



**The Orthodox Parish  
of the Holy and Life-Giving Cross,  
Lancaster, U.K.**

***The Stavronian***

*a monthly magazine & newsletter published by the 'Holy Cross Synodia'*



*Ἐθρονος Χριστός Ζωοδότης.  
(Φ. Κόντογλου, 1962).*

*The Parish of the Holy and Life-Giving Cross,  
belongs to the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of the British Isles and Ireland.  
The Patriarchate of Antioch is third senior of the Orthodox Churches.  
The Patriarch is His Beatitude John X.*

*The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch  
(Acts 11:26)*

## THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

Matthew 15:19; For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts,

Entertain a bad idea for long enough  
and you will embrace an evil ideology  
Embrace an evil ideology  
and you will breed thoughtless anger  
Breed thoughtless anger  
and you will reproduce merciless  
actions.

*Fr Jonathan*

*“He who busies himself with the sins of others, or judges his brother on suspicion, has not yet even begun to repent or to examine himself so as to discover his own sins...”*

— St. Maximos the Confessor (on Love  
no. 55)

## SPIRITUAL REMEDIES

Contemporary psychologists agree that shame, guilt and fear are the most crippling, most ‘toxic’ emotions that today’s man is vulnerable enough to experience. If ignored and unattended, some say, they can lead to mental health problems – such as addictions, depression and the phobias.

From a Christian point of view, all three of these ‘negative’ emotions could be useful, if their ‘dosage’ is measured and correctly utilised. The obvious metaphor here is the one of the snakebite; treated best with a poison based antidote. Shame for the sins committed or the fear of God and His judgment, for example, could start off the process of metanoia, a change of our hearts and our lives orientation.

However, when they are obsessive and exaggerated, these three emotions are neither corrective nor educational, rather they become oppressive; gaining tremendous power to demoralise and confuse the person who is experiencing them.

In such moments, it is good to remind ourselves that what we are experiencing is (while in a totally unique way) the common human predicament, the consequence of the Ancestral Sin: after eating the fruit, our Adam and Eve are hiding from God, because they are ashamed of their nakedness. When asked about their disobedience, they blame each other in a defensive and guilty way. When faced with the consequences of their action, they’re overwhelmed by grief and anxiety for their future.

The narrative form Genesis is important, in my view, in order to identify the ‘generic root’ of our human vulnerability – in that way we can approach our own particular and specific problems in a more realistic and wholesome way. We also need to relate the story of Fall to the gospel of Our Lord – much more closely. As a matter of fact, it is all part of the same history of the salvation, as Father John Behr explained it in his seminal work - ‘The Mystery of Christ’.

In some way, ascetic effort of the Orthodox believer consists in ‘retracing’ steps back to pre-fallen state to the highest possible (for this world) degree. We can not only say (with some assurance), there was no shame or fear or guilt in the Garden of Eden, but also that it won’t be even the slightest trace of them in the New Jerusalem.

According to the Philokalia, there are at least three different ways in which we can achieve this. The first one is **restraint**, which includes fasting, self-control and silence. The second one is **kenosis**: following the Christ’s example in serving the others in a selfless and creative way

(how often is overlooked that Our Saviour was teaching us by His humbleness – this is the most originally beautiful way of revealing the eternal truths).

Finally, the **unceasing prayer** is probably the central focus for the writers of Philokalia, it's the ultimate goal of contemplative life, a constant recall of God's presence in us and everywhere around us. Nevertheless, it is important to stress that restraint, kenosis and prayer are gracious gifts from God, which cannot be achieved exclusively through our own efforts, however sincere.

With that in mind, we can hope that the meaning that was communicated to us through the story of our first parents can come to our help when dealing with difficult emotions. Our desire to self-restrain could alleviate excessive guilt and can lead us to joyful freedom in communication. Kenotic life (that is modelled on Christ's example) could transform all that painful shame, restoring our original dignity as the priests and creative workers in God's holy parcel. And our unceasing prayers should help us to overcome our anxieties, and find heavenly peace that comes from the realisation that God is still with us, walking gently and lovingly in the evening shade of the Garden.

*Aleksandar Miljkovic  
London*



## TIME FLIES

After spending 7 years in England doing my PhD as well as work, I left the country on the 31<sup>st</sup> of January 2010 for the United States of America. I was surprised that on the first day I met my new American colleagues in the office, I was invited over their house for dinner! I found most Americans very friendly; they have a way to make you feel welcomed wherever you come from, whatever your background is. My first Sunday in Atlanta I attended the liturgy at the Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation of the Theotokos, where again I was warmly welcomed and felt I was part of a community I could receive from and contribute to. I then moved to Belgium in 2012, where I was also warmly welcomed at the Orthodox Parish of St. Barbara at the city of Liège and, after almost four years, I was again received back at the Parish of Holy and Life-giving Cross in Lancaster “completing” a small circle! I am so lucky to have met holy-like parishioners and inspiring priests like Fr. Augoustinos, Fr. Jonathan, Fr. Yves, Fr. Seraphim, M. Sarah, Fr. Georgios, Fr. Gregorios, Fr. Jacob, Fr. Nikolaos and Fr. Jonathan (again) included here in a chronological sequence of appearance in my life. Whatever the Parish, there was always enough time to benefit from each and every member of the church!

It's now been already almost a year that I am back in England and 12 years that I am away from Greece! It always makes me think how time flies and how big our responsibility is on the way we use time. I wonder how much of it we use for the benefit of our soul. It is a big question which always makes me realise how far away I am from perfection and how vast this distance currently is!

We often think “*I wish I could go back in time... I could correct all my mistakes and make my life better in the future*”. But

this rather tempting idea to attribute our misfortunes to lost chances is nothing but an illusion since even if we could change things in the past, our future would again depend on how we would use time from then on. If we don't know how to use time in a beneficial manner for our soul there's no reason to go back, as the same mistakes would again be made in present and future. On the other hand, if we have indeed acquired the experience, knowledge and spiritual instinct to use time beneficially for our soul then there is again no reason to go back, as our life from then on should have received the pace and meaning that our soul seeks. It seems that the perfect timing to start using our time beneficially is not in the past, nor in the future, but it is always today and every day -from now on- in our lives as Christians.

*Theodoros Papadopoulos  
Bolton*

## **NAMES OF DEPARTED LOVED ONES TO BE REMEMBERED THIS MONTH**

July 9: Metropolitan Methodios Fougias

*Please send us the names of your departed loved ones and date of their departure in order for them to be remembered.*

## **PARISH NEWS**

Georgios Dellaportas from Ithaca, Greece, has sent us a the following photos of Fr Theodosios Dendrinos and Fr Jonathan celebrating the liturgy in Ithaca at the Parish of Fr Theodosios at Gardelakion.



*Psalm 133; Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.*





## OLD STAVRONIAN CORNER

We would like to wholeheartedly thank Sophocles and Angeliki Ioulianou from Cyprus for the candles, incense, books, nuts and small bottles of Commandaria! May our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ give the reward!



“The purpose of hagiography is the reduction, from the perceivable to the imaginable, from the material to the spiritual and from the ephemeral to the eternal. Through hagiography all is depicted not as a sight but as a mystery.”

– Fotis Kontoglou –

## MAJOR CELEBRATIONS THIS MONTH

1<sup>st</sup> July: Cosmas and Damian the Holy Unmercenaries

2<sup>nd</sup> July: St. John Maximovitch, Bishop of Shanghai & Archbishop of San Francisco (†1966); St. Juvenal, Protomartyr of America and Alaska (†1796)

3<sup>rd</sup> July: St Germanus Bishop of the Isle of Man (†474)

4<sup>th</sup> July: St. Andrew of Crete, author of the Great Canon

7<sup>th</sup> July: Great-martyr Kyriake

11<sup>th</sup> July: St. Olga, equal to the Apostles, Princess of Kiev

13<sup>th</sup> July: Synaxis of Archangel Gabriel

15<sup>th</sup> July: Holy Equal-to-the-Apostles Great Prince Vladimir, in Baptism Basil, Enlightener of the Russian Land

17<sup>th</sup> July: Great-Martyr Marina of Antioch and Child-Martyr Prince Kenelm

20<sup>th</sup> July: Holy Glorious Prophet Elijah

25<sup>th</sup> July: Dormition of righteous Anna, mother of the Most Holy Theotokos

27<sup>th</sup> July: Great Martyr and Healer Panteleimon

31<sup>st</sup> July: St Joseph of Arimathea

For the lives of Saints please visit the Calendar of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America: [www.calendar.goarch.org](http://www.calendar.goarch.org)



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### Services during July\*

Sat. 5 <sup>th</sup>	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in R.C.
Sat. 12 <sup>th</sup>	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in R.C.
Sat. 19 <sup>th</sup>	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in R.C.
Sun. 27 <sup>th</sup>	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in Q.R. followed by Parish lunch

\*Help setting up the church is greatly appreciated and starts from 9.15 a.m.

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“God cares for everyone. Despair is in effect a lack of faith”  
- St. George Karslides -



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