



THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

1923 · EIGHTY-ONE YEARS OF MINISTRY · 2004

Our Mission: To proclaim and live the Orthodox Christian Faith in its fullness as faithful members of the Body of Christ

October 2004

www.HolyTrinityPgh.org

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Monthly Parish Newsletter
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Fr. John Touloumes, Economist

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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
MINISTRIES BROCHURE

Saint Luke the Evangelist · Feast Day: October 18



Saint Luke was from Antioch, a physician by trade, and a disciple and companion of Paul. He wrote his Gospel in Greek based in part on those of Matthew and Mark, after which he wrote the Acts of the Apostles. He dedicated both works to Theophilus, who, according to some, was Governor of Achaia. He lived some eighty-six years and died in Achaia, perhaps in Patras, the capital of this district. His emblem is the calf, the third symbolical beast mentioned by Ezekiel (1:10), which is a symbol of Christ's sacrificial and priestly office, according to Saint Irenaeus.



Father John's Message

THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

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The Cultural Side

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The Herald

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"That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened.

While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, "What

is this conversation which you are holding with each other as you walk?" And they stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" And he said to them, "What things?" And they said to him, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel.

Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since this happened. Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning and did not find his body; and they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb, and found it just as the women had said; but him they did not see." And he said to them, "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." (Luke 24.13-27)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Ever trying inviting an Orthodox Christian to a Bible Study? An unfortunately typical answer might be: "I go to Church. I've been going all my life. I hear the Bible there. Why should I go to 'Bible Study?' Orthodox Christians don't do that!" It is an unfortunate misconception that has not served our people well. Perhaps it is born out of our deep-seated understanding that it is more important to live the Scriptures and hear them in worship than it is to "know the Bible."

But looking at the passage from the Gospel of St. Luke above, it is clear that being 'around the Church' all our life simply because we have spent time there is not really the equivalent of 'knowing Christ' through a dedicated effort to learn and grow in His Holy Word. In fact, the disciples who were travelling to Emmaus had spent much time with the Lord, heard them words from His own mouth and knew Him in quite a personal way, but they did not even recognize Him when it counted as He appeared to them. Who among us would have liked to been chastised as they were: "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken?" Even more, who of us would like to hear the same answer in that day we will all face the Lord, where there is no more time for "cramming" like college students facing a final exam. No, it is not our goal to memorize chapter and verse in an academic way, but to have the truth of God engraved in our heart and soul and to live it daily, yet we often still shy away from it.

The strange thing about this seeming disconnect is that we hear from friends at work or in social circles that they spend time beyond Sunday worship in Bible studies, discussion groups or other spiritual growth opportunities and we respect them for it, but are hesitant to take advantage of it ourselves. The passage on the back page of this issue from Elder Cleopa of Romania (interesting that he has the same name as the disciple above, no?) demonstrates most clearly that for Orthodox Christians, the way to learn is from within the Church, through which the Lord brought the Scriptures to us in the first place.

So, whether you are an adult, young person, man or woman, the Church is offering to you, calling you to and presenting you with opportunities for learning here and now. The Holy Trinity Educational Ministries brochure enclosed in this issue of *The Herald* explains them in detail. Please, set your "fear of the Lord" (*phobos Theou*) ahead of your fear of learning and take a step forward in your spiritual life. Let the Holy Spirit guide you into the knowledge of the truth of the Gospel and teachings of our Lord. After all, it is truly "the Orthodox way!"

PS: Bring a friend, too!

News & Events

EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES

Church School "Trading Places" Open House . . . 10/17

Parents: When was the last time *you* were in "Sunday School?" Do you know who your children's teachers are? What are they studying? What books are they using? What do they do during a typical class session? And Students: What do all the adults do when you're in class, anyway? Well, the answers to all these questions can be found at this year's Church School "Trading Places" Open House. On Sunday, October 17, the Church School students and Parents will trade places following Holy Communion. Parents will be dismissed to attend a class and meet their children's teachers. Students will remain in the Divine Liturgy for a special session with Father John, who will be speaking to them instead of the parents for the main sermon of the day.

Please note: This is a class day for attendance purposes, so all students should be there! This special opportunity is not a "day off"; please plan on being there with the whole family!



St. Lydia's Orthodox Women's Fellowship . . Oct. 7, 21

The St. Lydia Women's Study Fellowship is a ministry for women to share in fellowship and to study scripture, the Orthodox Faith and family life in today's world. The meetings take place every other week on Thursday mornings at 9:30 a.m. at the home of Jan Petredis in Wexford. New participants are always welcome! The fellowship is enjoyable and the approach is casual, but the subjects are important for today's women and families.



This year's theme is "Growing in Christ," and is based on the book of the same name by Mother Raphaela, an abbess on American monastery. The topic for Oct. 7 is "Zeal, Piety and Sanctity"; Oct. 21 is "A Time to Build."

For further information on this worthwhile and informative group or for directions to the meetings, call Stacy Dickos at 412-367-0925.

St. Nikodemos Men's Study Fellowship . . Oct. 12, 26

The St. Nikodemos Men's Study Fellowship is an Orthodox men's fellowship, study and discussion group which meets **on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at from 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m.** at the

office of TriadUSA, Suite 460, Two Gateway Center, downtown. The group seeks to provide a regular meeting for working men to discuss issues of faith, work and family. It is open to all interested men and has been centrally located downtown to accommodate easy access for the lunchtime meetings. This year will also feature a complete series of guest facilitators, with seven area clergy on a rotating schedule.

For directions, call Gus Georgiadis at 412-880-4999. A complete schedule of dates and topics can be found on our web site at www.HolyTrinityPgh.org.

New Adult Bible Study: Gospel of John Oct. 19

The Religious Education Ministries brochure enclosed in this issue of *The Herald* includes information on an exciting new adult education opportunity starting in October: a Bible study for adults. This new educational offering is **open to all**, both "beginners" in Scripture study as well as those who are well-read. It will be based on an excellent new DVD production of "The Gospel of John" and will go through the entire book in segments, watching the selected section on DVD, then discussing it together. Please refer to the brochure for directions and information. The fall meeting dates are the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month: October 19, November 2 & 16 and December 7 & 21 from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. at the home of Cliff and Sondra Brubaker, 123 Foxwood Dr., Wexford. (724-940-3445).



YOUTH MINISTRY

GOYA Steelers Bake Sale October 10

Please plan on supporting our GOYA for their Steelers Bake Sale on Sunday, October 10. Take home some treats to (hopefully) celebrate another victory for the Black and Gold!

GOYA Fellowship Night October 10

The GOYA will hold the first of its monthly fellowship nights for the season at the home of Andrew Athanasiou on Sunday, October 10 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. These casual meetings provide an opportunity for discussion, time with friends, questions for Fr. John and other GOYA matters as needed. For information, contact George Athanasiou at 412-322-6002.

News & Events

LITURGICAL LIFE

Weekday Services.October

Please take note of the following weekday Liturgies for the feast days in the month of October. Orthros is at 8:30 a.m., followed by Divine Liturgy at 9:30.

St. Gerasimos of CephaloniaOctober 20

St. Demetrios the Great MartyrOctober 26

BAPTISMS

Germanos

The servant of God, Maximos Germanos, son of Thomas and Joanne Germanos, was received into the Orthodox Christian Faith through the Holy Mystery of Baptism on September 12, 2004. His sponsor was Jeremy Thomas. May God grant him many years!

Thomas

The servant of God, Jewel Anne Thomas, daughter of James and Lori Thomas, was received into the Orthodox Christian Faith through the Holy Mystery of Baptism on September 12, 2004. Her sponsor was Joanne Germanos. May God grant her many years!

FUNERALS & MEMORIALS

Michael Sfanos

The servant of God, Michael Sfanos, fell asleep in the Lord on September 24, 2004. The Funeral service was held on September 28, followed by interment at Grandview Cemetery in North Versailles. May his memory be eternal! (Michael Sfanos was also the former priest of Holy Trinity Church from 1971-1992. In his memory, the Parish Council and the Philoptochos hosted the *Makaria* funeral luncheon following the service.)



Upcoming Memorials

Memorial or Trisagion services have been scheduled for the following souls during the coming weeks:

October 3: Nicholas & Theophani Mitrakos

October 24: Anthony Lakes (6 months); George Morris (1 year).

PARISH NEWS

Biggest-Ever Festival Thank You!

The Festival Committee has provided its preliminary report to the Parish Council, and it started with a huge

“Thank You!” to the entire community. The 2004 Holy Trinity Greek Festival was the largest and most successful ever, with total income of over \$142,000. More information will be forthcoming, but rest assured and thank God that this was one for the record books!

Fall Community Homeless Outreach.Nov. 20

Holy Trinity Church has been blessed once again with the opportunity to host the “Feed the Homeless” Outreach event. You may remember that in March of 2003, our parish—which so often asks for the support of the community around us for the Festival, Wednesday Lunch, etc.—accepted the invitation of the Greater Pittsburgh Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood and opened our doors to the poor and needy the Lord commands us to serve in His name for a sit-down hot lunch.

Now, returning to that blessing for the fourth time, on Saturday, November 20, the Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood will again sponsor a sit-down lunch for the homeless here at Holy Trinity Social Hall from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm. This philanthropic outreach will be sponsored by various Orthodox parishes in the area, who will bring food and provide volunteers to set up, clean up and serve. In addition to offering the use of our hall, it is important that the Holy Trinity community steps forward to serve. If you would like to help by cooking, serving or donating, please contact Julie or Mike Kritiotis at 412-766-5001. During the Christmas fast when we are called to prayer, fasting and almsgiving, this is truly a wonderful way to fulfill the commandment of Jesus Christ: “As you did it to these, the least of my brethren, you did it to Me” (Mt. 25.40). Thank you for your generosity.

REGIONAL NEWS

Walk For Missions 2004.October 10

The Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood of Greater Pittsburgh will once again sponsor its annual Walk for Missions on Sunday, October 10 at 2:00 p.m. at the South Park Fair Grounds. Proceeds from the Walk will benefit the Orthodox Christian Missions Center (OCMC), which sends Orthodox Christian missionaries throughout the world: 35 long-term missionaries and over 800 short-term missionaries to 21 countries. OCMC also supports the ministries of indigenous (local) clergy in mission areas of over 12 countries, with over 240 clergy in areas such as Cameroon, India, Indonesia, Nigeria and Tanzania. The registration and sponsor flyer is available from the church office and should be brought to the Walk. Please notify Holy Cross Church at 412-833-3355 if you plan to participate.

Community Life Photo Journal

Photo highlights from the 2004 Holy Trinity Greek Festival, September 1-5

Time and space do not allow enough room to adequately portray all the excitement, dedication, hard work and enthusiasm shown by our beloved Holy Trinity parishioners for their Church through their labors and offerings of love at the largest ever Holy Trinity Festival. These few highlights are offered as a thanksgiving to God and a reminder to us all that each of us is an important part of the Body of Christ which is this Church. May the Lord continue to bless us with success that we may serve Him always!



Community Life Photo Journal

Photo highlights from the 2004 Holy Trinity Greek Festival, September 1-5



Community Life Photo Journal

Photo highlights from the 2004 Holy Trinity Greek Festival, September 1-5



Community Life Photo Journal

Photo highlights from the 2004 Holy Trinity Greek Festival, September 1-5, and other Community Life



September 5: The Holy Trinity Dancers, Olympic Dancers and the entire Holy Trinity Community present Greek Dance instructor Stella Athanasiou with a beautiful Greek-design trophy commemorating and thanking her for her 50 years of service to Holy Trinity Church as a Greek Dance instructor. Most touching about the photograph is that many of the children pictured with her are children or grandchildren of the very first generation of dancers she started with 50 years ago. God bless you, Stella, and thank you! *(Below is a thank you note from her)*

Dear Holy Trinity Dancers, Olympic Dancers, Parents and Friends,

Thank you for honoring me with the unique and memorable trophy with the touching and warm message on the fiftieth anniversary of my participation in Greek Dancing at Holy Trinity Church. It will not only have a special place in my home, but a special place in my heart because it came from **all of you!**

Love always,
Stella Athanasiou

Σας υπέρ ευχαριστώ όλους για την αγάπη και εκτιμήσεις σας.
Με αγάπη,
Στέλλα Αθανασίου



August 29: George Athanasiou receives well wishes, prayers and a gift of his first *anderi* (seminarian/clergy robe) from the Holy Trinity community from (l-r) Father John Androutsopoulos, Father John Touloumes, George Georges and Mike Kritiotis. George is the first seminarian in at least two generations from Holy Trinity Church.

To my beloved parish,

No words can explain how grateful I am for your support in my decision to go to Hellenic College/Holy Cross. I would like to thank all the parishioners, the parish council and Fr. John for providing me with my first *anderi*, which I am in the process of ordering now. This gift that I received revealed to me the love that my parish has for its future, for its youth. God has given me a path that I need to take to get where I need to be. This path will have its bumps, twists and turns. I will struggle and be tempted to do things that will lead me in the wrong direction. But God has provided me with a parish that will support me and has shown their support for me while I am on this Holy path of the seminary. No matter where life takes me I will always have a place for Holy Trinity in my heart. This love will help me follow God's path and make it much straighter than before. Nobody will ever be able to take away from me your love and from you your commitment for the future of not only our parish but for God's Holy Orthodox Church. I am very proud to represent Holy Trinity, the Metropolis of Pittsburgh, his Eminence Metropolitan Maximos, and my family here at the school. Please continue to pray for me and during my studies here at HC/HC.

All my love, George Athanasiou

Gheronda's Corner

Part of a regular series of contributions by our resident "Gheronda" (respected elder clergy), Father John Androutsopoulos



**Father John
Androutsopoulos**

The Destination of a Christian

The ultimate aim and destination of the Christian is to approach the perfect—that is, God—and to achieve the salvation of his soul.

In other words, each faithful Christian desires to end this earthly life with the hope and assurance that he or she will inherit eternal life. To inherit the future life, the faithful Orthodox Christian will look to the Church where there is at the disposal of the faithful three means:

1. The Orthodox Catholic Faith
2. The Grace of God
3. The good deeds of the faithful

The faithful Christian must believe in the Holy Trinity; in God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit; also in the life to come, and in the Church of Christ upon earth.

The Grace of God can be received through the Holy Sacraments and special Services, which the Church, through her Priests, offers for the sanctification of the Faithful.

Faith and the Grace of the Holy Spirit are absolutely necessary for our salvation, but they alone are not sufficient. It is not enough to believe in God and be worthy of His grace to be saved, but we must also do His will. Those worthy of receiving God's grace are the ones who do not oppose God but are prepared to receive Him. As Orthodox Christians, there are certain duties we must perform while we are on earth:

1. The first and most important way for a Christian to approach God and to be compared to our Lord Jesus Christ as Man (the human nature of Christ) is prayer, which is the most important privilege God gave to man, so that His creature (man) to communicate with His Maker. The Holy Fathers say that prayer is the lifting up the mind and heart to God. Every Orthodox Christian must pray.

2. Aside from prayer, of great importance is also Fasting--the abstinence of certain foods and worldly pleasures. Fasting helps our soul and our prayers. Fasting is the mother of good health.

3. To be saved, an Orthodox Christian must heed the word of God. God has revealed in many ways His

will, beginning with the prophets, and right up to Jesus Christ, of all His revelations. The most important laws which guide us are the Ten Commandments, for Jesus said, "Whoever accepts my commandments and obeys them is the one who loves me. My Father will love who ever loves me; I too will love him and reveal myself to him." (John 14:21)

4. Besides the Commandments of God, a good Christian must also abide by the laws laid down by the Church, to guide the life of its members on earth.

5. A good Christian must persist in doing good if he hopes to achieve salvation. This persistence in living up to the teachings of good willingly and doing deeds, is known as virtue. The most important virtues are the nine by which we achieve happiness and which were given to us by Jesus Christ Himself, during His "Sermon on the Mount." (Please read Matthew 5:1-12.)

6. A Christian must avoid sin. The persistence to do the Will of God and live a Christian life is known as virtue, but the disobedience of the Law of God is known as sin. A Christian must fight sin. If because of temptation or weakness, a person sins, then he or she must repent. The Christian must be contrite and confess the sins so that he or she may be absolved and forgiven. The Orthodox Christian must receive Holy Communion for the remission of sins.

7. An Orthodox Christian has received his life with its soul and body as a gift from God. As a gift, the person must take care of the soul and body. These obligations are known as duties to one's self.

8. Even if a Christian fulfills all the duties to God and to himself or herself, that Christian still cannot obtain salvation if he or she is negligent towards their neighbor. The first and greatest of our duties towards our neighbors is to love that person. Our Lord places only the love of God above the love of neighbor.

If an Orthodox Christian desires to attain a good life here on earth, and if the person wishes to achieve eternal salvation, that Christian will do the Will of God and prepare to receive Him.

THOUGHT FOR THIS MONTH:

Beloved as Orthodox Christians do we know our destination? Do we know where we come from and where are we going? We come from non-existence to life and through death we are going to the immortality of the soul.

*With His love,
Rev. Fr. John K. Androutsopoulos*

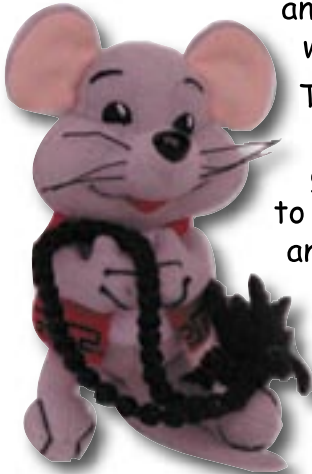
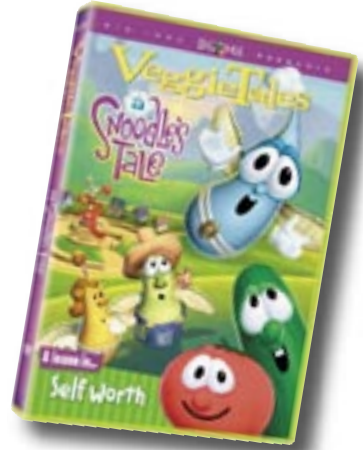
Mouse Tales: The St. Spyridon Church School Library Update

Hello, my Precious Children!

Welcome back to Church School! I really missed you and all my precious children! My...look how much you have grown! (That means that your feet have gotten bigger too so please be careful not to trample little things underfoot ... like little church mice!)

This year, we have many new things for you to learn, read, and view. In addition, the library has grown so much that we had to move. But don't worry, we didn't move out, we moved up! My home is now upstairs, so come and check out my new "mouse pad" every Sunday right after Church School!

For my little ones, we have a brand new DVD from the Veggie Tales series called, "A Snoodle's Tale". This DVD will teach you the value of self worth. In the first tale, Bob the Tomato and Larry the cucumber tell the hilarious and spine-chilling tale of Dr. Jiggle and Mr. Sly, which sounds a lot like the classic "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde", only with a new twist: a disco beat and white polyester leisure suit! The Veggies learn to be true to themselves and not to judge others by their appearances. The scientist learns that it is okay to be himself and that the way others see him doesn't matter. God sees how precious and special we are, and that is just the way we should see ourselves also!



The second Veggie Tale on this DVD is called, "A Stout-Hearted Snoodle." In it, his friends tell the Stout-Hearted Snoodle that his good deeds were silly. So he runs away high in the mountains, only to discover his Heavenly Father who tells him, "I know what you are and who you are for I made you. I build everything in the world, and planted everything including, all the flowers in the meadow, and put all the fishes in the ocean, and feed the birds. I know every time that you fall in the mud and all you do and will do for you are special. Do not listen to all the lies that degrade you. Only put your trust in Me, for I created you." YiaYia says that Psalm 139:14 teaches us to always praise God because He made us in an amazing and wonderful way. What He has done is wonderful and I know this very well.

The third Veggie Tale in this new release is called, "The Good Samaritan". It will teach my little ones that we do not only love our neighbors but also our enemies. (As you can guess, it's based on a famous Bible story!)

We also have a "Book of the Month" called, "What I Like About You", by Colleen Ludington. In it, an adorable mother kangaroo recites all the reason for loving it's precious child while also reminding the child of our Heavenly Father's boundless love. She reinforces the idea of a love not dependent on glorious looks or great accomplishments. It is a love that appreciates the gift that our Heavenly Father has given us. Remember my little ones, you are "custom made" by God's own design, You are not three- or two-, but one-of-a-kind! You have a purpose no one else can fulfill; no one can replace you, and no one ever will!

In Christ, Love Spero

The Cultural Side • Η Πολιτιστική Πλευρά

When World War II broke out in 1939, Greece was trying maintain a peaceful position and had decided to not take part in the war. In 1940, however, Italy's dictator, Benito Mussolini, tried in several ways to draw Greece into the war. On August 15th 1940, an Italian submarine shot a torpedo inside the island's harbor and shot one of the Greek ships. The governing body of Ioannis Metaxas, which had just come into office, pretended that they did not recognize who had done this—even though they did—in order to avoid any form of battle. The Italians continued their attacks in Greece, and war began to seem inevitable.

On the night of the 28th of October, 1940, Mussolini sent the Italian ambassador to Athens to the home of the Greek President. Metaxas was woken by the ambassador and asked for free entrance of the Italian forces on to Greece. He immediately gave a negative reply, and with him the Hellenic people answered "OXI" (No!). The war began, the sirens sound, the enemy planes flew over the skies of Greece, and the Italian army was on Greek land. The Greeks fought long and hard for their country. They fought throughout the cold winter in Albania. The Greeks never gave up, but Mussolini, having seen their determination, asked for Hitler's help. The Greeks in turn, fighting with the English by their side, had more triumphs to write of at El Alamein and Rimini. The day of freedom came in October of 1944. Since then, Greece has always commemorated the bravery of Ioannis Metaxas and the Greek patriots for their bravery and conviction in the face of the Italian enemy.

The following article is a Greek-language commemoration and reflection on this Greek national holiday provided by one of our Cultural Side contributors, Voula Hareras.

28η ΟΚΤΩΒΡΙΟΥ
1 • 9 • 4 • 0



28η ΟΚΤΩΒΡΙΟΥ
2 • 0 • 0 • 4

Αν και έχουν περάσει 64 χρόνια έντοτις δέν πρέπει νά ξεχνάμε ότι, τό πρωινό τής 28ης Οκτωβρίου τού 1940, ή Έλλάδα έκλήθη από τήν μοίρα νά πεθάνει ή νά ζήση έλεύθερη.

Κι' ή Έλλάδα όλόκληρη σάν μία ψυχή, σάν νά ήταν ένας μόνο άνθρωπος, συμφώνησε στό «όχι»,

πού έρριξε κατά πρόσωπο, τού Ιταλού φασίστα ό προθυπουργός τής χώρας, πού εκείνη τήν ώρα άνυψώθηκε σέ διαστάσεις γιγαντιαίες,κί έκάλυψε τίς σελίδες,τίς πιό ένδοξες, τής συγχρόνου ιστορικής σταδιοδρομίας της φυλης μας

Η 28η Οκτωβρίου τού 1940 είναι και θά μένει ή πιό μεγάλη μέρα τής Έλληνικής ιστορίας.Δεν θά είναι για τόν ιστορικό τού μέλλοντος ή μεγαλειτέρα ήμέρα, πού θά θεωρηθή ως άφετηρία περιλάμπρων νικών μόνο.Καί ούτε άκόμη ως μία μέρα άπαρχής μιάς σειράς έκπληκτικών άνδραγαθημάτων μονάχα. Θά είναι μεγάλη για τά μεγάλα πού εκείνη τήν στιγμή άποφάσισαν, από τόν Ήρωικόν και Άσκητικόν Βασιλέα τόν Μέγαν Πολιτικόν Ήγέτη τού Έθνους και τό σύνολο τού Έλληνικού λαού, για νά φανούν άντάξιοι τών παραδόσεων τής ιστορίας

Η 28η Οκτωβρίου θά είναι ή ήμέρα τής έκ μέρους τών Έλλήνων υπερτάρης θυσίας.Τής θυσίας για τόν κάθε Έλληνα τού παντός ύπαρκτού. Τής θυσίας τού παντός άγαθού.Τής θυσίας τού παντός χρησίμου εις τά ιδανικά εις τά άυλα πού έκπροσωπει ή ιδέα τής

Πατρίδος.

Όλες οι άλλες μεγάλες μέρες τής Έλληνικής ιστορίας είχαν ήρωισμούς, είχαν κάποια λογική.

Η ήμέρα τής 28η Όκτωβρίου λογική δέν είχε.στό Μαραθώνα ύπήρχαν έλπίδες, στή Σαλαμίνα ύπήρξε ή λογική τής στρατιγηκής και «τακτικής» ύπεροχής.Κι' άκομα όταν ό Έλληνικός λαος έπειτα από τετρακόσια χρόνια δουλείας ξεσηκώθηκε, περιορισμένος σ'ένα κομματάκι γής, έναντίον τής μεγαλειτέρας και ισχυρωτέρας άυτοκρατορίας τού κόσμου πάλι κατέλειπε στους μαχομένους

Έλληνες στοιχεία έλπίδων. Αύτος όμως ό άγώνας έναντιον τών ιταλών φασιστών τών όκτώ έκατομμυρίων λογχών και τών δέκα χιλιάδων άεροπλάνων πού θά έπισκίαζαν τόν ήλιο, δέν άφιναν καμμίαν έλπίδα. Για νά τό καταλάβη αυτό ό καθένας, έπρεπε νά είχε ζήση εκείνες τίς ύπέροχες πρωίνες ώρες τής Δευτέρας τό πρωί τής 28ης Όκτωβρίου τού 1940. Στην Αθήνα, στην Θεσσαλονίκη,στis πόλεις στα χωριά.Έπρεπε νά δή γέρους γυναίκες παιδιά,έπρεπε νά δή άναπήρους, νά τρέχουν στό δρόμο, ν' άφίνουν τά σπίτια μέ τίς πόρτες άνοιχτές και νά φωνάζουν έξαλλοι άπο πατριωτικό μένος. Στόν Στρατώνα! Όλοι όπλα! Καί στην Ρώμη! Μάταια έλπίδα αλλά πού τήν πραγματοποιήσε ό Θεός. Θά κρεμάσωμε τόν Μουσσολίνι! Κι' εκείνην τήν ώρα όταν άντήχησαν τό πρωί οι σειρήνες οι Έλληνες όλοι πίστεψαν βαθύτατα ότι έκαλούντο ν' άποθάνουν.

The Cultural Side • Η Πολιτιστική Πλευρά

Γιατί καθένας τότε ήξερε πολύ καλά τί δυνατότητες είχε τό κράτος καί τί είχαν οί φασίστες.

Ήξερε σχεδόν ολος ο λαος οτι πισω απ' αυτες τις τεραστιες δυναμεις παραφυλαττον οι δυναμεις της υαινης του Βερολινου.Κι' ηξεραν οτι ισως θα καιγοταν ο Πειραιας η Αθηνα η Θεσσαλονικη.

Ήξερε πολυ καλα ο πιο μικρος μαθητης οτι με τις Ιταλικες βομβες των δεκα χιλιαδων αεροπλανων θα καταστρεφοταν τα γεφυρια οι σταθμοι θα αχρηστευονταν οι σιδηροδρομικες συνγοκινωνιες και τα σπιτια κι' ολλα. Ομως βγηκε κι' αυτος ο μικρος μαθητης στο δρομο εκεινη την ευλογημενη μερα για να ζητηση κι' αυτος αρματα να πολεμηση. Ετσι εκεινη την ημερα επραγματοποιηθηκε η ψυχικη επαφη του ηγετου του εθνους Ιωαννη Μεταξα με τον Ελληνικο λαο ολοκληρο.

«Και τωρα ανδρες γυναικες και παιδια επιστρατευμενοι και μη, ας σφιξωμε τα δοντια και τους γρονθους μας ας αγωνισθουμε μ'ολη τη λυσσα που μας προκαλει αυτη η ανιερη αυτη η αισχυρα επιθεσις εναντιον μας. Αγωνιζομεθα οχι μονο δια την υπαρξη μας αλλα και δια τους αλλους βαλκανικους λαους. Αγωνιζομεθα δια τα μεγαλα αγαθα που η σπουδαιοτητα των ξεπερνα τα συνορα μας και τα ορια της Βαλκανικης και εκτεινεται εις ολοκληρον την ανθρωποτητα. Οφειλομεν να ευχαριστησωμεν το Θεον διοτι η Προνοια του εθεσε και παλιν την Ελλαδα πρωτοπορον ενος τοσον ευγενους αγωνος, εβροντοφωνησε ο Μεταξας την ιδια μερα του πολεμου».

Και ηξερε πολυ καλα ο Ελληνικος Λαος με τι θα πολεμουσε.Τα σηζητουσε επι μηνες ο Ελληνικος

Λαος εκεινα που θα συνεβαιναν. Οι φασιστες με την πολιτικη αεροπορια που ωργωναν επι δεκα χρονια τον Ελληνικο ουρανο ειχαν επισημανει καθε θεση ενδιαφερουσα στρατιωτικως.

Κι' οταν στο ημιφως των σπιτιων ανοιγε η συζητησις «πολεμος με τους Ιταλους».Οι λιγοι απαντουσαν αμεσως. «Μα θα ειναι αυτοκτονια». Και αρχιζαν οι υπολογισμοι. Τοσα εκατομμυρια αυτοι, τοσα εμεις. Μαζυ τους και οι Αλβανοι κι' οι Βουλγαροι. Βεβαιος θανατος! Βεβαιος ναι! Αλλα εκεινο το μεγαλο πρωινο με τι θαρρος εκπληκτικο με τι πληθος εξαλλης χαρας επροχωρησε προς αυτον αφοβη αποτητη η Ελλαδα μας! Δεν ηταν ολοι οι Εληνες ηρωες ουτε εκλεκτοι ουτε ηταν

ολοι φανατικοι πατριωται. Μετριοι ανθρωποι φρονιμοι τακτικοι της φαμιλιας και της υσηχης δουλειας. «Μεχρι εκεινο το πρωινο—εγραφε ο αιμνηστος και μοναδικος Γεωργιος Βλαχος—οχι το σπιτι και τα παιδια και τους εαυτους τους, αλλ' ουτε το περιεχομενον της τσεπης μας, δεν ειμεθα προθυμοι να πεταξωμε εις τον ερανον της Πατριδος» Αλλα οταν ομως εκεινο το πρωι με το αντηχισμα των σειρηνων παρουσιαστικε η Ελλαδα με τον ερανον οχι των περουσιων μονο και των παιδιων, αλλα και του αιματος,ολη η Ελλαδα αμεσως χωρις λογαριασμους χωρις σκεψιν χωρις να λαβη υπ'οψιν της τιποτε ανοιξε τις φλεβες της. Ολες. Γιατι ο αγωνας ηταν αγωνας υπερ της Πατριδος υπερ της Ελλαδος!

Αυτην αγαπησαν εξαφνα μ' ασυνγκρατητο παθος δεξιои, αστοι, αριστεροι, κομμουνισται, αναρχικοι, κι' εθνηκοφρονες. Την Ελλαδα οτι εκρυβε μεσα της. Την ιστορια, τα ιδανικα, τας παραδοσεις.

Ο πατριωτισμος ποτέ—ο εξαλλος πατριωτισμος—δια τον Ελληνα ολων των εποχων δεν υπηρξε ουτοπια. Ηταν και ειναι η ψυχικη αναγκη του ισοροπημενου Ελληνα.

Αλλα ας γυρισωμε πισω 64 χρονια πριν. Ας αναπολησωμε για μια στιγμη τα γεγονοτα εκεινα που ανεβασαν την Ελλαδα στις κορυφες της δοξας.Ας ποτιστουμε ακομα μια φορα, απο το εξαισιο νεκταρ των

μεγαλων εκεινων ωρων, που ξεχυθηκε απο την καρδια των Ελληνων ως μεγαλη αποφασις. Βραδυ της 27ης Οκτωβριου. Στην Αθηνα ο πρεσβευτης της Ιταλιας, ο Γκρατσι, ειχε οργανωσει προς τιμην εξοχόντων μελών της Αθηναικης κοινωνιας πλουσιωτατον γευμα στις μεγαλοπρεπεις αιθουσες του μεγαρου της ιταλικης πρεσβειας, οπου με μια υποκριτικη ευγλωτια διεκηρυσε την « στενοτητα των σχεσεων και την πατροπαραδοτη φιλια μεταξυ των δυο παναρχαιων λαων». Μολις ομως η ωραια ελληνοιταλικη γιορτη τελειωσε και οι Ελληνες ολοι οι επισημοι προ παντός—ετσι ενομισε τουλαχιστον ο αφελης—αποχωρησαν « με τας καλυτερας των εντυπωσεων», ο κομης Εμμανουηλ Γκρατσι, απεσυρθηκε εις το γραφειο του δια να ετοιμαση το εγγραφο της φασιστικης διπλωματιας, το οποιο θα επεδιδε επειτα απο λιγο στο Μεταξα.

Ηταν 3 παρα πεντε το πρωι της Δευτερας Οκτωβριου. Εκεινη την ωρα ο Μεταξας κοιμοτανε.

Ειχε αποσυρθη αφου συνεταξε ωρισμενα τηλεγραφηματα προς τους πρεσβευτάς και οδηγιες προς το



Ι. Μεταξας

The Cultural Side • Η Πολιτιστική Πλευρά

Γενικό Επιτελείο, στις 12 τα μεσανύκτα. Το κουδούνι χτυπήσε επαννείλημμενος.

Ο Μεταξας φορεσε κατι προχειρο κι' ανοιξε ο ιδιος κι' ειδε εκπληκτος μπροστα του τον πρεσβευτη της Ιταλιας. Οπως διηγείται η κ. Λελα Μεταξα ο ανδρας της χαμογελασε. Καταλαβε.

Και πηρε το αναλογο υφος για να αντιπροσωπευση περηφανα την Ελλάδα. Ο Γκρατσι μπηκε μεσα στο μικρο σαλονακι, οπου πολλες φορες ο Μεταξας δεχοτανε τους δημοσιογραφους για να συνομιληση φιλικα μαζί τους και «καθησε στην ιστορικη πολυθρονα» που στυριζοταν στην δεξια μερια του τοιχου. Ο Γκρατσι καθησε κι' εδωσε στον Μεταξα τον φακελλον. Η ιστορικη στιγμη που η μοιρα επιφυλαξε στην Ελλάδα. Ο Μεταξας εβγαλε τα γυαλια του τα καθарισε με την ακρη του μαντηλιου του τα ξαναφορεσε με την ησυχια του και αρχισε να διαβαζη. Οπως ομως διηγειτο αργότερα προσεποιειτο οτι εδιαβαζε ενα ολοκληρο τεταρτο της ωρας. Το βλεμμα του και το πνευμα, ειχαν συλλαβει στα δυο πρωτα λεπτα το πνευμα και το γραμμα του τελεσιγραφου. Αλλα ηθελε να ζυγιση καθε λεξη που θα ελεγε στον θρασυ νυκτερινο επισκεπτη του. Οταν συνεπληρωσε τις σκεψεις του, συκωθηκε ξαναδιπλωσε το τελεσιγραφο και το εβαλλε ηρεμα στο φακελλο.

Κυριε Προεδρε—αρχισε ο Γκρατσι να λεγει ταραγμενος—ειμαι επιπροσθέτως επιφορτισμενος να σας ανακοινωσω οτι εν περιπτωση μη αποδοξης των ορων που αναγνωσατε, τα ιταλικά στρατευματα θα εισελθουν εις την Ελλάδα εις τας 6 το πρωι. Κυριε πρεσβευτα—απηντησε αταραχος

Ο Μεταξας—και το περιεχομενο του τελεσιγραφου και ο τροπος καθ' ον μοι επεδοθη σημαινουν κηρυξιν πολεμου εκ μερου της Ιταλιας. Ο Ιωαννης Μεταξας τιναχθηκε. Σηκωθηκε ορθιος και προσεπαθησε να υψωθη στο υψος του Γκρατσι. Τα γαλανα του ματια πεταξαν φλογες.

Περितτον να προχωρισετε φωναζε: ΟΧΙ! Δεν προκειται να δωσω τετοιες διαταγες στα στρατευματα μας. Και δεν θα επιτραπει στα δικα σας να περασουν! Και κατηθυνθη προς την πορτα. Ο Γκρατσι καταλαβε οτι απεπεμπετο και εξηλθε. Στην πορτα προσπαθησε να τεινη την χειρα εις χαιρετισμον.

Ο Μεταξας απεστρεψε το προσωπον με αηδια. Μολις ο ανεπιθυμητος ξενος εφυγε ο Μεταξας ορμησε στο τηλεφωνο. Μεσα σε μιση ωρα ξυπνησε τον Βασιλεα, τον Αρχιστρατηγο, τους Υπουργους, κι' εδωσε στα συνορα την διαταγη.. Οι Ιταλοι δεν θα περασουν! Ντυθηκε επειτα γρηγορα και τις 4 και πεντε το πρωι ηταν στο γραφειο του υπουργιου των εξωτερικων.

Αργότερα τον ηρωτησε καποιος πρεσβευτης μεγαλης χωρας, της Αγγλιας, ο Παλαρετ. Εις την φοβεραν αυτην στιγμην που εδωσατε την απηντηση σας εις τον ιταλον δεν εδιστασατε δεν εσταματησατε ουτε ενα δευτερολεπτο? Ουτε ενα δευτερολεπτον. Εν οσω διαβαζα το τελεσιγραφο, ειχα αρκετο καιρο να σκεπτω οτι καλουμεθα οι Ελληνες να ζησωμε

ελευθεροι η δουλοι. Και δεν εχρειαζετο πολλη σκεψις δια να αποφασισω πως θα ζουσαμε!

Η Μεγαλη Ωρα εσημανε κι' οι Ελληνες ολοι σαν να ενεπνευσθησαν απο ενα ποιημα:

Κρατατε το κεφαλι σας ψηλα.
Εξω το στηθος ορθιο το κορμι σας.
Κι' ας φαίνεται πως σκυβουνε δειλα.
Και τα βουνα ακομα στην ορμη σας.
Σαν περπατατε ας φαίνεται πως τρεχετε.
Πως πεταξατε με τα φτερα απο την
κουνια.
Πως τρεμει ο κοσμος τα μουστακια που
δεν εχετε.
Και των ποδιων σας τα ανυπαρκτα
σπιρουνια
Ορθιο το κορμι ψηλα την μυτη σας.
Ας φαίνεται πως βγαινετε απο καστρα.
Μην το ξεχνατε.
Πατε να ξεκρεμασετε τ' αστρα.
Αστρα, σημαιες, ονειρα, φτερα.
Ας ειναι της ψυχη σας πρωτοβροχι
Θυελα νάν' τα ζητω
Και κερουνος το ΟΧΙ!
Ας μου επιτραπει να κλεισω αυτη τη
συντομη εξιστοριση μ'ενα θαυμασιο
αρθρο του

Γεωργίου Βλαχου



The Cultural Side • Η Πολιτιστική Πλευρά

Η 28η Οκτωβρίου 1949. Θα περάσουν μήνες και χρόνια η σημερινή γενεά κι' αυτή που ερχεται κι' άλλες κι' άλλες, θα σβήσουν οι χειμώνες θα ακολουθήσουν τα καλοκαίρια η ημερομηνία αυτή θα ξαναρχεται εις τα σπιτία και τις καλυβές θ' αναβη τέταια εποχή η φωτιά, θα δερνουν οι πρώτες βροχές τα παραθυροφυλλά θ' ακουγεται ο βορίας, κι' αυτή θα είναι η αιωνία παλαιά ιστορία το παραμυθι.

Αληθεια, γιαγια. την εξήσε ο παπους? Ο παπους? Επρεπε να τον ειχατε δη εκείνο το πρωί με τ' αρματά του. Απεξω απο το σπίτι μας τι κόσμος, τι φωνές τι τραγουδια! Καθ' ένας αποχαιρετούσε την γυναίκα του, τα παιδιά. Ηρθε, εσκυψε, μ' εφίλησε, ήταν ψυλος σαν το κυπαρισσι. Μα κοιμηθήκες γιαγια? Βαίβια κοιμηθηκε και ξάνα βλέπει πάλι στ' όνειρο της το αιώνιο εκείνο πρωί.

Τον εαυτο της στην πορτα με το παιδι στο χερι της, με τα ματια της φωτεινά, την χαρά της θυσίας, μ' αυτον να φευγει μαζί με τους άλλους—και τα πρώτα μυνίματα, τις νικές τα χιονία τις γυναίκες που κουβαλούσαν πέτρες εις τα βουνά, αυτους που γυριζανε λαβωμενοι, το μεσημερι εκείνο που ηρθε η νίκη της Κοριτσας. Και τα τραγουδια..Αντε στο καλο. Η Παναγία μαζί σου. Αντε στο καλο,κι' η σκεψη μου...Κι' επείτα ο αντιλαλος...να μιλά ολος ο κόσμος για την Ελλάδα. Να μιλουν όλα σαν άνθρωποι, ο αερας, οι μουσικές, η γη, και η θαλασσα και τα πουλιά. Και ν' ερχονται επανω στα χιονισμένα οροι οι ιταλοι και να τους φερνουν οι δικοι μας ξαρματωμενους κουρελιασμενους. Μα τόσα χρόνια να περάσουν..Κι' εμεις να ζουμε ορθιοι με ανοικτά τα ματια το παραμυθι.

Δεν επέρασαν αιώνες δεν εφυγαν χρόνια, δεν μας προσφερεται σαν μαθημα στο σχολειο, δεν ερχεται σαν μια ημερα επισημος οπου ο δασκαλος ανεβαινει στην εδρα και τον κοιταζουνε καταματα τα παιδιά κι' αυτος στεκεται ισιος κουμπωνεται και αρχίζει. «Σήμερα εχομε την εν Μαραθωνι μάχη»

Το παραμυθι δεν ερχεται δεν το περιμενομε, δεν προκειται καποιος να μας το ειπη. Είναι χθεσινό είναι διπλα μας είναι δικό μας. Και όμως, ποιος μετα πεντε χρόνια να τολεγε. ναλεγε οτι σήμερα, τώρα, που η Δοξα θερμαινει ακόμη τη γυμνια μας, που αντηχουν σαν βοή μακρινή οι ζητωκραυγές, που δεν εμαραθηκαν ακόμη οι δαφνές ποιος να τολεγε..-Αλλά όχι. Αυτά που συμβαινουν τώρα είναι περαστικά.

Οι καυγάδες, οι θυμοι, οι παραφροσυνες, οι βρωμιές και οι λασπές που ριχνόμε ο ένας του άλλου στο προσωπο, θα περάσουν.Αυτά είναι περαστικά κι' αυτή η ημερομηνία δεν είναι.

Εφ' όσον υπαρχει Ελλάς και ανατελλει ο ήλιος

το πρωί και φωτίζει τα χώματα της και σιγοτρεμουν την νυκτα απο πάνω της, τ' αστρα στον ουρανο και γεννιουνται άνθρωποι απο Ελληνίδες μητρες και τους κυβερνουν, όπως θα τους κυβερνουν τα αισθηματα, η ημερα αυτή θα ερχεται θα ξαναρχεται αιωνία, μεγάλη, πανισχυρή για να δινει την αρετή της και την αξία της σ' αυτήν την μεγάλη φυλή.

Εξημερώσε μόλις, κάτω ακόμη η πόλις δεν ξυπνήσε, ανοίξε βιαστικά τα παραθύρα, κατι ακουεται.

Οι συρίνες. Η μεγάλη ημερα, η τρομακτική καμψη της ζωής μας αρχίζει.Αρχίζει η σημαντική εποχή

Οπου εμεις επιτελούς γινόμεθα προγονοί. Και θα μείνωμε η γενεά μας αυτή, οτι κι' αν συμβη, όπως κι' αν γραφη, με εμφύλια αιμάτα η με χολή η με ενοχούς λησμοσυνας, η απο σήμερα και περα ιστορία μας, προγονοί.Ας ανοίξωμε λοιπον, μέσα εις τα ταπίνα, τα πέζα τα ελεείνα σημερινά εικοσιτετράωρα μια παρενθεση καλωσύνης και ας βαλώμε μέσα σ' αυτήν να γωνάτιση σιωπηλή η ψυχή μας. Και ας είναι γεμάτη η παρενθεση αυτή απο ευλαβεία, συγκίνηση, αναμνήσεις.

28η Οκτωβρίου του 1940! Η μεγάλη ημερομηνία ας μη φοβάται.. Αν υπαρχουν ελλήνες ακόμα που την εκαμαν, που την εστερεώσαν, που την εξήσαν και τώρα την παραμερίζουν και την ξεχνουν, υπαρχουν ευτυχώς οι Ελληνες που ακόμη δεν ζουν αλλά ερχονται. Αυτοι δεν θα την ξεχασουν ποτε.

Και τουτον το χρόνο στην επετειο της μεγάλης και ενδοξου ημερας η Ελλάς θα προσέλθει ολοκλήρος απο ένα ακρον του κοσμου εως το άλλο, οπου καρδιά Ελληνική ζή και υπαρχει, προσκυνητρία ευλαβής των ηρώων και των νεκρών του πολέμου εκείνου,

Των ανδρών αυτών το μέγα μνημοσυνο, πορ' όσον κι' αν διασείουν σήμερα τον τοπον αι κακαί πνοαι των δηθεν νέων ιδεών, θα ευρίσκη όλους τους Ελληνες τους αληθινους, τους υγιεις, τους κληρονομους και θεματοφυλακάς των ιερών παραδόσεων, γονυπετείς προ του Βωμου του, Και οσα κι' αν παρελθουν χρόνια οσος κι' αν περάσει καιρος αυτοι οι οποιοι θα εκπροσωπούν την Ελλάδα πρέπει να φθάνουν με φύλλα δαφνης τα οποια πρέπει να συλλέγει απο την ελευθερά γην η ευγνώμων ψυχή των Ελλήνων, δια να τα καταθετούν εκεί, την ημερα αυτήν καθε Οκτωβρίου, την επετειο της ωραιότερας ημερας της συγχρονου ιστορίας μας, εις τα χώματα τα οποια εποίησαν τα τιμιώτερα αιμάτα, τα οποια ηγίασε η πλέον ιδανική αρετή και τα οποια εδόξασε η θυσία...

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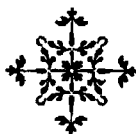
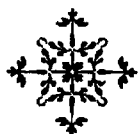
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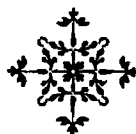
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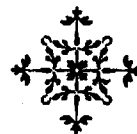


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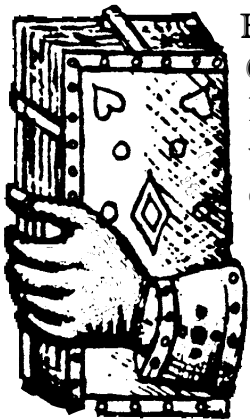
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WHY IT IS NECESSARY TO LEARN HOLY SCRIPTURE FROM WITHIN THE CHURCH



Holy Scripture is like a fountain or an endless spring, of the wisdom of God in which we must be steeped and partake in accordance with our level of wisdom and spiritual maturity. Just as we take water from the well with a bucket, empty it into our pitcher and then into our glass in order to quench our body's thirst, so must we also do with our spiritual thirst when we are urged to drink of the deepest ocean of wisdom, the Holy Scriptures. Thus, spiritually speaking, if we draw more water from the well of Scripture than is drinkable (out of desire for the purity of our intellect and heart), due to our pride and inquisitiveness we will be destroyed in our attempt to grasp the incomprehensible with our limited human faculties. If, for example, we were to see a child from the first grade trying to learn and to teach others that which is taught at the university, how much laughter and amusement would it provoke in us! The same and worse happens to those who desire to scrutinize and unravel the incomprehensible mysteries of the Scriptures with an intellect inexperienced and unenlightened by the Holy Spirit.

The Elder Cleopa of Romania
From "The Truth of Our Faith" (Uncut Mountain Press, 200)