



“Joy of All Who Sorrow”

No. 85 December 2015



Orthodox Elders: St Porphyrios and Elder Cleopa in Their Own Words

2nd December is the date when two greatly revered elders passed into eternity, St Porphyrios in 1991 and Elder Cleopa in 1998. In what follows, we have allowed them to speak about themselves in their own words, including some of their sayings, and a personal testimony by each about his life:

St Porphyrios



“God loves us very much. He constantly has us in His thoughts and He protects us. We must believe this reality well and not be afraid of anything in life.”

“A lazy person cannot become a Christian. It requires a great deal of work, a lot of work.”

“Morbid grief and worry is not from God, it is a trap of the devil.”

“God concerns Himself with all the details of our lives. We must understand that He is not indifferent to our needs. We are not alone in this world.”

“You should not be concerned whether or not people like you, but you should be concerned about loving Christ and all your fellow human beings. Only in this way will your soul be filled with Jesus Christ.”

“[Christ]... shouts it out, "You're My friends, don't you understand that? We're brothers... I love you. I want you to enjoy life together with Me.”

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My dear spiritual Children,

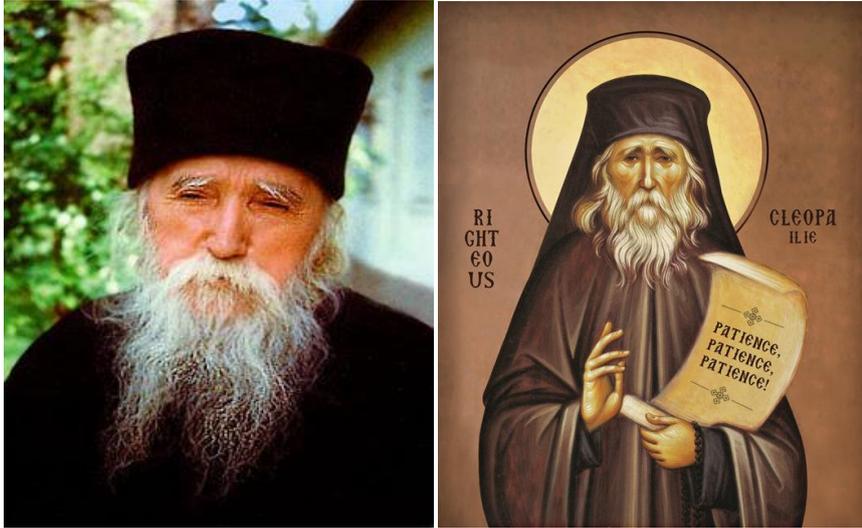
Now that I am still in charge of my faculties, I want to give you some advice. Ever since I was a child, I was always in sin. When my mother sent me to watch the animals on the mountain, (my father had gone to America to work on the Panama Canal for us his children, because we were poor), there, where I shepherded the animals, I slowly read, word by word, the life of St. John the Hut-dweller and I loved St. John very much. I said a lot of prayers, like the young child that I was, twelve or fifteen years old, I don't remember too well. I wanted to follow his example. So, with a lot of difficulty, I secretly left my parents and came to Kavsokalyvia on the Holy Mountain.

I became obedient to two elders, the true brothers, Panteleimon and Ioannikios. They happened to be very devout and full of virtue, I loved them very much and because of that, with their blessing, I gave them absolute obedience. That helped me a lot. I also felt great love for God and got along very well.

However, because of my sins, God allowed me to become ill, and my elders told me to go to my parents in my village of St. John, Evia. Although I had sinned a lot from when I was a small child, when I returned to the world I continued to commit sins, which today are very many. The world, however, thought highly of me, and everyone shouts that I'm a saint. I however, feel that I am the most sinful person in the world. Of course, whatever I remembered I confessed, and I know God has forgiven me. But now I have the feeling that my spiritual sins are very many and I ask all those who have known me to pray for me because, for as long as I lived, I humbly prayed for you, too. Now that I'm leaving for heaven, I have the feeling that God will say to me, "What are you doing here?" I have only one thing to say to him, "I am not worthy of here, Lord, but whatever your love wills, it'll do for me." From then on, I don't know what will happen. I however, wish for God's love to act. I always pray that my spiritual children will love God, Who is everything, so that He will make us worthy to enter His earthly, uncreated Church. We must begin from here. I always made the effort to pray, to read the hymns of the Church, the Holy Scriptures and the Lives of the Saints. May you do the same. I tried, by the grace of God, to approach God and may you also do the same. I beg all of you to forgive me for whatever I did to upset you.

Hieromonk Porphyrios (Farewell Letter, 1991)

Elder Cleopa



“In any stage you may be do not get discouraged. Pray even if you feel compulsion and the Lord will visit you with His mercy.”

“The enemy will run like a wild ass from the man who has tasted the sweetness of prayer.”

“Do not do anything without signing yourself with the Sign of the Cross! ... All of you should be sealed with the Sign of Christ’s victory over hell. Then you will no longer be afraid of charms, evil spirits, or sorcery, because these are dissolved by the power of the Cross like wax before fire and like dust before the wind.”

“I haven’t seen written in the Holy Gospel, “Do not smoke,” but I have seen written, “Do not judge.” However, smoking is a sin.”

“The Kingdom of God is not in words but in power, that is, in good works.”

My parents had ten children, of which five, four boys and one girl, went to monasteries. My oldest brother, named Michael, lived in asceticism on Mount Ceahlau. My sister Catherine became a nun in the monastery of Old Agapia, while I and my two older brothers, Basil and George, came to Sihastria. By 1935 all my brothers had died, and afterwards my father, Alexander, also died. Only I still lived, as abbot then of Sihastria Monastery, and my mother in her home, in the village of Suli, ta-Boto, sani. In 1946 I brought my mother to Sihastria. There I tonsured her a nun and sent her to Old Agapia, where she lived until 1968 and went to the Lord at the age of 92.

My coming to the monastery was as follows: On 12 December, 1929, the memory day of the holy Hierarch Spyridon, when I was 17 years old, I left my parents’ home with my older brother Basil, with our satchels on our backs. In one we had the lives of the Saints, the Psalter, the Horologion, and the Holy Scriptures, while in the other we had two large painted icons, one of the Theotokos

and the other of St. George. We took nothing else from the house. Our parents, Alexander and Anna, accompanied us weeping as far as below the plain, to the area called the "Cattle Ravine." Then my brother Basil began to sing the kontakion of the Akathist to our Saviour Jesus Christ: "Sweetest Jesus, Light of the world, enlighten the eyes of my soul...." Then we kissed our parents' hands, received their blessing, and departed for the skete of Cozancea. At that point our parents fell down and wept.... At Cozancea we stayed one night with Fr. Paisius. Then we took also our brother George and the three of us came to Suceava, venerated the relics of St. John the New, and went down to Sihastria Monastery. The abbot was Archimandrite Ioanichie Moroi. When he saw us, he kept us three days and three nights outside the gate of the monastery, to test if we had patience for the monastic life. Only at night did he let us sleep in a cell. After three days of fasting, prayer, and trials, he called us to the church, confessed us, gave us Communion of the Spotless Mysteries, and gave us cells and obediences in the monastery. In this way we entered the monastic life. Afterwards, in 1931 and 1933 my brothers died, and I remained alone. In 1937 I was tonsured a monk. I pastured the sheep of the monastery for ten years. In the years 1942-1945 I was appointed to govern the monastery, since the Abbot was sick. In January of 1945 I was ordained a priest and elected abbot of the monastery of my repentance, in the place of my reposed Elder, Abbot Ioanichie.

(Elder Cleopa on how he became a monk)

Veni Redemptor Gentium

A Hymn of St Ambrose of Milan

**Redeemer of the nations, come;
Reveal Thyself in Virgin Birth,
The Birth which ages all adore,
A wondrous Birth, befitting God.**

**From human will Thou dost not spring,
But from the Spirit of our God;
O Word of God, come; take our flesh
And grow as Child in Mary's womb.**

**Thou camest forth from the Eternal God,
And Thou returned to that same source.
Thou suffered death and harrowed hell,
And reigned once more from God's high throne.**

**With God the Father Thou art one,
And one with us in human flesh.
Oh, fill our weak and dying frame
With godly strength which never fails.**

Thy cradle shines with glory's light;
Its splendour pierces all our gloom.
Our faith reflects those radiant beams;
No night shall overcome it now.

All praise, O Unbegotten God,
All praise to Thee, Eternal Word,
All praise Life-giving Spirit, praise,
All glory to our God Triune.

Rest of Father Gregoire Legoute



On 6 November, Fr Gregoire Legoute, one of the two priests of the Orthodox Mission in Haiti, died of a massive stroke. He was only 54. May his memory be eternal! A few weeks before his untimely death Fr Gregoire sent Fund For Assistance an email. He was a modest man and never asked for help for himself. This time was no different. His last request was to conduct an appeal to raise money for **Foyer d'Amour** - the school for mentally and physically handicapped student that he and Matushka Rose founded over 20 years ago. Foyer d'Amour is Fr Gregoire's labour of love. Wishing to fulfil God's commandment to care for the "little ones" (Matthew 18:10), the couple cared tremendously for the most vulnerable people in their country. [Here is a video about the school](#). There are around 300 students at the school. Most of them would have been on the street had it not been for the Legoutes... students are fed and clothed here and taught a trade, so they can survive in a country where a majority of the population is below the poverty level and half of children do not attend school. Fr Gregoire's last request to us was to help his school. You can donate to the school [here](#), and to Matushka Rose and her children [here](#).

Notes & Jottings

PATRONAL FEAST AND FOUNDER'S DAY

The Patronal Feast was celebrated on Friday 6 November with a peaceful Liturgy followed by a procession around the church with the Ikon *Joy of All Who Sorrow*. Founder's Day was observed on Sunday 15 November, the 5th anniversary of the repose of the Foundress. Archpriest Philip Steer presided at the Liturgy, concelebrating with the college clergy. Prayers were said at the tomb and the service was followed by the memorial meal. It was good to see many old friends with their fond memories of Mary, although such occasions are always tinged with some sadness. May God grant her Eternal Memory.

IKON STUDY DAY

On Saturday 14 November we held our first full study day on the subject "Ikons of Christ and the Saints: Altar Screens and Orthodox Ikons". After an introduction to the subject of iconography by Fr Liviu, our first speaker, Prof. John Mitchell, delivered a fascinating and richly illustrated lecture on the nature of visual screens within the Christian Tradition, in particular focussing on the recurring lattice-work motif. After a delicious lunch, Deacon Gabriel Hanganu presented a thought-provoking talk on the use of ikons within the home as well as public spaces such as museums, and introduced us to the notion of the biography of the ikon as it changes through time and space. Attendees were then shown two films concerning the miraculous myrrh-streaming Iveron Ikon of Hawai, before ending the day with a moleben to the Ikon Joy of All Who Sorrow. We have received some very positive feedback from those who came. A fuller account of the Study Day will be posted on the College website shortly.

GOSPEL BOOK

Our friend Mark Harris has donated a large format Gospel Book to the church. We are grateful to him for his kindness. In the Litany we remember *the founders and benefactors of all church and monasteries*. May God bless everyone who has been generous to the church.

SAINT WALSTAN of Taverham and Bawburgh

Next year 2016 is the millennium of the death of St Walstan whose shrine was formerly in the ancient church at Bawburgh near Norwich. We are trying to arrange a service at Bawburgh, possibly on Saturday 11 June, to sing the akathist in honour of the saint. Also, in view of this anniversary, a new book on St Walstan by Carol Twinch has just been published. SGOIS has this book in stock. The illustrated paperback, with 178 pages retails at £9.50 plus 15% p&p.

CALENDARS and CHRISTMAS CARDS

St Herman Calendars for 2016 are now in stock. These retail at £6.50 so order quickly to avoid disappointment. Also Christmas cards are available – for full details click on this link; http://www.mettingham.org.uk/index.php/news/entry/christmas_card_flyer_2015

NAMEDAYS

To all who are celebrating a nameday at this time we send congratulations and wish them:

Many Years!

7 Dec – **Great Martyr Catherine of Alexandria** – Catherine Meyer

13 Dec - **Apostle Andrew the First Called** – Andrei Bosisas, Deacon Andrew Bond

17 Dec – **Great Martyr Barbara** – Matushka Barbara Jones

19 Dec – **St Nicholas of Myra** – Nicholas Meade, Nicholas Morgan

28 Dec – **St Anthea, mother of St Eleutherius** – Anthea Barry

28 Dec – **St Stephen of Sourozh** – Archpriest Stephen Platt.



COLLEGIATE CHURCH OF THE IKON OF THE MOTHER OF
GOD

JOY OF ALL WHO SORROW

DECEMBER 2015

Saturday 5 December

7.30pm ~ Vigil

Sunday 6 December

10.10am ~ Hours & Divine Liturgy (St Alexander Nevsky)

Saturday 12 December

7.30pm ~ Vigil

Sunday 13 December

10.10am ~ Hours & Divine Liturgy (St Andrew the First-Called)

Saturday 19 December

7.30pm ~ Vigil

Sunday 20 December

10.10am ~ Hours & Divine Liturgy (St Ambrose of Milan)

Saturday 26 December

7.30pm ~ Vigil

Sunday 27 December

10.10am ~ Hours & Divine Liturgy (Ss Thyrsus, Leucius and Philemon)



Unless our heart's merciful, unless it's loving towards other people, unless it's fond of them,
as God is of all of us, then we're like trees without fruit.

Bishop Athanasios of Limassol

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