



ΛΥΧΝΟΣ

AN ORTHODOX PERIODICAL FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

«Δύχνος τοῖς ποσί
μου ὁ νόμος σου
καί φῶς
ταῖς τρίβοις μου»
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WHEN THE CONSCIENCE FALLS SILENT AND SHAME DIES OUT

We have lain down in our shame, and our disgrace has covered us: because we and our fathers have sinned before our God, from our youth until this day; and we have not listened to the voice of the Lord our God (Jeremiah 3:25)

Today it is difficult to repeat these words of the prophet, for the conscience of many fell silent long ago, and shame has been extinguished in many hearts. Modern society teaches us that people's different feelings and beliefs are all "valid". The boundaries between good and evil are supposedly unclear.

Modern people are not horrified by the blatant and unconcealed evil all around us. We are accustomed to it. We do not turn away from shameless depravity, but are often attracted by it. We are raising entire generations of shameless people. Lying, betrayal, violence, murder, fornication, adultery are common occurrences. It is about these that the Prophet Jeremiah said: *Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush (Jer. 6:15)*. With the loss of shame, in the absence of spiritual resistance, the success of evil is guaranteed.

Three fundamental feelings form our moral foundation: shame, compassion, and awe towards what is holy. To possess spiritual shame means to stand firm in purity.

In paradise, before Adam and Eve fell into sin, there was no shame, because there was no evil. Humans were created by God for a higher, spiritual, life; they were naturally good. They became ashamed when they sinned. Sin is a voluntary departure from God and is always connected with shame. The first humans departed from their Father and hid themselves; they understood that they were naked and became ashamed. The consequences of sin were dreadful. Our nature changed: our spiritual eyes were closed, we ceased to see God; we withdrew from Him.

The sense of shame, which showed itself after the Fall, was put there by God. The absence of shame indicates inner death.

Shame and conscience are proof that a person has



spirit. According to the Holy Fathers, the words "I am ashamed, I feel guilty", are the beginning of repentance.

The feeling of shame should be natural to every psychologically healthy person.

In modern society, advertising and media are filled with shameless exposure. Shamelessness has become so ordinary that modesty is frowned upon.

The feeling of a prickly conscience is very painful. It does not allow us to become accustomed to sin. This is our cross; it is heavy, oppressive, but we must not cast it aside; we must carry it in order to be liberated in Christ, Who took upon Himself our shameful nakedness and clothed us in His light, as in a garment.

And so, as Saint Isaac the Syrian writes, shame is a great good. It is the restraint given to fallen man to make possible his salvation by God.



THE ORTHODOX CHURCH WHO ARE WE?

17. THE SACRAMENTS

The Holy Mysteries or Sacraments of the Orthodox Church are those sacred ceremonies which are channels of Divine Grace, directly communicating God's power to sinful Man; cleansing and sanctifying him, making him righteous again before God. There are seven Sacraments: Baptism, Chrismation, Holy Communion, Confession, Ordination, Marriage, and Holy Oil (or Unction). Divinely instituted by Christ Himself and His Apostles, they are essential to our salvation. The first four are obligatory for every Orthodox Christian. On the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, Christ commands His Apostles: *"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He who believes and is baptized will be saved"* (Mark 16:15-16). On the Sacrament of Holy Communion: *"He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life"* (John 6: 54). On the Sacrament of Confession, Christ pronounces to the Apostles after His Resurrection: *"Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained"* (John 20: 22-23).

The saving power of the Sacraments originates from the Lord's sacrifice on the Cross. St John Chrysostom declares that when the lance of the soldier pierced the side of the crucified Lord:

"Water and blood came forth. These two sources did not spring forth simply by chance, but precisely because the Church is composed of both these elements, and as those who prepare for baptism well know, they are reborn through water and nurtured through the Body and Blood [of our Lord]."

Thus, the water and blood which sprang from the wound are Holy Baptism and Holy Communion.

The Sacraments cleanse us from sin, relieving us of the burden of guilt, as well as sustaining and nourishing us spiritually. They are also termed *"Mysteries"* because of their hidden divine power, which is incomprehensible to our limited intellect. St John Chrysostom states: *"It is called Mystery because we believe not that which we see; for we see one thing and believe another"*. Thus, behind the visible ceremonies of the Sacraments, lie the invisible, spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit, which cleanses, enlightens, saves and regenerates us. This is the great sanctifying power of the Sacraments: *"Christ loved the church, and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word (i.e. Holy Baptism), that he might present the church to himself in splendour, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish"* (Eph. 5: 25-27).



Saint of the Month

Sts Joachim and Anna

Commemorated September 9

They say, 'patience is a virtue', and yet people hardly ever try to be patient. The parents of the Theotokos, Saints Joachim and Anna, are a model of patience and teach us what one can achieve if we try to acquire this great virtue.

Joachim was a descendant of the royal house of king David, and Anna descended from the priestly tribe of the Levites. They were both righteous and God-fearing. Despite this, and even after being married for fifty years, they were without child. This was a source of great sadness for them. Moreover, they were stigmatised by those around them because it was thought that it was a curse from God not to have children.

Despite this, the elderly couple never lost their faith and hope, and they never complained. They continued to pray to the Lord for a child. They promised that if God would grant them a child, they would dedicate it to the Lord.

One day, the righteous couple were taking their sacrifice to the temple, as was the custom. To their grief, the temple staff rejected their sacrifice because of their childlessness. In great sorrow, Joachim went to the mountain to pray, while Anna took her usual stroll in their garden.

While they were both praying, an angel of the Lord appeared to them separately, saying, "God has heard your prayers, and Anna will have a baby daughter. You shall name her Mary and shall dedicate her to the service of the Lord". No one can imagine their joy at this revelation. In nine months, Anna gave birth to the All-Holy Panagia, thus becoming the grandparents of our Lord. Joachim and Anna are commemorated at every service of the Orthodox Church. It was their faith in God and patience that earned them the honour of being Panagia's parents. In our modern society where we always expect instantaneous results, we learn from the righteous couple that to achieve spiritual progress we need to show dedication and patience, and allow God to work in our lives in His own perfect way.



Για μικρούς και Για μεγάλους

Για μας στην Αυστραλία αρχή της άνοιξης, στην Ελλάδα αρχή του φθινοπώρου, ο τρυγητής.

Αν ρωτηθεί, ο παππούς η γιαγιά, τι τους θυμίζει ο Σεπτέμβριος; Η απάντηση θα εξαρτηθεί από τις συνθήκες που μεγάλωσαν σε πόλη ή σε επαρχία. Θα τους θυμίζει φθινόπωρο στα νιάτα τους στην Ελλάδα, και άνοιξη κλεισμένοι σε εργοστάσια, μαγαζιά κτλ στην Αυστραλία.

Άνοιξη, χωρίς τα κάλλη της και τις ευωδιές της. Καλό θα ήταν να γίνει μια συζήτηση μεταξύ των εγγονών στην άνοιξη της ζωής τους με τον παππού και την γιαγιά στο φθινόπωρο της ζωής των στα πλαίσια του Μήνα Σεπτέμβρη, του τρυγητή. Πρωτοβρόχια, τρύγος πάτημα του σταφυλιού, πετιμέζι, κρασί από το μούστο, αρχή σχολικής χρονιάς και άλλα παρόμοια.

θα έλεγαν του εγγονού τους . Μπορούν να μιλούν για ώρες για αυτά και για τόσα άλλα

Στο μηνολόγιο της Ορθόδοξης εκκλησίας , κάθε μήνας, κάθε μέρα έχει και έναν ή πολλούς Αγίους να μας θυμίζει την ζωή τους και τα παραδείγματα τους.

Ο Σεπτέμβριος αρχίζει με την αρχή της ινδίκτου. Αρχή, δηλαδή του εκκλησιαστικού έτους.

Στις 8 γιορτάζουμε το γενέθλιο της Θεοτόκου.

Στις 14 η Ύψωσης του Τιμίου Σταυρού.

Στις 17 της Αγίας Σοφίας και των τριών θυγατέρων της.

Στις 24 ανάμνησης του θαύματος της Μυρτιδιώτισσας.

Στις 26 η Μετάστασης Αγίου Ιωάννου του Θεολόγου.

Ο Αύγουστος πλαισιώνεται με την Μεταμόρφωση του Σωτήρος στις 6 και στις 15 με την Κοίμηση της Θεοτόκου.

Αλλά η Παναγία πλουτίζει και τον Σεπτέμβριο με την παρουσία της όπως αναφέραμε πιο πάνω.

Με την γέννησή της το σχέδιο του Θεού για την σωτηρία μας μπαίνει πια στην ιστορία του κόσμου, της φύσεως, του σύμπαντος ορατού και αοράτου.

Η ανάμνηση του θαύματος της Μυρτιδιώτισσας διαβεβαιώνει για όλους ότι «Εν τη κοιμίσει ου κατέλειπε τον κόσμο». Διότι «μετέστη προς την Ζωή Μήτηρ υπάρχουσα της Ζωής».

Από τα αμέτρητα Θαύματά της και την ευλαβή αφοσίωση των πιστών στο Πρόσωπό της, η Παναγία Θεοτόκος ονομάζεται και ως: Παντάνασσα, Ελεούσα, Γλυκοφιλούσα, Ακάθιστη, Γιάτρισσα, Πανολύτρα, Παραμυθιά, Περίβλεπτη, Πανάχραντη, Οδηγήτρια, Αντιφωνήτρα, Τριχερούσα, Βαγγελίστρα, Λαύρα, Γοργοεπίκοη, Αθηναία, Ρωμαία, Φανερωμένη, Πύργε Χρυσοπλοκότατε, Λιοσταλασμένε Θρόνε!.....

Αλλά στο κέντρο του Σεπτέμβρη βέβαια, στις 14 ορθώνεται η Ύψωσης του Τιμίου Σταυρού.

Ο πιο καταραμένος τρόπος τιμωρίας και θανάτου ενός εγκληματία γίνεται τώρα, με την Σταύρωση, ο μόνος τρόπος απολύτρωσης από την κατάρα της ανυπακοής στον Παράδεισο.

Τώρα ο κάθε άνθρωπος μπορεί, αν το θέλει και το πιστεύει, να ξαναβρεί τον χαμένο του Παράδεισο.

“...ο κάθε άνθρωπος μπορεί, ... να ξαναβρεί τον χαμένο του Παράδεισο...”

Ο Σταυρός, το σημείο του Σταυρού, το σταύρωμα του ζυμαριού, του παιδιού, του γέρου, του αρρώστου, το Τίμιο Ξύλο, η εύρεση του Σταυρού από την Αγία Ελένη, η Ύψωση του Τιμίου Σταυρού από τον

Αυτοκράτορα Ηράκλειο ατίμητα κειμήλια. Όλα αυτά και πόσα άλλα, μαζί με το όνομα της Παναγίας είναι τόσο βαθιά ριζωμένα και ζυμωμένα στην Ορθόδοξη Παράδοση και ζωή του καθενός μας για 2000 χρόνια τώρα!.....

Γιατί η Εκκλησία είναι Θεοσύστατη με κεφαλή τον Χριστό. Και «Πύλαι Άδου ου κατισχύσουσιν αυτήν». Εμείς είμαστε οι προνομιούχοι συνεχιστές. Μας βαραινεί πολύ η ευθύνη του καθήκοντος, που για πολλούς είναι τρόπος ζωής.

Με άκρα ταπεινοφροσύνη, ευλάβεια, δέος, και φόβο Θεού ας συνεχίζουμε και εμείς.

Το χρωστάμε στα παιδιά μας, στα εγγόνια μας, στην Ορθόδοξη Παράδοση, στην οικογένεια του Θεού.



NEWS AND VIEWS

Paraklisis Services

On Saturday 7th August the women of the Ladies Christian Fellowship along with the girls Omathes of Sydney, visited the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Monastery at Mangrove Mountain to chant, along with the nuns of the Monastery, the Paraklisis service to the Theotokos. The priest officiating was the abbot of Pantanassa Monastery, Fr Stephanos, who also delivered an inspiring sermon. On the same afternoon in Sydney, the boys Omathes gathered to attend the Paraklisis service at the Parish of the Transfiguration of our Lord, Earlwood. Fr Loukas Kordonouris delivered a moving sermon to the boys in both Greek and English.

Winter Retreats



The young men of 3rd Kyklo with the abbot of Pantanassa Monastery, Fr Stephanos, at this year's winter retreat.

On Friday 9th through to Sunday 11th July, the boys Omathes of Earlwood, Kogarah and Kingsford held a joint winter retreat at Koori Cabins, Mangrove Mountain. In an atmosphere of friendship and spiritual bonding, the boys participated in a number of activities including a Divine Liturgy Service at the Monastery of Panagia Pantanassa. On the weekend of July 23rd-25th, the young women of the Ladies Christian Fellowship held their annual retreat at the Bethshan Conference Centre, Wyee. The highlight of this retreat was the Divine Liturgy Service at the Holy Cross Monastery, chanted by the nuns of the Monastery. In late August, from Friday 20th through to Sunday 22nd, the young men of Enosi 3rd Kyklo held their Retreat at Koori Cabins, Mangrove Mountain. On the Sunday, the boys attended a Monastic Divine Liturgy Service at Pantanassa Monastery.

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Talk by Mrs Vivian George



The choir of the Ladies Christian Fellowship singing Christian and Greek folk songs on the spirit of Women.

On Sunday 29th August, Mrs Vivian George, leader of the Ladies Friendly Society, gave a knowledgeable and inspiring talk on the topic of "The Role and Contribution of Women to Society", at the parish hall of All Saints, Belmore. Mrs George covered a number of interesting historical perspectives, including society's attitudes to women in the pre-Christian, mediaeval, and modern feministic eras. In the end, she was able to convincingly demonstrate that only through Orthodox Christianity could the great value and potential of



Mrs George delivers her well-attended talk at the parish hall of All Saints.

women in society be fulfilled, as revealed through the Bible and in the Teachings of the Church Fathers.



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