



Sunday, October 3, 2010

**NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST;
AFTERFEAST OF THE EXALTATION OF THE LIFE-GIVING CROSS;
HOLY GREATMARTYR EUSTATIUS**

RESURRECTIONAL TROPARION - TONE TWO:

When You did descend to death, O Life Immortal, You did slay hell with the splendor of Your Godhead! And when from the depths You did raise the dead, all the powers of heaven cried out: O Giver of Life! Christ our God! Glory to You!

TROPARION TO THE LIFE-GIVING CROSS - TONE ONE:

O Lord, save Your people, and bless Your inheritance. Grant victory to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries; and by virtue of Your Cross, preserve Your habitation.

RESURRECTIONAL KONTAKION - TONE TWO:

Hell became afraid, O Almighty Savior, seeing the miracle of Your Resurrection from the tomb! The dead arose! Creation, with Adam, beheld this and rejoiced with You! And the world, O my Savior, praises You forever.

KONTAKION TO THE LIFE-GIVING CROSS - TONE FOUR:

As You were voluntarily crucified for our sake, grant mercy to those who are called by Your name. Make all Orthodox Christians glad by Your power, granting them victory over their adversaries, by bestowing on them the invincible trophy, Your weapon of peace.

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!

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

Magnify, O my soul, the most precious Cross of the Lord. You are the mystical Paradise, O Theotokos, in which Christ blossomed; through Him the life-bearing wood of the Cross was planted on earth. Now at its Elevation, as we bow in worship before it, we magnify you.

EPISTLE & COMMENTARY

THE PROKIMENON IN THE 2ND TONE:

The Lord is my strength and my song. He has become my salvation.

2 CORINTHIANS II: 31 – 12: 9

Brethren, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. In Damascus the governor, under Aretas the king, was guarding the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desiring to arrest me; but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands. It is doubtless not profitable for me to boast. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord: I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago - whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body, I do not know, God knows - such a one was caught up to the third heaven. And I know such a man - whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows - how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such a one I will boast; yet of myself I will not boast, except in my infirmities. For though I might desire to boast, I will not be a fool; for I will speak the truth. But I refrain, lest anyone should think of me above what he sees me to be or hears from me. And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

FOR THE SUNDAY AFTER THE CROSS EXALTATION, GALATIANS 2: 16-20

Brethren, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

THE ALLELUIA VERSES:

The Lord answer you in the day of trouble! The name of the God of Jacob protect you! Save the the king, O Lord, and hear us on the day we call.

COMMENTARY ON 2 CORINTHIANS II: 31 – 12: 9

Paul's opponents may have boasted themselves about "visions and revelations," prompting his response. While they publically proclaim their own greatness in these experiences, Paul sees his "thorn in the flesh" as given to him precisely so that he *doesn't* exalt in himself. The identity of the "thorn" - be it physical problem, deluded Christian leaders or hard-hearted Israelites - isn't as important as the understanding that his *weakness* is the means by which "[Christ's] strength is made perfect."

COMMENTARY ON GALATIANS 2: 16-20

We die “through the law,” not bypassing or dishonoring it, but by recognizing that: 1) it is holy; 2) we deserve its consequence, death; 3) we voluntarily die to the law through our death with Christ. Being crucified with Christ through baptism, we become alive to the law of the Spirit which perfects the intention of the Old Testament law. Our crucifixion with Christ must be willingly and freely accepted, just as Christ accepted His: “not My will, but Yours be done” (Luke 22: 42).



GOSPEL & COMMENTARY

LUKE 6: 31 – 36

At that time, Jesus said to His disciples, “And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise. But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.”

FOR THE SUNDAY AFTER THE CROSS EXALTATION, MARK 8: 34 - 9: 1

At that time, when Jesus had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, “Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses

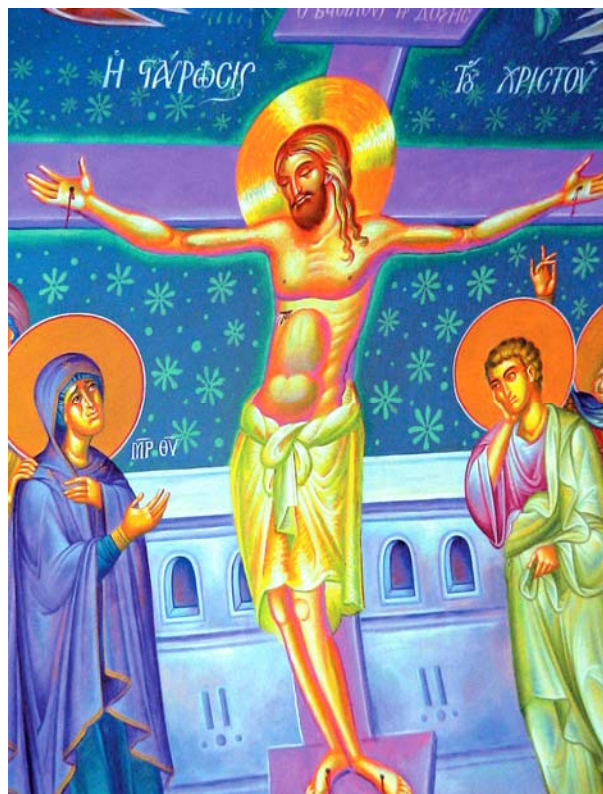
his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." And He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power."

COMMENTARY ON LUKE 6: 31 - 36

The Evangelist Luke traveled with Paul on some of his missionary journeys, as recorded in Acts (16: 10-18; 20: 5-6, 13-15; 21: 1-19), and wrote his Gospel about twenty years after Paul's letters. This Gospel passage is reminiscent of Romans' teaching about love having to be directed at one's enemy in order for it to be genuine and Christ-like; if it's not then we've done nothing more than what sinners do and will not be rewarded as "sons of the Most High."

COMMENTARY ON MARK 8: 34 – 9: 1

At this point in His earthly ministry, Jesus injects a new, solemn tone by speaking about suffering and by teaching the people, and disciples, the cost of true discipleship: self-denial, carrying one's cross and obedience to Christ. True followers should separate themselves from their sins and the inclination towards evil, crucifying the flesh with its passions and desires (Galatians 5: 24).



SPIRITUAL ARTICLES

From The Prologue for Sept. 20/Oct. 3 by St. Nikolai Velimirovic:

The Holy Great-martyr Eustathius (Placidus)

Eustathius was a great Roman general during the reigns of Emperors Titus and Trajan. Though he was a pagan, Placidus (for that was his pagan name) was a just and merciful man, similar to Cornelius the Centurion, who was baptized by the Apostle Peter (Acts 10). Out hunting one day, he pursued a stag. By God's providence, a cross appeared between the antlers of the stag and the voice of the Lord came to Placidus, directing him to go to a Christian priest and become baptized. Placidus was baptized, along with his wife and two sons. At baptism, he received the name Eustathius; his wife, Theopiste ("faithful to God"); and his sons, Agapitus and Theopistus. After his baptism, he returned to the place where he had experienced the revelation of the stag and, kneeling, gave thanks to God that He had brought him to the truth. Just then, the voice of the Lord again manifested itself to him, foretold that he would suffer for His name, and strengthened him. Then Eustathius secretly left Rome with his family, intending to hide among the simple people and serve God in humble and unknown surroundings. Arriving in Egypt, he was immediately beset by trials. An evil barbarian abducted his wife, and both of his sons were seized by wild beasts and carried away. However, the barbarian soon lost his life, and the children were saved from the wild beasts by shepherds. Eustathius settled in the Egyptian village of Vadisis and lived there for fifteen years as a hired laborer. Then barbarians attacked the Roman Empire, and Emperor Trajan grieved that he did not have the brave General Placidus, who had carried the victory whenever he fought. The emperor sent two of his officers to seek the great commander throughout the empire. By God's providence, these officers (who were once companions of Eustathius), came to the village of Vadisis, found Eustathius and brought him back to the emperor. Eustathius amassed an army and defeated the barbarians. On the way back to Rome, Eustathius found his wife and both sons. Meanwhile, Emperor Trajan had died and Emperor Hadrian was on the throne. When Hadrian summoned General Eustathius to offer sacrifices to the gods, Eustathius declined, declaring himself a Christian. The emperor subjected him and his wife and sons to torture. They were thrown to the wild beasts, but this did them no harm. Then they were cast into a red-hot metal ox. On the third day their dead bodies were removed, but they were unharmed by the fire. Thus, this glorious commander rendered *unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's* (Luke 20:25), and took up his habitation in the Eternal Kingdom of Christ our God.

Saint Michael the Prince and Saint Theodore the Boyar

Prince Michael of Chernigov visited the Tartar horde with Theodore, his Boyar, at the invitation of Khan Batu. Since they refused to follow the Tartar custom of passing through fire and worshiping idols before gaining audience with the king, they were beheaded. This occurred in the year 1244. Their relics, witnesses of their martyric death for Christ the Lord, repose in the Church of the Archangel in Moscow.

The Venerable Martyr Hilarion

Hilarion was an Athonite monk. He willingly suffered for the Christian Faith at the hands of the Turks in Constantinople on September 20, 1804. His miracle-working relics repose in the Church of the Transfiguration on the island of Proti.

HYMN OF PRAISE: The Holy Great-martyr Eustathius

Eustathius, a wonder among generals,
Gave his life for the Living Lord.
Authority and glory and royal honor
He discarded as refuse and chaff,
For the sake of Christ, the Immortal King,
For the sake of true eternal life.
When the voice of Jesus greeted him,
He was infused with ardent love
For Christ the All-glorious God—
The All-glorious Lover of Mankind.
That voice remained deep in his soul,
And the world could not drown it out;
And the radiant cross which the general saw,
Never left his soul.
The Cross gave him wondrous fearlessness.
The Cross saved him from the enemy's power,
And saved his spouse, faithful as a rock,
And his children, heroic and virtuous.
Eustathius gave his body over to the fire,
And his blessed spirit to the Lord.
O Eustathius, glorious martyr,
Invincible soldier of Christ,
Help and strengthen the Church of God
That the malicious demon not slander it.
Let the Church shine as a star,
And glorify her Sun, Christ.

REFLECTION

Suicide is a mortal sin and an act of defiance against the Holy Spirit, Who gives life. Suicide is a much greater sin than murder, since for the sin of murder a man can still repent; but for the sin of suicide there is no repentance. Here are two examples of overwhelming misfortune, in the face of which a fainthearted man would commit suicide, yet in which holy men of God showed themselves to be heroes.

St. Eustathius found himself in the following predicament: he left one of his sons on the bank of a river, while he carried the other son to the opposite bank and returned for the first son. Halfway back across the river, he saw that a lion had seized his son and carried him away. He looked at the other bank and saw a wolf seize the second son and carry him away. A fainthearted man in such a situation would have drowned himself in the water, and made an end to his life. Even though drowning in sorrow, Eustathius did not commit suicide, but with hope in God lived as a hireling for fifteen years. This patient man lived to see his two sons again. Thus, God rewarded his faith and patience.

As a young man, St. Hilarion was forced to become a Moslem, but his conscience began to torment him cruelly, and he had no peace at all. He returned to the Christian Faith, was tonsured a monk, and gave his body over to intense fasting and every difficult ascetic labor. Even so, his peace of soul did not return to him. A fainthearted man of little faith would have committed suicide. But Hilarion chose an incomparably better path. He went to Constantinople with his spiritual father Bessarion, and not only openly confessed the Christian Faith at the sultan's court, but even counseled him to go to Russia and be baptized. After being subjected to mockery and torture, this courageous young man was beheaded, and God glorified him both in heaven and on earth. Even today, his holy relics are miracle-working. But where is the glory of those who commit suicide? Where are their relics?

CONTEMPLATION

Contemplate the righteousness of King Jehoshaphat, and God's reward (II Chronicles 17):

1. How Jehoshaphat was zealous for God's truth, and how he destroyed the idols in his land;
2. How God granted him riches, glory, peace and victory over his enemies.

HOMILY

on the only Way, Truth and Life

I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me (John 14:6).

Brethren, these words were not merely spoken, but were soaked with blood, confirmed by the Resurrection, instilled by the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the faithful, and proven again and again by the Church through ages and ages. Of all the treasures on earth, men love life the most—and they love life more than they do truth, even though there is no life without truth. Thus, the highest good is life, but truth is the foundation of life. He who loves life, must also love truth. But where is the way to truth? Our Lord says: *I am the Way*. He did not say: "I am a way," so that none would think there is another way to truth besides the Lord Jesus. And He is not only the Way, but also *the Truth and the Life*, so that none would think that there is some other truth and some other life besides the Lord Jesus. For this He was born as a man, to show men the way; for this He was crucified, to mark the way by His blood. *No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me*. This addresses those who deceive themselves by thinking that they can know God and acquire the Kingdom of God without the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord entirely cut off this false hope and desperate self-deception by these words. The apostle who heard and wrote these words in the Gospel, expressed them in his Epistle in this way: *Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father* (I John 2:23). O Blessed Lord Jesus Christ, Source of all blessings—truly Thou art for us the only Way, the only Light, the only Truth, the only Life and Life-giver. We acknowledge Thee before men and angels as our only God and Savior. Have mercy on us and save us.

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*”

800 N. Glendale Avenue

Glendale, CA 91206

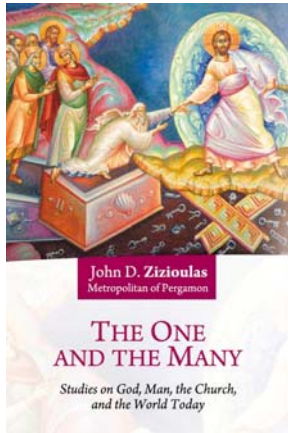
September 9th through Saturday, October 2nd

FROM SEBASTIAN PRESS:

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

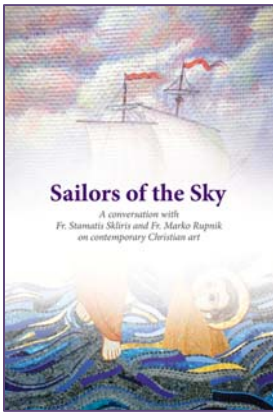


English, and which present his trinitarian doctrine of God, as well as his theological account of the Church as the place in which freedom and communion are actualized. The title, *The One and the Many*, suggests the idea of a profound relationship that exists between the Persons in the Holy Trinity, 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 TRIADOLOGY* (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).

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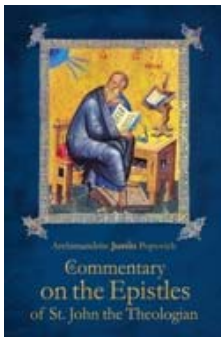


Sailors of the Sky

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

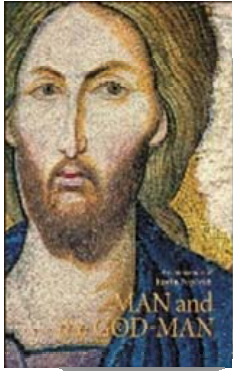
In these timely conversations led by Fr. Radovan Bigovic, many issues are introduced that enable the contemporary reader to deepen and expand his or her understanding of the role of art in the life of the Church. Here we find answers to questions on the crisis of contemporary ecclesiastical art in West 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.*

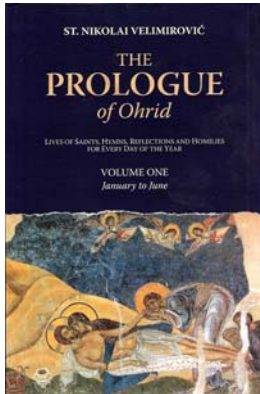


MAN AND THE GOD-MAN by Archimandrite Justin Popovic

This newest publication of our Sebastian Press Publishing House is now available for purchase online at:

http://www.westsrbdio.org/ads/man_and_the_godman.html

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THE PROLOGUE OF OHRID - St Nikolai of Zica (Velimirovic) (1880-1956) has been called the "Serbian Chrysostom" for his theological depth and golden-tongued eloquence. Now for the first time, a complete and unabridged English translation of St. Nikolai's Prologue of Ohrid has been made available. St. Nikolai's Prologue has become a much-loved spiritual classic for Orthodox Christians worldwide. An inspirational source-book of the Orthodox Faith, it contains within its pages a summation of the Church's wisdom and Her experience of sanctity through the Grace of Jesus Christ. Lives of Saints, Hymns, Reflections and Homilies are presented for every day of the year. St. Nikolai's beautiful Hymns have never before appeared in English.

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