as an aspect of proper parenting.

But adults are entitled to the presumption they are able to validly exercise their free will, and children are entitled to the presumption their parents are validly parenting them. Outside of the valid exercise of the police powers inherent in government, no one has the right to abrogate these principles.

Therefore, when, instead of attempting to guide those who are validly able to fully exercise their free will, one attempts to impose their own will upon the other, that is the commission of a great evil.

That is but one of the great evils in which Osama bin Laden engaged. But at root it was part of the foundation of all the evils he wrought.

Pray tell, what other than the immediacy of the measure of violence, is there to distinguish and differentiate in the motivations, actions, and effects, especially the effects upon proper exercise of free will, of that wrought by Osama bin Laden, and that wrought and in process of bring wrought by President Barack Obama? Nothing. What about other of our government officials?

Improper impediment of the proper exercise of free will is always a great evil, resulting in great evil. It must be constantly opposed for we are constantly faced with its attempted imposition.

Ref: Apoc. 1:1-5; Mat. 18:1-10

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But it also occurs when that which is false is presented as being true. It also very often occurs through intentional destruction, denial, or control of the free will or the exercise thereof

REPAINTING THE CHURCH
 HUMOR
 (Thanks Mike)

There was a Scottish painter named Smokey MacGregor who was very interested in making a penny where he could, so he often thinned down his paint to make it go a wee bit further.

As it happened, he got away with this for some time. Eventually the local church decided to do a big restoration job on the outside of one of their biggest buildings.

Smokey put in a bid; and because his price was so low, he got the job.

So he set about erecting the scaffolding and setting up the planks, and buying the paint and, yes, I am sorry to say, thinning it down with turpentine.

Well, Smokey was up on the scaffolding, painting away, the job nearly completed, when suddenly there was a horrendous clap of thunder, the sky opened, and the rain poured down, washing the thinned paint from all over the church and knocking Smokey clear off the scaffold to land on the lawn among the gravestones, surrounded by telltale puddles of the thinned and useless paint.

Smokey was no fool. He knew this was a judgment from the Almighty, so he got down on his knees and cried,

"Oh, God, Oh, God, forgive me. What should I do?"

And from the thunder, a mighty voice spoke,

"Repaint! Repaint!

And thin no more!"

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**WHAT IS REQUIRED TO
 BECOME HOLY? WHY DO
 IT?**

What is required to become holy?

AXIOM: You must desire to be holy; that desire must override and be stronger than any other desire; and you must diligently pursue attaining holiness.

Why would one desire to be holy instead of just being good?

Because being good does not result in the reward of eternal happiness with God in heaven for all eternity. But being holy does.

A good person is not necessarily a holy person, but a holy person is of necessity and by definition a good person.

Being good will assist one to become holy, and one can not be holy unless one also is good. Therefore, be good, do good things but do them not just because they are good and not just because they are proper but do them also because they are what God desires of you and because you desire to do and to be what God desires you to do and to be. But most importantly, be good and do good because so being and so doing are what God is and does, and because you desire to be as much like God as is possible. Make the reason you desire to be as much like God as possible not that you wish to attain a happy eternal reward but because you love God not to the exclusion of all else but with a fervor and intensity far greater than that with which and for which you love anything else. Then begin to love all which God has created in increasing measure, attempting to love all of which God has created with the same measure you love God, simultaneously increasing your measure of love for God to ap-

Utilize this truth, this AXIOM: There is nothing more intimidating to the devil than love of and for God. There is nothing in creation stronger than love of and for God. The only thing stronger than love of and for God is God.

proach its being incapable of being measured.

Hear the word of God, and keep it. Then you will be blessed. Hear the word of God, and keep it, because you fear hell, and you will receive the reward of those who avoid evil out of fear. Hear the word of God, and keep it, because so doing is good, and you will receive the reward of being good. Hear the word of God, and keep it, because of love of and for God, because the holiest of all men, the God-Man Jesus Christ, so did, and so do out of love for and of God, and you will receive the reward of eternal union with the God-Man Jesus Christ, and God the Father, and God the Holy Spirit.

Fasting because you are instructed to fast will result in the reward received by those who follow instructions. Fasting because of love of and for God, because the holiest of all men, the God-Man Je-

sus Christ, so did, and so do out of love for and of God, and you will receive the reward of eternal union with the God-Man Jesus Christ, and God the Father, and God the Holy Spirit.

Pray because you are instructed to pray will result in the reward received by those who follow instructions. Pray because of love of and for God, because the holiest of all men, the God-Man Jesus Christ, so did, and so do out of love for and of God, and you will receive the reward of eternal union with the God-Man Jesus Christ, and God the Father, and God the Holy Spirit.

Be and do good and avoid sin because you are instructed to be and do good and to avoid sin and you will receive the reward received by those who follow instructions. But be and do good and avoid sin because of love of and for God, because the holiest of all men, the

(Continued AXIOM on page 9)

(Continued AXIOM from page 8)

God-Man Jesus Christ, so did, and so do out of love for and of God, and you will receive the reward of eternal union with the God-Man Jesus Christ, and God the Father, and God the Holy Spirit.

Utilize this truth, this **AXIOM**: There is nothing more intimidating to the devil than love of and for God. There is nothing in creation stronger than love of and for God. The only thing stronger than love of and for God is God.

Utilize this truth; live this truth; be in accord and harmony with this truth; and you will achieve this truth. Achieve this truth and you need fear no devil, no evil spirit, no sin, nor any catastrophe of the natural world. Devils and evil spirits may confront you, sin may tempt you, and catastrophe of the natural world may befall you, but they will be as nothing because you will have ascertained and are pursuing to the exclusion of all else, that **Only** which is of value - God.

You will continue to love others, to seek justice and cringe and be disgusted with injustice, to appreciate good and abhor evil. But you will love holiness and hate sin because of Divine Love for God.

Ref: Ephes. 5:1-9; Luke 11:14-28

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(Continued ADVENT from page 1)

human beings as well as different societies and mankind as a whole.

But there was a fairly universal sense of anticipation and wondering or at the very least, curiosity - a time of advent which lasted for thousands of years.

Now that He has come, in the modern, materialistic world of today, very few people seem to exhibit any sense of anticipation in the celebration of His birthday.

Every individual should experience anticipation of the celebration of this event. The level of anticipation should be greater than the highest level experienced

for any other event, except, perhaps, reception of the Sacraments, or death.

In explaining the level of anticipation it is useful to use examples of anxiety which are easily understood, in a manner to parallel anticipation. In a sense, having anxiety correlate to anticipation, and joy correlate to relief. Using this form of simile, when a person needs to relieve their bladder or otherwise use toilet facilities, and none are readily available, as the need increases the level of anxiety increases. When the proper facilities are found, the relief experienced is second only to the actual relieving of the necessity itself.

In the celebration of the event which has already occurred, the birth of the Saviour of the world, the level of anticipation should greatly exceed the toilet anxiety, and the joy in the celebration should greatly exceed the toilet relief.

Some may find this example vulgar, but the correlation is readily comprehended and appreciated.

In both situations there is a desperate need - even though many seem to be unaware of the desperate need mankind had and continues to have for the Saviour.

There are many other examples which would have conveyed a similar sense, such as hunger, or desire for tobacco, alcohol, or a narcotic. But very few convey the sense of desperation, anxiety, need, and multi level relief as this example. And each of these has a correspondent in Advent and in Christmas.

There is another aspect of advent, of anticipation, of preparation, and of the event of the Birth of the Saviour in which it behooves us to participate. That aspect is reality - reality saturated with honesty, truthfulness, and accuracy.

We anticipate, prepare for, and

celebrate the birth of the Saviour Who is God and Who has added a complete and perfect human nature to His Divine Nature. This not just a super powerful and intelligent man. This is the Creator and sustainer of everything.

No one else has the ability to create, especially to create out of nothing. He also sustains what He has created, and no one else has that ability.

He also is perfect, always accurate, means what He says and what He teaches, and does what He states He will do.

We do not serve our best interest if we do not believe we must do what He has expressed as His desires, or if we attempt to modify or make exceptions to His expressed instructions.

God is not someone with Whom we are able to argue and be successful. If we have been contrary with God, there is no higher authority to which we are able to appeal or before which we are able to attempt to justify our contrariness. God actually does know everything, even that which we retain in the deepest parts of our minds so that even we are only remotely aware of that which is hidden.

As we develop the ability to, and actually practice and participate in, honestly preparing to celebrate the birth of the Saviour, we strengthen our focus on God and more consistently relegate to minor levels of importance anything which does not further our goal of eternal salvation.

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

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CHILDREN'S PAGE

The Orthodox - Basilian Catechism

LESSON THIRTY-SEVENTH: On the Last Judgment and the Res- urrection, Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven

Q. 1371. When will Christ judge us?

A. Christ will judge us immediately after our death, and on the last day.

Q. 1372. What is the judgment called which we have to undergo immediately after death?

A. The judgment we have to undergo immediately after death is called the Particular Judgment.

Q. 1373. Where will the particular judgment be held?

A. The particular judgment will be held in the place where each person dies, and the soul will go immediately to its reward or punishment.

Q. 1374. What is the judgment called which all men have to undergo on the last day?

A. The judgment which all men have to undergo on the last day is called the General Judgment.

Q. 1375. Will the sentence given at the particular judgment be changed at the general judgment?

A. The sentence given at the particular judgment will not be changed at the general judgment, but it will be repeated and made public to all.

Q. 1376. Why does Christ judge men immediately after death?

A. Christ judges men immediately after death to reward or punish them according to their deeds.

Q. 1377. How may we daily prepare for our judgment?

A. We may daily prepare for our judgment by a good examination of conscience, in which we will discover our sins and learn to fear the punishment

they deserve.

Q. 1378. What are the rewards or punishments appointed for men's souls after the Particular Judgment?

A. The rewards or punishments appointed for men's souls after the Particular Judgment are Heaven, Purgatory, and Hell.

Q. 1379. What is Hell?

A. Hell is a state to which the wicked are condemned, and in which they are deprived of the sight of God for all eternity, and are in dreadful torments.

Q. 1380. Will the damned suffer in both mind and body?

A. The damned will suffer in both mind and body, because both mind and body had a share in their sins. The mind suffers the "pain of loss" in which it is tortured by the thought of having lost God forever, and the body suffers the "pain of sense" by which it is tortured in all its members and senses.

Q. 1381. What is Purgatory?

A. Purgatory is the state in which those suffer for a time who die guilty of venial sins, or without having satisfied for the punishment due to their sins.

Q. 1382. Why is this state called Purgatory?

A. This state is called Purgatory because in it the souls are purged or purified from all their stains; and it is not, therefore, a permanent or lasting state for the soul.

Q. 1383. Are the souls in Purgatory sure of their salvation?

A. The souls in Purgatory are sure of their salvation, and they will enter heaven as soon as they are completely purified and made worthy to enjoy that presence of God which is called the Beatific Vision, and accept harmony in and of the House of God.

Q. 1384. Do we know what souls are in Purgatory, and how long they have

to remain there?

A. We do not know what souls are in Purgatory nor how long they have to remain there; hence we continue to pray for all persons who have died apparently in the true faith and free from mortal sin. They are called the faithful departed.

Q. 1385. Can the faithful on earth help the souls in Purgatory?

A. The faithful on earth can help the souls in Purgatory by their prayers, fasts, alms, deeds; by indulgences, and by having Masses said for them.

Q. 1386. Since God loves the souls in Purgatory, why does He punish them?

A. Though God loves the souls in Purgatory, He punishes them because His holiness requires that nothing defiled may enter heaven and His justice requires that everyone be punished or rewarded according to what he deserves. It is through this purification that the soul becomes worthy in the person and in the person's desires and behavior.

Q. 1387. If every one is judged immediately after death, what need is there of a general judgment?

A. There is need of a general judgment, though every one is judged immediately after death, that the providence of God, which, on earth, often permits the good to suffer and the wicked to prosper, may in the end appear just before all men.

Q. 1388. What is meant by "the Providence of God"?

A. By "the Providence of God" is meant the manner in which He preserves, provides for, rules and governs the world and directs all things by His infinite Will.

Q. 1389. Are there other reasons for the general judgment?

A. There are other reasons for the general judgment, and especially that Christ Our Lord may receive from the

(Continued CHILDREN PAGE on page 11)

CHILDREN'S PAGE

(Continued CHILDREN PAGE from page 10)

whole world the honor denied Him at His first coming, and that all may be forced to acknowledge Him their God and Redeemer.

Q. 1390. Will our bodies share in the reward or punishment of our souls?

A. Our bodies will share in the reward or punishment of our souls, because through the resurrection they will again be united to them.

Q. 1391. When will the general resurrection or rising of all the dead take place?

A. The general resurrection or rising of all the dead will take place at the general judgment, when the same bodies in which we lived on earth will come forth from the grave and be united to our souls and remain united with them forever either in heaven or in hell.

Q. 1392. In what state will the bodies of the just rise?

A. The bodies of the just will rise glorious and immortal.

Q. 1393. Will the bodies of the damned also rise?

A. The bodies of the damned will also rise, but they will be condemned to eternal punishment.

Q. 1394. Why do we show respect for the bodies of the dead?

A. We show respect for the bodies of the dead because they were the dwelling-place of the soul, the medium through which it received the Sacraments, and because they were created to occupy a place in heaven.

Q. 1395. What is Heaven?

A. Heaven is the state of everlasting life in which we see God face to face, are made like unto Him in glory, and enjoy eternal happiness.

Q. 1396. In what does the happiness in heaven consist?

A. The happiness in heaven consists in

seeing the beauty of God, in knowing Him as He is, and in having every desire fully satisfied.

Q. 1397. What does St. Paul say of heaven?

A. St. Paul says of heaven, "That eye hath not seen. nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man what things God hath prepared for them that love Him." (I. Cor. ii., 9.)

Q. 1398. Are the rewards in heaven and the punishments in hell the same for all who enter into either of these states?

A. The rewards of heaven and the punishments in hell are not the same for all who enter into either of these states, because each one's reward or punishment is in proportion to the amount of good or evil he has done in this world. But as heaven and hell are everlasting, each one will enjoy his reward or suffer his punishment forever.

Q. 1399. What words should we bear always in mind?

A. We should bear always in mind these words of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul, or what exchange shall a man give for his soul? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then will He render to every man according to his works."

Q. 1400. Name some of the more essential religious truths we must know and believe.

A. Some of the more essential religious truths we must know and believe are:

1. That there is but one God, and He will reward the good and punish the wicked.
2. That in God there are three Divine Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and these Divine Persons are called the Blessed Trinity.
3. That Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, became man and

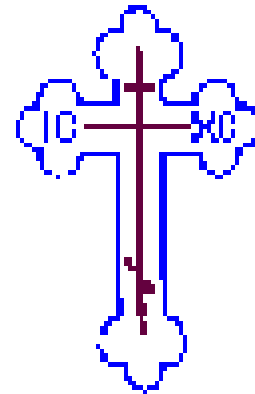
died for our redemption.

4. That the grace of God is necessary for our salvation.

5. That the human soul is immortal.

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END



BLONDE HUMOR

(Thank you Patricia) (She is a blonde)

A blonde is flying in a two-seater airplane with just the pilot.

He has a heart attack and dies. She, frantic, calls out a May Day.

"May Day! May Day! Help me! Help me! My pilot had a heart attack and is dead. And I don't know how to fly. Help me! Please help me!"

She hears a voice over the radio saying:

"This is Air Traffic Control and I have you loud and clear. I will talk you through this and get you back on the ground. I've had a lot of experience with this kind of problem. Now, just take a deep breath. Everything will be fine! Now give me your height and position."

She says, "I'm 5'4" and I'm in the front seat."

"O.K.," says the voice on the radio....
"Repeat after me: "Our Father. . .Who art in Heaven....."

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THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS NOT A BIG HOUSE AND OTHER EARTHLY RICHES FOR YOU

The Kingdom of Heaven, whether on Earth or in the life to come, has nothing to do with Earthly riches.

Quite simply, Jesus Christ, God, became human while remaining divine, taught The Way, endured His passion and death, NOT so that you could get a Cadillac, avoid bankruptcy, get a big house, marry a sex-pot, be cured of a physical defect or illness, "get your miracle" or obtain any other gain, advantage, or thing of this material world. He so did that you would have the opportunity - **THE OPPORTUNITY** - to be united with God for all eternity in heaven.

Like the tree in which the birds of the air find a place of rest and security, it is free to all who desire to go there. But just as a bird may roost elsewhere, if a person does not make the effort to enter, no one will push them in. If a person chooses to live where material things are paramount, they will not find a place to live in the tree of life.

Anyone who simply pays even the slightest attention to what Jesus Christ actually did, said, and taught will know that His kingdom is not of this world.

Despite this fact, the world is full of individuals who call themselves Christians, and whose focus is on what they can get in this material world. They are led by preachers who teach getting things of this world through Christianity. These preachers and their followers consider themselves to be successful only if they actually do obtain an overabundance of material wealth - which many of them do. But they are not Christians. They do not even teach or practice their own brand of Christianity. Their only association with Christianity is their self proclaimed association with Christianity. And their self proclamation of association is as effective as if they had self proclaimed their flesh to be flexible granite.

We are fast approaching two related periods in the Church calendar: Advent and Christmas. During Advent we prepare for the celebration of the Nativity. On the Nativity we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, God, in human nature combined with His eternal Divine nature. And at Epiphany we celebrate the revelation of the Christ to the Gentiles and our inclusion in the salvation He makes available to humankind.

If God chooses to intervene in your life in an unusual manner and in that intervention provide you with an overabundance of the things of this world, ask Him for the grace to withstand the temptations which accompany that overabundance. If He chooses to intervene in your life in an unusual manner

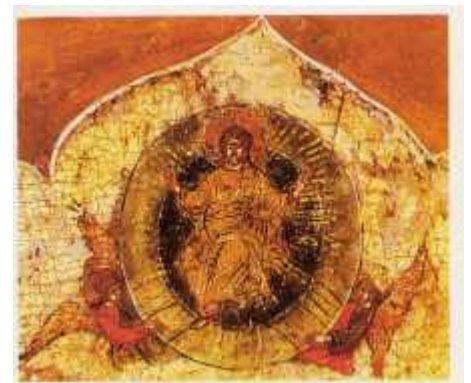
and cause you to lack even the necessities of life, ask Him for the grace to withstand the temptations which accompany those necessitous circumstances. If He chooses to intervene in your life in an unusual manner and cause you to have a life wherein your needs and realistic desires of life are met, ask Him for the grace to withstand the temptations which accompany those circumstances.

If He does not intervene in your life - well that simply does not happen. God constantly intervenes in the life of every human being. Occasionally, an individual actually realizes, acknowledges, accepts, and attempts to flow with or follow this intervention. But only occasionally.

It is not evil to ask God to assist you in the needs of this life. But it is evil to focus only on this life. And it is foolish to neglect seeking God's assistance in attaining that for which He became human - eternal salvation where a big house, fancy automobile, gold, and pretties are meaningless.

Ref: 1 Thes. 1:2-10; Mat. 13:31-35

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Ascension

LEADING OTHERS TO CHRIST

“and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with much power and majesty,” For many of those who see this event, and for many of those who do not live long enough to see it, there will be no benefit from the second coming of the Son of God, nor from the first, for they have neglected God.

For those who believe in God, and that God is active, and especially for true Christians, the need to teach that there really is a God, and that He really is active, is something which is not often considered. But all one need do is observe the world in which we live and the reality of this need becomes obvious.

We are each charged by God with, amongst other things, living in accordance with His instructions, teaching His Gospel, leading others to Him, and attaining the benefits of Christ’s Sacrifice for ourselves and for others.

Regarding those who believe in God, our task is a matter of assisting them to believe in God as He is, to develop Faith, Hope, and Charity, and to live in accordance with God’s instructions through utilization of the Sacraments.

Regarding those who believe Jesus Christ is God, and in the Blessed Trinity, our task is a matter of assisting them to receive and accept true Faith from which are developed Hope and Charity, to desire to live and to actually live in accordance with God’s instructions through utilization of the Sacraments.

A prayer at the beginning of the Divine Liturgy for the Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost states: *“Arouse, we beseech Thee, O Lord, the wills of Thy faithful, that, by more earnestly following after the fruit of the divine work, they may the more abundantly partake of Thy mercies.”* This prayer has great significance in its application to those who merely believe Jesus Christ

is God, and even greater significance in its application to those who have true Faith.

But it has no application to those who do not believe Jesus Christ is God, no application to those who do believe He is God but do not care or for whom that belief carries no significance, no application to those who do not believe there is a God or for whom whether or not there is a God is of no significance.

There is a multitude of such people and we must be concerned for their eternal welfare for such concern is part of being a Christian. Since God is concerned for their eternal welfare, we too must be concerned. And we are the instruments God has chosen to do something about the situation, to do something positive about the problem.

Prayer is, of course, of paramount importance. But not just prayer that people in general, or that certain specific persons, will acquire Faith and live in accordance with Faith. Of great importance is prayer that you yourself will be instrumental in leading others to seek and to accept true Faith and to live in accordance with Faith, Hope, Charity, God’s instructions and will, and receive the benefit of the Sacraments through their frequent reception.

That is a fairly large and impressive prayer. But it is one which is simple in being brought to real application.

Simply as an example: In your work be careful, professional, working with pride in the work, anticipating being proud of the result, all because in your work you are dealing with what God has created and are modifying it to its better utilization within a specific application. This somewhat ostentatious verbiage is quickly brought into realistic application when applied to a mother changing her baby’s diaper. Of course she changes the diaper because it benefits the baby and removes a disagreeable odor and condition. But if she realizes she is taking care of someone God created, and that in this she is assisting

God in a manner in which He approves, then if someone comments to the effect that she takes good care of her baby, she can incorporate love for her baby, pride in being a good mother, and greater pride in being chosen by God to take care of the baby He created and entrusted unto her, into a brief response. In so doing she will expose that person to the concept of the reality of God, and may nudge that person into a realistic relationship with God.

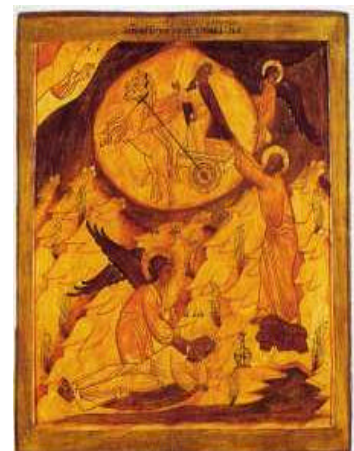
It is the same with everything we do. If we do everything we do for love of God, then, not only will we benefit, but we will complete each task better. These facts will be obvious to others, and if someone comments on our work, we can incorporate love of God into a response.

It may seem absurd in the abstract, but if you are washing your automobile and doing a careful job of it, and someone says, “You sure take good care of that car,” you could easily respond with: “I worked hard to acquire it, but God is the one Who enabled me to work to buy it and He made everything the car is made out of. So I have to take good care of it because of God’s involvement.”

Rephrase it so it works better; but do it, bring yourself closer to God, and lead someone else to God.

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

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Elijah (Elias) in the Chariot

RECIPES FOR THE HOLY SUPPER of the Vigil of The Nativity (Christmas Eve Supper)

(The text of the following recipes and associated traditions have been in our files for decades . . . but we have no ready means of ascertaining their ultimate origin. In publishing them we hope we are not infringing upon anyone's prerogatives. The recipes simply are too precious to be allowed to evaporate.)

Twelve Traditional Orthodox (and Eastern Catholic) Courses or Dishes

The Vigil of the Nativity is within the fast - it is a fast day. Therefore, meat and meat products or by-products may not be used . . . but dairy products are not considered a meat by-product.

There is a single plate upon which is a whole clove of garlic for each person at the table, and a small dish of honey.

When the family has finished the prayers before the meal and all are seated, the head of the family (Patriarch or Matriarch - but NOT some visiting or guest Priest) proceeds around the table with the plate.

With the clove of garlic, he / she traces the sign of the cross on the forehead, then dips it into the honey, then puts it into the mouth of the person on whom he has just traced the sign of the cross. This is a reminder that life is both bitter and sweet at the same time.

Each of the other dishes are designed to remind the "diners" of various other aspects of the faith.

DISHES - "MENU":

Wine (Optional)
Bread-Garlic-Honey
Mushroom Soup
Lima Beans
Fish
Pirohi

Bobalki
Mushroom Stuffed Cabbage
Peas
Stewed Fruit
Fresh Fruit
Nuts
Coffee-Tea

CHRISTMAS EVE BREAD

INGREDIENTS:

1 pkg. dry yeast
1/2 cup lukewarm water
1/8 tsp. salt
1 tbsp. sugar
4 tbsp. sugar
6 cups flour
1 tsp. salt
4 tbsp. salad oil

Dissolve the yeast in warm water, along with 1/8 tsp. salt and 1 tbsp. sugar. Set in a warm place to proof. Sift 6 cups of flour into a deep bowl, add 2 cups of warm water, 4 tbsp. sugar, 1 tsp. salt, 4 tbsp. salad oil. Knead well and set aside to rise.

When double in bulk, punch down, and let rise a second time until doubled. Punch down and divide the dough into two parts. Shape one part into a round bread loaf, cover and let it stand for about 20 minutes. (The second part will be used for Bobalki...see below). Punch down the bread and re-shape it. Place it into a greased pan and allow to rise until double in bulk. Bake at 350 degrees for one hour.

CHRISTMAS EVE BOBALKI

Use the other half of the bread dough for the Bobalki. Knead and roll the dough on a floured board into a rope about 1 inch in diameter. Cut the rope and roll the chunks into balls about 1 inch in diameter. Place them on a floured pan and let them rise for about 15 minutes. Bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes, or until *just slightly* brown. Cook, then place them into a deep bowl, and pour boiling water over them to soak just a little. Drain the bread balls in a colander, let stand

several hours in a refrigerator before serving.

Mix 1/2 cup of ground poppy seed and 1/4 cup of sugar, then add to the bobalki. Let stand several hours in a refrigerator before serving. Some Bobalki are served with sweet cabbage or sauerkraut. Saute the cabbage or sauerkraut with some onion in salad oil, then mix it with the Bobalki.

PIROHI

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup flour
1 egg
about 1 tbsp. water

Mix the flour and egg with enough water to make a soft dough. Knead well. Roll the dough out on a floured board until it's thin and cut into squares. Place 1 tsp. of filling on each square. Fold in half, making a triangle. Pinch the edges well to keep the filling inside. Drop the triangles into boiling salted water until they rise to the surface. Cook another five minutes. Rinse in a colander with HOT water. Drain. Pour melted butter over the pirohi and serve.

CHEESE FILLING: 1/2 cup dry cottage cheese, 1 egg yolk, 1 tsp. butter, pinch of salt. Mix together.

POTATO FILLING: 1 large potato cooked and smashed. Add 1 tablespoon butter. (Optional - use some grated cheese for taste, either Parmesan, or Pecorino, or Colby, or Mild Cheddar).

LEKVAR FILLING: Lekvar can be purchased in most specialty shops, and in many supermarkets. You may also use sauerkraut as a filling. Drain and rinse the sauerkraut in cold water. Brown some diced onion in some shortening and add the sauerkraut to cook for a few minutes.

(Continued SUPPER on page 15)

(Continued SUPPER from page 14)

NUT ROLLS

INGREDIENTS:

- 8 cups flour
- 2 cups scalded milk
- 4 egg yolks
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 large yeast cake or 3 pkgs. dry yeast
- 1/2 lb. butter
- 1/2 lb. Crisco
- 1 tbsp. salt
- 1-1/2 tsp. vanilla

Dissolve the yeast in one cup of lukewarm milk. Stir well. Add the sugar, shortening and salt to the rest of the milk and let cool. Beat the egg slightly and add to the mixture, then add the yeast mixture to the rest of the lukewarm mixture. Put half of the flour in a bowl and add the mixture above a little at a time. Mix well. Add the remainder of the flour to make a soft dough using just enough flour to knead without sticking. Cover. Let rise to double in bulk.

Keep in a warm place. Takes about two hours to rise. Knead down a little to get out the puffiness. Divide into 6 parts and let stand for ten minutes. Roll out and spread with the nut mixture. Roll tightly and place on a greased baking sheet, and let rise for about an hour. Bake in a 350 degree oven for 35 to 40 minutes. Brush each roll with slightly beaten egg before baking. Brush with melted butter after baking, while the roll is still hot.

NUT MIXTURE:

- 4 lbs. ground nuts
- 4 cups sugar
- 1 stick melted butter
- 1/4 cup milk (enough to moisten the nut mixture)

PAGACH

INGREDIENTS:

- 10 cups flour
- 2 yeast cakes (or 2 pck. dry yeast)
- 2 sticks margarine
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 2 tbsp. salt
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 2-1/2 cups milk (more, if necessary)

Knead all together until well blended as for bread dough. Let rise until double in bulk in a warm place; punch down and let rise again. Turn out on a floured board, separate into 8 or 10 portions. Let rise until light. With a rolling pin flatten enough to place about 1 cup of filling in the center of each mound of the dough. Bring the dough up over the mound and pinch together to form a round ball. Let rest about 1/2 hour with the filling, then carefully roll it out as thin as you want it. Place on a cookie sheet. Bake until golden brown, then butter it on both sides. Rounds should be about 14 inches in diameter or as thin as you like them. For filling you may use fried cabbage, potato, cheese, or lekvar.

MACHANKA
(MUSHROOM SOUP)

If you don't have fresh mushrooms, use this as a substitute for fresh mushroom soup.

Wash some dried mushrooms and soak them overnight in water. In the morning, cook the mushrooms *in the same water*. Add salt and pepper to taste. Cook slowly for two hours or more.

Zaprashka (soup thickener)

Brown 1 chopped onion in 2 tablespoons of salad oil, add the browned onion to the mushroom soup. To the rest of the oil, add 2 tablespoons of flour *slowly*, brown, and then add it to the mushroom soup for thickener. Cook for a few minutes and serve hot.

MUSHROOM SOUP

INGREDIENTS:

- 7 cups fresh mushrooms (chopped)
- 3 quarts water
- 1 quart sauerkraut juice salt and pepper (to taste)
- 1 small onion
- 3 tbsp. butter
- 3 tbsp. flour

Cook the mushrooms in water for about an hour. Brown the butter and the onions; add the flour and brown well. Add the sauerkraut juice and boil for 5 minutes. Add the mixture to the soup and boil for 1/2 an hour longer.

GREEN SPLIT PEA SOUP

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 lb. dry green split peas
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 celery stalk, diced

Soak the peas in cold water overnight. Drain and add 6 to 7 cups of water, onion and celery. Bring to a boil, skim the starch that comes to the top from time to time. Lower the heat and simmer for 2 or 3 hours. Stir to prevent sticking. Add more water for the desired thickness. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

See Zaprashka above for soup thickener.

You can add 1 lb. baby lima beans (dry) instead of peas, if you wish.

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TWO FOLD ATTACK ON DOGMA AND MORALITY REGARDING NUN'S BOOK ON "SEXUALITY" AND VATICAN'S RESPONSE

Advocating homosexual marriage as a means of reducing hatred and stigmatization of gay people, United States nun, Sister Margaret Farley drew a weak response from the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (as reported by the BBS on 4 June 2012).

According to the report, in her book, *Just Love*, Sister Farley, a member of the Sisters of Mercy and professor emeritus of Christian ethics at Yale University, takes the position "same-sex oriented persons as well as their activities can and should be respected". She advocates a framework for sexual ethics that "uses a criteria of justice" in evaluating sexual relations.

The Vatican (The Holy Roman Catholic Church) seems to have limited its response to stating the nun's ideas on masturbation, homosexual acts, homosexual unions and remarriage are in "direct contradiction" with Catholic teaching, and to banning the use of her book by Catholic teachers. The statement also maintains standard and established dogma, that homosexual acts are "intrinsically disordered" and "contrary to the natural law".

In a statement Sister Farley said she had proposed a framework for sexual ethics that "uses a criteria of justice" in evaluating sexual relations. "The fact that Christians (and others) have achieved new knowledge and deeper understanding of human embodiment and sexuality seems to require that we at least examine the possibility of development in sexual ethics."

WHAT SHOULD BE OBVIOUS

There is absolutely no nexus, no connection, no equality, vis a vis ethics and dogma, between ethical conduct and "operating divinely".

In the (now far distant) past it often was proper to consider ethics as having a relationship to morals. Considering ethics to be a system of moral principles was not inaccurate. But ethics may be, can be, and are changed. Standards of ethics and principles of ethics **CHANGE**. But Dogma, and moral principles of or within or established under or in accordance with Dogma, the unchanging Dogma established by and issued by the true unchanging and only God, never change.

A more proper definition of ethics is: that branch of philosophy dealing with values relating to human conduct, with respect to the rightness and wrongness of certain actions and to the goodness and badness of the motives and ends of such actions, as established or accepted by a culture or a society, at a particular instant in time.

To operate Divinely, however, is to conduct one's self in accordance with the unchanging Dogma which comes from God; in accordance with the never changing standards established by God Himself.

Sister Farley either has confused "ethics" and "operating divinely", or human authority and divine authority, or human standards (which may and obviously do change) and Divine standards (which do not change), or she has decided she may replace God's standards with her own standards.

Nuns generally are respected. While some nuns carry the specter of severity, even these also carry the mantle of never leading anyone astray from God. Sister Farley's teachings and their promulgation serve to lead astray those whom they reach. For her teachings regarding sex, sexual relations, sexuality, and sexual actions, directly oppose those teachings from God - deposited within the Dogma from God and maintained by the True Church - on the same subject.

The Vatican's response seem to the Or-

thodox observer, to be very weak.

Sister Farley is a Roman Catholic nun, a member of a Roman Catholic religious order. When measured by both Orthodox and Roman Catholic Dogma, what Sister Farley advocates is sin - serious sin, mortal sin.

While she is morally entitled to every protection afforded by Roman Canon Law and the Roman Legal - Judicial system, there is neither evidence nor indication Sister Farley is under any form of discipline. In effect the Vatican has limited its response to stating Sister Farley's positions regarding these matters is wrong or in error, and that her book may not be used by Catholic teachers.

She apparently remains a member in good standing of the Sisters of Mercy, and of the Roman Catholic Church, and able to receive Holy Communion in the Roman Catholic Church.

Perhaps Sister Farley has been contacted by a Roman Catholic Priest or Bishop or other, appropriate, Roman Catholic person of authority. Perhaps in that contact she has been requested or advised to recant; or instructed to contemplate (under guidance and supervision); or given the choice to conform to Dogma or leave the Sisters of Mercy; or something else along those lines.

Perhaps. But since there is neither evidence nor indication of such procedures or actions, the observer - including Roman Catholic clergy, religious, and laity - is left with the impression the Roman Catholic Church - the Vatican - is not pursuing this matter.

Does not being a good shepherd require Sister Farley be counseled regarding the heresies she has advocated? Does it not also mandate the clergy, religious, and laity, receive some indication the Church is maintaining propriety? Should she not, at the very least, be publicly denied reception of Holy Communion - unless she recants?

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Southern Boys
(Humor) (Thanks Marc)

His name was Bubba, he was from Alabama ... and he needed a loan, so ... he walked into a bank in New York City and asked for the loan officer. He told the loan officer that he was going to Paris for an International Redneck Festival for two weeks and needed to borrow \$5,000 and that he was not a depositor of the bank.

The bank officer told him that the bank would need some form of security for the loan, so the Redneck handed over the keys to a new Ferrari. The car was parked on the street in front of the bank. The Redneck produced the title and everything checked out. The loan officer agreed to hold the car as collateral for the loan and apologized for having to charge 12% interest.

Later, the bank's president and its officers all enjoyed a good laugh at the Redneck from the South for using a \$250,000 Ferrari as collateral for a \$5,000 loan. An employee of the bank then drove the Ferrari into the bank's private underground garage and parked it.

Two weeks later, the Redneck returned, repaid the \$5,000 and the interest of \$23.07. The loan officer said, "Sir, we are very happy to have had your business, and this transaction has worked out very nicely, but we are a little puzzled. While you were away, we checked you out on Dunn & Bradstreet and found that you are a Distinguished Alumni from The University of Alabama, a highly sophisticated investor and multi-millionaire with real estate and financial interests all over the world. Your investments include a large number of wind turbines around Sweetwater, Texas. What puzzles us is, why would you bother to borrow \$5,000?"

The good 'ole boy replied, "Where else in New York City can I park my car for two weeks for only \$23.07 and expect it to be there when I return?"

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COMMENTS ON SOME INDICATORS OF OUR TIMES

Spatulas - If you go to any of the major retail outlets to purchase a spatula and look only at the labels on the products and not at the products in all probability you will never find a spatula. This is because a spatula is now labeled as a turner - unless the label is in Spanish in which instance it may be labeled "espatula". If you seek a slotted spatula it will be labeled "slotted turner". This is without regard as to whether the spatula was manufactured in China, the U.S.A., or elsewhere. Perhaps those whose responsibility in the manufacturing of spatulas is to label the product do not possess the ability to spell "spatula", or perhaps they do not know that the product is a spatula, or perhaps they do not know what a spatula is, or perhaps the public is generally deficient in one or more of these areas and those responsible for the labeling are simply responding to this general deficiency. These people probably need to have toilet paper packages be printed with illustrated use instructions. Incidentally, the "slotted turner" made in China under the label of a woman celebrity cost \$2.98, apparently the same "slotted turner" under the store label cost \$1.89, and the generic "slotted turner" made in the U.S.A. cost 89 cents.

Interest Rates On Deposits - Interest rates on bank deposits - CD's etc - are tied to the bank's earnings. The Federal Reserve Bank and federal government policies are keeping loan interest rates low. The public is told this is to encourage individuals and businesses to borrow money to stimulate the economy. Well, the situation is much more complicated than can be covered in a short paragraph . . . **BUT** (you knew there had to be a "but") it seems as though the "powers that be" are also stating, "If you do not like the low interest rates on your savings then buy stocks." Well, if this is what actually is being promoted, recent history shows even the "big guys" can not trust those who run the stock market, which leaves the "little

guys" in a precarious position. **ALSO REMEMBER**, the money received from selling its stock is used by a company to make capital investments which enable the company to provide products and services. But consumers must purchase those products and services. If there is no demand or increase in demand for the products and services the money received from the stock sit idle and there is no reason for the company to increase its work force until there is an increase in demand for its products.

Afghanistan and Iraq - Two considerations: (1) The economic benefits which accompanied World War II; (2) The ineffective infrastructure built at American expense in Iraq and in Afghanistan and the inability of America to maintain and repair its own infrastructure:

(1) The uniforms, armaments, munitions, supplies, equipment, and material of every type and sort which were used by the American military of all branches in World War II were made in America by Americans, mainly by American owned companies, using mainly American resources. And Americans reaped the economic benefits. In the Iraq and Afghanistan war(s) those items are being made all over the world, by citizens of numerous countries, by multi-national corporations, using material from all over the world, with American money benefiting Americans very little. Therefore, there is no economic "boom" to Americans as a result of these wars.

(2) America has rebuilt the infrastructure (roads, utilities, etc) of Iraq and is building an infrastructure for Afghanistan. What was built in Iraq is so much better than what existed that Iraq should be considered an infrastructure paradise. Yet that infrastructure is already decaying due to Iraq's management of what America has provided to Iraq. Afghanistan does not have the ability - expertise - to maintain and often even lacks the ability - knowledge of how - to use that which America is building for Afghanistan. While America is doing all of this for these two countries, America is totally unable to maintain and to make necessary repairs to its own infrastructure.

(Continued **COMMENTS** on page 18)

(Continued COMMENTS from page 17)

Moral application - If you are experiencing difficulty in ascertaining the moral applications of these particular comments, or their relevance to your own eternal salvation of that of someone else, well . . . a spatula is a tool which is used to turn food during the cooking process . . .

Throat and mouth cancer - oral sex: HPV (human papillomavirus) is the (a?) cause of cervical cancer. The virus also is one of the causes of vulvar, anal, penile, and various head and neck cancers. An estimated seven percent of American teens and adults carry the human papillomavirus in their mouths. Rates of mouth and throat cancer have been climbing for nearly twenty-five years. If present trends continue, HPV will cause more cases of oral cancers than cervical cancer by 2020.. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that about 90 percent of adults have had oral sex, along with 27 percent of 15-year-old boys and 23 percent of 15-year-old girls. *Wonder if there is a connection???*

At least one Roman Catholic Bishop "gets it": Diocese of Brooklyn Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio has asked all Catholic churches and schools in the Diocese of Brooklyn to decline donations and speaking engagements from Governor Andrew Cuomo and any lawmaker who voted "yes" on the bill legalizing same-sex marriages. He declared New York's passage of legislation approving marriage between persons of the same gender / sex to be "another nail in the coffin' of marriage". Apparently the clergy and Church organizations are adhering to the Bishop's instructions. When Joseph Lentol, an assemblyman representing Brooklyn's 50th district, who openly voted for same-sex marriage, made a donation to Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish School, the donation was declined. Lentol was surprised. So were many "observers".

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THERMOMETER

(Humor)
(thanks Marc)

When you have had an 'I Hate My Job' kind of day. [Even if you're retired, you sometimes have those days], try this out.

Stop at your pharmacy and go to the thermometer section and purchase a rectal thermometer made by Johnson & Johnson.

Be very sure you get this brand.

When you get home, lock your doors, draw the curtains and disconnect the phone so you will not be disturbed.

Change into very comfortable clothing and sit in your favorite chair. Open the package and remove the thermometer.

Now, carefully place it on a table or a surface so that it will not become chipped or broken.

Now the fun part begins.

Take out the literature from the box and read it carefully.

You will notice that in small print there is a statement:

"Every Rectal Thermometer made by Johnson & Johnson is personally tested and then sanitized."

Now, close your eyes and repeat out loud five times,

"I am so glad I do not work in the thermometer quality control department at Johnson & Johnson."

Have a nice day and remember, there is always someone else with a job that is more of a pain in the butt than yours!

Now, if you haven't got a smile on your face and laughter in your heart Maybe you should go and work for Johnson and Johnson!

Enjoy life NOW - It has an expiration date!

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PROVERBS
Chapters 7 and 9

Proverbs Chapter 7

The love of wisdom is the best preservative from being led astray by temptation.

7:1. My son, keep my words, and lay up my precepts with thee. Son,

7:2. Keep my commandments, and thou shalt live: and my law as the apple of thy eye:

7:3. Bind it upon thy fingers, write it upon the tables of thy heart.

7:4. Say to wisdom: Thou art my sister: and call prudence thy friend,

7:5. That she may keep thee from the woman that is not thine, and from the stranger who sweeteneth her words.

7:6. For I looked out of the window of my house through the lattice,

7:7. And I see little ones, I behold a foolish young man,

7:8. Who passeth through the street by the corner, and goeth nigh the way of her house,

7:9. In the dark when it grows late, in the darkness and obscurity of the night.

7:10. And behold a woman meeteth him in harlot's attire, prepared to deceive souls: talkative and wandering,

7:11. Not bearing to be quiet, not able to abide still at home,

7:12. Now abroad, now in the streets, now lying in wait near the corners.

7:13. And catching the young man, she kisseth him, and with an impudent face, flattereth, saying:

7:14. I vowed victims for prosperity,

(Continued PROVERBS on page 19)

(Continued PROVERBS from page 18)
 this day I have paid my vows.

7:15. Therefore I am come out to meet thee, desirous to see thee, and I have found thee.

7:16. I have woven my bed with cords, I have covered it with painted tapestry, brought from Egypt.

7:17. I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.

7:18. Come, let us be inebriated with the breasts, and let us enjoy the desired embraces, till the day appear.

7:19. For my husband is not at home, he is gone a very long journey.

7:20. He took with him a bag of money: he will return home the day of the full moon.

7:21. She entangled him with many words, and drew him away with the flattery of her lips.

7:22. Immediately he followeth her as an ox led to be a victim, and as a lamb playing the wanton, and not knowing that he is drawn like a fool to bonds,

7:23. Till the arrow pierce his liver: as if a bird should make haste to the snare, and knoweth not that his life is in danger.

7:24. Now, therefore, my son, hear me, and attend to the words of my mouth.

7:25. Let not thy mind be drawn away in her ways: neither be thou deceived with her paths.

7:26. For she hath cast down many wounded, and the strongest have been slain by her.

7:27. Her house is the way to hell, reaching even to the inner chambers of death.

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Proverbs Chapter 9

Wisdom invites all to her feast. Folly calls another way.

9:1. Wisdom hath built herself a house, she hath hewn her out seven pillars.

9:2. She hath slain her victims, mingled her wine, and set forth her table.

9:3. She hath sent her maids to invite to the tower, and to the walls of the city:

9:4. Whosoever is a little one, let him come to me. And to the unwise she said:

9:5. Come, eat my bread, and drink the wine which I have mingled for you.

9:6. Forsake childishness, and live, and walk by the ways of prudence.

9:7. He that teacheth a scorner, doth an injury to himself; and he that rebuketh a wicked man, getteth himself a blot.

9:8. Rebuke not a scorner, lest he hate thee. Rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee.

9:9. Give an occasion to a wise man, and wisdom shall be added to him. Teach a just man, and he shall make haste to receive it.

9:10. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is prudence.

9:11. For by me shall thy days be multiplied, and years of life shall be added to thee.

9:12. If thou be wise, thou shalt be so to thyself: and if a scorner, thou alone shalt bear the evil.

9:13. A foolish woman and clamorous, and full of allurements, and knowing nothing at all,

9:14. Sat at the door of her house, upon a seat, in a high place of the city,

9:15. To call them that pass by the way, and go on their journey:

9:16. He that is a little one, let him turn to me. And to the fool she said:

9:17. Stolen waters are sweeter, and hidden bread is more pleasant.

9:18. And he did not know that giants are there, and that her guests are in the depths of hell.

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Apply the concepts not just to a woman to whom you are not married, but to all the "shiny things" that "catch your eye". As the fish often learn, that shiny thing might not taste very good, and may hide a hook.

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A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AVOIDING EVIL AND DOING GOOD

The parable of the Good Samaritan is a double example of the difference between simply avoiding committing an evil, and in actually engaging in good.

The robbers who assaulted, battered, robbed, and stripped the man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho, leaving him half dead, obviously committed evil.

The priest and the Levite who ignored the battered, naked victim, did not engage in evil by commission. But under the Natural Law both had an obligation to assist the man, and in failing to assist him, they each committed evil by omission; they committed evil by failing to do good when they could have so done, when it was within their ability so to do, without any real detriment to themselves. They did not have to pay for his medical care and for his room and board at the inn, but they easily could have cleaned and bound his wounds and clothed him even if it was just in a blanket - remember these two men were a priest and a Levite meaning they were

(Continued SAMARITAN on page 20)

(Continued SAMARITAN from page 19)
probably financially secure.

Both were religious leaders of their people, and therefore should have given good example by at least following the Natural Law which required they render what assistance was within their ability. But they did not, nor were Christ's listeners surprised.

We often do not properly realize there is a need or recognize an opportunity to do good until the opportunity is past. But a man lying beaten half to death and naked in the road obviously is in need. In our world, if we fear to attempt to render assistance, we can at the very least contact the authorities and notify them of the situation. The obviousness of the need for assistance and total helplessness of the man may have been factors which Christ wished to emphasize in making clear God's command that we love our neighbor as we love ourselves, for no one wishes to be in the situation of the beaten and robbed man.

The Good Samaritan not only avoided commission of evil, and avoided omission of doing good, but actually did good and did not so do in a miserly fashion. He did good to the fullest extent of his abilities, and to a measure far beyond what is required by the Natural Law. For he not only cleansed and bound the man's wounds, but carried him on his own transportation which means the Samaritan had to walk, and paid for his room, board, and other needs.

Had he simply cleansed and bound the man's wounds, and given him a blanket with which to cover his nakedness, he may have fulfilled the Natural Law and avoided evil by omission. But in taking care of the man beyond the minimum requirements of the Natural Law, the Samaritan engaged in good.

The lawyer to whom Our Saviour was making answer in telling the Parable of the Good Samaritan was obviously well versed in the law of Moses which was the law of the Jews. But he was impris-

oned by that same law as many people are. He would do what was required because there was a law instructing him to do certain things. He would avoid that which was prohibited because there was a law instructing him to avoid certain things. Those things which were not required would be done or not done according to his own whim at that moment. And those things which were not prohibited would be avoided or not avoided according to his whim at that moment. But for the most part, such people do what is mandatory when forced so to do, avoid what is prohibited when forced so to do, and indulge themselves whenever possible. They view the law as a forced minimum and they will do only what they are forced to do.

But the Good Samaritan viewed the law as a guide and measure by which we are reminded of the direction which we wish our lives to follow. Not as a forced minimum of what is to be done and avoided, but as a minimum standard designed to encourage one to willingly achieve far beyond that minimum.

Those who regard the law as a forced boundary and as a forced minimum constantly skirt the edge and cross the edge in ever increasing measure. They view the law as a restriction on what they have the ability to do, and as a barrier to that which they want to do.

But those who view the law as a minimum standard and guide attempt to exceed the minimum requirements, usually not in every aspect, but in those aspects wherein they have the means and ability to be readily successful in the performance of good. Then they challenge themselves and attempt to exceed the minimum in areas where they do not have the means and ability readily available to do good.

Ref: 2 Cor. 3:4-9; Luke 10:23-37

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WALES HUMOR

(Thank you Patricia)

I was in a pub on Saturday night. Had a few drinks.....

I noticed two rather large women sitting at the bar.

They both had strong accents so I asked, "Hey, are you two ladies from Scotland?"

One of them screamed, "It's WALES, you blatherin' IDIOT!"

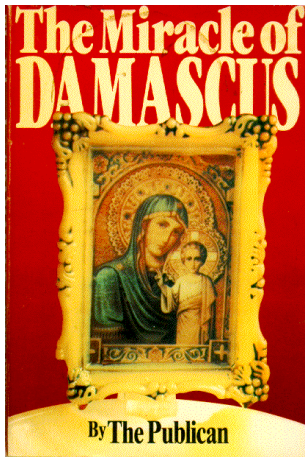
So, I immediately apologized and said, "Sorry, are you two whales from Scotland?"

That's all I remember....

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Archangel Gabriel



(Editor's Note: We wish this book did not contain negative comments regarding other purported apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary. We neither condemn nor endorse those comments; but do wish it were possible for there to be more continuity within and amongst the Marian communities.)

**THE
MIRACLE
OF
DAMASCUS
by
the publican**

(Continued)

CHAPTER 1

The Miracle of Damascus

On November 22, 1982, in the old city of Damascus, within walking distance of the House of Ananias (where Paul became the light of Christ to the gentiles), a strange new light began to shine, dim at first, but (with the grace of God) a beacon to relight the world.

A young girl named Mirna prayed over the bed of her sister-in-law, Layla. She was very sick. Two other women prayed with her, an Orthodox woman, and a Moslem woman. As they prayed, the Moslem woman noticed light coming from Mirna's hands. (Mirna didn't notice it.) After the light, oil began to flow

right out of her skin. Mayada Kowzaly shouted at her to look at her hands. Mirna, confused, didn't know what was happening nor what to do about it. Mayada quickly told her to put her hands on Layla, the sick woman. She was instantly cured.

And so the light began to shine in this bewildered young woman. Mirna had just turned 18 and had only been married six months. 1

1. She had known her husband, Nicolas Nazour, for some time. Her sister had married his brother. Nicolas had left Damascus to work in Germany and Saudi Arabia. He came back to Syria to find himself a good wife. They were both only mildly religious.

That evening her husband, Nicholas, came by to pick Mirna up. Excited, they told him what happened. He reprimanded Mirna severely. Neither of them knew what to make of it.

On November 25 Mirna's mother was cured in the same manner. But this was only a flicker of light. The true miracle of Damascus was about to start. These bizarre happenings were only paving the way for what would come that same week.

Open the Doors

November 27 is the anniversary of the apparition of the Virgin Mary to St. Catherine Laboure and the Miraculous Medal. It is also known as the start of the Age of Mary. This will become more and more relevant as this story unfolds.

At any rate, on November 27, 1982, a three-inch tall picture of the Virgin Mary and Christ Child in a cheap plastic frame began to exude oil. The oil flowed out from the bottom of the Icon and onto the floor next to Nicolas and Mirna's bed. Oil again appeared on Mirna's hands.

Nicolas went out to call all his relatives

to see what was happening. They came in and began to pray. Mirna was praying with them. Within the first hour, four dishes of oil came out of the Icon.

Soon all sound began to disappear like a vacuum from Mirna's ears. She could hear no sound at all. She looked around. Everyone was still praying out loud, but she could hear nothing. Everything was total silence. This silence lasted a long time. She laid her head on the dresser a few inches in front of the Icon. Mirna, whose real name is Mary, heard a woman's soft voice as if from inside a seashell:

MARY,

DO NOT BE FRIGHTENED. 2 I AM WITH YOU. OPEN THE DOORS AND DO NOT DEPRIVE ANYONE FROM SEEING ME...

LIGHT A CANDLE FOR ME.

2. These are the first words used by the angel at Fatima and the first words used by Mary at Fatima--"Do not be frightened."

Mirna thought she was imagining things. She was afraid to tell anyone. Two minutes went by as she thought about the words. Suddenly the lights in the house went out. Mirna had to light a candle.

The moment she lit it, the lights came back on. She remembered the words: "LIGHT A CANDLE FOR ME." She wished she had done it right away. The Icon poured continuously for four days. They gathered the oil in bowl after bowl.

From that day to this thousands of candles have been lit in the house and all over the world for the Virgin Mary The light is getting brighter each year.

The following day a Catholic priest, Father Elias Zahlaoui, was called to Nicolas' house. By the time he arrived, the

(Continued DAMASCUS on page 22)

(Continued DAMASCUS from page 21)

courtyard was filled with emotional people.

Other priests arrived. The authorities brought in a physician with four security officers. They took the picture out of its frame and discovered that oil was dropping from the Icon itself. They put it back and asked Mirna to wash her hands. She did so. They went with her to the setting room and asked her to pray in their presence. Immediately oil came from her hands. The doctor examined her hands and said to the officers, "God is great." They took pieces of cotton soaked in the oil and left the house. Since then the authorities have taken a respectful stand regarding the events at Soufanieh.

Father E. Zahlaoui asked questions of all the family. He then asked to speak with Mirna alone. He asked her some questions: "Mirna, what do you think about all that is happening?"

"I feel that my heart is missing. I don't know what is happening to me."

"Do you have the habit of praying a lot?" asked father.

"Father, don't make any illusion. I turned eighteen recently. I lived like any young girl of my age. I have been married only seven months. What do you think that I can be? My daily prayer is limited to the Lord's Prayer and a Hail Mary. Every Wednesday I accompany my mother-in-law to the Church of the Holy Cross." 3

3. Mirna and Nicolas liked to dance and swim and laugh. They were very normal. He had saved a bit of money in his travels and could speak many languages. They had only recently returned from their honeymoon in Rome where they had an audience with the Holy Father and Nicolas made his first confession in St. Peter's Cathedral.

During the meeting, Mirna's sister entered the room. She was quite upset. "Father, would you please pray with Mirna? The oil has stopped coming out

of the picture."

Father was surprised at the question and tried to avoid the request, but then asked Mirna if she would.

"As you wish, Father."

"What about all these people crowded in the room?" he asked.

"I shall send them out."

They knelt in front of the Icon. Father Zehlaoui knelt behind her so he could watch her and the Icon at the same time.

Mirna liked the oil coming from the Icon, but she didn't like it coming from her hands. So, in a low, calm voice she said: "Oh, Virgin, do not allow the oil to pour from my hands and to stop flowing from your picture. People are coming for you, not me. I kiss your feet. You are the source."

Without looking at Father Zehlaoui, she spoke to him: "Father, I feel like the Virgin has entered into me."

Father would later write: "Hearing these words, I felt a shivering in all my body, and I saw a very brilliant liquid flowing abundantly from her palms like a sponge that we press. At the same time, drops of oil piled up on the glass of the Icon and flowed slowly."

Father E. Zahlaoui was confused. He went to see his Bishop. He told his story and let him smell a piece of cotton impregnated with oil. The Bishop said it had the smell of Holy Myron and told him to "keep on watching but with circumspection and prudence." 4

4. This statement of the Bishop regarding Holy Myron is very significant. When oil is prepared for the many sacraments where it is used, from 30 to 60 different herbs are added to it. It has a very special smell. It is the smell of the oil of the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Orders, Extreme Unction, etc. The oil is called Holy Myron.

After he left the Bishop, Father called Dr. Hunein Siage, a famous epidermologist and professor at Damascus University.

"Doctor, can the human body exude oil?"

"The human body can perspire," answered the doctor, "but it is sweat. In the case of a strong agony, it may exude drops of blood."

Back at Nicolas and Mirna's house a top ranking officer of the police asked Nicolas if he would like them to close off access to his house because of the large crowds.

Nicolas thought about the message, "open the doors." At the same time, he was irritated with all that was happening. He replied in a sarcastic voice, "Who opened the house will close it. If it depends on me, I will not open the door of my house to anybody."

Since then, the door of the house has always been open. No one even need knock. In those first days, thousands of people visited the Icon day and night. Among them were non-Christians, Moslems, Orthodox, and Catholics of every denomination. Many came from Al Djazireh. Sometimes groups came at 4:30 A.M.

At one point Nicolas and Mirna could not get in or out of their house. They had to pull loose boards off the second floor wall and call out to their neighbors to go and get them some food. There were times when people slept in their bed for more than a week at a time. Nicolas and Mirna had to sleep on the floor or sofa. Only Mirna and the 70-year-old mother of Nicolas are there to clean up after the crowds to this day. Never have they closed the doors.

First Apparition

On the night of December 15, 1982, while large numbers of the faithful were

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praying in front of the Icon, suddenly Mirna felt something pulling on her arm. The odd thing about this was that it happened at exactly the same time of night that the angel had led Catherine Laboure to the chapel to see the Virgin Mary (11:37 P.M.). Mirna had never heard of Catherine Laboure, though, and she was now being pulled upstairs to the roof terrace of the house.

"I felt a power pushing me, and I was afraid," she said afterward. "Trembling, I knelt face to the floor. When I raised up my head, I saw the Virgin Mary in front of me. She shined as if She were covered with diamonds. I was afraid, and I ran away screaming."

Mirna ran to her sister-in-law, who lived on the upper deck of the house with her husband and children. She ran into her arms screaming, "Helene, Helene, the Virgin!" Helene woke with a start but couldn't see anything. Mirna could not stop crying. Awad, her brother-in-law, carried her down to her floor and into the living room.

Nicolas was beside himself. He didn't know what to do. How could he console his wife? This power was bigger than he could handle. His house, his wife, his whole family was in turmoil. Father Elias Zahlaoui talked with her.

"What do you mean, 'She was like diamonds?' Did She have diamond rings?"

"No! Her entire body and Her clothes were like shining diamonds."

"The Holy Virgin has certainly a mission to confide to you," the good father explained. "I think She will come back. You have to prepare yourself with fervent prayers." He taught her a prayer to say: Oh, Virgin, prepare me to receive You well, to understand better what You want to tell me."

"Only that?" asked Mirna.

"Only that!" responded the father.

First Message

On the night of December 18, 1982 (again at exactly the same hour, 11:37 P.M., that Catherine Laboure talked to the Virgin Mary), Mirna was drawn (or gently pulled from the back of the arm) to the open terrace of the house. About ten people followed her to the roof including her husband and her father.

Across the street, in the upper part of a large tree, Mirna saw a large, luminous, white globe like a large diamond ball sitting on a tree limb. As she watched, the ball opened, splitting from top and dividing into two half-moons. As the halves opened, a bow of light appeared over the top, and inside was the same beautiful lady. As the ball disappeared, the lady seemed to be standing on the branch of the tree. She had a white veil that covered all Her hair. The veil was a part of Her dress. Over Her right shoulder was a sky-blue cape that wrapped around Her back and over Her left side. The white dress covered Her feet, and only Her hands could be seen. The dress and cape seemed to be made of white and blue light. From Her right hand, between the second and third fingers, hung a long Rosary.

She floated across the air above the street. Mirna couldn't see Her feet moving. As She moved towards Mirna, a street of pure light appeared behind Her like a road in the sky. She passed right through the railing of the terrace. When She was within two feet of Mirna, She stopped.

This time Mirna didn't run away. She thought everyone was seeing the same vision. The Holy Mother spoke gently and slowly in classical Arabic:

MY CHILDREN,

REMEMBER GOD BECAUSE GOD IS WITH US. YOU KNOW EVERYTHING AND YET YOU KNOW NOTHING. YOUR KNOWLEDGE IS AN IMPERFECT KNOWLEDGE, BUT ONE DAY YOU WILL KNOW EVERYTHING AS GOD

KNOWS ME.

DO GOOD TO EVILDOERS. DO NOT TREAT ANYONE BADLY.

Many people were around Mirna now, but they saw nothing. Mirna's father bent double to the floor and said loudly, "Virgin Mary, please, don't deprive us of the oil." Mirna heard the answer but her father did not.

I GAVE YOU MORE OIL THAN YOU ASKED FOR, AND YET, I SHALL GIVE YOU SOMETHING MUCH STRONGER THAN OIL.

Mirna's father asked, "Can you see the Virgin Mary?"

"Yes! Yes! She is right here." Mirna reached out and touched the Virgin's foot through the long, white dress. She could actually feel the softness of the top of Her foot. It was real flesh.

REPENT AND BELIEVE . . . REMEMBER ME WHEN YOU ARE HAPPY.

ANNOUNCE MY SON, EM-MANUEL.

HE WHO ANNOUNCES HIM IS SAVED. HE WHO DOES NOT...HIS FAITH IS IN VAIN.

LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

I AM NOT ASKING FOR MONEY TO BE GIVEN TO THE CHURCHES, NOR TO BE DISTRIBUTED TO THE POOR. I ASK FOR LOVE. THOSE WHO DISTRIBUTE THEIR MONEY TO THE CHURCHES AND THE POOR, BUT DO NOT HAVE LOVE, ARE NOTHING. 5

5 The Virgin Mary doesn't mean in this passage to not give to the churches and the poor, since at the bottom of the message She says to give to everyone who asks. It means our motive must be love

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I SHALL VISIT HOMES MORE OFTEN, BECAUSE THOSE WHO GO TO CHURCH, SOMETIMES THEY DO NOT GO TO PRAY.

I AM NOT ASKING YOU TO BUILD A CHURCH FOR ME BUT A SHRINE.

GIVE. DO NOT DEPRIVE ANYONE WHO ASKS FOR HELP.

After She finished the message, the Virgin began to move slowly backward. As She did, the road of light disappeared under Her feet. When She reached the railing of the roof, She passed right through it and raised Her right hand with the Rosary still in it. It was not a wave of good-bye. It was as if She was reminding everyone of the Rosary. She went back to the branch without ever turning around. The ball of light closed around Her again, and She disappeared in the light.

Three times Mirna saw flashes of light around the large globe, then it disappeared also.

No one else on the roof saw anything. Mirna conveyed all the messages to Father Elias Zahlaoui, who wrote them down. Father had to explain to her what the word "Emmanuel" meant. She had never heard it before. 6

6. "Emmanuel" means "God with us." I have assumed Her meaning in the first part of this message (regarding knowledge) is related to (our knowledge) of the Bible, which is entirely known but not entirely understood. For "As God knows me" see Chapter Three.

After the apparition, the people began to ask how they should build a shrine. They weren't sure what to do. The Virgin answered their questions.

One night during the prayers, all sound disappeared from Mirna's ears. There were many in the house but she heard no sound. Then Mirna heard the Vir-

gin's voice again:

MAKE A NICHE OUTSIDE THE HOUSE. TAKE OUT ONE STONE AND PUT ME IN IT.

Nicol called an engineer friend of his. They could only find one stone on the entire house that could be removed without damage to the walls. This stone was right next to the main door and at eye level. They took out the stone, placed one of the Icons in the space with a marble dish under it, and put a glass cover over the hole. Inside they made another shrine with the original Icon that poured out oil. It was still coming out.

Again Mirna heard the voice in the same manner. This time it was a secret message for Father E. Zahlaoui. All I know about the secret is that something very miraculous happened to Father E. Zahlaoui in his past by the intercession of the Mother of God. She reminded him of it.

My Son Can Walk

The oil from the picture didn't stop. The oil from her hands didn't stop. The crowds became larger and larger. Sometimes the oil appeared on the glass of the image like bubbles. It would blow up, then break, making a perceptible noise. Mirna's husband didn't understand nor appreciate any of what was happening--until the day following the apparition.

On December 19, 1982, a paralyzed boy of nine years was brought to the house from Hons, Syria. The boy's father carried him into the bedroom. His legs were all twisted. He had never been able to walk. Mirna and the father prayed together over the child. Oil came from her hands. She anointed his legs. The child's legs straightened out. He started to move them. The father screamed and ran into the patio kneeling at the water fountain, thanking God with many tears of joy in his eyes. Then he jumped up.

"Give me some shoes. Give me some

shoes. My son can walk. He will need shoes."

The son of Mirna's sister was about the same age as the boy. He quickly took off his shoes and gave them to the father, who put them on his son. The boy not only walked all over the patio, but he jumped and danced.

So much joy came to Nicolas in seeing this boy, he never again wanted the miracle to go away. This didn't take away his crosses, which were many, but he began to carry them without complaint. The crosses were many.

That same day six other people came on crutches and went away without them. Father Zahlaoui thought about the message, "I shall give you something much stronger than oil."

Home of the Icon

Mirna is a Catholic of the Melkite Byzantine Rite. Her husband, Nicolas, is Greek Orthodox. And so, on December 30, 1982, His Beatitude Patriarch Ignatius IV Hazim interviewed Nicolas and Mirna in his office. After the interview, the Patriarch promised an official declaration for the following day. The next day the official paper was read to all the Greek Orthodox Churches in Damascus. It gave recognition to what was happening. The Patriarch ordered the Icon moved in procession to the Church of the Holy Cross, which is very near to Nicolas' house.

On January 7, 1983, two days before the moving of the Icon, Safu Abu Fares, a Moslem woman, who was completely blind, recovered her sight. In spite of this, there was no joy in the house of Mary. On the 9th of January the Icon would be moved.

At this point Nabil Shoukeir who had a video shop a few hundred yards from Mirna's house began to film everything. He now lives in California and is a charter member of THE MESSENGERS OF UNITY. It is because of him

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that we have everything on film.

On January 8, 1983, at 11:37 P.M., Mirna received her third apparition of the Virgin Mary. The Holy Mother of God was crying. Mirna was crying also, and she cried out: "The Blessed Virgin is crying." The Virgin said to Mirna,

IT IS ALL RIGHT.

She smiled and disappeared.

The following day thousands of the faithful marched in the short procession from the house to the church with the Icon. But there was no joy in their singing. The Icon was placed next to a large column in the church, and "collection boxes" were placed around it. The Icon stopped pouring oil.

However, at Mirna's home, a second identical Icon began to pour out oil on January 17, 1983. (Nicolas had bought ten Icons with the first one. This one had been placed in a niche outside the front door of their house.) The news went around fast, and the crowds continued to come to the house.

There on January 26, 1983, Alice Benilian of Aleppo, who had suffered from a withered arm for 13 years, was cured while she was praying in front of the Icon in the church.

On February 21, 1983, two Greek Orthodox priests, Fathers Elias Kfoury and Dimitri Hosni, brought the holy Icon back to the house in a very sacrilegious manner (a black nylon bag). They told Nicolas he should not allow anyone into his house except Greek Orthodox people. Nicolas, angry about the black bag, answered them: "I am a Christian before I am a Greek Orthodox. All are welcome."

They went away angry.

Father Joseph Malouli, a Catholic Lazarist priest of the Roman Rite, arrived. He knew what had happened. He asked Mirna to pray with him before the

Icon. They recited ten decades of the Rosary and then prayed silently. Father Malouli prayed: "Virgin Mary, enlighten us so we may do nothing against Your wishes."

Forgive with Humility

Around 9:20 P.M. Mirna left the room. She said nothing. She went upstairs to the terrace. Her brother-in-law saw her and told Father Malouli. He followed, as did the other members of the household and the visitors. At 10:30 P.M. on February 21, 1983, she had another apparition.

The Virgin appeared again in blue and white light just as She had appeared the first time. The Virgin spoke:

MY CHILDREN, THIS IS BETWEEN YOU AND ME.

I CAME BACK HERE...

DO NOT INSULT THE PROUD PEOPLE WHO HAVE NO HUMILITY.

THE HUMBLE IS THIRSTY FOR THE REMARKS OF OTHERS TO CORRECT HIS FAULTS, WHEREAS THE CORRUPT AND ARROGANT NEGLECTS, REVOLTS, AND BECOMES HOSTILE.

FORGIVENESS IS THE MOST PREFERABLE THING.

HE WHO PRETENDS TO BE PURE AND CHARITABLE BEFORE MEN, IS IMPURE BEFORE GOD.

I HAVE A REQUEST TO ASK OF YOU. ENGRAVE THESE WORDS IN YOUR MINDS AND ALWAYS REPEAT THEM.

"GOD SAVES ME. JESUS ENLIGHTENS ME. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS MY LIFE. I AM NOT AFRAID."

IS THAT NOT SO, MY SON,

JOSEPH?

ENDURE AND FORGIVE. ENDURE MUCH LESS THAN WHAT THE FATHER ENDURED.

Mirna passed on the message as she heard it and Father Malouli wrote it down. After the apparition Mirna wanted to know who Joseph was.

"My name is Joseph," Father Malouli said. Before the apparitions the family didn't know the good father. Few in the city of Damascus knew his first name. Father had an answer. He still didn't know what to do, but he knew what not to do. The Lord's Prayer says, "forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us." The Mother of God was telling us to do the same thing. She was also repeating the doctrine of the Trinity. 7

"I came back here." It was still the same day the Icon returned. Was Mary saying that where the Icon stayed, there Mary would be? 8

Is this why she was appearing to this little girl? Was it to tell us to be more forgiving? Father pondered the words over and over. There must be another reason for these happenings.

7. Father Malouli noticed that the words of this apparition were similar to the words in "IMITATION OF CHRIST," Book 11, Chapter 11, and Book 111, Chapter VII.

8. This is not to say that the Icon is Mary, but only that She will be where the Icon stays just as God was with the Ark of Moses.

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(To be continued.)

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Upper: Mirna Nazour of Damascus, Syria, mystic and stigmatist, at age 18, poses beside her miniature icon which miraculously exudes oil. She is of Lebanese descent and a Roman Catholic of the Melkite Rite

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Lower: Mirna Nazour at age 26. She is a simple woman of little religious education, but profound wisdom. She was married to a Greek Orthodox in 1982 and has 2 children [1990]



THE CHURCH HISTORY OF EUSEBIUS

BOOK II.

(Continued)

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Works of Philo that have come down to us.

1 Copious in language, comprehensive in thought, sublime and elevated in his views of divine Scripture, Philo has produced manifold and various expositions of the sacred books. On the one hand, he expounds in order the events recorded in Genesis in the books to which he gives the title Allegories of the Sacred Laws; on the other hand, he makes successive divisions of the chapters in the Scriptures which are the subject of investigation, and gives objections and solutions, in the books which he quite suitably calls Questions and Answers an Genesis and Exodus. There are, besides these, treatises expressly worked out by him on certain subjects, such as the two books On Agriculture, and the same number On Drunkenness' and some others distinguished by different titles corresponding to the contents of each; for instance, Concerning the things which the Sober Mind desires and execrates, On the Confusion of Tongues, On Flight and Discovery, On Assembly for the sake of Instruction, On the question, Who is heir to things divine?' or On the division of things into equal and unequal, and still further the work On the three Virtues which with others have been described by Moses. In addition to these is the work On those whose Names have been changed and why they have been changed, in which he says that he had written also two hooks On Covenants? And there is also a work of his On Emigration, and one On the life of a Wise Man made perfect in Righteousness, or On unwritten laws; and still further the work On Giants or On the Immutability of God, and a first, second, third, fourth and fifth book On the proposition, that Dreams according to Moses are sent by

God.

These are the hooks on Genesis that have come down to us. But on Exodus we are acquainted with the first, second, third, fourth and fifth books of Questions and Answers,' also with that On tire Tabernacle, and that On the ten Commandments, and the four books On the laws which refer especially to the principal divisions of the ten Commandments, and another On animals intended for sacrifice and On the kinds of sacrifice, and another On the rewards fixed in the law for the good, and on the punishments and curses fixed for the wicked. In addition to all these there are extant also some single-volumed works of his; as for instance, the work On Providence, and the book composed by him On the Jews, and The Statesman; and still further, Alexander, or On the possession of reason by the irrational animals?:

Besides these there is a work On the proposition that every wicked man is a slave, to which is subjoined the work On the proposition that every good man is free. After these was composed by him the work On the contemplative life, or On suppliants, from which we have drawn the facts concerning the life of the apostolic men; and still further, the Interpretation of the Hebrew names in the law and in the prophets are said to be the result of his industry.

And he is said to have read in the presence of the whole Roman Senate during the reign of Claudius the work which he had written, when he came to Rome under Coins, concerning Coins' hatred of the gods, and to which, with ironical reference to its character, he had given the title On the Virtues. And his discourses were so much admired as to be deemed worthy of a place in the libraries. At this time, while Paul was completing his journey "from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum," Claudius drove the Jews out of Rome; and Aquila and Priscilla, leaving Rome with the other Jews, came to Asia, and there abode with the apostle Paul, who was confirming the churches

of that region whose foundations he had newly laid. The sacred book of the Acts informs us also of these things.

CHAPTER XIX.

The Calamity which befell the Jews in Jerusalem an the Day of the Passover.

1 While Claudius was still emperor, it happened that so great a tumult and disturbance took place in Jerusalem at the feast of the Passover, that thirty thousand of those Jews alone who were forcibly crowded together at the gate of the temple perished, being trampled under foot by one another. Thus the festival became a season of mourning for all the nation, and there was weeping in every house. These things are related literally by Josephus.

But Claudius appointed Agrippa, son of Agrippa, king of the Jews, having sent Felix as procurator of the whole country of Samaria and Galilee, and of the land called Perea. And after he had reigned thirteen years and eight months a he died, and left Nero as his successor in the empire.

CHAPTER XX.

The Events which took place in Jerusalem during the Reign of Nero.

Josephus again, in the twentieth book of his Antiquities, relates the quarrel which arose among the priests during the reign of Nero, while Felix was procurator of Judea. His words are as follows: "There arose a quarrel between the high priests on the one hand and the priests and leaders of the people of Jerusalem on the other. And each of them collected a body of the boldest and most restless men, and put himself at their head, and whenever they met they hurled invectives and stones at each other. And there was no one that would interpose; but these things were done at will as if in a city destitute of a ruler.

And so great was the shamelessness and audacity of the high priests that they

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dared to send their servants to the threshing-floors to seize the tithes due to the priests; and thus those of the priests that were poor were seen to be perishing of want. In this way did the violence of the factions prevail over all justice."

And the same author again relates that about the same time there sprang up in Jerusalem a certain kind of robbers," who by day," as he says, "and in the middle of the city slew those who met them." For, especially at the feasts, they mingled with the multitude, and with short swords, which they concealed under their garments, they stabbed the most distinguished men. And when they fell, the murderers themselves were among those who expressed their indignation. And thus on account of the confidence which was reposed in them by all, they remained undiscovered. The first that was slain by them was Jonathan the high priest; and after him many were killed every day, until the fear became worse than the evil itself, each one, as in battle, hourly expecting death.

CHAPTER XXI.

The Egyptian, who is mentioned also in the Acts of the Apostles.

1 After other matters he proceeds as follows: "But the Jews were afflicted with a greater plague than these by the Egyptian false prophet. For there appeared in the land an impostor who aroused faith in himself as a prophet, and collected about thirty thousand of those whom he had deceived, and led them from the desert to the so-called Mount of Olives whence he was prepared to enter Jerusalem by force and to overpower the Roman garrison and seize the government of the people, using those who made the attack with him as body guards. But Felix anticipated his attack, and went out to meet him with the Roman legionaries, and all the people joined in the defense, so that when the battle was fought the Egyptian fled with a few followers, but the most of them

were destroyed or taken captive."

Josephus relates these events in the second book of his History. But it is worth while comparing the account of the Egyptian given here with that contained in the Acts of the Apostles. In the time of Felix it was said to Paul by the centurion in Jerusalem, when the multitude of the Jews raised a disturbance against the apostle, "Art not thou he Who before these days made an uproar, and led out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers?" These are the events which took place in the time of Felix.

CHAPTER XXII.

Paul having been sent bound from Judea to Rome, made his Defense, and was acquitted of every Charge.

Festus was sent by Nero to be Felix's successor. Under him Paul, having made his defense, was sent bound to Rome Aristarchus was with him, whom he also somewhere in his epistles quite naturally calls his fellow-prisoner. And Luke, who wrote the Acts of the Apostles, brought his history to a close at this point, after stating that Paul spent two whole years at Rome as a prisoner at large, and preached the word of God without restraint.

Thus after he had made his defense it is said that the apostle was sent again upon the ministry of preaching, and that upon coming to the same city a second time he suffered martyrdom.

In this imprisonment he wrote his second epistle to Timothy, in which he mentions his first defense and his impending death. But hear his testimony on these matters: "At my first answer," he says, "no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion."

He plainly indicates in these words that on the former occasion, in order that the preaching might be fulfilled by him, he was rescued from the mouth of the lion, referring, in this expression, to Nero, as is probable on account of the latter's cruelty. He did not therefore afterward add the similar statement, "He will rescue me from the mouth of the lion"; for he saw in the spirit that his end would not be long delayed. Wherefore he adds to the words, "And he delivered me from the mouth of the lion," this sentence: "The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom," indicating his speedy martyrdom; which he also foretells still more clearly in the same epistle, when he writes, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." In his second epistle to Timothy, moreover, he indicates that Luke was with him when he wrote, but at his first defense not even he. Whence it is probable that Luke wrote the Acts of the Apostles at that time, continuing his history down to the period when he was with Paul.

But these things have been adduced by us to show that Paul's martyrdom did not take place at the time of that Roman sojourn which Luke records. It is probable indeed that as Nero was more disposed to mildness in the beginning, Paul's defense of his doctrine was more easily received; but that when he had advanced to the commission of lawless deeds of daring, he made the apostles as well as others the subjects of his attacks.

CHAPTER XXIII

The Martyrdom of James, who was called the Brother of the Lord.

1 But after Paul, in consequence of his appeal to Caesar, had been sent to Rome by Festus, the Jews, being frustrated in their hope of entrapping him by the snares which they had laid for him, turned against James, the brother of the Lord, to whom the episcopal seat at Jerusalem had been entrusted by the apostles. The following daring mea-

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asures were undertaken by them against him. Leading him into their midst they demanded of him that he should renounce faith in Christ in the presence of all the people. But, contrary to the opinion of all, with a clear voice, and with greater boldness than they had anticipated, he spoke out before the whole multitude and confessed that our Saviour and Lord Jesus is the Son of God.

But they were unable to bear longer the testimony of the man who, on account of the excellence of ascetic virtue and of piety which he exhibited in his life, was esteemed by all as the most just of men, and consequently they slew him. Opportunity for this deed of violence was furnished by the prevailing anarchy, which was caused by the fact that Festus had died just at this time in Judea, and that the province was thus without a governor and head. The manner of James' death has been already indicated by the above-quoted words of Clement, who records that he was thrown from the pinnacle of the temple, and was beaten to death with a club.

But Hegesippus, who lived immediately after the apostles, gives the most accurate account in the fifth book of his Memoirs. He writes as follows: "James, the brother of the Lord, succeeded to the government of the Church in conjunction with the apostles. He has been called the Just by all from the time of our Saviour to the present day; for there were many that bore the name of James. He was holy from his mother's womb; and he drank no wine nor strong drink, nor did he eat flesh. No razor came upon his head; he did not anoint himself with oil, and he did not use the bath. He alone was permitted to enter into the holy place; for he wore not woolen but linen garments. And he was in the habit of entering alone into the temple, and was frequently found upon his knees begging forgiveness for the people, so that his knees became hard like those of a camel, in consequence of his constantly bending them in his worship of God, and asking forgiveness for the

people.

Because of his exceeding great justice he was called the Just, and Oblias, which signifies in Greek, Bulwark of the people' and 'Justice,' in accordance with what the prophets declare concerning him.

Now some of the seven sects, which existed among the people and which have been mentioned by me in the Memoirs, asked him, 'What is the gate of Jesus?' and he replied that he was the Saviour. On account of these words some believed that Jesus is the Christ. But the sects mentioned above did not believe either in a resurrection or in one's coming to give to every man according to his works. But as many as believed did so on account of James. Therefore when many even of the rulers believed, there was a commotion among the Jews and Scribes and Pharisees, who said that there was danger that the whole people would be looking for Jesus as the Christ.

Coming therefore in a body to James they said, 'We entreat thee, restrain the people; for they are gone astray in regard to Jesus, as if he were the Christy We entreat thee to persuade all that have come to the feast of the Passover concerning Jesus; for we all have confidence in thee. For we bear thee witness, as do all the people, that thou art just, and dost not respect persons. Do thou therefore persuade the multitude not to be led astray concerning Jesus. For the whole people, and all of us also, have confidence in thee. Stand therefore upon the pinnacle of the temple, that from that high position thou mayest be clearly seen, and that thy words may be readily heard by all the people. For all the tribes, with the Gentiles also, are come together on account of the Passover.'

The aforesaid Scribes and Pharisees therefore placed James upon the pinnacle of the temple, and cried out to him and said: Thou just one, in whom we ought all to have: confidence, forasmuch as the people are led, astray after Jesus, the crucified one, declare to us,

what is the gate of Jesus.' And he answered with a loud voice, 'Why do ye ask me concerning Jesus, the Son of Man? He himself sitteth in heaven at the right hand of the great Power, and is about to come upon the clouds of heaven.'

And when many were fully convinced and gloried in the testimony of James, and said, 'Hosanna to the Son of David,' these same Scribes and Pharisees said again to one another, 'We have done badly in supplying such testimony to Jesus. But let us go up and throw him down, in order that they may be afraid to believe him.' And they cried out, saying, 'Oh! oh! the just man is also in error.' And they fulfilled the Scripture written in Isaiah, 'Let us take away the just man, because he is troublesome to us: therefore they shall eat the fruit of their doings.' So they went up and threw down the just man, and said to each other, 'Let us stone James the Just.' And they began to stone him, for he was not killed by the fall; but he turned and knelt down and said, 'I entreat thee, Lord God our Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' And while they were thus stoning him one of the priests of the sons of Rechab, the son of the Rechabites, who are mentioned by Jeremiah the prophet, cried out, saying, 'Cease, what do ye? The just one prayeth for you And one of them, who was a fuller, took the club with which he beat out clothes and struck the just man on the head. And thus he suffered martyrdom. And they buried him on the spot, by the temple, and his monument still remains by the temple.

He became a true witness, both to Jews and Greeks, that Jesus is the Christ. And immediately Vespasian besieged them." These things are related at length by Hegesippus, who is in agreement with Clement. James was so admirable a man and so celebrated among all for his justice, that the more sensible even of the Jews were of the opinion that this was the cause of the siege of Jerusalem, which happened to them immediately after his martyrdom for no

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other reason than their daring act against him.

Josephus, at least, has not hesitated to testify this in his writings, where he says, "These things happened to the Jews to avenge James the Just, who was a brother of Jesus, that is called the Christ. For the Jews slew him, although he was a most just man." And the same writer records his death also in the twentieth book of his Antiquities in the following words: "But the emperor, when he learned of the death of Festus, sent Albinus to be procurator of Judea.

But the younger Ananus, who, as we have already said, had obtained the high priesthood, was of an exceedingly bold and reckless disposition. He belonged, moreover, to the sect of the Sadducees, who are the most cruel of all the Jews in the execution of judgment, as we have already shown. Ananus, therefore, being of this character, and supposing that he had a favorable opportunity on account of the fact that Festus was dead, and Albinus was still on the way, called together the Sanhedrim, and brought before them the brother of Jesus, the so-called Christ, James by name, together with some others, and accused them of violating the law, and condemned them to be stoned. But those in the city who seemed most moderate and skilled in the law were very angry at this, and sent secretly to the king, requesting him to order Ananus to cease such proceedings. For he had not done right even this first time. And certain of them also went to meet Albinus, who was journeying from Alexandria, and reminded him that it was not lawful for Ananus to summon the Sanhedrim without his knowledge. And Albinus, being persuaded by their representations, wrote in anger to Ananus, threatening him with punishment. And the king, Agrippa, in consequence, deprived him, of the high priesthood, which he had held threemonths, and appointed Jesus, the son of Damnaeus." These things are recorded in regard to James, who is said to be the author of the first of the so-called catholic epistles.

But it is to be observed that it is disputed; at least, not many of the ancients have mentioned it, as is the case likewise with the epistle that bears the name of Jude, which is also one of the seven so-called catholic epistles. Nevertheless we know that these also, with the rest, have been read publicly in very many churches.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Annianus the First Bishop of the Church of Alexandria after Mark.

WHEN Nero was in the eighth year of his reign, Annianus succeeded Mark the evangelist in the administration of the parish of Alexandria.

CHAPTER XXV.

The Persecution under Nero in which Paul and Peter were honored at Rome with Martyrdom in Behalf of Religion.

WHEN the government of Nero was now firmly established, he began to plunge into unholy pursuits, and armed himself even against the religion of the God of the universe. To describe the greatness of his depravity does not lie within the plan of the present work. As there are many indeed that have recorded his history in most accurate narratives, every one may at his pleasure learn from them the coarseness of the man's extraordinary madness, under the influence of which, after he had accomplished the destruction of so many myriads without any reason, he ran into such blood-guiltiness that he did not spare even his nearest relatives and dearest friends, but destroyed his mother and his brothers and his wife, with very many others of his own family as he would private and public enemies, with various kinds of deaths. But with all these things this particular in the catalogue of his crimes was still wanting, that he was the first of the emperors who showed himself an enemy of the divine religion.

The Roman Tertullian is likewise a wit-

ness of this. He writes as follows: "Examine your records. There you will find that Nero was the first that persecuted this doctrine, particularly then when after subduing all the east, he exercised his cruelty against all at Rome. We glory in having such a man the leader in our punishment. For whoever knows him can understand that nothing was condemned by Nero unless it was something of great excellence." Thus publicly announcing himself as the first among God's chief enemies, he was led on to the slaughter of the apostles. It is, therefore, recorded that Paul was beheaded in Rome itself, and that Peter likewise was crucified under Nero. This account of Peter and Paul is substantiated by the fact that their names are preserved in the cemeteries of that place even to the present day. It is confirmed likewise by Caius, a member of the Church, who arose under Zephyrinus, bishop of Rome.

He, in a published disputation with Proclus, the leader of the Phrygian heresy, speaks as follows concerning the places where the sacred corpses of the aforesaid apostles are laid: "But I can show the trophies of the apostles. For if you will go to the Vatican or to the Ostian way, you will find the trophies of those who laid the foundations of this church." And that they both suffered martyrdom at the same time is stated by Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, in his epistle to the Romans, in the following words: "You have thus by such an admonition bound together the planting of Peter and of Paul at Rome and Corinth. For both of them planted and likewise taught us in our Corinth. And they taught together in like manner in Italy, and suffered martyrdom at the same time."

I have quoted these things in order that the truth of the history might be still more confirmed.

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THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS NOT A BIG HOUSE AND OTHER EARTHLY RICHES FOR YOU Anyone who simply pays even the slightest attention to what Jesus Christ actually did, said, and taught will know that His kingdom is not of this world. page 12

Ascension Icon page 12

LEADING OTHERS TO CHRIST *“and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with much power and majesty,”* For many of those who see this event, and for many of those who do not live long enough to see it, there will be no benefit from the second coming of the Son of God, nor from the first, for they have neglected God. For those who believe in God, and that God is active, and especially for true Christians, the need to teach that there really is a God, and that He really is active, is something which is not often considered. But all one need do is observe the world in which we live and the reality of this need becomes obvious. page 13

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TWO FOLD ATTACK ON DOGMA AND MORALITY REGARDING NUN’S BOOK ON “SEXUALITY” AND VATICAN’S RESPONSE Advocating homosexual marriage as a means of reducing hatred and stigmatization of gay people, United States nun, Sister Margaret Farley drew a weak re-

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THE MIRACLE OF DAMASCUS *(Continued)*

Mirna, whose real name is Mary, heard a woman's soft voice as if from inside a seashell:

MARY,

DO NOT BE FRIGHTENED. 2 I AM WITH YOU. OPEN THE DOORS AND DO NOT DEPRIVE ANYONE FROM SEEING ME...

LIGHT A CANDLE FOR ME.

2. These are the first words used by the angel at Fatima and the first words used by Mary at Fatima--"Do not be frightened."

Mirna thought she was imagining things. She was afraid to tell anyone. Two minutes went by as she thought about the words. Suddenly the lights in the house went out. Mirna had to light a candle.

The moment she lit it, the lights came back on. She remembered the words: "LIGHT A CANDLE FOR ME." She wished she had done it right away. The Icon poured continuously for four days. They gathered the oil in bowl after bowl. page 21

THE CHURCH HISTORY OF EUSEBIUS *(Continued)*

Josephus relates these events in the second book of his History. But it is worth while comparing the account of the Egyptian given here with that contained in the Acts of the Apostles. In the time of Felix it was said to Paul by the centurion in Jerusalem, when the multitude of the Jews raised a disturbance against the apostle, "Art not thou he Who before these days made an uproar, and led out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers?" These are the events which took place in the time of Felix. . . .Paul having been sent bound from Judea to Rome, made his Defense, and was acquitted of every Charge. page 27

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CHILDREN'S PAGE *The Orthodox - Basilian Catechism* **LESSON THIRTY-SEVENTH: On the Last Judgment and the Resurrection, Hell,**
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The left and the right parties are nothing more than opposite wings of the same vulture. - Karen J.

Remember Gomer Pyle, the television character played by Jim Nabors, on The Andy Griffith Show, and on Gomer Pyle, U.S.M.C.? Ever wonder where the name "Gomer" came from? Well: in the Old Testament Book of Osee, God instructs the prophet Osee to marry a harlot and have children by her. Each of the children is named by God with a name that correlates to a serious sin prevalent in the kingdom of Israel. The name of the harlot Osee married was, Gomer.

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