



## *Fire & Light*

### **St. Symeon Orthodox Church**

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✠ **September 25, 2011** ✠

**St. Sergius of Radonezh (1392)**

**St. Euphrosyne of Alexandria (5<sup>th</sup> C)**

**St. Finbarr (Barry) of Cork (633)**

**St. Geolfrith (Geoffrey) of Wearmouth & Jarrow (716) St. Euphrosyne, Nun of Suzdal (1250)**

If we are righteous, let us  
be proved in tribulation.  
And if we are sinners, let us  
endure them as deserving.

~ **Sts. Barsanuphios & John  
of Gaza (6th C)**



⇒ **Annual Parish Meeting - Next Sunday, October 2 - following Divine Liturgy**

### **Miracles Unseen**

✠ **Thus every year... God turns water into wine. That, men fail to see.** Either like the Pagans they refer the process to some finite spirit, Bacchus or Dionysus: or else, like the moderns, they attribute real and ultimate causality to the chemical and other material phenomena which are all that our senses can discover in it. But when Christ at Cana makes water into wine, the mask is off. The miracle has only half its effect if it only convinces us that Christ is God: it will have its full effect if whenever we see a vineyard or drink a glass of wine we remember that here works He who sat at the wedding party in Cana. Every year God makes a little corn into much corn: the seed is sown and there is an increase, and men, according to the fashion of their age, say "It is Ceres, it is Adonis, it is the Corn-King," or else "It is the laws of Nature." --**C.S. Lewis**

✠ **Fear of death comes from bustle, not happiness.** In happiness, in genuine happiness, one always feels the presence of eternity in the heart, so that happiness is open to death. They are alike, they touch eternity. In fuss, there is no eternity and therefore fuss rejects death. "In blessed repose..." -- it means in death, as perceived by a happy man. ~ **Father Alexander Schmemmann**

### **Look Elsewhere**

✠ Instead of fighting our thoughts directly and attempting to drive them out by an effort of will, we can seek to direct our attention away from them and to look elsewhere. Our spiritual energy in this way becomes positive instead of negative; our immediate objective is not to empty our mind of what is evil but rather to fill it with what is good. --**Met. Kallistos Ware**

### **To Love for God**

✠ Don't struggle directly with temptation.... Let all your strength be turned to love for God, worship of God, and adhesion to God. In this way your release from evil and from your weaknesses will happen in a mystical manner, without your being aware of it and without exertion.

--**Elder Porphyrios**

**Do not fear or dread like a coward, lest you fall short of God's promises.**

**Do not be terrified like an unbeliever, but give courage to your thoughts of little faith.**

**Sts. Barsanuphios and John of Gaza**

**Love your tribulations in all things so that you may become an approved son of God.**

**Sts. Barsanuphios and John of Gaza**

## St. Sergius of Radonezh – Sept. 25

✠ St. Sergius is called the father of Russian monasticism and the Patron Saint of Holy Russia. He was born in 1314 in the city of Rostov into a deeply pious family, one of the three sons of Cyril and Mary, who baptized him Bartholomew. To the dismay of his parents, he could not keep pace with his brothers, Stephen and Peter, in their studies, and not even special tutors could help the struggling youth to overcome a mental block which apparently doomed him to illiteracy. He was not lacking in spiritual fervor, however. His parents took comfort in the fact that he was deeply devoted to Christ and the Church.

One afternoon, Bartholomew was looking for some lost horses when he saw in the field a monk praying beneath an oak tree. The boy went up to him for a blessing. He told him of his sorrow and asked the monk to pray for him. The monk bowed his head in prayer, and then said to the boy, "From now on, child, God will grant you the ability to read." He gave Bartholomew a piece of prosphora (holy bread). "This piece," he said, "may be small, but when you eat it you will find that it will fill you with great joy and sweetness."

Bartholomew invited the monk back to his home for dinner. Imagine the amazement of the boy's parents when, before they sat down to eat, he read some psalms from the Psalter – without stumbling over any words! After predicting that the boy would serve the Holy Trinity, the monk walked out of the door and disappeared. From that time Bartholomew began reading the Holy Scriptures and other spiritual writings in his desire to learn more about God's Commandments and to grow in love for Him.

To escape the oppression of the Tartars, Bartholomew and his family sought refuge in the city of Radonezh, north of Moscow. After his parents passed on, he and his brother, Stephen started a monastic community living in a crude hut with a chapel dedicated to the Holy Trinity. Bartholomew was tonsured a monk with name of Sergius on the feast day of Sts. Sergius & Bacchus, October 7. Not long after, he became Abbot of the community. St. Sergius' Holy Trinity Monastery grew into national prominence and produced future abbots of over 20 other monasteries from his spiritual children. He was offered to become the Metropolitan of Moscow, but declined, choosing to remain in his holy monastery.

In a famous incident, he counseled and encouraged Grand Prince Dimitri of Moscow who had come to him before his impending critical battle with the Tartar hordes. St. Sergius prophesied victory for the Russians at the battle of Kulikovo. This battle would be decisive in Russia's casting off the Tartar yoke. It is said that St. Sergius remained in church praying a continuous memorial service during the battle, clarivoyantly seeing the ascending soul of each fallen Russian soldier and praying for each by name.

St. Sergius continued to labor in his holy work for the Lord, departing this life in holiness on September 25, 1392. He was canonized soon after in 1422. Today his Holy Trinity Lavra is the most popular place of pilgrimage in Russia. His relics are in a gilded tomb to the side of the iconostasis in one monastery church where a continuous around-the-clock moleben is served to him in turns by the hieromonks. It is said that this perpetual service at his relics was kept going even during the critical times of World War II. Orthodox pilgrims come there from all over Russia and the world to pray at these services and ask his intercessions.

**Holy Father Sergius, pray unto God for us !**

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✠ He who would love God is always in converse with Him as with his Father, turning away from all passionate thought. If you wish to pray as you ought, do nothing that is opposed to prayer, in order that God may draw near and descend to you.

*St. Nilus of Sinai (6<sup>th</sup> C)*

# Archpastoral Letter of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah

July 28, 2011

Beloved Fathers, brothers and sisters in Christ,

If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. (1 John 1:6-10)

In our own lifetimes we were blessed by an act of prophetic witness in July 1992, when the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America issued the magnificent “Affirmations on Marriage, Family, Sexuality, and the Sanctity of Life.” Two decades later we Orthodox who live in the diocese that includes our nation’s capital city need to be reminded of some of the moral verities contained in the Affirmations. It should be obvious to any attentive observer that those verities are under increasing assault by the intellectual, social, and cultural elites in this country—and even by many of our public officials, particularly in the federal government headquartered here in Washington, DC. More alarming is the erosion of those moral verities within some of our Orthodox congregations.

The dire need to preserve and protect the sanctity of human life from the moment of conception has been the focus of the annual encyclical of the OCA primate for Sanctity of Life Sunday each January for many years. I wish to remind you, in the prophetic spirit of the apostles, that the Holy Mystery of Matrimony and the moral limits of human sexuality are ancient traditions of the Church not subject to whatever winds of change may be blowing through our society at the moment.

The 1992 Affirmations enunciated clearly and forcefully the following principles and guidelines among others:

- God wills that men and women marry, becoming husbands and wives. He commands them to increase and multiply in the procreation of children, being joined into “one flesh” by His divine grace and love. He wills that human beings live within families (Genesis 1:27; 2:21-24; Orthodox Marriage Service).
- The Lord went even further to declare that people who look at others in order to lust after them in their hearts have “committed adultery” (cf. Matthew 5:27-30).
- Christ’s apostles repeat the teachings of their Master, likening the unique marriage between one man and one woman to the union between Christ and His Church which they experience as the Lord’s very body and His bride (Ephesians 5:21-33; 2 Corinthians 11:2).
- Marriage and family life are to be defended and protected against every open and subtle attack and ridicule.
- Sexual intercourse is to be protected as a sacred expression of love within the community of heterosexual monogamous marriage in which alone it can be that for which God has given it to human beings for their sanctification.
- Homosexuality is to be approached as the result of humanity’s rebellion against God, and so against its own nature and well-being. It is not to be taken as a way of living and acting for men and women made in God’s image and likeness.
- Men and women with homosexual feelings and emotions are to be treated with the understanding, acceptance, love, justice and mercy due to all human beings.

- People with homosexual tendencies are to be helped to admit these feelings to themselves and to others who will not reject or harm them. They are to seek assistance in discovering the specific causes of their homosexual orientation, and to work toward overcoming its harmful effects in their lives.
- Persons struggling with homosexuality who accept the Orthodox faith and strive to fulfill the Orthodox way of life may be communicants of the Church with everyone else who believes and struggles. Those instructed and counseled in Orthodox Christian doctrine and ascetical life who still want to justify their behavior may not participate in the Church's sacramental mysteries, since to do so would not help, but harm them.

Our life in Christ is constituted by repentance. If we are to be faithful Christians, we must be constantly turning toward God, away from our sins and passions, realizing the seriousness of our sin in a spirit of repentance, and striving to change our lives. We cannot approach the Holy Mysteries without living a life of repentance, and examining our consciences and confessing our sins. When we have fallen, we repent, and try to stop our sinful behavior. Otherwise, we risk communing unto judgment and condemnation. This discipline of the Christian life leads to salvation, enlightenment and the healing of our souls. We must be faithful to that discipline of life, if we are to call ourselves Orthodox Christians.

In light of the above, what Orthodox Christian in good conscience would dare to approach the chalice containing the life-giving Holy Mysteries of the Body and Blood of Our Lord, while refusing to acknowledge, confess, and eradicate from his or her life sins against authentic Christian marriage, including fornication, homosexual activity, or adultery? Which sexually active couples co-habiting without the Orthodox sacrament of marriage can expect the Church to bless their unholy union and welcome them to the life-giving Holy Mysteries of the Body and Blood of Our Lord, unless they find separate accommodations and cease their fornication and get married in the Church?

We are all called as Christians to live a life of chastity, pleasing to the Lord, married or single. If we are Christians we are all called, whatever our attractions or past habits, to the same saving discipline that will heal our souls. Otherwise we are living in hypocrisy, a living death; just as when we judge others struggling with their sins. This has been delivered to us from the Apostles and Holy Fathers, and remains unchanged to this day. The Orthodox teaching on chastity and Christian marriage is a fundamental element in Christian life and discipline. We are called to conform our lives to the Church and its disciplines, not alter the teachings of the Church to fit either a cultural fad or our own passions. Where we stand against the prevailing cultural trends, we must stand fast, because we know that obedience to the Church's teaching leads us to communion with God and eternal life; and disobedience leads to alienation from God, spiritual death.

As the Lord proclaims in the Gospel of St. Luke, "Every one to whom much is given, of him will much be required. . ." (Luke 12:48, RSV). We Orthodox Christians have been granted eternal life as a free, unmerited divine gift. Virtuous struggle against sexual temptations is hardly too much for the Lord to ask of us. The Lord honors the genuine intent of those who, with humility and repentance, so struggle, even as He judges those who, moved by a spirit of pride and defiance, persist in the spiritual delusion that unnatural or unholy sexual activity can be blessed. I have already instructed the clergy of our Archdiocese to honor their ordinations by acting in full accordance with our uncompromising Orthodox moral tradition. I expect all of us faithful to honor our baptism and unique calling as Christians.

These teachings are not onerous, but rather, part of the light yoke and easy burden of being a faithful follower of Jesus Christ.

With love in Christ,

**+Jonah**

**Archbishop of Washington**

**Metropolitan of All America and Canada**

# Shades of Grey: The Record of Archbishop Stepinac of Croatia

by Serge Trifkovic

As a long-time upholder of friendship and alliance between the Roman Catholic and Orthodox traditionalists, I am disheartened by Pope Benedict XVI's uncritical portrayal of Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac (1898-1960) as a saintly figure during his visit to Croatia earlier this week.

In a homily at the Zagreb Cathedral the Pontiff called Stepinac "a fearless pastor and an example of apostolic zeal and Christian fortitude, whose heroic life continues today to illuminate the faithful of the Dioceses of Croatia, sustaining the faith and life of the Church in this land":

"The merits of this unforgettable bishop are derived essentially from his faith: in his life, he always had his gaze fixed on Jesus, to whom he was always conformed, to the point of becoming a living image of Christ, and of Christ's suffering. Precisely because of his strong Christian conscience, he knew how to resist every form of totalitarianism, becoming, in a time of Nazi and Fascist dictatorship, a defender of the Jews, the Orthodox, and of all the persecuted, and then, in the age of communism, an advocate for his own faithful, especially for the many persecuted and murdered priests."

The historical record presents a more nuanced and ambivalent picture of Stepinac. The leading American historian of the Balkans, H. James Burgwyn, notes that, as "a vocal nationalist Croat," Stepinac "conferred respectability on the Ustaša regime by his immediate approval of the new government... Without the urging of prelates and priests, many Croats, who otherwise would have turned their backs on the Ustaša atrocities, allowed themselves to be co-opted by Pavelic's (*Croatian President - ed.*) regime" (H. James Burgwyn. *Empire on the Adriatic: Mussolini's Conquest of Yugoslavia, 1941-1943*. New York: Enigma Books, 2005, pp. 52-53).

Specifically, on April 28, 1941, Archbishop Stepinac issued a pastoral letter in which he called on the clergy to take part in the "exalted work of defending and improving the Independent State of Croatia," the birth of which "fulfilled the long-dreamed-of and desired ideal of our people" (*Katolicki List*, April 28, 1941). The pastoral letter was read in every Croatian parish and over the radio.

The clergy hardly needed the Archbishop's encouragement, however. This phenomenon was soon noted by various Axis officials in the field. The German Security Service (SD) expert for the Southeast, Dr. Wilhelm Hoettl, noted that forced conversions from Orthodoxy to Roman Catholicism figured prominently in the clerical agenda from the outset: "Since being Croat was equivalent to confessing to the Catholic faith, and being Serb followed the profession of Orthodoxy, they now began to convert the Orthodox to Roman Catholicism under duress. Forced conversions were actually a method of Croatization" (Walter Hagen. *The Secret Front: the Story of Nazi Political Espionage*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1953, p. 238. 'Hagen' was Hoettl.).

For over two years "he refrained from open criticism of Pavelic's blood-soaked rule and kept silent over the Ustaša murders of the Orthodox" (Burgwyn, op. cit. p. 53).

In what is cited by his apologists as a bold move, Stepinac once declared from the pulpit that "all men and races are children of God," specifically mentioning "Gypsies, Black, European, or Aryan"—but not Serbs. He did not mention the main victims of the regime by name—not once—for the rest of the war. After more than two years of Ustaša rule, on October 31, 1943, Stepinac stated in a sermon that "there are people who accuse us of not having taken action against the crimes committed in different regions of our country. Our reply is... we cannot sound the alarm, for every man is endowed with his own free will and alone is responsible for his acts. It is for this reason that we cannot be held responsible for some in the ecclesiastical ranks." Under the circumstances this view amounted to an abdication of moral responsibility.

No less contentiously, Stepinac stated at the Council of Croatian Bishops that a "psychological basis should be created among the Orthodox followers" for the conversions: "They should be guaranteed, upon conversion, not only life and civil rights, but in particular the right of personal freedom and also the right to hold property." He did not say, or appear to think, that those rights were due to the unconverted Serbs. (Over a year before Yugoslavia's collapse, on January 17, 1940, Stepinac wrote in his diary: "The most ideal thing would be if the Orthodox Serbs were... to bend their heads before Christ's Vicar, our Holy Father [the Pope].")

Stepinac's failing was primarily in his timid and reluctant attitude to those members of the Croatian clergy who openly identified with the Ustaša regime, or even became supporters of and participants in the genocide.

When the anti-Serb and anti-Jewish racial laws of April and May 1941 were enacted, the Catholic press welcomed them as vital for "the survival and development of the Croatian nation" (Hrvatska Straža, May 11, 1941)—yet Stepinac did not intervene. On the subject of those laws, the Archbishop of Sarajevo Ivan Šarić declared that "there exist limits to love" and declared it "stupid and unworthy of Christ's disciples to think that the struggle against evil could be waged in a noble way and with gloves on." Stepinac did not reprimand him. Those were the early days of the Ustaša regime, however, before the slaughter started in earnest. Later, "when the Ustaša launched their massacres, the Holy See took no overt measures to bring them to a halt" (Bergwyn, op. cit. p. 54).

This need not have been so:

Because Pavelić so eagerly sought Vatican diplomatic recognition and led a movement of zealous Catholics, Pius had the leverage to force Pavelić and the Ustaša to stop murdering Serbs and Jews. [Pavelić requested recognition immediately after arriving in Zagreb: "I fervently ask Your Holiness with Your highest apostolic authority to recognize our state, and deign as soon as possible to send Your representative, who will help me with Your fatherly advice . . . "] The Vatican never attempted to use this leverage to prevent this genocide. Pius XII never condemned the destruction of the Serbian and Jewish population in Croatia, even though he held great sway over Pavelić and his followers [Robert McCormick: Pius XII, in *History in Dispute, Volume 11: The Holocaust, 1933-1945*. St. James Press, 2003, p. 193].

By the summer of 1941 some priests abandoned all pretense of restraint. Fr. Dragutin Kamber, SJ, as the Ustaša trustee in the city of Doboj, in central Bosnia, personally ordered the execution of hundreds of Serbs. Fr. Perić of the Gorica monastery instigated and participated in the massacre of over 5,000 Serbs in Livno and the surrounding villages. He encouraged the local Ustaša bands to start the slaughter with his own sister who was married to a Serb. The Catholic Weekly, the official journal of the Archdiocese headed by Stepinac, warned what was in store for the "schismatics" and enemies of the New Order: "When in the past God spoke through papal encyclicals, they closed their ears. Now God has decided to use other means... The sermons will be echoed by cannon, tanks and bombers" (Katolic(ki) tjednik, Zagreb, 31 August 1941).

Particularly controversial was the role of Stepinac in a belated attempt to save the Ustaša state from collapse. In March 1945, he presided over a commemorative assembly in Zagreb devoted to "Catholic priests killed by the hand of the enemy" (Katolic(ki) list, Zagreb 1945, No. 12-13, 29 March 1945, pp. 99-100).

In the message to the faithful signed by Stepinac and the Catholic episcopate on 24 March 1945, the bishops made a ringing assertion that "during the Second World War the will of the Croat people was expressed and realized in our own State" and that "nobody has the right to accuse any citizen of the State of Croatia because they respect this immutable will of the Croat People, to which it has the right both by God's laws and those of men" (ibid. pp. 93-95).

The moral consequences of such posture are illustrated by Dr. Vladko Maček's personal encounter with a mass murderer. The leader of the Croatian Peasant Party, interned at the Jasenovac camp headquarters in 1941-42, recalled hearing from the other side of the barbed wire "the screams and wails of despair and extreme suffering, the tortured outcries of the victims, broken by intermittent shooting." They "accompanied all my waking hours and followed me into sleep at night." He noticed that one of the guards assigned to watch him crossed himself each night before going to bed. Maček asked the guard whether he was not afraid of the punishment of God. "Don't talk to me about that," the guard replied, "for I am perfectly aware what is in store for me. For my past present and future deeds I shall burn in hell, but at least I shall burn for Croatia" (Vlatko Maček, *In the Struggle for Freedom*, University Park, PA: Pennsylvania University Press, 1957, p. 234).

As this episode illustrates, the Ustaša criminality is measured not only by the numbers of dead Serbs, Jews and Gypsies, but also by the impact of their crimes on the society at large. That impact remains

*Hopscotch Spirituality - 'Jesus died for this?'"*

## **More Americans Tailoring Religion to Fit Their Needs**

By Cathy Lynn Grossman, USA TODAY

***"America is headed for "310 million people with 310 million religions."***

If World War II-era warbler Kate Smith sang today, her anthem could be Gods Bless America.

That's one of the key findings in newly released research that reveals America's drift from clearly defined religious denominations to faiths cut to fit personal preferences.

The folks who make up God as they go are side-by-side with self-proclaimed believers who claim the Christian label but shed their ties to traditional beliefs and practices. Religion statistics expert George Barna says, with a wry hint of exaggeration, America is headed for "310 million people with 310 million religions."

"We are a designer society. We want everything customized to our personal needs — our clothing, our food, our education," he says. Now it's our religion.

### **Religious beliefs ~ practices shift**

Barna's new book on U.S. Christians, *Futurecast*, tracks changes from 1991 to 2011, in annual national surveys of 1,000 to 1,600 U.S. adults. All the major trend lines of religious belief and behavior he measured ran downward — except two.

More people claim they have accepted Jesus as their Savior and expect to go to heaven. And more say they haven't been to church in the past six months except for special occasions such as weddings or funerals. In 1991, 24% were "unchurched." Today, it's 37%.

Barna blames pastors for those oddly contradictory findings. Everyone hears, "Jesus is the answer. Embrace him. Say this little Sinners Prayer and keep coming back. It doesn't work. People end up bored, burned out and empty," he says. "They look at church and wonder, 'Jesus died for this?'"

The consequence, Barna says, is that, for every subgroup of religion, race, gender, age and region of the country, the important markers of religious connection are fracturing. When he measures people by their belief in seven essential doctrines, defined by the National Association of Evangelicals' Statement of Faith, only 7% of those surveyed qualified.

Barna laments, "People say, 'I believe in God. I believe the Bible is a good book. And then I believe whatever I want.'"

LifeWay Research reinforces those findings: A new survey of 900 U.S. Protestant pastors finds 62% predict the importance of being identified with a denomination will diminish over the next 10 years.

Exactly, says Carol Christoffel of Zion, Ill. She drifted through a few mainline Protestant denominations in her youth, found a home in the peace and unity message of the Baha'i tradition for several years, and then was drawn deeply into Native American traditional healing practices. Yet, she also still calls herself Christian.

"I'm a kind of bridge person between cultures. I agree with the teachings of Jesus and ... I know many Christians like me who keep the Bible's social teachings and who care for the earth and for each other," Christoffel says. "I support people who do good wherever they are."

And it's not only Christians sampling hopscotch spirituality. The Jewish magazine *Moment* has an "Ask the Rabbis" feature that consults 14 variations of Judaism, "and there are many," says editor and publisher Nadine Epstein.

"The September edition of *Moment* asks 'Can there be Judaism without God?' And most say yes. It's incredibly exciting. We live in an era where you pick and choose the part of the religion that makes sense to you. And you can connect through culture and history in a meaningful way without necessarily religiously practicing," Epstein says.

Sociologist Robert Bellah first saw this phenomenon emerging in the 1980s. In a book he co-authored, *Habits of the Heart*, he introduces Sheila, a woman who represents this. Sheila says: "I can't remember the last time I went to church. My faith has carried me a long way. It's Sheilaism. Just my own little voice. ... It's just try to love yourself and be gentle with yourself. You know, I guess, take care of each other. I think God would want us to take care of each other."

Bellah, now professor emeritus at University of California-Berkeley, says, "Sheila was a jolt to some at the time. But to a lot of people, it wasn't a jolt at all. They had been living that way for a while. Don't romanticize the past. Fervent religiosity was always in the minority. Just because people showed up in church didn't always mean a deep personal conviction or commitment."

Bellah sees two sides to the one-person-one-religion trend. On the positive: It's harder to hold on to prejudices against groups — by religion or race or gender or sexuality — if everyone wants to be seen individually.

"The bad news is you lose the capacity to make connections. Everyone is pretty much on their own," he says. And all this rampant individualism also fosters "hostility toward organized groups — government, industry, even organized religion."

Today, even the godless disagree on how not to believe, says Rusty Steil of Denver. He grew up Lutheran and retained his parents' "strong moral code," but, he says, he couldn't stick with "ancient myths of people trying to make sense of the world."

"I don't find much comfort in imagining there's an all-powerful God who would allow people starving and all the natural and man-made disasters," Steil says.

Steil calls himself a "live-and-let-live atheist," as apart from the virulently anti-religious variety such as Christopher Hitchens or Richard Dawkins, or "those who actively promote disbelief."

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✘ Faintheartedness (in spiritual efforts) often seizes us; this is allowed and happens not only because of very many sins, but even more because of pride. ~ **St. Leonty of Optina (1861)**

✘ Prayer is a struggle. It strengthens the fight of the faithful against the devil, but it is itself also a painful and bloody struggle. --**from *A Night in the Desert of the Holy Mountain***

✘ Make yourself a rule always to be with the Lord, keeping your mind in your heart, and do not let your thoughts wander; as often as they stray, turn them back again and keep them at home in the closet of your heart, and delight in converse with the Lord. -**St. Theophan the Recluse (1894)**