



Sunday, February 20, 2011

**AFTERFEAST OF THE MEETING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST;  
SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON;  
SAINT PARTHENIUS, BISHOP OF LAMPSACUS**

**RESURRECTIONAL TROPARION - TONE SIX:**

The angelic powers were at Your tomb; and the guards became as dead men; and Mary stood by Your grave, seeking Your most pure Body. You did capture hell, not being tempted by it. You did come to the Virgin, granting life. O Lord who did rise from the dead: Glory to You!

**TROPARION TO THE MEETING OF THE LORD – TONE ONE:**

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, Full of Grace! From you shone the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God, enlightening those who sat in darkness! Rejoice and be glad, O righteous elder; you accepted in your arms the Redeemer of our souls who grants us the Resurrection.

**TROPARION TO SAINT PARTHENIUS – TONE FOUR:**

In truth you were revealed to your flock as a rule of faith, an image of humility and a teacher of abstinence; your humility exalted you; your poverty enriched you. Hierarch Father Parthenius, entreat Christ our God that our souls may be saved.

**RESURRECTIONAL KONTAKION - TONE SIX:**

When Christ God, the Giver of Life, raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand, He bestowed resurrection on the human race. He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and God of all.

**KONTAKION TO THE MEETING OF THE LORD – TONE ONE:**

By Your Nativity, You did sanctify the Virgin's womb! And did bless Simeon's hands, O Christ God. Now You have come and saved us through love. Grant peace to all Orthodox Christians, O only Lover of Man!

**KONTAKION TO SAINT PARTHENIUS – TONE THREE:**

You received divine grace to work miracles, wise and holy God-bearing wonderworker Parthenius. You cleansed the passions of all the faithful and drove out evil spirits. Therefore, we praise you as a great initiate of the grace of God.

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SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON KONTAKION - TONE THREE:

I have recklessly forgotten Thy glory, O Father, and among sinners I have scattered the riches which Thou gavest me. And now I cry to Thee as the Prodigal: I have sinned before Thee, O merciful Father; receive me a penitent and make me as one of Thy hired servants.

HYMN TO THE THEOTOKOS (REPLACES, "IT IS TRULY MEET..."):

O Virgin Theotokos, hope of all Christians! Protect, preserve and save those who hope in you! We faithful saw the figure in the shadow of the law and the scriptures: every male child that opened the womb was holy to God. Therefore, we also magnify the first-begotten Son of the unoriginate Father, the first-born Son of the unwedded Mother!



*Parable of the Prodigal Son*

EPISTLE & COMMENTARY

THE PROKIMENON IN THE 1<sup>ST</sup> TONE:

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us as we have set our hope on Thee.

1 CORINTHIANS 6: 12-20

Brethren, all things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body

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with her? For “the two,” He says, “shall become one flesh.” But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him. Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.

THE ALLELUIA VERSES:

God gives vengeance to me and subdues people under me; He magnifies the salvation of the king, and deals mercifully with His Christ, with David and his seed forever.

COMMENTARY ON I CORINTHIANS 6: 12-20

The temptations of this world are truly great, yet Christ gives us the grace and strength by which to overcome these temptations. Many times we forget that, as creatures of God, our bodies are not our own. Our bodies are temples of God...but instead of using them to worship Him, we choose to defile them through gluttony, drunkenness and sexual immorality. We see the Chalice every Sunday from which we receive the Body and Blood of Christ. This is just a vessel, as are our bodies, but would we use the Chalice for any other purpose than to hold the Holy Gifts? Certainly not. And yet our bodies are so much more valuable to God than this! May our Lord grant us strength to overcome temptations as we struggle to imitate Him and prepare for Great Lent.



*The Meeting of the Lord in the Temple*

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## GOSPEL & COMMENTARY

### LUKE 15: 11-32

Jesus said this parable: “A certain man had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.’ So he divided to them his livelihood. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.”’ And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ And they began to be merry. Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.’ But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. So he answered and said to his father, ‘Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.’ And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.’ ”

### COMMENTARY ON LUKE 15: 11-32

The son’s request for his “portion of goods” indicates man receiving his free will and rational mind from God. As Adam did in Eden, the younger son uses these possessions to rebel against his father; the “far country,” thus, represents life in exile from God. Repentance began when the son “came to himself” because, like life in exile from God, someone immersed in sin is living outside his true self, which is made in the image and likeness of God.





*Saint Parthenius, Bishop of Lampsacus*

### SPIRITUAL ARTICLES

From The Prologue for February 7/20 by St. Nikolai Velimirovic:

#### **Saint Parthenius, Bishop of Lampsacus**

Parthenius was the son of a deacon from the town of Melitopolis. As a child he remembered well the words of the Gospel and endeavored to fulfill them. He settled near a lake, where he fished. He then sold the fish and distributed the money to the poor. By God's providence he was chosen as Bishop of Lampsacus. He cleansed the town of paganism, closed the idolatrous temples, built many churches and strengthened believers in the Faith. Through prayer, he healed every manner of illness and was particularly powerful over evil spirits. On one occasion, when he wanted to cast out an evil spirit from an insane man, the evil spirit begged him not to do so. Parthenius said to him: "I will give you another man whom you can enter, and in him you can dwell." The evil spirit asked him: "Who is this man?" "I am that man," replied the saint. "Enter and dwell in me!" Upon hearing this, the evil spirit fled as though burned by fire, crying out: "How can I enter into the house of God?" St. Parthenius lived a long time and through his work manifested an abundant love for God and man. Parthenius entered into the eternal rest of Christ in the fourth century.

#### **The Venerable Luke of Hellas**

Luke was born in Castoria. Even as a child, he never desired to taste meat and always conducted his life in chastity and prayer. One time, Luke went to a field to sow grains of wheat. Along the way, however, he distributed a greater portion of the grains of wheat to the poor, and he planted the lesser portion, that was left over. From that lesser quantity of grain, God gave him a greater harvest than had previously come from the entire

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amount. After that, Luke left his widowed mother and entered a monastery. The grieving mother prayed earnestly to God to reveal the secret of where her son could be found. God heard the prayers of the mother. The abbot of that monastery dreamed on three consecutive nights that a certain woman sharply rebuked him because he had taken away her only son. The abbot then ordered Luke to return immediately to his mother. Luke went, visited his mother, and parted from her once again, this time never to return. He exhausted himself by fasting on a mountain known as John's Mountain [near Corinth]. At night he prayed to God and during the day he worked in the garden and field, not for his sake but for the sake of the indigent and visitors. Luke himself only lived on bread made of barley. God bestowed upon him the gift of working miracles. Luke reposed peacefully in the year 946. From time to time, myrrh flowed from his relics.

### **The Venerable Mastridia**

Mastridia lived in Jerusalem, where she led an austere life of asceticism. A certain young man fell in love with her and began to annoy her. In order to save herself and this young man from sin, Mastridia took a small basket of moistened beans and retreated into the wilderness. She spent seventeen years in the wilderness, and during the entire time, by the power of God, she did not exhaust her supply of beans, nor did her clothing wear out. Mastridia died peacefully in about the year 580.

### **The 1003 Martyrs of Nicomedia**

They all suffered for Christ during the reign of Emperor Diocletian.

### **HYMN OF PRAISE: The Holy Martyrs at Nicomedia**

The city of Nicomedia shone like a star—  
The eastern capital, like the morning star.  
But one day, by the will of Duclianus,  
Four courtiers were beheaded.  
Eusebius, Vasa, Eutychius, courageous ones,  
And wondrous Basilides, with unfading glory,  
Were beheaded for Christ.  
And by this, Nicomedia was darkened.  
Those four heads were not the end of the horror,  
But only the first blossoms of the mown grass:  
A thousand slaves, servants, and obedient ones,  
Who faithfully served the four martyrs.  
A thousand as one, and three more,  
Created a clamor, as though they had drunk wine.  
No, it was not wine that they drank, but the truth that intoxicated them,  
With the Blood and the victory of the Son of God.  
“O ungodly emperor, we also are Christians.  
We also are Christians, do whatever you will!  
We desire to go to that place  
Where our Blessed Master went.”  
O wondrous daring! O wondrous fidelity!  
But this did not cause the emperor's cruelty to abate.  
A thousand souls departed the earth,

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And the gates of Paradise opened wide to them.

### REFLECTION

St. Isidore of Pelusium interprets certain passages of Holy Scripture in the following manner: *Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left* (Matthew 24:41). This means that many dedicate themselves to the spiritual life, but with different intentions—some sincerely and steadfastly, and others negligently and vainly. The first will be taken into the Kingdom of God, and the others will be left behind. What does the prayer about the cup mean? And why did the Lord pray that this cup of suffering might pass from Him (Matthew 26:42)? This means that no one should seek out adversity, but when adversity does come, a Christian should accept it and courageously endure it. Concerning the five foolish virgins (cf. Matthew, Chapter 25), St. Isidore says: “Indeed, all of them had retained their virginity, but they did not possess the other virtues, especially charity. Virginity alone is not sufficient to enter the Kingdom of God. Virginity does not help at all, if the virgin is proud and selfish.”

### CONTEMPLATION

Contemplate the Lord Jesus as a Sower:

1. As a Sower whose seed grows slowly and surely;
2. As a Sower of the new teaching, new power and new order;
3. As a Sower of the new spiritual food, by which mankind will be fed until the end of time.

### HOMILY

**on the narrow-minded, to whom crime is closer than the love of God**

*But ye seek to kill Me, because My word hath no place in you* (John 8:37).

Why was the word of Christ unable to prevail among the Jewish elders? Because, they were so filled with malice that there was no room in them for the divine seed, for the divine good news. All that grew in their souls was the sowing of Satan, the Antichrist. That is why they sought to kill Christ. Through the blessed Psalmist, the Lord speaks: *Empty yourselves, and know that I am God* (Psalm 46:10). Therefore, it is necessary to empty oneself of everything that is opposed to God, i.e., of everything in us that hinders the light of the knowledge of God from dwelling in us. When man empties himself of that, then and only then can he understand that God is God. As long as the soul of a man is filled with ungodly thoughts, ungodly feelings and ungodly desires, man is totally unable to listen to or receive the word of God. When people do not have God within themselves, they act by some infernal impulse to uproot God from the soul of him who possesses Him. *Ye seek to kill Me*. Why? Because not one divine word of Christ was able to find shelter or acceptance in their godless hearts. Having nothing in common with Christ the Lord, the Jewish elders, from the beginning, were unable to have any kind of friendly relations with Him. O Lord Jesus, our Blessed Savior, help us to empty ourselves of all sinful seeds, that Thy holy word may be able to enter into us and to enlighten, strengthen and resurrect us. To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.

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## **DIOCESAN EVENTS**

### **2011 Dates to Remember**

**Monday, January 28, 2011**

2010 Year-End Parish Financial Reports & 2011 Proposed Budgets  
to be submitted to Diocesan Office

**March 13, 2011**

Sunday of Orthodoxy

**March 22-23, 2011**

Annual Lenten Clergy Retreat  
Christ the Saviour Serbian Orthodox Church  
1424 S. Baldwin Avenue, Arcadia, CA 91007  
Tuesday, March 22<sup>nd</sup> beginning at 3:00 p.m.  
Departure on Wednesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>  
following 10:30 am Breakfast and Wrap-up

**April 8-9, 2011**

Annual Lenten Women's Retreat

**July 17 – August 6, 2011**

Diocesan Summer Camp - Saint Sava Mission, Jackson, California

**September 2-4, 2011**

Diocesan Days - Saint Sava Mission, Jackson, California

**December 4, 2011**

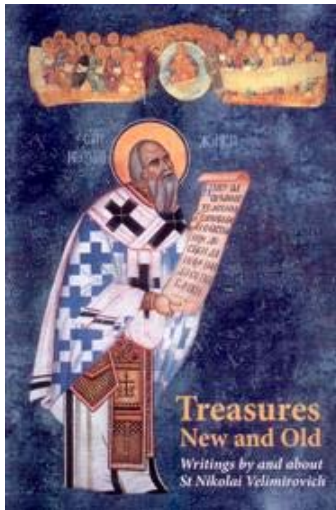
Diocesan KSS Slava  
Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos

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## FROM SEBASTIAN PRESS: A NEW PUBLICATION

### Treasures New and Old

Writing by and about St. Nikolai Velimirovich

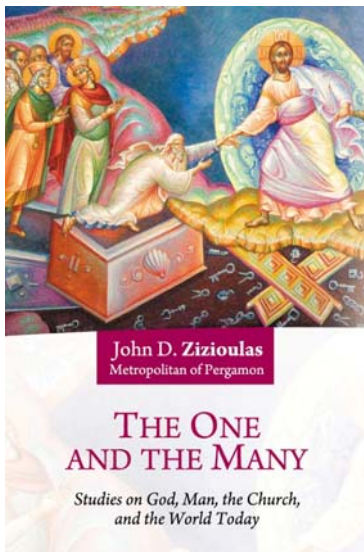


Before us is a book about a theologian, a minister, a missionary, a writer, a poet, an apostle, a saint, a man of dialogue: this book is about St. Nikolai Velimirovich, Bishop of Ohrid and Zhicha (1880 - 1956), who along with his many other attributes is regarded, with good reason, as an Enlightener of the Americas. The renewed interest in this man and his works has resulted in the materialization of this book for English-speaking readers who wish to become acquainted with this extraordinary person. The collected texts provide an extensive overview of his life, present important testimonies about his personality, and offer essential insights into his theology. The authors penetrate the depths of his thought with remarkable precision and also elucidate his actions. The authors agree that the appearance of Nikolai Velimirovich marks an era of change in the ecclesiastical and theological paradigm as a result of his spirituality, ecclesiastical work, and theological position.

Retail price: \$18.00 Paperback

### 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;

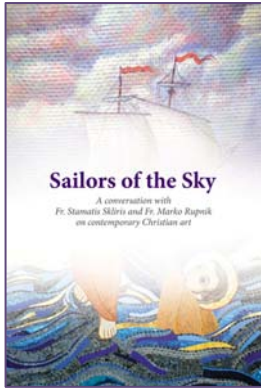
The problem of God's being in Himself; The place of Trinitarian theology in Ecclesiology; Conclusion). The Being of God and the Being of Man (pp. 17-40: The need for a serious theological dialogue; A controversial issue: Trinitarian theology and the human person; Personalism-Existentialism and the theological 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 (pp. 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***

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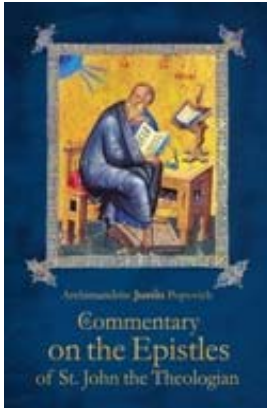
## Sailors of the Sky

*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.*