



Sunday, September 19, 2010

**SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST;
MIRACLE OF THE HOLY ARCHANGEL MICHAEL; HOLY MARTYR EUDOXIUS**

RESURRECTIONAL TROPARION - TONE EIGHT:

You did descend from on high, O Merciful One! You did accept the three day burial to free us from our sufferings! O Lord, our Life and Resurrection: Glory to You!

TROPARION TO THE MIRACLE OF THE HOLY ARCHANGEL MICHAEL - TONE FOUR:

O Michael, commander of the heavenly hosts, we who are unworthy beseech you, by your prayers encompass us beneath the wings of your immaterial glory; and faithfully preserve us who fall down and cry out to you: 'Deliver us from all harm, for you are the commander of the powers on high!'

RESURRECTIONAL KONTAKION - TONE EIGHT:

By rising from the tomb You did raise the dead and resurrect Adam. Eve exults in Your Resurrection, and the world celebrates Your Rising from the dead, O greatly Merciful One!

KONTAKION TO THE MIRACLE OF THE HOLY ARCHANGEL MICHAEL - TONE TWO:

O Michael, commander of God's armies and minister of the divine glory, prince of the bodiless angels and guide of mankind, ask for what is good for us and for great mercy, as supreme commander of the bodiless hosts.

HYMN TO THE MOTHER OF GOD - TONE SIX:

Steadfast Protectress of Christians and constant advocate before the Creator, do not despise the cry of us sinners; but in your goodness come speedily to help us who call on you in faith. Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us, O Theotokos, for you always protect those who honor you!

EPISTLE & COMMENTARY

THE PROKIMENON IN THE 8TH TONE:

Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God!

2 CORINTHIANS 6: 16 – 7: 1

Brethren, what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.” Therefore: “Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.” Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

THE ALLELUIA VERSES:

Come let us rejoice in the Lord! Let us make a joyful noise to God our Savior! Let us come before His face with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to Him with psalms!

COMMENTARY ON 2 CORINTHIANS 6: 16 – 7: 1

This passage offers a spiritual perspective of the New Covenant holiness code: love of God and His Church requires a spurning of immorality and false religions and a devotion to “perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” An escape from “filthiness” requires more than thinking repentant thoughts because we are engaged in spiritual warfare and are entrenched in patterns of sin which become habitual. Over time these patterns become imprinted on body and soul so that even our wills are bypassed and we sin automatically. To “cleanse ourselves” means to sustain the struggle for holiness: be genuinely sorry for our sin, confess them sacramentally, avoid recurring temptations, ask forgiveness of others, practice Christian virtue, cleave to God through faith, prayer and the Eucharist. We cannot sustain this struggle on our own but are empowered by the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, which is why the Apostle Paul calls us “the temple of God.”



GOSPEL & COMMENTARY

MATTHEW 15: 21-28

At that time, Jesus departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, “Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed.” But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, “Send her away, for she cries out after us.” But He answered and said, “I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, “Lord help me!” But He answered and said, “It is not good to take the children’s bread and throw it to the little dogs.” And she said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table.” Then Jesus answered and said to her, “O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire.” And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW 15: 21-28

This story of a humble Gentile woman who is tested and then praised by Jesus for her persistence and faith is the Gospel reading for the commemoration of female martyrs in the Church. Jesus’ apparent rebuff of her cry for mercy is simply to make known her faith so He can commend her for it publically, as He did the Roman centurion – another Gentile – as well. In these two can be envisioned the future Gentile Church, the true Israel (Gal. 6: 16), coming to Christ.



SPIRITUAL ARTICLES

From The Prologue for Sept. 6/13 by St. Nikolai Velimirovic:

The Commemoration of the Miracles of the Holy Archangel Michael

Near Hierapolis, in Phrygia, there was a place called Chonae (“plunging”), and in that place there was a spring of miraculous water. When Apostle John the Theologian, accompanied by Philip, preached the Gospel in Hierapolis, he looked upon that place and prophesied that a spring of miraculous water would open up there, from which many would receive healing, and that the great Archangel of God Michael would visit that place. Soon afterward, this prophecy was fulfilled: a spring of water burst forth and became widely known for its miraculous power. A pagan in Laodicea had a daughter who was mute, which caused him great sorrow. Archangel Michael appeared to him in a dream, and told him to take his daughter to the spring, where she would be cured. The father immediately obeyed, brought his daughter to the spring, and found many people there seeking deliverance from various infirmities. These people were all Christians. The man asked how he should seek healing, and the Christians told him: “You must pray to the Archangel Michael, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” The man prayed in this way, gave his daughter a drink of this water, and the girl began to speak. The pagan, his daughter and his whole household were baptized. He also built a church over the spring dedicated to the Archangel Michael.

Later, a young man named Archippus settled there and lived a life of austerity, in fasting and prayer. The pagans did many malicious things to Archippus, for they did not like the fact that this Christian holy place emanated such spiritual power and attracted so many people to it. The pagans, in their wickedness, rerouted the nearest river in order to flood the church and the spring. By the prayers of Archippus, the holy Archangel Michael opened a fissure in the rock beside the church, and the river’s water plunged into it. This is how that place was saved and why it was called Chonae, or “of the plunging,” for the river’s water that plunged into the open fissure. St. Archippus labored in asceticism there until the age of seventy, and peacefully reposed in the Lord.

The Holy Martyr Romulus and 11,000 Soldiers

While Emperor Trajan waged war in the East, he once commanded that the Christians in his army be counted. It was found that there were 11,000 Christians in the imperial army. The emperor then ordered that they all be dismissed from the army and sent to Armenia. St. Romulus was the overseer of the imperial household. He went before the emperor and reprimanded him for this action, declaring himself a Christian. The emperor gave order that Romulus be beheaded. Of those banished soldiers, the emperor had 10,000 of them crucified. The others were slain by various tortures.

Saint Eudoxius

Eudoxius was a commander in the Roman army. He suffered for Christ during the reign of Diocletian. He was tried and tortured by the governor of Melitene in Armenia. His friends Zeno and Macarius also suffered with him, as well as 1104 other soldiers who had been converted to Christianity by Eudoxius. After his death Eudoxius appeared to his wife Basilissa, who remained faithful to Christ to the time of her peaceful repose.

The Venerable David

He was the leader of a band of robbers near Hermopolis, in Egypt. He came to his senses only in his later years, when he repented and was tonsured a monk. The Archangel Gabriel appeared to David and granted him miraculous power. After many difficult ascetic practices, David became worthy of the Kingdom of God and reposed peacefully in the sixth century.

HYMN OF PRAISE THE HOLY ARCHANGEL MICHAEL

Archangel of God
Michael the Commander,
The sword-bearing servant
Of the Lord Most-high.

He stands before the Lord
With the heavenly hosts,
With the mighty angels
And the holy souls.

The greatest commander
Of the Greatest King,
Wherever he goes, he conquers
And works miracles.

He is the one whom Satan
Fears like flame,
For the commander of God
Stands for truth.

He stands for truth,
And upholds justice;
Fast as sight
He can be anywhere swiftly.

The commander of light,
He drives the impure away,
And with his wings
Protects the faithful.

REFLECTION

Christianity has uprooted many barbaric customs from the society of man. But some of those customs—praiseworthy from the pagan point of view, but shameful from the Christian point of view—are, even to the present day, like hidden corruption oozing from a supposedly healed wound. One of these customs is the unlawful kidnapping of maidens. St. Basil wrote powerfully to one of his priests, after one such incident: “Do all in your power to find and rescue this maiden. Then, return her to her parents and excommunicate the perpetrator. Also suspend those who abetted him—including their

entire households—from participation in services for three years. Likewise, suspend everyone in the village to which the maiden was taken, where she was hidden or perhaps kept by force—so that all will know that a kidnapper should be driven away from them like a serpent or some other wild beast or common enemy, and that the abused should be protected.”

CONTEMPLATION

Contemplate the example of David’s self-restraint (II Samuel 23):

1. How, during battle against the Philistines, David became thirsty, and asked who would bring him water from the well in Bethlehem, which was held by the Philistines;
2. How three heroes slipped through the enemy lines, and brought water back to their king;
3. How David did not want to drink, but rather poured the water on the ground, saying: “Is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives?”

HOMILY

On the two births

That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit (John 3:6).

Brethren, these words are not the words of a prophet or an apostle, but are the words of the Lord Himself, uttered with His most pure mouth. As there is power and salvation in every one of the Lord’s words, so is there power and salvation in these. That is why it is necessary to study these words with fear and great care and apply them in our lives. By these words the Lord emphasizes the precedence of the spirit over the flesh. And, as the flesh is born of the body, so the spirit must be born of the Spirit. The birth of our spirit is of the Spirit of God, according to the grace of God and not according to nature. It is the new birth that the Lord described to Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. Nicodemus did not understand these words of Christ, just as, even today, he whose flesh is stronger than his spirit does not understand them. Men whose flesh has overcome their spirit think and judge everything according to the body. Men whose spirit has overcome their body think and judge everything according to the spirit. All those who think and judge according to the body make their spirits fleshly, while all who think and judge spiritually make their bodies spiritual. Just like someone exchanging gold for paper money, the former convert that which is immortal into that which is mortal. The latter are like someone exchanging paper money for pure gold—for they do not destroy that which is immortal, but convert that which is mortal into that which is immortal. The Jews interpreted the Law and the Prophets according to the flesh, and that is why they did not understand the Lord Jesus, but crucified the Lord of Glory. Those who were enlightened by the grace of the Spirit of God interpreted both the Law and the Prophets spiritually, and understood our Lord Jesus Christ. And through Him, they understood not only the Law and the Prophets, but all of created nature as well, and all of their life on earth. Brethren, although the body is necessarily born of the flesh, it would be unnatural for the spirit also to be born of the flesh. Let our spirit be born of the Spirit of God and then we will be natural, both in body and in spirit. This is that higher and sinless nature that Adam had in Paradise before he sinned. It is not possible or necessary for our body to be born again of the flesh. It is possible and necessary, and never too late, for our spirit to be born again of the Spirit of God. O Lord Jesus Christ, the Only-begotten Son of God—help us, that before death we

may become reborn of the Spirit of God, and that our spirits, in truth, be born of the Spirit. To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Residents of Heaven – An Exhibit of Byzantine and Modern Orthodox Icons

Paintings by V. Rev. *Stamatis Skliris*, *Iconographer*

at the ***“Life Giving Spring Bookstore”***

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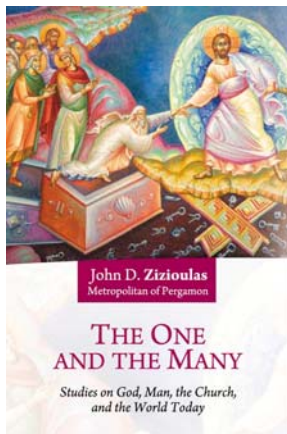
FROM SEBASTIAN PRESS:

OUR NEWEST PUBLICATION

THE ONE AND THE MANY

Studies on God, Man, the Church, and the World Today

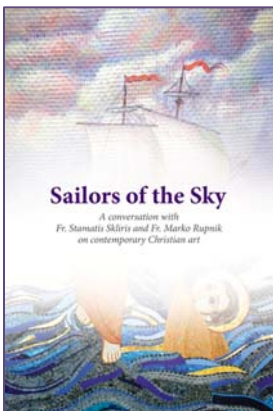
This volume offers a collection of Zizioulas articles which have appeared mostly in English, and which present his trinitarian doctrine of God, as well as his theological account of the Church as the place in which freedom and communion are actualized. The title, *The One and the Many*, suggests the idea of a profound relationship that exists between the Persons in the Holy Trinity, between Christ and the Church, between one Catholic Church and many catholic Churches. On each of these levels of communion, each one is called to receive from one another and indeed to receive one another. And while this is understandable at the Triadological and Christological levels, it raises all sorts of fundamental ecclesiological questions, since the highest point of unity in this context is both the mutual ecclesial-eucharistic recognition and agreement on doctrine and canonical-ecclesiological organization. The book has the Preface written by Bishop



Athanasius Yevtich, and an extensive and valuable Introduction (pp. xi-xxi) written by Paul Mc Partlan. Part one contains Zizioulas STUDIES IN TRIADODOLOGY (Trinitarian theology): The Doctrine of God the Trinity Today (pp. 3-16: The need for a fresh study; The question of God's being in relation to the world; The problem of God's being in Himself; The place of Trinitarian theology in Ecclesiology; Conclusion). The Being of God and the Being of Man (pp. 17-40: The need for a serious theological dialogue; A controversial issue: Trinitarian theology and the human person; Personalism-Existentialism and the theological concept of the person; Neoplatonism and patristic theology; Apophaticism and ontology; The personal existence of God and the human person; The importance of Christology and history;

The eschatological character of salvation; Conclusion). This part ends with an article One Single Source: An Orthodox Response to the Clarification on the Filioque (pp. 41-45). Part Two: STUDIES IN ECCLESIOLOGY: The Church as Communion (pp. 49-60: Introduction; Koinonia as a theological concept; The Church as koinonia ; Conclusion). Ecclesiological Presuppositions of the Holy Eucharist (pp. 61-74: Historical background; The Eucharist makes the Church and the Church constitutes the Eucharist; Conclusions; Our ecumenical situation today). The Pneumatological Dimension of the Church (p.75-90: The place of Pneumatology in ecclesiology; Pneumatology and the actual structure and life of the Church). Some Reflections on Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist (p.91-). Symbolism and Realism in Orthodox Worship (pp. 101-117: Introduction; The notion of symbol; Symbolism in the Christian Faith; Symbolism in Orthodox worship; Iconic symbolism in worship; A look at the situation today). The Theological Problem of Reception (pp. 118-125: Introduction; The classical idea of reception and its theological significance; The actual ecumenical situation); Eschatology and History (pp. 126-135); The Mystery of the Church in Orthodox Tradition (pp. 136-146: Some basic theological presuppositions; The importance of these principles for ecclesiology); The Early Christian Community (pp. 147-169: Primitive Christianity; Aspects of the Faith of the early Christian community; The early Patristic period; The challenge of Gnosticism; The emergence of a Christian Gnosticism; Martyrdom as a form of spirituality; Toward medieval spirituality); Preliminary Considerations on the Concept of Authority (pp. 170-176); The Meaning of Ordination (pp. 177-180); Ordination and Communion (pp. 181-189: Some preliminary considerations; Ordination in the light of communion; Some concluding remarks); The Development of Conciliar Structures to the Time of the First Ecumenical Council (pp. 190-213: Primitive conciliarity on the local level; The transition to provincial conciliar structure; Toward an Ecumenical Council; Some concluding remarks); Comment on Communal Spirit and Conciliarity (pp. 214-220).

Retail Price: \$80 Hardcover \$35.00 Paperback – Available Now

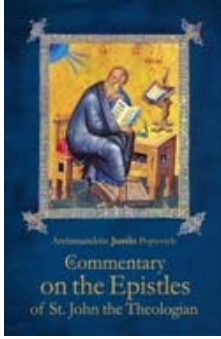


Sailors of the Sky

*A conversation with Fr. Stamatis Skliris
and Fr. Marko Rupnik on contemporary Christian art*

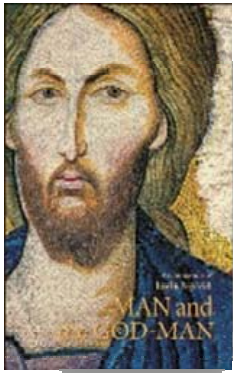
In these timely conversations led by Fr. Radovan Bigovic, many issues are introduced that enable the contemporary reader to deepen and expand his or her understanding of the role of art in the life of the Church. Here we find answers to questions on the crisis of contemporary ecclesiastical art in West and East; the impact of Impressionism, Expressionism, Cubism, Surrealism, and Abstract painting on contemporary ecclesiastical painting; and a consideration of the main distinction between iconography and secular painting.

This book is adorned with striking full-color icons by Fr. Stamatis Skliris and Fr. Marko Rupnik, renowned as iconographers and as writers and lecturers on Byzantine iconography. Highly recommended! 94 pages – Retail Price - \$15.00



Commentary on the Epistles of St. John the Theologian

By Archimandrite Justin Popovic - This Commentary on the Epistles of St. John the Theologian - published now, three years after the blessed repose of Venerable Fr. Justin (on the Feast of the Annunciation, 1979) - was written by the tireless Messenger of Christ forty years ago, in circumstances similar to those in which Christ's Holy Evangelist John wrote his sacred Epistles. The text of this 93-page soft-bound book has been translated from the Serbian by Radomir M. Plavsic. Published by Sebastian Press, Western American Diocese of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Contemporary Christian Thought - *Retail price: \$10.*

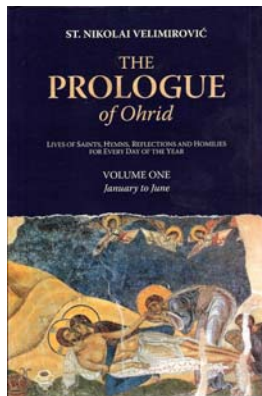


MAN AND THE GOD-MAN by Archimandrite Justin Popovic

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