



# HOLY CROSS ORTHODOX CHURCH

THROUGH THE CROSS JOY HAS COME INTO ALL THE WORLD

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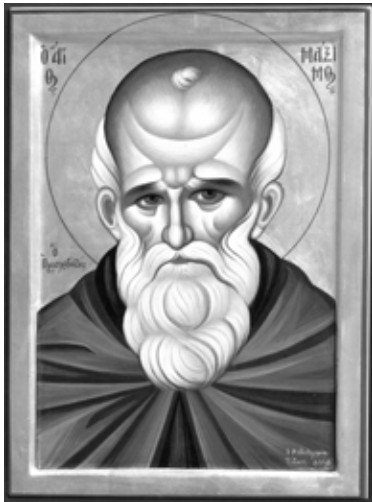
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## FOUR HUNDRED TEXTS ON LOVE Saint Maximus the Confessor, 2nd Century



1. He who truly loves God prays entirely without distraction, and he who prays entirely without distraction loves God truly. But he whose intellect is fixed on any worldly thing does not pray without distraction, and consequently he does not love God.

2. The intellect that dallies with some sensible thing clearly is attached to it by some passion, such as desire, irritation, anger or rancor: and unless it becomes detached from that thing it will not be able to free itself from the passion affecting it.

3. When passions dominate the intellect, they separate it from God, binding it to material things and preoccupying it with them. But when love of God dominates the intellect, it frees it from its bonds, persuading it to rise above not only sensible things but even this transitory life.

4. The effect of observing the commandments is to free from passion our conceptual images of things. The effect of spiritual reading and contemplation is to detach the intellect from form and matter. It is this which gives rise to undistracted prayer.

5. Unless various successive spiritual contemplations also occupy the intellect, the practice of virtues by itself cannot free it so entirely from passions that it is able to pray undistractedly. Practice of the virtues frees the intellect only from dissipation and hatred; spiritual contemplation releases it also from forgetfulness and ignorance. In

this way the intellect can pray as it should.

6. Two states of pure prayer are exalted above all others. One is to be found in those who have not advanced beyond the practice of the virtues, the other in those leading the contemplative life. The first is engendered in the soul by fear of God and a firm hope in Him, the second by an intense longing for God and by total purification. The sign of the first is that the intellect, abandoning all conceptual images of the world, concentrates itself and prays without distraction or disturbance as if God Himself were present, as indeed He is. The sign of the second is that at the very onset of prayer the intellect is so ravished by the divine and infinite light that it is aware neither of itself nor of any other created thing, but only of Him who through love has activated such radiance in-it. It is then that, being made aware of God's qualities, it receives clear and distinct reflections of Him.

7. Whatever a man loves he inevitably clings to, and in order not to lose it he rejects everything that keeps him from it. So he who loves God cultivates pure prayer, driving out every passion that keeps him from it.

8. He who drives out self-love, the mother of the passions, will with God's help easily rid himself of the rest, such as anger, irritation, rancor and so on. But he who is dominated by self-love is overpowered by the other passions, even against his will. Self-love is the passion of attachment to the body.

9. Men love one another, commendably or reprehensibly, for the following five reasons; either for the sake of God, as the virtuous man loves everyone and as the man not yet virtuous loves the virtuous: or by nature, as parents love their children and children their parents: or because of self-esteem, as he who is praised loves the man who praises him: or because of avarice, as with one who loves a rich man for what he can get out of him; or because of self-indulgence, as with the man who serves his belly and his genitals. The first of these is commendable, the second is of an intermediate kind, the rest are dominated

by passion.

10. If there are some men you hate and some you neither love nor hate, and others you love strongly and others again you love but moderately, recognize from this inequality that you are far from perfect love. For perfect love presupposes that you love all men equally.

11. ‘Shun evil and do good’ (Ps. 34: 14), that is to say, fight the enemy in order to diminish the passions, and then be vigilant lest they increase once more. Again, fight to acquire the virtues and then be vigilant in order to keep them. This is the meaning of ‘cultivating’ and ‘keeping’ (cf. Gen. 2:15).

12. Those permitted by God to test us either inflame the desiring aspect of the soul, or stir up its incensive power, or darken its intelligence, or envelop its body in pain, or deprive us of bodily necessities.

13. The demons either tempt us themselves or arm against us those who have no fear of the Lord. They tempt us themselves when we withdraw from human society, as they, tempted our Lord in the desert. They tempt us through other people when we spend our time in the company of others, as they tempted our Lord through the Pharisees. But whichever line of attack they choose, let us repel them by keeping our gaze fixed on the Lord’s example.

14. When the intellect begins to advance in love for God, the demon of blasphemy starts to tempt it, suggesting thoughts such as no man but only the devil, their father, could invent. He does this out of envy, so that the man of God, in his despair at thinking such thoughts, no longer dares to soar up to God in his accustomed prayer. But the demon does not further his own ends by this means. On the contrary, he makes us more steadfast. For through his attacks and our retaliation we grow more experienced and genuine in our love for God. May his sword enter into his own heart and may his bows be broken (cf. Ps. 37:15).

15. When the intellect turns its attention to the visible world, it perceives things through the medium of the senses in a way that accords with nature. And the intellect is not evil, nor is its natural capacity to form conceptual images of things, nor are the things themselves, nor are the senses, for all are the work of God. What, then, is evil? Clearly it is the passion that enters into the conceptual images formed in accordance with nature by the intellect: and this need not happen if the intellect keeps watch.

16. Passion is an impulse of the soul contrary to na-

ture, as in the case of mindless love or mindless hatred for someone or for some sensible thing. In the case of love, it may be for needless food, or for a woman, or for money, or for transient glory, or for other sensible objects or on their account. In the case of hatred, it may be for any of the things mentioned, or for someone on account of these things.

17. Again, vice is the wrong use of our conceptual images of things, which leads us to misuse the things themselves. In relation to women, for example, sexual intercourse, rightly used, has as its purpose the begetting of children. He, therefore, who seeks in it only sensual pleasure uses it wrongly, for he reckons as good what is not good. When such a man has intercourse with a woman, he misuses her. And the same is true with regard to other things and our conceptual images of them.

18. When the demons expel self-restraint from your intellect and besiege you with thoughts of unchastity, turn to the Lord with tears and say, ‘Now they have driven me out and encircled me’ (Ps. 17:11. LXX); ‘Thou art my supreme joy: deliver me from those who encircle me’ (Ps. 32:7. LXX). Then you will be safe.

19. The demon of unchastity is powerful and violently attacks those who struggle against passion, particularly if they are lax about matters of diet and often meet women. With the lubricity of sensual pleasure he imperceptibly steals into the intellect and thereafter persecutes the hesychast by means of the memory, setting his body on fire and presenting various forms to his intellect. In this way he evokes his assent to sin. If you do not want these forms to linger in you, turn again to fasting, labor, vigils and blessed stillness with intense prayer.

20. Those who are always trying to lay hold of our soul do so by means of impassioned thoughts, so that they may drive it to sin either in the mind or in action. Consequently, when they find the intellect unreceptive, they will be disgraced and put to shame, and when they find the intellect occupied with spiritual contemplation, they will be turned back and suddenly ashamed’ (Ps. 6:10).

21. He who anoints his intellect for spiritual contest and drives all impassioned thoughts out of it has the quality of a deacon. He who illuminates his intellect with the knowledge of created beings and utterly destroys false knowledge has the quality of a priest. And he who perfects his intellect with the holy myrrh of the knowledge and worship of the Holy Trinity has the quality of a bishop.

22. The demons are weakened when the passions in us decrease through our keeping the commandments, and

they are defeated totally when they are routed by dispassion, for then they no longer find anything through which they can enter the soul and fight against it. This is what is meant by 'they will be weakened and defeated before Thy face' (Ps. 9:3).

23. Some men abstain from the passions because of human fear, others because of self-esteem, and others through self-control. Some, however, are delivered from the passions by divine providence.

24. All the discourses of our Lord contain these four elements: commandments, doctrines, threats and promises. With the help of these we patiently accept every kind of hardship, such as fasting, vigils, sleeping on the ground, toil and labor in acts of service, insults, dishonor, torture, death and so on. 'Helped by the words of Thy lips,' says the psalmist, 'I have kept to difficult paths' (Ps. 17:4. LXX).

25. The reward of self-control is dispassion, and the reward of faith is spiritual knowledge. Dispassion engenders discrimination, and spiritual knowledge engenders love for God.

26. When the intellect practices the virtues correctly, it advances in moral understanding. When it practices contemplation, it advances in spiritual knowledge. The first leads the spiritual contestant to discriminate between virtue and vice; the second leads the participant to the inner qualities of incorporeal and corporeal things. Finally, the intellect is granted the grace of theology when, carried on wings of love beyond these two former stages, it is taken up into God and with the help of the Holy Spirit discerns - as far as this is possible for the human intellect - the qualities of God.

27. If you are about to enter the realm of theology, do not seek to desecrate God's inmost nature, for neither the human intellect nor that of any other being under God can experience this: but try to discern, as far as possible, the qualities that appertain to His nature - qualities of eternity, infinity, indeterminateness, goodness, wisdom, and the power of creating, preserving and judging creatures, and so on. For he who discovers these qualities, to however small an extent, is a great theologian.

28. He who combines the practice of the virtues with spiritual knowledge is a man of power. For with the first he withers his desire and tames his incensiveness, and with the second he gives wings to his intellect and goes out of himself to God.

29. When our Lord says, 'I and My Father are one' (John 10:30), He indicates their identity of essence.

Again, when He says, 'I am in the Father, and the Father in Me' (John 14:1), He shows that the Persons cannot be divided. The tritheists, therefore, who divide the Son from the Father, find themselves in a dilemma. Either they say that the Son is coeternal with the Father, but nevertheless divide Him from the Father, and so they are forced to say that He is not begotten from the Father: thus they fell into the error of claiming that there are three Gods and three first principles. Or else they say that the Son is begotten from the Father but nevertheless divide Him from the Father, and so they are forced to say that He is not coeternal with the Father; thus they make the Lord of time subject to time. For, as St Gregory of Nazianzos says, it is necessary both to maintain the one God and to confess the three Persons, each in His own individuality. According to St Gregory, the Divinity is divided but without division and is united but with distinctions. Because of this both the division and the union are paradoxical. For what paradox would there be if the Son were united to the Father and divided from Him only in the same manner as one human being is united to and divided from another, and nothing more?

30. For him who is perfect in love and has reached the summit of dispassion there is no difference between his own or another's, or between Christians and unbelievers, or between slave and free, or even between male and female. But because he has risen above the tyranny of the passions and has fixed his attention on the single nature of man, he looks on all in the same way and shows the same disposition to all. For in him there is neither Greek nor Jew, male nor female, bond nor free, but Christ who 'is all, and in all' (Col. 3: 1 1; cf Gal. 3:28).

31. The passions lying hidden in the soul provide the demons with the means of arousing impassioned droughts in us. Then, fighting the intellect through these thoughts, they force it to give its assent to sin. When it has been overcome, they lead it to sin in the mind; and when this has been done they induce it, captive as it is, to commit the sin in action. Having thus desolated the soul by means of these thoughts, the demons then retreat, taking the thoughts with them, and only the specter or idol of sin remains in the intellect. Referring to this our Lord says, 'When you see the abominable idol of desolation standing in the holy place (let him who reads understand) . . .' (Matt. 24:15). For man's intellect is a holy place and a temple of God in which the demons, having desolated the soul by means of impassioned thoughts, set up the idol of sin. That these things have already taken place in history no one, I think, who has read Josephus will doubt; though

some say that they will also come to pass in the time of the Antichrist.

32. There are three things that impel us towards what is holy: natural instincts, angelic powers and probity of intention. Natural instincts impel us when, for example, we do to others what we would wish them to do to us (cf Luke 6:31), or when we see someone suffering deprivation or in need and naturally feel compassion. Angelic powers impel us when, being ourselves impelled to something worthwhile, we find we are providentially helped and guided. We are impelled by probity of intention when, discriminating between good and evil, we choose the good.

33. There are also three things that impel us towards evil: passions, demons and sinfulness of intention. Passions impel us when, for example, we desire something beyond what is reasonable, such as food which is unnecessary or untimely, or a woman who is not our wife or for a purpose other than procreation, or else when we are excessively angered or irritated by, for instance, someone who has dishonored or injured us. Demons impel us when, for example, they catch us off our guard and suddenly launch a violent attack upon us, stirring up the passions already mentioned and others of a similar nature. We are impelled by sinfulness of intention when, knowing the good, we choose evil instead.

34. The rewards for the toils of virtue are dispassion and spiritual knowledge. For these are mediators of the kingdom of heaven, just as passions and ignorance are mediators of eternal punishment. It is because of this that he who seeks these rewards for the sake of human glory and not for their intrinsic goodness is rebuked by the words of Scripture, 'You ask, and do not receive, because you ask wrongly' (Jas. 4:3).

35. Many human activities, good in themselves, are not good because of the motive for which they are done. For example, fasting and vigils, prayer and psalmody, acts of charity and hospitality are by nature good, but when performed for the sake of self-esteem they are not good.

36. In everything that we do God searches out our purpose to see whether we do it for Him or for some other motive.

37. When you hear the words of Scripture, "Thou shalt render to every man according to his work' (Ps. 62:12. LXX), do not think that God bestows blessings when something is done for the wrong purpose, even though it seems to be good. Quite clearly He bestows blessings only when something is done for the right purpose. For God's judgment looks not at the actions but at the purpose be-

hind them.

38. The malice of the demon of pride takes two forms. Either he persuades the monk to ascribe his achievements to himself and not to God, the Giver of all goodness and helper in every achievement; or, if this fails, he suggests that he should belittle those of his brethren who are as yet less perfect than himself. Influenced in this way, he does not realize that the demon is persuading him to deny God's help. For if he belittles his brethren for their lack of achievement, he clearly infers that he has achieved something through his own powers. But this is impossible, since, as our Lord has said, 'Without Me you can do nothing' (John 15:5). For even when impelled towards what is good, our weakness cannot bring anything to fruition without the Giver of all goodness.

39. The person who has come to know the weakness of human nature has gained experience of divine power. Such a man, having achieved some things and eager to achieve others through this divine power, never belittles anyone. For he knows that just as God has helped him and freed him from many passions and difficulties, so, when God wishes. He is able to help all men, especially those pursuing the spiritual way for His sake. And if in His providence He does not deliver all men together from their passions, yet like a good and loving physician He heals with individual treatment each of those who are trying to make progress.

40. We grow proud when the passions cease to be active in us, and this whether they are inactive because their causes have been eradicated or because the demons have deliberately withdrawn in order to deceive us.

41. Almost every sin is committed for the sake of sensual pleasure; and sensual pleasure is overcome by hardship and distress arising either voluntarily from repentance, or else involuntarily as a result of some salutary and providential reversal. "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged; but when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, so that we should not be condemned with the world' (1 Cor. 11:31 -32).

42. When a trial comes upon you unexpectedly, do not blame the person through whom it came but try to discover the reason why it came, and then you will find a way of dealing with it. For whether through this person or through someone else you had in any case to drink the wormwood of God's judgments.

43. As long as you have bad habits do not reject hardship, so that through it you may be humbled and eject your pride.

44. Sometimes men are tested by pleasure, sometimes by distress or by physical suffering. By means of His prescriptions the Physician of souls administers the remedy according to the cause of the passions lying hidden in the soul.

45. Trials are sent to some so as to take away past sins, to others so as to eradicate sins now being committed, and to yet others so as to forestall sins which may be committed in the future. These are distinct from the trials that arise in order to test men in the way that Job was tested.

46. The sensible man, taking into account the remedial effect of the divine prescriptions, gladly bears the sufferings which they bring upon him, since he is aware that they have no cause other than his own sin. But when the fool, ignorant of the supreme wisdom of God's providence, sins and is corrected, he regards either God or men as responsible for the hardships he suffers.

47. Certain things stop the movement of the passions and do not allow them to grow; others subdue them and make them diminish. For instance, where desire is concerned, fasting, labor and vigils do not allow it to grow, while withdrawal, contemplation, prayer and intense longing for God subdue it and make it disappear. The same is true with regard to anger. Forbearance, freedom from rancor, gentleness, for example, all arrest it and prevent it from growing, while love, acts of charity, kindness and compassion make it diminish.

48. When a man's intellect is constantly with God, his desire grows beyond all measure into an intense longing for God and his incensiveness is completely transformed into divine love. For by continual participation in the divine radiance his intellect becomes totally filled with light; and when it has reintegrated its passible aspect, it redirects this aspect towards God, as we have said, filling it with an incomprehensible and intense longing for Him and with unceasing love, thus drawing it entirely away from worldly things to the divine.

49. If a man is not envious or angry, and does not bear a grudge against someone who has offended him, that does not necessarily mean that he loves him. For, while still lacking love, he may be capable of not repaying evil with evil, in accordance with the commandment (cf Rom. 12:17), and yet by no means be capable of rendering good for evil without forcing himself To be spontaneously disposed to 'do good to those who you hate you' (Matt. 5:44) belongs to perfect spiritual love alone.

50. If a man does not love someone, it does not neces-

sarily mean that he hates him: and conversely, if he does not hate him, it does not necessarily mean that he loves him, since he can be neutral towards him, that is, neither love him nor hate him. For the disposition to love is created only in the five ways listed in the ninth text of this Century, one commendable, one of an intermediate kind, and three reprehensible.

51. When you find your intellect occupied pleasantly with material things and becoming fondly attached to its conceptual images of them, you may be sure that you love these things more than God. 'For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also' (Matt. 6:21).

52. The intellect joined to God for long periods through prayer and love becomes wise, good, powerful, compassionate, merciful and long-suffering; in short, it includes within itself almost all the divine qualities. But when the intellect withdraws from God and attaches itself to material things, either it becomes self-indulgent like some domestic animal, or like a wild beast it fights with men for the sake of these things.

53. Scripture calls material things 'the world': and worldly men are those who occupy their intellect with these things. It is such men that Scripture rebukes when it says: 'Do not love the world or the things that are in the world . . . The desire of the flesh, and the desire of the eyes, and pride in one's possessions, are not of God but of the world' (cf 1 John 2:15-16).

54. A monk is a man who has freed his intellect from attachment to material things and by means of self-control, love, psalmody and prayer cleaves to God.

55. The herdsman signifies the man practicing the virtues, for moral achievements may be represented by cattle. That is why Jacob said, 'Your servants are herdsmen' (Gen. 46:34). The shepherd signifies the gnostic, for sheep represent thoughts pastured by the intellect on the mountains of contemplation. That is why 'every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians' (Gen. 46:34), that is, to the demonic powers.

56. When the body is urged by the senses to indulge its own desires and pleasures, the corrupted intellect readily succumbs and assents to its impassioned fantasies and impulses. But the regenerated intellect exercises self-control and withholds itself from them. Moreover, as a true philosopher it studies how to rectify such impulses.

57. There are virtues of the body and virtues of the soul. Those of the body include fasting, vigils, sleeping on the ground, ministering to people's needs, working with



one's hands so as not to be a burden or in order to give to others (cf 1 Thess. 2:9, Ephes. 4:28). Those of the soul include love, long-suffering, gentleness, self-control and prayer (cf. Gal, 5:22). If as a result of some constraint or bodily condition, such as illness or the like, we find we cannot practice the bodily virtues mentioned above, we are forgiven by the Lord because He knows the reasons. But if we fail to practice the virtues of the soul, we shall not have a single excuse, for it is always within our power to practice them.

58. Love for God leads him who shares in it to be indifferent to every transient pleasure and every labor and distress. Let all the saints, who have suffered joyfully so much for Christ, convince you of this.

59. Guard yourself from that mother of vices, self-love, which is mindless love for the body. For it gives birth with specious justification to the three first and most general of the impassioned thoughts. I mean those of gluttony, avarice and self-esteem, which take as their pretext some so-called need of the body. All further vices are generated by these three. You must therefore be on your guard, as we have already said, and fight against self-love with great vigilance. For when this vice is eradicated, all the others are eradicated too.

60. The passion of self-love suggests to the monk that he should have pity on his body and in the name of its proper care and governance should take food more often than is fitting; for in this way self-love will lead him on step by step to fall into the pit of self-indulgence. On the other hand, self-love prompts those who are not monks to fulfill the body's desires at once.

61. It is said that the highest state of prayer is reached when the intellect goes beyond the flesh and the World, and while praying is utterly free from matter and form. He who maintains this state has truly attained unceasing prayer.

62. When the body dies, it is wholly separated from the things of this world. Similarly, when the intellect dies while in that supreme state of prayer, it is separated from all conceptual images of this world. If it does not die such a death, it cannot be with God and live with Him.

63. Let no one deceive you, monk, with the notion that you can be saved while a slave to sensual pleasure and self-esteem.

64. When the body sins through material things, it has the bodily virtues to teach it self-restraint. Similarly, when the intellect sins through impassioned conceptual images,

it has the virtues of the soul to instruct it, so that by seeing things in a pure and dispassionate way, it too may learn self-restraint.

65. Just as night follows day and winter summer, so distress and pain follow self-esteem and sensual pleasure, either in this life or after death.

66. No sinner can escape future judgment without experiencing in this life either voluntary hardships or afflictions he has not chosen.

67. There are said to be five reasons why God allows us to be assailed by demons. The first is so that, by attacking and counterattacking, we should learn to discriminate between virtue and vice. The second is so that, having acquired virtue through conflict and toil, we should keep it secure and immutable. The third is so that, when making progress in virtue, we should not become haughty but learn humility. The fourth is so that, having gained some experience of evil, we should 'hate it with perfect hatred' (cf Ps. 139:22). The fifth and most important is so that, having achieved dispassion, we should forget neither our own weakness nor the power of Him who has helped us.

68. Just as the intellect of a hungry man imagines bread and that of a thirsty man water, so the intellect of a glutton imagines a profusion of foods, that of a sensualist the forms of women, that of a vain man worldly honor, that of an avaricious man financial gain, that of a rancorous man revenge on whoever has offended him, that of an envious man how to harm the object of his envy, and so on with all the other passions. For an intellect agitated by passions is beset by impassioned conceptual images whether the body is awake or asleep.

69. When desire grows strong, the intellect in sleep imagines things that give sensual pleasure; and when the incensive power grows strong, it imagines things that cause fear. For the impure demons, finding an ally in our negligence, strengthen and excite the passions. But holy angels, by inducing us to perform works of virtue, make them weaker.

70. When the desiring aspect of the soul is frequently excited, it implants in the soul a habit of self-indulgence which is difficult to break. When the soul's incensive power is constantly stimulated, it becomes in the end cowardly and unmanly. The first of these failings is cured by long exercise in fasting, vigils and prayer; the second by kindness, compassion, love and mercy.

71. The demons fight against us either through things themselves or through our impassioned conceptual images

of these things. They fight through things against those who are occupied with things and through conceptual images against those who are not attached to things.

72. Just as it is easier to sin in the mind than in action, so warfare through our impassioned conceptual images of things is harder than warfare through the things themselves.

73. Things are outside the intellect, but the conceptual images of these things are formed within it. It is consequently in the intellect's power to make good or bad use of these conceptual images. Their wrong use is followed by the misuse of the things themselves.

74. The intellect receives impassioned conceptual images in three ways: through the senses, through the body's condition and through the memory. It receives them through the senses when the senses themselves receive impressions from things in relation to which we have acquired passion, and when these things stir up impassioned thoughts in the intellect; through the body's condition when, as a result either of an undisciplined way of life, or of the activity of demons, or of some illness, the balance of elements in the body is disturbed and again the intellect is stirred to impassioned thoughts or to thoughts contrary to providence; through the memory when the memory recalls the conceptual images of things in relation to which we were once made passionate, and so stirs up impassioned thoughts in a similar way.

75. Some of the things given to us by God for our use are in the soul, others are in the body and others relate to the body. In the soul are its powers: in the body are the sense organs and other members; relating to the body are food, money, possessions and so on. Our good or bad use of these things given us by God, or of what is contingent upon them, reveals whether we are virtuous or evil.

76. Of the things contingent upon those given us by God, some are in the soul, some are in the body, and some relate to the body. Those in the soul are spiritual knowledge and ignorance, forgetfulness and memory, love and hate, fear and courage, distress and joy, and so on. Those in the body are pleasure and pain, sensation and numbness, health and disease, life and death, and so on. Those relating to the body are having children and not having children, wealth and poverty, fame and obscurity, and so on. Some of these are regarded as good and others as evil. Not one of them is evil in itself. According to how they are used they may rightly be called good or evil.

77. Both spiritual knowledge and health are good by

nature, yet their contraries have been of more benefit to many people. For such knowledge may serve no good purpose where the wicked are concerned, even though, as we have said, it is good in itself. The same is true with regard to health, riches and joy, for they are not used advantageously by such people. But certainly their contraries do benefit them. Therefore not one of them is evil in itself, even though it may appear to be evil.

78. Do not misuse your conceptual images of things, lest you are forced to make a wrong use of the things themselves. For if a man does not first sin in his mind, he will never sin in action.

79. The principal vices - stupidity, cowardice, licentiousness, injustice - are the 'image' of the 'earthly' man. The principal virtues - intelligence, courage, self-restraint, justice - are the 'image' of the 'heavenly' man. As we have borne the image of the earthly, let us also bear the image of the heavenly (cf 1 Cor. 15:49).

80. If you wish to find the way that leads to life, look for it in the Way who says, "I am the way, the door, the truth and the life" (John 10:7: 14:6), and there you will find it. Only let your search be diligent and painstaking, for few there are that find it" (Matt. 7:14) and if you are not among the few you will find yourself with the many.

81. Five things make a soul cut itself off from sin: fear of judgment, hope of future reward, love of God and, lastly, the prompting of conscience.

82. Some say that there would be no evil in the created world unless there were some power outside this world dragging us towards evil. But this so-called power is in fact our neglect of the natural energies of the intellect. For those who nurture these energies always do good, never evil. If this, then, is what you too wish to do, get rid of negligence and you will also drive out evil, which is the wrong use of our conceptual images of things, followed by the wrong use of the things themselves.

83. In its natural state, the human intelligence is subject to the divine intelligence and itself rules over the non-intelligent element in us. Let this order be maintained in all things, and there will be no evil among creatures nor anything which draws us towards evil.

84. Some thoughts are simple, others are composite. Thoughts which are not impassioned are simple. Passion charged thoughts are composite, consisting as they do of a conceptual image combined with passion. This being so, when composite thoughts begin to provoke a sinful idea in the mind, many simple thoughts may be seen to

follow them. For instance, an impassioned thought about gold rises in someone's mind. He has the urge mentally to steal the gold and commits the sin in his intellect. Then thoughts of the purse, the chest, the room and so on follow hard on the thought of the gold. The thought of the gold was composite - for it was combined with passion - but those of the purse, the chest and so on were simple: for the intellect had no passion in relation to these things. And the same is true for every thought - thoughts of self-esteem, women and so on. For not all thoughts which follow impassioned thought are themselves impassioned, as our example has shown. From this, then, we may know which conceptual images are impassioned and which are not.

85. Some say that the demons first touch the genitals during sleep and so arouse the passion of unchastity. Once aroused, the passion, by means of the memory, brings the form of a woman into the intellect. But others say that the demons appear first to the intellect in the guise of a woman and then excite the appetite by touching the genitals and so fantasies arise. Yet others say that the passion dominant in the approaching demon stirs the corresponding passion in us, and thus the soul is incited to sinful thoughts and brings these female forms into the intellect by means of the memory. The same is true with regard to other impassioned fantasies. Some say they happen in one way, others in another. However, if love and self-control are present in the soul, the demons have no power to arouse any passion at all in any of the ways described, whether the body is awake or asleep.

86. Some commandments of the Mosaic Law must be kept both physically and spiritually, others only spiritually. For example, 'You shall not commit adultery, you shall not kill, you shall not steal' (Exod. 20: 13-15) and so on must be kept both physically and spiritually (the spiritual observance is threefold, as explained below). To be circumcised (cf Lev. 12: 3), to keep the Sabbath (cf Exod. 31:13), and to slaughter the lamb and eat unleavened bread with bitter herbs (cf Exod. 12:8; 23:15) and similar injunctions are to be kept only spiritually.

87. There are three main inner states characterizing the life of the monk. The first consists in not sinning in actions; the second in not allowing the soul to dally with impassioned thoughts; the third in being able to contemplate dispassionately in the mind the forms of women and of those who have given one offence.

88. A man who is truly without possessions is one who has renounced all his worldly goods and has absolutely

nothing on earth except his body; and who, breaking his attachment to the body, has entrusted himself to the care of God and of the devout.

89. Some people with possessions possess them dispassionately, and so when deprived of them they are not dismayed but are like those who accepted the seizure of their goods with joy (cf. Heb. 10:34). Others possess with passion, so that when they are in danger of being dispossessed they become utterly dejected, like the rich man in the Gospel who went away full of sorrow (cf. Matt. 19:22); and if they actually are dispossessed, they remain dejected until they die. Dispossession, then, reveals whether a man's inner state is dispassionate or dominated by passion.

90. The demons attack the person who has attained the summits of prayer in order to prevent his conceptual images of sensible things from being free from passion; they attack the gnostic so that he will dally with impassioned thoughts; and they attack the person who has not advanced beyond the practice of the virtues so as to persuade him to sin through his actions.. They contend with all men by every possible means in order to separate them from God.

91. Those whom divine providence is leading towards holiness in this life are tested by the following three tests: by the gift of agreeable things, such as health, beauty, fine children, money, fame and so on; by afflictions causing distress, such as the loss of children, money and fame: and by bodily sufferings, such as disease, torture and so on. To those in the first category the Lord says, "If a person does not forsake all that he has, he cannot be My disciple" (Luke 14:33); and to those in the second and third He says, "You will gain possession of your souls through your patient endurance" (Luke 21:19).

92. The following four things are said to change the body's temperament and through it to produce either impassioned or dispassionate thoughts in the intellect: angels, demons, the winds and diet. It is said that angels change it by thought, demons by touch, the winds by varying, and diet by the quality of our food and drink and by whether we eat too much or too little. There are also changes brought about by means of memory, hearing and sight - namely when the soul is affected by joyful or distressing experiences as a result of one of these three means, and then changes the body's temperament. Thus changed, this temperament in its turn induces corresponding thoughts in the intellect.

93. Death in the true sense is separation from God, and "the sting of death is sin" (1 Cor. 15:56). Adam, who



received the sting, became at the same time an exile from the tree of life, from paradise and from God (cf Gen.3); and this was necessarily followed by the body's death. Life, in the true sense, is He who said, "I am the life" (John 1 1 :25), and who, having entered into death, led back to life him who had died.

94. A man writes either to assist his memory, or to help others, or for both reasons; or else he writes in order to injure certain people, or to show off, or out of necessity.

95. In Psalm 23, 'green pasture' represents the practice of the virtues; 'water of refreshment', spiritual knowledge of created things.

96. 'The shadow of death' is human life. Therefore if a man is with God and God is with him, clearly he is able to say, "Though I walk through the midst of the shadow of

death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me'.

97. A pure intellect sees things correctly. A trained intelligence puts them in order. A keen hearing takes in what is said. He who is lacking in these three qualities insults the person who has spoken.

98. He who knows the Holy Trinity, the Trinity's creation, and providence, and who has brought his soul's possible aspect into a state of dispassion, is with God.

99. Again in Psalm 23 'the rod' is said to signify God's judgment and 'the staff His providence. So he who has received spiritual knowledge of these things is able to say, "Thy rod and Thy staff have comforted me.'

100. When the intellect is stripped of passions and illuminated with the contemplation of created beings, then it can enter into God and pray as it should.



## ON INNER PEACE

St. Seraphim of Sarov

You cannot be too gentle, too kind. Shun even to appear harsh in your treatment of each other. Joy, radiant joy, streams from the face of him who gives, and kindles joy in the heart of him who receives.

All condemnation is from the devil. Never condemn each other. We condemn others only because we shun knowing ourselves. When we gaze at our own failings, we see such a swamp that nothing in another can equal it. That is why we turn away, and make much of the faults of others.

Instead of condemning others, strive to reach inner peace. Keep silent, refrain from judgement. This will raise you above the deadly arrows of slander, insult and outrage and will shield your glowing hearts against all evil.

*Adapted from: <https://theinnerkingdom.wordpress.com/2012/04/18/on-inner-peace/>*



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **Parish Meeting about progress in our building plan.**

We will be having a parish meeting during coffee hour on Sunday, November 11 to update everyone on where we are with the building process. It has been a busy year meeting with our builder and getting our finances in order to be able to build soon. Steve Iltis will be presenting the work that the finance committee has been doing and where we stand with the banks and our capital campaign. I will be sharing what the building committee has been doing this year with our builder, RPM Partners in Kernersville. Andrew Wells, who works for RPM, will be showing us where we are in the process and be willing to answer any questions we have. We are getting closer and it is a very exciting time in the life of our parish as we hope to begin building a permanent home for us. Please make plans to attend this important meeting!

**Moleben on our property:** We will continue serving a weekly short prayer service on our property in Kernersville. This is a service of supplication (Molieben) that Archbishop Dimitri of blessed memory blessed for the use of parishes in the diocese. Fr. Christopher will be serving it on Friday mornings at 10 AM except where noted in the calendar. Our property is located at 1320 Masten Drive in Kernersville.

**Sisterhood of the Holy Myrrhbearers:** The Sisterhood will meet at 11:00AM on Saturday, November 10.

**Men's Group:** The Men's Group will meet on Tuesday, November 13th at 7:00 PM.

**Order Gift Cards Through Holy Cross!** Scrip cards are available from hundreds of retailers and don't cost any more than the face value of the gift card. It's a "free" fundraiser to benefit the Holy Cross building fund! Contact Karen Brudnak-Slate.

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

October	Actual	Budgeted
Income	\$11,401.03	\$12,515.25
Expense	\$9,533.15	\$10,000.18

YTD	Actual	Budgeted
Income	\$122,056.86	\$125,159.00
Expense	\$99,406.50	\$106,914.40

Thank you for your generous support!



## PRAY FOR LOVE IN ORDER TO OBTAIN THE KINGDOM Saint John of Kronstadt

In order not to be in daily bondage to the passions and the devil, you must set yourself an object to aim at, have this object constantly in view, and endeavor to attain it, conquering all obstacles by the name of the Lord.

What is this object? The Kingdom of God, the Divine palace of glory, prepared for believers from the creation of the world. But as this object can only be attained by certain means, it also is necessary to have such means at one's disposal.

And what are these means? Faith, hope, and love, especially the last.

*Believe, hope, and love, especially love, disregarding all obstacles; love God above everything And your neighbor as yourself.*

If you have not sufficient strength to preserve in your heart these inestimable treasures, fall down more often at the feet of the God of Love. Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you," for He Who has promised is true. Walking, sitting, lying down, conversing, or working, at every time, pray with your whole heart that faith and love may be given to you. You have not yet asked for them as you should ask - fervently and instantly - with the firm purpose of obtaining them.

Say now, "I will begin to do so henceforth."

# HOLY CROSS ORTHODOX CHURCH



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 10 AM Prayers at the Property	3 6 PM Great Vespers 7 PM Preg- nancy Loss Molieben
4 9:00AM Church School 9:40AM Hours 10AM Divine Liturgy 6:30 PM OCAT home meeting	5	6	7 7 PM Choir Re- hearsal	8 6PM Parish Council	9 Nativity Fast 10AM Prayers at the Property	10 Nativity Fast 11 AM Sister- hood 6 PM Great Vespers
11 Nativity Fast 9:40AM Hours 10AM Divine Liturgy 12:30 PM Parish Meeting	12 Nativity Fast	13 Nativity Fast 7 PM Men's Group	14 Nativity Fast 6:30PM Inquirers' Class	15 Nativity Fast	16 Nativity Fast 10AM Prayers at the Property	17 Nativity Fast 6 PM Great Vespers
18 Nativity Fast 9:00 AM Church School 9:40AM Hours 10AM Divine Liturgy	19 Nativity Fast	20 Nativity Fast 6:30 Great Vespers	21 ENTRY of the Theotokos Nativity Fast 8 AM Divine Liturgy	22 Nativity Fast	23 Nativity Fast 10AM Prayers at the Property	24 Nativity Fast 6 PM Great Vespers
25 Nativity Fast 9:40AM Hours 10AM Divine Liturgy	26 Nativity Fast	27 Nativity Fast	28 Nativity Fast 6:30PM Inquirers' Class	29 Nativity Fast	30 Nativity Fast 10AM Prayers at the Property	

## Prayer is Spiritual Breathing.

When we pray we breathe in the Holy Ghost; "praying in the Holy Ghost (Jude 1:20)." thus, all church prayers are ... the breathing of the Holy Ghost; as it were spiritual air and also light, spiritual fire, spiritual food and spiritual raiment.

*From St. John of Kronstadt (My Life in Christ)*