

SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH



FEBRUARY 21, 2010

SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY

Saint Timothy of Symbola, Saint Evstathios

Today we commemorate the “Triumph of Orthodoxy,” the restoration of the holy icons in the reign of the holy Empress Theodora (February 11).

Saint Timothy of Symbola, was of Italian descent. He became a monk at a young age and pursued asceticism at a monastery called “Symbola,” in Asia Minor near Mount Olympus. At that time Theoctistus was the archimandrite of the monastery. St Timothy was the disciple of Theoctistus and also of St Platon of the Studion Monastery (April 5).

Attaining a high degree of spiritual perfection, he received from God the gift of healing the sick and casting out unclean spirits. He spent many years as a hermit, roaming the wilderness, the mountains and forests, both day and night offering up prayer to the Lord God. He died at a great old age, in the year 795.

Saint Evstathios, Archbishop of Antioch (323-331) was born in Side, Pamphylia in 324. He was Bishop of Beroea (modern Aleppo), and enjoyed the love and esteem of the people, and at the request of his flock he was elevated by the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council (325) to the See of Antioch.

St Evstathios was a learned theologian, and was also distinguished by his broad knowledge in secular sciences. When the heresy of Arius began to spread in the East (Arianism denied the consubstantiality of the Son of God with the Father), St Evstathios struggled zealously for the purity of the Orthodox Faith through his words and his writings.

The First Ecumenical Council was convened in the year 325 by the holy God-crowned Emperor Constantine the Great (306-337). The first to preside over this Council was St Evstathios. The Council condemned the heretical teachings of Arius and incorporated the Orthodox confession into the Symbol of Faith (the Nicene Creed).

But the mad Arius, as St Evstathios called him, refused to renounce his errors. He and those who shared his opinion were excommunicated from the Church by the Council. Among the bishops who signed the Nicene Symbol of Faith were some who sympathized with the heresy of Arius, but signed the Acts of the Council through fear of excommunication.

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AT THE SMALL ENTRANCE WE SING

APOLYTIKION OF THE FEAST. MODE 2.

We venerate Your immaculate icon, O good Lord, and entreat You to forgive our offences, O Christ our God. By Your own choice you were pleased to ascend the Cross in the flesh, to deliver us, whom You created, from our slavery to the foe. Therefore we cry to You with gratitude: You have filled all things with joy, O our Savior, by coming to save the world.

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYT. MODE 4.

When the women Disciples of the Lord * had learned from the Angel the joyful message of the Resurrection* and had rejected the ancestral decision,* they cried aloud to the Apostles triumphantly:* Death has been despoiled, Christ God has risen,* granting His great mercy to the world.

APOLYTIKION FOR THE CHURCH. MODE 5.

The holy Apostle, the All-hymned Luke, * who is acknowledged by the Church of Christ * as the recorder of the Acts of the Apostles, * and the splendid author of the Gospel of Christ. * Let us praise with sacred hymns as a physician, * who heals the infirmities of man, * and the ailments of nature, * who cleanses spiritual wounds, and prays unceasingly for our souls.

KONTAKION. MODE 8.

O Champion General, I your City now inscribe to you triumphant anthems as the tokens of my gratitude, being rescued from the terrors, O Theotokos. Inasmuch as you have power unassailable, from all kinds of perils free me so that unto you I may cry aloud: Rejoice, O unwedded Bride.

ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ ΤΗΣ ΕΟΡΤΗΣ. ΗΧΟΣ Β΄.

Τὴν ἄχραντον Εἰκόνα σου προσκυνοῦμεν Ἀγαθέ, αἰτούμενοι συγχώρησιν τῶν πταισμάτων ἡμῶν, Χριστέ ὁ Θεός, βουλήσει γὰρ ἠὲ δόκησας σαρκὶ ἀνελθεῖν ἐν τῷ Σταυρῷ, ἵνα ῥύσῃ οὖς ἔπλασας ἐκ τῆς δουλείας τοῦ ἐχθροῦ, ὅθεν εὐχαρίστως βοῶμέν σοι, Χαράς ἐπλήρωσας τὰ πάντα, ὁ Σωτὴρ ἡμῶν, παραγενόμενος εἰς τὸ σῶσαι τὸν Κόσμον.

ΑΝΑΣΤ. ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ. ΗΧΟΣ Δ΄.

Τὸ φαιδρὸν τῆς Ἀναστάσεως κήρυγμα, τοῦ Ἀγγέλου μαθοῦσαι αἱ τοῦ Κυρίου Μαθήτριά, καὶ τὴν προγονικὴν ἀπόφασιν ἀπορρίψασαι, τοῖς Ἀποστόλοις καυχώμεναι ἔλεγον, Ἐσκύλευται ὁ θάνατος, ἠγέρθη Χριστὸς ὁ Θεός, δωρούμενος τῷ κόσμῳ τὸ μέγα ἔλεος.

ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ ΤΟΥ ΝΑΟΥ. ΠΛ. Α΄.

Λουκάν τον πανύμνητον καὶ ἅγιον ἀπόστολον, τὸν τῆς Ἐκκλησίας γνωστὸν συνθέτην τῶν Πράξεων τῶν Ἀποστόλων, τὸν τε σεμνὸν τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου Χριστοῦ ὑπομνηματιστήν, ἀξίως τιμήσωμεν ὕμνοις ὁσίοις, ὡς νοσημάτων ἀνθρωπίνων καὶ φυσικῶν ἀσθενειῶν θεραπευτήν, τὸν καθάιροντα πληγὰς τοῦ πνεύματος, καὶ ἀδιαλείπτως πρεσβεύοντα ὑπὲρ τῶν ψυχῶν ἡμῶν.

KONTAKION. ΗΧΟΣ ΠΛ Δ΄.

Τῆ ὑπερμάχῳ στρατηγῷ τὰ νικητήρια, ὡς λυτρωθεῖσα τῶν δεινῶν, εὐχαριστήρια, ἀναγράφω σοι ἡ Πόλις σου, Θεοτόκε, ἀλλ' ὡς ἔχουσα τὸ κράτος ἀπροσμάχητον, ἐκ παντοίων με κινδύνων ἐλευθέρωσον ἵνα κράζω σοι, Χαῖρε, Νύμφη ἀνύμφευτε.

THE READINGS OF THE DAY

EPISTLE READING

SAINT PAUL'S LETTER

TO THE HEBREWS 11:24-26, 32-40

Brethren, by faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets -- who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign enemies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated -- of whom the world was not worthy -- wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

GOSPEL READING

JOHN 1:43-51

TAt that time, Jesus decided to go to Galilee. And he found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael, and he said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus answered him, "Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these." And he said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

“
*Whence shall my tears begin?
What first-fruits shall I bear
Of earnest sorrow for my sin?
Or how my woes declare?
O Thou! the Merciful
and Gracious One
Forgive the foul
ransgressions I have done.*

—SAINT ANDREW OF CRETE
(650-726)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

UPCOMING CHURCH SERVICES:

Monday, Feb. 22, Great Compline, 7pm

Wednesday, Feb. 24, Presanctified Div. Liturgy, 5:45pm

Friday, Feb. 26, Second Salutations to the Most Holy Theotokos, 7pm

UPCOMING CLASSES:

Orthodox Catechism, Tuesday, Feb. 23, 6pm

GREAT AND HOLY LENT / CONFESSION

Confession is an important part of our preparation for the celebration of our Lord's Pascha. During Great and Holy Lent, Fr. Michael will be available at the Church from 6-7pm on Thursdays. No appointment is necessary.

NEW LITURGY BOOKS

We have received our new liturgy books. Please do not remove the books from the Church. If you would like to purchase a personal copy, they are available from Presvytera for \$15 each. They are also available on Amazon for \$17.

LENTEN POTLUCK

Today we will have a Lenten Potluck following Divine Services. Everyone is invited.

IOCC REQUEST

The IOCC (International Orthodox Christian Charities) extends the request for hygiene kits to be shipped to places like Haiti – or wherever disasters strike. There is a critical shortage of these supplies and they need our help to provide this aid. One kit contains the following:

- One-gallon plastic bag with a zipper closure filled with:
- 1 ea. hand towel
- 1 ea. washcloth
- 1 ea. comb
- 1 ea. metal nail file or nail clipper

- 1 ea. bar of soap (bath size, new and wrapped in original packaging)
- 1 ea. toothbrush (NO TOOTHPASTE)
- 6 ea. Band-Aids.

You can assemble a number of kits and bring them to the church or buy supplies for these kits and bring them to the church. Philoptochos will assemble them at the March meeting and send them to IOCC. Thank you for your support.

YOUTH EVENT

The youth will go ice skating on March 7th from 3-6pm in Jefferson City. After ice skating, the kids will enjoy a lenten meal at a local restaurant. This event is open to all the youth of the parish and is free.

DONATIONS REQUESTED

Monetary donations are requested for the fish for the Palm Sunday Luncheon and for the lamb for the Mageritsa for Anastasi/Pascha. Please see Georgia Pardalos if you can help defray the costs for these events.

COMMUNITY PASCHA CARD

The youth of the parish will be requesting donations for a community Pascha Card. The proceeds of the card will go to the funding of youth activities. Please support our youth!

SYNAXARION

Continued

After the Council, his enemies plotted against St Evtathios. With great cunning they gained his consent to convene a local Council at Antioch. Having bribed a certain profligate woman, they persuaded her to appear at the Council with an infant at her breast, and falsely declare that St Evtathios was the father of the infant.

The Arians declared St Evtathios deposed, violating the Apostolic Rule that accusations against the clergy must be substantiated by two witnesses. Without a trial he was sent off into exile in Thrace. But the lie was soon unmasked: the woman repented after falling grievously ill. She summoned the clergy, and in the presence of many people, she confessed her sin.

St Constantine the Great died around this time, and his son Constantius (337-361), who shared the heretical views of Arius and favored the Arian bishops, succeeded his father on the throne. Even in exile, St Evtathios struggled for Orthodoxy with the same zeal. He died in exile, in the city of Philippi or Trajanopolis, in the year 337.

Convened in the year 381 at Constantinople, the Second Ecumenical Council confirmed the Orthodox Symbol of Faith, which St Evtathios had so vigorously defended. The Arian heresy was once again anathematized.

In the year 482 the relics of St Evtathios were reverently transferred from Philippi to Antioch, to the great joy of the Antioch people, who had not ceased to honor and love their patriarch.

St Evtathios was esteemed by the great hierarchs of the fourth century, Basil the Great, John Chrysostom, Athanasius of Alexandria, Epiphanius of Cyprus, Anastasius of Sinai, and Jerome of Stridonia. The renowned church historian Bishop Theodoret of Cyrhus calls St Evtathios a pillar of the Church and a man of piety, of equal stature with St Athanasius of Alexandria and the other bishops at the forefront of the struggle for Orthodoxy.

Saint George, Bishop of Amastris, was from the city of Kromna, near the city of Amastris close to the Black Sea. His pious and illustrious parents Theodore and Migethusa gave him a fine spiritual and secular education. St George withdrew to the mountains of Syriki in Asia Minor, where he embraced monasticism and began to lead a strict ascetic life under the guidance of a hermit.

After the death of his Elder, St George moved to a monastery in Bonissa, and there continued with his efforts. After the death of the bishop of the city of Amastris, St George was chosen bishop by the clergy and the people, and he was consecrated at Constantinople by Patriarch Tarasius (February 25). Arriving in Amastris, St George instructed his flock, he adorned several churches, was a defender of widows and orphans, fed the poor, and in everything he gave example of a God-pleasing life.

By the power of his prayer he repelled the Saracens who were ravaging the countryside from the city of Amastris. He also delivered from death Amasian merchants wrongfully condemned in the city of Trebizon.

St George died peacefully in the midst of his flock on March 3, 805 during the reign of the emperor Nicephorus I (802-811).

Saint John Scholasticus, Patriarch of Constantinople, was born in Sirimion near Antioch, and studied law. He was ordained a priest because of his great holiness and piety. Later he was elevated to the patriarchal throne, where he spent the years 565 to 577.

While still a presbyter, he compiled a collection of Church Rules in Fifty Chapters, and later during his time as patriarch he made a Codex of civil laws relating to the Church. From these collections was compiled the Nomocanon (i.e. "Law-canon"), used in church administration. St John also composed the "Cherubic Hymn", and "Of Thy Mystical Supper."

THE INWARD MISSION OF OUR CHURCH

BRINGING ABOUT ORTHODOXY

by Blessed Father Justin Popovich

It is very, very difficult indeed for infinite and eternal life to make its way into the human soul—so narrow—and even into the narrower human body. Held behind bars, the inhabitants of this earth suspiciously stand their ground against anything coming from without. Cast into this prison of time and space they are unable—from atavism or perhaps from inertia—to bear being penetrated by something outlasting time, outlying space, something which surpasses these, and is eternal. Such an invasion is considered to be aggression towards them and they respond with war. A man, given the fact that he is being corrupted by the “moth” of time, does not like the intrusion of eternity into his life and is not easily able to adapt himself to it. He often considers this intrusion to be sheer unforgivable insolence. At certain times he might become a hardened rebel against eternity because in the face of it he perceives his own minuteness; at others he even experiences fierce hatred towards it because he views it through such a human prism, one that is all too earthbound, all too worldly. Plunged bodily into matter, bound by the force of gravity to time and space, and having his spirit quite divorced from eternity, the worldweary man takes no pleasure in those arduous expeditions towards the eternal, toward what lies beyond. The chasm existing between time and eternity is quite unbridgeable for him because he lacks the strength and ability needed to get across it. Thoroughly besieged by death, he covers with scorn all those who say to him, “Man is immortal; he is eternal.” Immortal in just what respect? In his mortal body? In what respect eternal? With respect to his feeble spirit?

In order for a person to be immortal he must, at the very core of his sense of self, feel himself immortal. For him to be eternal, in his center of consciousness of self he must know himself eternal. Without doing this, for him both immortality and eternity alike will be conditions imposed from the outside. And if at one time man did have this sense of immortality and awareness of eternity, he had it so long ago that it has since wasted away under the weight of death. And waste away it really has; we learn this from the whole mysterious makeup of human beings. Our whole problem lies in how we might rekindle that extinguished feeling, how we might revive the wasted-away awareness. Human beings are not in a position to do this; nor, indeed, are the “transcendent gods” of philosophy. It is something to be done by God, who incarnated His immortal Self inside

man’s sense of himself and incarnated His eternal Self within man’s self-awareness. Christ did precisely this when He was made man and became God-human. Only in Christ, in Him alone, did man feel himself immortal and know himself eternal. Christ God-human, in His Person, bridged that chasm between time and eternity and restored relations between them. For this reason only he who is organically made one with Christ God-human, one with His Body, the Church, can be the one to feel himself really immortal and know himself in truth to be eternal. Whereby, for man and humanity, Christ composes the one and only passage and transition from time to eternity. This is why in the Church, the Orthodox Church, Christ became and remained the one and only way and the single guide from the former to the latter, from the sense of one’s own mortality to the sense of one’s immortality, from self-awareness of what is transient to self-awareness of what is eternal and without dimension.

The ever-living personality of God-human Christ is precisely the Church. The Church is always personality, God-human body and spirit. The definition of the Church, Her life, Her purpose, Her spirit, Her plan, Her ways, all these are given in the wondrous Person of God-human Christ. Hence, the mission of the Church is to make every one of her faithful, organically and in person, one with the Person of Christ; to turn their sense of self into a sense of Christ, and their self-knowledge (self-awareness) into Christ-knowledge (Christ-awareness); for their life to become the life in Christ and for Christ; their personality to become personality in Christ and for Christ; that within them might live not they themselves but Christ in them (Gal. 2:10). The mission of the Church is still to bring about in her members the conviction that the proper state of human personhood is composed of immortality and eternity and not of the realm of time and mortality...and the conviction that man is a wayfarer who is wending his way in the sway of time and mortality towards immortality and all eternity.

The Church is God-human, eternity incarnated within the boundaries of time and space. She is here in this world but she is not of this world (John 18:36). She is in the world in order to raise it on high where she herself has her origin. The Church is ecumenical, catholic, God-human, ageless, and it is therefore a blasphemy—an unpardonable blasphemy against Christ and against the Holy Ghost—to

turn the Church into a national institution, to narrow her down to petty, transient, time-bound aspirations and ways of doing things. Her purpose is beyond nationality, ecumenical, all-embracing: to unite all men in Christ, all without exception to nation or race or social strata. "There is neither Greek nor Jew, their is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28), because "Christ is all, and in all." The means and methods of this all-human God-human union of all in Christ have been provided by the Church, through the holy sacraments and in her God-human works (ascetic exertions, virtues). And so it is: in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist the ways of Christ and the means of uniting all people are composed and defined and integrated. Through this mystery, man is made organically one with Christ and with all the virtues: faith, prayer, fasting, love, meekness, through compassion and giving alms, a man consolidates in this union and preserves himself in its sanctity, personally experiencing Christ both as the unity of his personality and as the essence of his union with other members of the body of Christ, the Church.

The Church is the personhood of the God-human Christ, a God-human organism and not a human organization. The Church is indivisible, as is the person of the God-human, as is the body of the God-human. For this reason it is a fundamental error to have the God-human organism of the Church divided into little national organizations. In the course of their procession down through history many local Churches have limited themselves to nationalism, to national methods and aspirations, ours being among them. The Church has adapted herself to the people when it should properly be just the reverse: the people adapting themselves to the Church. This mistake has been made many times by our Church here. But we very well know that these were the "tares" of our Church life, tares which the Lord will not uproot, leaving them rather to grow with the wheat until the time of harvest (Matt. 13, 29-30). We also well know (the Lord so taught us) that these tares have their origin in our primeval enemy and enemy of Christ: the devil (Matt. 13, 25-28). But we wield this knowledge in vain if it is not transformed into prayer, the prayer that in time to come Christ will safeguard us from becoming the sowers and cultivators of such tares ourselves.

It is now high time—the twelfth hour—time for our Church representatives to cease being nothing but the servants of nationalism and for them to become bishops and priests of the One, Holy Catholic, and Apostolic Church. The mission of the Church, given by Christ and put into practice by the Holy Fathers, is this: that in the soul of our people be planted and cultivated a sense and awareness that every member of the Orthodox Church is a Catholic Per-

son, a person who is for ever and ever, and is God-human; that each person is Christ's, and is therefore a brother to every human being, a ministering servant to all men and all created things. This is the Christ-given objective of the Church. Any other is not an objective of Christ but of the Antichrist. For our local Church to be the Church of Christ, the Church Catholic, this objective must be brought about continuously among our people. And yet what are the means of accomplishing this God-human objective? Once again, the means are themselves God-human because a God-human objective can only be brought about exclusively by God-human means, never by human ones or by any others. It is on this point that the Church differs radically from anything which is human or of this earth.

These means are none other than the God-human ascetic exertions and virtues. And these can be successfully practiced only by God-human, Christ-bearing ascetics. God-human virtues exist in an organic kinship. Each has its source in the other and they bring one another to completion.

First among the ascetic virtues is the effort of faith: The souls of our people must pass through, and constantly be passing through, this exertion; meaning that these souls may then be given up to Christ as having no reservations and being without compromises; having extended down to the God-human depths and ascended to the God-human heights. It is essential to create in our people the sense that the faith of Christ is a virtue beyond nationhood, being ecumenical and catholic, trinitarian; and that for someone to believe in Christ entails their waiting on Christ, and only on Christ, with every event of their lives.

The second ascetic virtue is the God-human virtue of prayer and fasting: This being a virtue which must become the way of life of our Orthodox people, becoming the souls of their souls, because prayer and fasting are the all-powerful, Christ-given means of purging not only the human personhood but also society, the people, and the human race at large, of every defilement. It is prayer and fasting which are able to cleanse our people's souls from our defilements and sinning (Mt. 17:19-21; Lk. 9:17-29). The souls of our people must fall in step with the orthodox life of prayer. Prayer and fasting are not to be performed merely for the individual, or for one people, but for everyone and everything ("in all and for all"), for friends and enemies, for those who persecute us and those who put us to death, because that is how Christians are to be distinguished from the Gentiles (Mt. 5: 44-45).

The third God-human virtue is that of love: That love which knows no bounds, which does not question who is worthy and who is not, but loves them all; loving friends and enemies, loving sinners and evildoers, without how-

ever loving their sins and their crimes. It blesses the accursed, as the sun does, it shines both on the evil and the good (Matt. 5: 44-46). This God-human love must be cultivated in our people because its catholic character is what sets it apart from other self-proclaimed and relative loves: from that of the pharisaic sort, the humanist, the altruistic, the nationalist, and likewise from animal love. The love of Christ is all-embracing love, always. By prayer it is acquired because it is a gift of Christ. Now the Orthodox heart prays with intensity: Lord of love, this love of Thine for everyone and for all things—give it to me!

The fourth ascetic virtue is the God-human virtue of meekness and humility. Only he who is meek at heart can appease fierce hearts that are in uproar: only he who is lowly in heart can humble proud and haughty souls. To be “showing all meekness unto all men” (Tit. 3:2). But a person becomes truly meek and humble when he turns his heart of hearts into the Lord Jesus, humble and meek, He being the only true “meek and lowly in heart” (Matt. 11:29). The soul of the person must be rendered meek by Christ’s meekness. Every person must learn to pray: Meek, gentle Lord, assuage my fierce soul! The Lord humbled himself with the greatest humility—he was incarnate and became a man. Should you be of Christ, then humble yourself as a worm: embed your flesh in the pain of all who are in pain, of everyone sorrowing and in grief; in the trial of everyone who, impassioned, is thus tormented; and in the trauma of every animal and bird. Humble yourself lower than them all: be all things to all men, but be of Christ and according to Christ. When you are by yourself, then pray: O humble Lord, by your humility, humble me!

The fifth ascetic virtue is the God-human virtue of patience and humility: Which is to say, to endure ill-use, not to render evil for evil, to forgive in total compassion all assault, slander and hurt. This is what it is to be of Christ: to feel yourself perpetually crucified to the world, persecuted by it, violated and spat upon. The world will not tolerate Christ-bearing men just as it would not tolerate Christ. Martyrdom is the state in which a Christian brings forth fruit. This must be imparted to our people. For the Orthodox, martyrdom is purification. Being Christian does not simply mean to bear suffering cheerfully, but to pardon in compassion those who cause it, to pray to God for them as did Christ and the archdeacon Stephen. And so, pray: Long-suffering Lord, give me forbearance, make me magnanimous and meek!

Our Church’s mission is to infuse these God-human virtues and ascetic exertions into the people’s way of living; to have their life and soul knit firm with the Christ-like God-human virtues. For therein lies salvation from the world and from all those soul-destroying, death-dealing,

and Godless organizations of the world. In response to the “erudite” atheism and refined cannibalism of contemporary civilization we must give place to those Christ-bearing personalities, who with the meekness of sheep will put down the roused lust of wolves, and with the harmlessness of doves will save the soul of the people from cultural and political putrefaction. We must execute ascetic effort in Christ’s name in response to the cultural exercising which is performed in the name of the decayed and disfigured European being, in the name of atheism, civilization, or the Antichrist. Which is why the major task of our Church is the creation of such Christ-bearing ascetics. The watchword which should be heard within our Church today is: Let us return to the Christ-bearing ascetics and to the Holy Fathers! To resume the virtues of Saint Anthony, Saint Athanasios, Saint Basil, and Saint Gregory, of Saints Sergios and Seraphim of the Russians, of Saints Savva, Prochios, and Gabriel of the Serbs, and others like them because it was these God-human virtues which brought about Saint Anthony, Saint Gregory and Saint Savva. And today only Orthodox ascetic efforts and virtues can bring about sanctity in every soul, in the soul of all our people—seeing that the God-human objective of the Church is unalterable and its means are likewise so, since Christ is the same yesterday, today and unto all ages (Heb. 13:8). Herein lies the difference between the world of men and the one in Christ: the human world is transient and time-bound, whilst that of Christ is ever whole, for evermore. Orthodoxy, as the single vessel and guardian of the perfect and radiant Person of God-human Christ, is brought about exclusively by this extension of virtues by grace, through entirely God-human Orthodox means, not through borrowings from Roman Catholicism or Protestantism, because the latter are forms of Christianity after the pattern of the proud European being, and not of the humble God-human being.

This mission of the Church is facilitated by God Himself because among our people there exists an ascetic spirit as created by Orthodoxy through the centuries. The Orthodox soul of our people leans towards the Holy Fathers and the Orthodox ascetics. Ascetic exertion, at the personal, family, and parish level, particularly of prayer and fasting, is the characteristic of Orthodoxy. Our people is a people of Christ, an Orthodox people, because—as Christ did—it sums up the Gospel in these two virtues: prayer and fasting. And it is a people convinced that all defilement, all foul thoughts, can be driven out of man by these alone (Matt. 17:21). In its heart of hearts our people know Christ and Orthodoxy, they know just what it is that makes an Orthodox person Orthodox. Orthodoxy will always generate ascetic rebirth. She recognizes no other.