

HOLY CROSS ORTHODOX CHURCH

THROUGH THE CROSS JOY HAS COME INTO ALL THE WORLD

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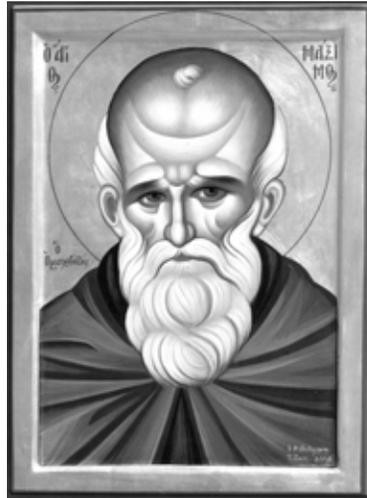
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FOUR HUNDRED TEXTS ON LOVE - THIRD CENTURY Saint Maximus the Confessor

1. An intelligent use of conceptual images and their corresponding physical objects produces self-restraint, love and spiritual knowledge; an unintelligent use produces licentiousness, hatred and ignorance.
2. 'You have prepared a table before me . . .' (Ps. 23:5). In this passage, 'table' stands for the practice of the virtues, for this has been prepared for us by Christ to use 'against those who afflict' us. The 'oil' anointing the intellect is the contemplation of created things. The 'cup' of God is the knowledge of God. His 'mercy' is His divine Logos. For through His incarnation the Logos pursues us 'all the days' until He overtakes all those who are to be saved, as He did in the case of Paul (cf. Phil. 3:12). The 'house' is the kingdom in which all the saints will dwell. 'Length of days' means eternal life.
3. When we misuse the soul's powers their evil aspects dominate us. For instance, misuse of our power of intelligence results in ignorance and stupidity; misuse of our incensive power and of our desire produces hatred and licentiousness. The proper use of these powers produces spiritual knowledge, moral judgment, love and self-restraint. This being so, nothing created and given existence by God is evil.
4. It is not food that is evil but gluttony, not the begetting of children but unchastity, not material things but avarice, not esteem but self-esteem. This being so, it is only the misuse of things that is evil, and such misuse occurs when the intellect fails to culti-



- vate its natural powers.
5. Among the demons, says the blessed Dionysios, evil takes the form of mindless anger, desire uncontrolled by the intellect, and impetuous imagination. But mindlessness, lack of intellectual control and impetuosity in intelligent beings are privations of intelligence, intellect and circumspection. But a privation is posterior to the possession of something. There was a time, then, when the demons possessed intelligence, intellect and devout circumspection. This being the case, not even the demons are evil by nature, but they have become evil through the misuse of their natural powers.
 6. Some of the passions produce licentiousness, some hatred, while others produce both dissipation and hatred.
 7. Overeating and gluttony cause licentiousness. Avarice and self-esteem cause one to hate one's neighbor. Self-love, the mother of vices, is the cause of all these things.
 8. Self-love is an impassioned, mindless love for one's body. Its opposite is love and self-control. A man dominated by self-love is dominated by all the passions.
 9. 'No man has ever hated his own flesh', says the Apostle (Eph. 5:29), but he disciplines it and makes it his servant (cf. 1 Cor. 9:27), allowing it nothing but food and clothing (cf. 1 Tim. 6:8), and then only what is necessary for life. In this way a man loves his flesh dispassionately and nourishes it and cares for it as a servant of divine things, supplying it only with what meets its basic needs.
 10. If a man loves someone, he naturally makes every effort to be of service to that person. If, then, a man loves God, he naturally strives to conform to His

- will. But if he loves the flesh, he panders to the flesh.
11. Love, self-restraint, contemplation and prayer accord with God's will, while gluttony, licentiousness and things that increase them pander to the flesh. That is why 'they that are in the flesh cannot conform to God's will' (Rom. 8:8). But 'they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh together with the passions and desires' (Gal. 5:24).
 12. If the intellect inclines to God, it treats the body as its servant and provides it with no more than it needs to sustain life. But if it inclines to the flesh, it becomes the servant of the passions and is always thinking about how to fulfill its desires.
 13. If you wish to master your thoughts, concentrate on the passions and you will easily drive the thoughts arising from them out of your intellect. With regard to chastity, for instance, fast and keep vigils, labor and avoid meeting people. With regard to anger and resentment, be indifferent to fame, dishonor and material things. With regard to rancor, pray for him who has offended you and you will be delivered.
 14. Do not compare yourself with weaker men but rather apply yourself to fulfilling the commandment of love. For by comparing yourself with the weak you will fall into the pit of conceit, but by applying yourself to the commandment of love you will reach the height of humility.
 15. If you totally fulfill the command to love your neighbor, you will feel no bitterness or resentment against him whatever he does. If this is not the case, then the reason why you fight against your brother is clearly because you seek after transitory things and prefer them to the commandment of love.
 16. It is not so much because of need that gold has become an object of desire among men, as because of the power it gives most people to indulge in sensual pleasure.
 17. There are three things which produce love of material wealth: self-indulgence, self-esteem and lack of faith. Lack of faith is more dangerous than the other two.
 18. The self-indulgent person loves wealth because it enables him to live comfortably; the person full of self-esteem loves it because through it he can gain the esteem of others; the person who lacks faith loves it because, fearful of starvation, old age, disease, or exile, he can save it and hoard it. He puts his trust in wealth rather than in God, the Creator who provides for all creation, down to the least of living things.
 19. There are four kinds of men who hoard wealth: the three already mentioned and the treasurer or bursar. Clearly, it is only the last who conserves it for a good purpose - namely, so as always to have the means of supplying each person's basic needs.
 20. All impassioned thoughts either stimulate the soul's desiring power, or disturb its incensive power, or darken its intelligence. It is in this way that the intellect's capacity for spiritual contemplation and for the ecstasy of prayer is dulled. And for this reason a monk, especially the hesychast, must pay close attention to such thoughts, searching out and eliminating their causes. For example, the soul's power of desire is stimulated by impassioned thoughts of women. Such thoughts are caused by intemperance in eating and drinking, and by frequent and senseless talk with the women in question; and they are cut off by hunger, thirst, vigils and withdrawal from human society. Again, the incensive power is disturbed by impassioned thoughts about those who have offended us. This is caused by self-indulgence, self-esteem and love of material things. For it is on account of such vices that the passion-dominated man feels resentment, being frustrated or otherwise failing to attain what he wants. These thoughts are cut off when the vices provoking them are rejected and nullified through the love of God.
 21. God knows Himself and He knows the things He has created. The angelic powers, too, know God and know the things He has created. But they do not know God and the things He has created in the same way that God knows Himself and the things He has created.
 22. God knows Himself through knowing His blessed essence. And the things created by Him He knows through knowing His wisdom, by means of which and in which He made all things. But the angelic powers know God by participation, though God Himself transcends such participation; and the things He has created they know by apprehending that which may be spiritually contemplated in them.
 23. Although the intellect apprehends its vision of created things within itself, they are actually outside it. This is not the case with respect to God's knowledge of Created things, for He is eternal, infinite and undetermined, and has bestowed on everything that ex-

ists its being, well-being and eternal being.

24. Natures endowed with intelligence and intellect participate in God through their very being, through their capacity for well-being, that is for goodness and wisdom, and through the grace that gives them eternal being. This, then, is how they know God. They know God's creation, as we have said, by apprehending the harmonious wisdom to be contemplated in it. This wisdom is apprehended by the intellect in a non-material way, and has no independent existence of its own.
25. When God brought into being natures endowed with intelligence and intellect He communicated to them, in His supreme goodness, four of the divine attributes by which He sustains, protects and preserves created things. These attributes are being, eternal being, goodness and wisdom. Of the four He granted the first two, being and eternal being, to their essence, and the second two, goodness and wisdom, to their volitive faculty, so that what He is in His essence the creature may become by participation. This is why man is said to have been created in the image and likeness of God (cf. Gen. 1:26). He is made in the image of God, since his being is in the image of God's being, and his eternal being is in the image of God's eternal being (in the sense that, though not without origin, it is nevertheless without end). He is also made in the likeness of God, since he is good in the likeness of God's goodness, and wise in the likeness of God's wisdom, God being good and wise by nature, and man by grace. Every intelligent nature is in the image of God, but only the good and the wise attain His likeness.
26. All beings endowed with intelligence and intellect are either angelic or human. All angelic beings may be subdivided further into two general moral categories or classes, the holy and the accursed — that is, the holy powers and the impure demons. All human beings may also be divided into two moral categories only, the godly and the ungodly.
27. Since God is absolute existence, absolute goodness and absolute wisdom, or rather, to put it more exactly, since God is beyond all such things, there is nothing whatsoever that is opposite to Him. Creatures, on the other hand, all exist through participation and grace, while those endowed with intelligence and intellect also have a capacity for goodness and wisdom. Hence they do have opposites. As the opposite to existence they have non-existence, and as the opposite to the capacity for goodness and wisdom they have evil and ignorance. Whether or not they are to exist eternally lies Within the power of their Maker. But whether or not intelligent creatures are to participate in His goodness and wisdom depends on their own will.
28. The ancient Greek philosophers say that the being of created things has coexisted with God from all eternity and that God has only given it its qualities. They say that this being itself has no opposite, and that opposition lies only in the qualities. But we maintain that only the divine essence has no opposite, since it is eternal and infinite and bestows eternity on other things. The being of created things, on the other hand, has non-being as its opposite. Whether or not it exists eternally depends on the power of Him who alone exists in a substantive sense. But since 'the gifts of God are irrevocable' (Rom. 11:29), the being of created things always is and always will be sustained by His almighty power, even though it has, as we said, an opposite; for it has been brought into being from non-being, and whether or not it exists depends on the will of God.
29. Just as evil is a privation of good, and ignorance a privation of knowledge, so non-being is a privation of being - not of being in a substantive sense, for that does not have any opposite, but of being that exists by participation in substantive being. The first two privations mentioned depend on the will of creatures; the third lies in the will of the Maker, who in His goodness wills beings always to exist and always to receive His blessings.
30. All creatures are either endowed with intelligence and intellect, and thus possess a capacity for opposites such as virtue and vice, knowledge and ignorance; or else they are physical bodies of various kinds made up of opposites, that is, of earth, air, fire and water. The former are altogether incorporeal and immaterial, although some of them are joined to bodies; the latter are composed of matter and form.
31. By nature all bodies lack a capacity for motion; they are given motion by the soul, either by one that is intelligent, or by one without intelligence, or by one that is insensate, as the case may be.
32. The soul has three powers: first, the power of nourishment and growth; second, that of imagination and instinct; third, that of intelligence and intellect.

- Plants share only in the first of these powers; animals share in the first and second; men share in all three. The first two powers are perishable; the third is clearly imperishable and immortal.
33. In communicating illumination to each other, the angelic powers also communicate either their virtue or their knowledge to human nature. As regards their virtue, they communicate a goodness which imitates the goodness of God, and through this goodness they confer blessings on themselves, on one another and on their inferiors, thus making them like God. As regards their knowledge, they communicate either a more sublime knowledge about God - for, as Scripture says, 'Thou, Lord, art most high for evermore' (Ps. 92:8) - or a more profound knowledge about embodied beings, or one that is more exact about incorporeal beings, or more distinct about divine providence, or more precise about divine judgment.
 34. Impurity of intellect consists first in having false knowledge; secondly in being ignorant of any of the universals (I refer to the human intellect, for it is a property of the angelic intellect not to be ignorant even of particulars); thirdly in having impassioned thoughts; and fourthly in assenting to sin. .
 35. Impurity of soul lies in its not functioning in accordance with nature. It is because of this that impassioned thoughts are produced in the intellect. The soul functions in accordance with nature when its passible aspects - that is, its incensive power and its desire - remain dispassionate in the face of provocations both from things and from the conceptual images of these things.
 36. Impurity of body consists in the actual committing of sin.
 37. He who is not attracted by worldly things cherishes stillness. He who loves nothing merely human loves all men. And he who takes no offence at anyone either on account of their faults, or on account of his own suspicious thoughts, has knowledge of God and of things divine.
 38. It is a great achievement not to be attracted by things. But it is a far greater achievement to remain dispassionate in the face both of things and of the conceptual images we derive from them.
 39. Love and self-control keep the intellect dispassionate in the face both of things and of the conceptual images we form of them.
 40. The intellect of a man who enjoys the love of God does not fight against things or against conceptual images of them. It battles against the passions which are linked with these images. It does not, for example, fight against a woman, or against a man who has offended it, or even against the images it forms of them; but it fights against the passions which are linked with the images.
 41. The whole purpose of the monk's warfare against the demons is to separate the passions from conceptual images. Otherwise he will not be able to look on things dispassionately.
 42. A thing, a conceptual image and a passion are all quite different one from the other. For example, a man, a woman, gold and so forth are things; a conceptual image is a passion-free thought of one of these things; a passion is mindless affection or indiscriminate hatred for one of these same things. The monk's battle is therefore against passion.
 43. An impassioned conceptual image is a thought compounded of passion and a conceptual image. If we separate the passion from the conceptual image, what remains is the passion-free thought. We can make this separation by means of spiritual love and self-control, if only we have the will.
 44. The virtues separate the intellect from the passions; spiritual contemplation separates it from its passion-free conceptual images of things; pure prayer brings it into the presence of God Himself.
 45. The virtues exist for the sake of the knowledge of creatures; knowledge for the sake of the knower; the knower, for the sake of Him who is known through unknowing and who knows beyond all knowledge.
 46. God, full beyond all fullness, brought creatures into being not because He had need of anything, but so that they might participate in Him in proportion to their capacity and that He Himself might rejoice in His works (cf. Ps. 104:31), through seeing them joyful and ever filled to overflowing with His inexhaustible gifts.
 47. There are many people in the world who are poor in spirit, but not in the way that they should be; there are many who mourn, but for some financial loss or the death of their children; many are gentle, but towards unclean passions; many hunger and thirst, but only to seize what does not belong to them and to profit from in-justice ; many are merciful, but

towards their bodies and the things that serve the body; many are pure in heart, but for the sake of self-esteem; many are peace-makers, but by making the soul submit to the flesh; many are persecuted, but as wrongdoers; many are reviled, but for shameful sins. Only those are blessed who do or suffer these things for the sake of Christ and after His example. Why? Because theirs is the kingdom of heaven, and they shall see God (cf. Matt. 5:3-12). It is not because they do or suffer these things that they are blessed, for those of whom we have spoken above do the same; it is because they do them and suffer them for the sake of Christ and after His example.

48. As has been said many times, in everything we do God examines our motive, to see whether we are doing it for His sake or for some other purpose. Thus when we desire to do something good, we should not do it for the sake of popularity; we should have God as our goal, so that, with our gaze always fixed on Him, we may do everything for His sake. Otherwise we shall undergo all the trouble of performing the act and yet lose the reward.
49. In time of prayer clear your intellect of both the passion-free conceptual images of human things and the contemplation of creatures. Otherwise in imagining lesser things you may fall away from Him who is incomparably greater than all created beings.
50. Through genuine love for God we can drive out the passions. Love for God is this: to choose Him rather than the world, and the soul rather than the flesh, by despising the things of this world and by devoting ourselves constantly to Him through self-control, love, prayer, psalmody and so on.
51. If we persistently devote ourselves to God and keep a careful watch on the soul's passible aspect, we are no longer driven headlong by the provocations of our thoughts. On the contrary, as we acquire a more exact understanding of their causes and cut them off, we become more discerning. In this way the following words come to apply to us: 'My eye also sees my enemies, and my ear shall hear the wicked that rise up against me' (Ps. 92:11. LXX).
52. When you see that your intellect reflects upon its conceptual images of the world with reverence and justice, you may be sure that your body, too, continues to be pure and sinless. But when you see that your intellect is occupied with thoughts of sin, and you do not check it, you may be sure that before very

long your body, too, will fall into those sins.

53. As the world of the body consists of things, so the world of the intellect consists of conceptual images. And as the body fornicates with the body of a woman, so the intellect, forming a picture of its own body, fornicates with the conceptual image of a woman. For in the mind it sees the form of its own body having intercourse with the form of a woman. Similarly, through the form of its own body, it mentally attacks the form of someone who has given it offence. The same is true with respect to other sins. For what the body acts out in the world of things, the intellect also acts out in the world of conceptual images.
54. One should not be startled or astonished because God the Father judges no one but has given all judgment to the Son (cf. John 5:22). The Son teaches us, 'Do not judge, so that you may not be judged' (Matt. 7:1); 'Do not condemn, so that you may not be condemned' (Luke 6:37). St Paul likewise says, 'Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes' (1 Cor. 4:5); and 'By judging another you condemn yourself' (Rom. 2:1). But men have given up weeping for their own sins and have taken judgment away from the Son. They themselves judge and condemn one another as if they were sinless. 'Heaven was amazed at this' (Jer. 2:12. LXX) and earth shuddered, but men in their obduracy are not ashamed.
55. 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, which are truly heavier than a great lump of lead; nor does he know why a man becomes heavy-hearted when he loves vanity and chases after falsehood (cf. Ps. 4:1). That is why, like a fool who walks in darkness, he no longer attends to his own sins but lets his imagination dwell on the sins of others, whether these sins are real or merely the products of his own suspicious mind.
56. Self-love, as has often been said, is the cause of all impassioned thoughts. For from it are produced the three principal thoughts of desire; those of gluttony, avarice and self-esteem. From gluttony is born the thought of unchastity; from avarice, the thought of greed; from self-esteem, the thought of pride. All the rest - the thoughts of anger, resentment, rancor, listlessness, envy, backbiting and so on - are consequent upon one or other of these three. These passions,

then, tie the intellect to material things and drag it down to earth, pressing on it like a massive stone, although by nature it is lighter and swifter than fire.

57. The origin of all the passions is self-love; their consummation is pride. Self-love is a mindless love for the body. He who cuts this off cuts off at the same time all the passions that come from it.
58. Just as parents have a special affection for the children who are the fruit of their own bodies, so the intellect naturally clings to its own thoughts. And just as to passionately fond parents their own children seem the most capable and most beautiful of all - though they may be quite the most ridiculous in every way - so to a foolish intellect its own thoughts appear the most intelligent of all, though they may be utterly degraded. The wise man does not regard his own thoughts in this way. It is precisely when he feels convinced that they are true and good that he most distrusts his own judgment. He makes other wise men the judges of his thoughts and arguments - lest he should run, or may have run, in vain (cf. Gal. 2:2) - and from them receives assurance.
59. When you overcome one of the grosser passions, such as gluttony, unchastity, anger or greed, the thought of self-esteem at once assails you. If you defeat this thought, the thought of pride succeeds it.
60. All the gross passions that dominate the soul drive from it the thought of self-esteem. But when all these passions have been defeated, they leave self-esteem free to take control.
61. Self-esteem, whether it is eradicated or whether it remains, begets pride. When it is eradicated, it generates self-conceit; when it remains, it produces boastfulness.
62. Self-esteem is eradicated by the hidden practice of the virtues, pride, by ascribing our achievements to God.
63. He who has been granted knowledge of God, and fully enjoys the pleasure that comes from it, despises all the pleasures produced by the soul's desiring power.
64. He who desires earthly things desires either food, or things which satisfy his sexual appetite, or human fame, or wealth, or some other thing consequent upon these. Unless the intellect finds something more noble to which it may transfer its desire, it will not be persuaded to scorn these things completely.

The knowledge of God and of divine things is incomparably more noble than these earthly things.

65. Those who scorn sensual pleasures do so either from fear, or from hope, or from knowledge and love for God.
66. Passion-free knowledge of divine things does not persuade the intellect to scorn material things completely; it is like the passion-free thought of a sensible thing. It is therefore possible to find many men who have much knowledge and yet wallow in the passions of the flesh like pigs in the mire. Through their diligence they temporarily cleanse themselves and attain knowledge, but then they grow negligent. In this they resemble Saul: for Saul was granted the kingdom, but conducted himself unworthily and was driven out with terrible wrath (cf. 1 Sam. 10-15).
67. Just as passion-free thought of human things does not compel the intellect to scorn divine things, so passion-free knowledge of divine things does not fully persuade it to scorn human things. For in this world truth exists in shadows and conjectures. That is why there is need for the blessed passion of holy love, which binds the intellect to spiritual contemplation and persuades it to prefer what is immaterial to what is material, and what is intelligible and divine to what is apprehended by the senses.
68. If a man has cut off the passions and so has freed his thoughts from passion, it does not necessarily mean that his thoughts are already orientated towards the divine. It may be that he feels no passionate attraction either for human or for divine things. This occurs in the case of those simply living the life of ascetic practice without yet having been granted spiritual knowledge. Such men keep the passions at bay either by fear of punishment or by hope of the kingdom.
69. 'We walk by faith, not by sight' (2 Cor. 5:7) and we gain spiritual knowledge through symbols, indistinctly as in a mirror (cf. 1 Cor. 13:12). Thus we must devote much time to this kind of knowledge, so that by long study and constant application we may achieve a persistent state of contemplation.
70. If we cut off the causes of the passions for only a short while, and occupy ourselves with spiritual contemplation without making it our sole and constant concern, we easily revert to the passions of the flesh, gaining nothing from our labor but theoretical

knowledge coupled with conceit. The result is a gradual darkening of this knowledge itself and a complete turning of the intellect towards material things.

71. The passion of love, when reprehensible, occupies the intellect with material things, but when rightly directed unites it with the divine. For the intellect tends to develop its powers among those things to which it devotes its attention; and where it develops its powers, there it will direct its desire and love. It will direct them, that is to say, either to what is divine, intelligible and proper to its nature, or to the passions and things of the flesh.
72. God created both the invisible and the visible worlds, and so He obviously also made both the soul and the body. If the visible world is so beautiful, what must the invisible world be like? And if the invisible world is superior to the visible world, how much superior to both is God their Creator? If, then, the Creator of everything that is beautiful is superior to all His creation, on what grounds does the intellect abandon what is superior to all and engross itself in what is worst of all - I mean the passions of the flesh? Clearly this happens because the intellect has lived with these passions and grown accustomed to them since birth, whereas it has not yet had perfect experience of Him who is superior to all and beyond all things. Thus, if we gradually wean the intellect away from this relationship by long practice of controlling our indulgence in pleasure and by persistent meditation on divine realities, the intellect will gradually devote itself more and more to these realities, will recognize its own dignity, and finally transfer all its desire to the divine.
73. He who speaks dispassionately of his brother's sins does so either to correct him or to benefit another. If he speaks for any other reason, either to the brother himself or to another person, he speaks to abuse him or ridicule him. In this case he will not escape being abandoned by God. On the contrary, he will fall into the same sin or other sins and, censured and reproached by other men, will be put to shame.
74. It is not always for the same reason that sinners commit the same sin. The reasons vary. For example, it is one thing to sin through force of habit and another to sin through being carried away by a sudden impulse. In the latter case the man did not deliberately choose the sin either before committing it, or afterwards; on the contrary, he is deeply distressed that

the sin has occurred. It is quite different with the man who sins through force of habit. Prior to the act itself he was already sinning in thought, and after it he is still in the same state of mind.

75. He who cultivates the virtues for the sake of self-esteem also seeks after spiritual knowledge for the same reason. Such a man plainly does not do anything or discuss anything for the edification of others. On the contrary, he always seeks the praise of those who see him or hear him. His passion is brought to light when some of these people censure his actions or words. This distresses him greatly, not because he has failed to edify them - for that was not his aim - but because he has been humiliated.
76. The presence of the passion of avarice reveals itself when a person enjoys receiving but resents having to give. Such a person is not fit to fulfill the office of treasurer or bursar.
77. A man endures suffering either for the love of God, or for hope of reward, or for fear of punishment, or for fear of men, or because of his nature, or for pleasure, or for gain, or out of self-esteem, or from necessity.
78. It is one thing to be delivered from sinful thoughts and another to be free from passions. Frequently a man is delivered from such thoughts when the things which rouse his passions are not present. But the passions lie hidden in the soul and are brought to light when the things themselves are present. Hence one must watch over the intellect in the presence of things and must discern for which of them it manifests a passion.
79. A true friend is one who in times of trial calmly and imperturbably suffers with his neighbor the ensuing afflictions, privations and disasters as if they were his own.
80. Do not treat your conscience with contempt, for it always advises you to do what is best. It sets before you the will of God and the angels; it frees you from the secret defilements of the heart; and when you depart this life it grants you the gift of intimacy with God.
81. If you wish to be a person of understanding and moderation, and not to be a slave to the passion of conceit, continually search among created things for what is hidden from your knowledge. When you find that there are vast numbers of different things

that escape your notice, you will wonder at your ignorance and abase your presumption. And when you have come to know yourself, you will understand many great and wonderful things; for to think that one knows prevents one from advancing in knowledge.

82. The person who truly wishes to be healed is he who does not refuse treatment. This treatment consists of the pain and distress brought on by various misfortunes. He who refuses them does not realize what they accomplish in this world or what he will gain from them when he departs this life.
83. Self-esteem and avarice produce each other. Those who are full of self-esteem acquire riches and those who are rich become full of self-esteem. That is what happens to people living in the world. In the case of a monk, if he has renounced possessions, he becomes still more full of self-esteem; but if he has money he is ashamed and hides it as something unworthy of one who wears the habit.
84. The mark of monastic self-esteem is to be puffed up about one's virtue and its consequences. The mark of monastic pride is to be conceited about one's own achievements, to ascribe these achievements to oneself and not to God, and to hold others in contempt. The mark of worldly self-esteem and pride is to be puffed up and conceited about one's beauty, wealth, power and moral judgment.
85. The achievements of the worldly man constitute the failings of the monk, and the achievements of the monk constitute the failings of the worldly man. For example, the achievements of the worldly man are wealth, fame, power, luxury, comfort, children and what is consequent upon all these things. But the monk is destroyed if he obtains any of them. His achievements are the total shedding of possessions, the rejection of esteem and power, self-control, hardship, and all that is consequent upon them. If a lover of the world obtains these against his will, he considers it a great calamity and is often in danger even of killing himself; some people have actually done this.
86. Food was created for nourishment and healing. Those who eat food for purposes other than these two are therefore to be condemned as self-indulgent, because they misuse the gifts God has given us for our use. In all things misuse is a sin.
87. Humility consists in constant prayer combined with

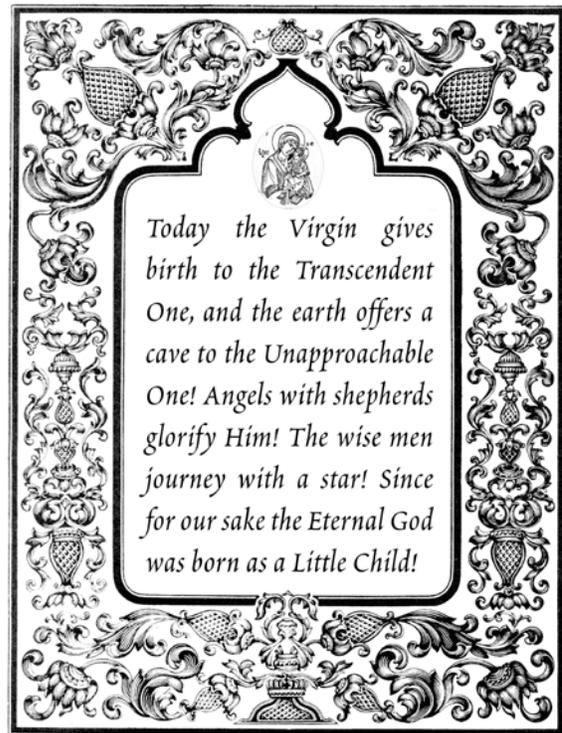
tears and suffering. For this ceaseless calling upon God for help prevents us from foolishly growing confident in our own strength and wisdom, and from putting ourselves above others. These are dangerous diseases of the passion of pride.

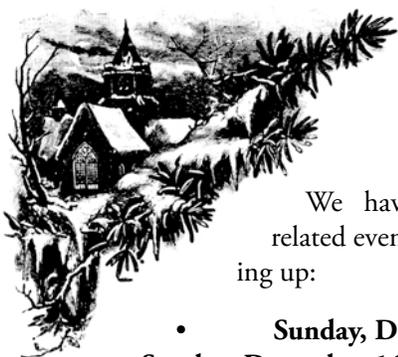
88. It is one thing to fight against a passion-free thought so that it will not stimulate a passion; it is another to fight against an impassioned thought so that there will be no assent to it. Both these two forms of counter-attack prevent the thoughts themselves from persisting.
89. Resentment is linked with rancor. When the intellect forms the image of a brother's face with a feeling of resentment, it is clear that it harbors rancor against him. 'The way of the rancorous leads to death' (Prov. 12:28. LXX), because 'whoever harbors rancor is a transgressor' (Prov. 21:24. LXX).
90. If you harbor rancor against anybody, pray for him and you will prevent the passion from being aroused; for by means of prayer you will separate your resentment from the thought of the wrong he has done you. When you have become loving and compassionate towards him, you will wipe the passion completely from your soul. If somebody regards you with rancor, be pleasant to him, be humble and agreeable in his company, and you will deliver him from his passion.
91. You will find it hard to check the resentment of an envious person, for what he envies in you he considers his own misfortune. You cannot check his envy except by hiding from him the thing that arouses his passion. If this thing benefits many but fills him with resentment, which side will you take? You have to help the majority but without, as far as possible, disregarding him, and without being seduced by the cunning of the passion itself, for you are defending not the passion but the sufferer. You must in humility consider him superior to yourself, and always, everywhere and in every matter put his interest above yours. As for your own envy, you will be able to check it if you rejoice with the man whom you envy whenever he rejoices, and grieve whenever he grieves, thus fulfilling St Paul's words, 'Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep' (Rom. 12:15).
92. Our intellect lies between angel and demon, each of which works for its own ends, the one encouraging virtue and the other vice. The intellect has both the

authority and the power to follow or resist whichever it wishes to.

93. The angelic powers urge us towards what is holy. Our natural instincts and our probity of intention assist us. But the passions and sinfulness of intention reinforce the provocations of the demons.
94. When the intellect is pure, sometimes God Himself approaches and teaches it; and sometimes the angelic powers, or the nature of the created things that it contemplates, suggest holy things to it.
95. An intellect which has been granted spiritual knowledge must keep its conceptual images free from passion, its contemplation unfaltering, and its state of prayer untroubled. But it cannot always guard these from intrusions by the flesh, because it is obscured by the ploys of demons.
96. The things that distress us are not always the same as those that make us angry, the things that distress us being far more numerous than those which make us angry. For example, the fact that something has been broken, or lost, or that a certain person has died, may only distress us. But other things may both distress us and make us angry, if we lack the spirit of divine philosophy.
97. When the intellect gives attention to conceptual images of physical objects, it is assimilated to the configuration of each image. If it contemplates these objects spiritually, it is transformed in various ways according to which of them it contemplates. But once it is established in God, it loses form and configuration altogether, for by contemplating Him who is simple it becomes simple itself and wholly filled with spiritual radiance.
98. A soul is perfect if its passible aspect is totally oriented towards God.
99. A perfect intellect is one which by true faith and in a manner beyond all unknowing supremely knows the supremely Unknowable; and which, in surveying the entirety of God's creation, has received from God an all-embracing knowledge of the providence and judgment which governs it - in so far, of course, as all this is possible to man.
100. Time has three divisions. Faith is coextensive with all three, hope with one, and love with the remaining two. Moreover, faith and hope will last to a certain point; but love, united beyond union with Him who is more than infinite, will remain for all eternity, al-

ways increasing beyond all measure. That is why 'the greatest of them is love' (1 Cor. 13:13).





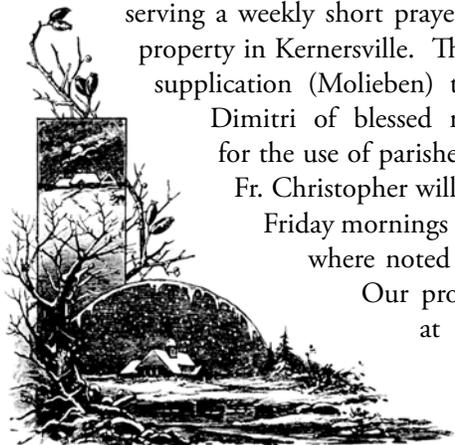
ANNOUNCEMENTS

We have several Nativity-related events and projects coming up:

- **Sunday, December 2, through Sunday, December 16:** We'll be collecting new hats and gloves for adults and children. These will be distributed to families in need through the New Arrivals Institute. Many of these families are from warm climates and have never owned a winter hat or gloves, so your donations will be much appreciated. Items should not be wrapped. There will be a box set up at Holy Cross for these items. Our goal is to collect 50 sets by Sunday, December 16.
- **Sunday, December 9:** Children's Nativity performance and a special visit by St. Nicholas. Have kids bring a spare shoe for special treats! Everyone is welcome to stay and hear our new Children's Choir sing carols.
- **Sunday, December 23:** Christmas caroling at Adams Farm Assisted Living, 5100 Mackay Rd, Jamestown. We'll leave Holy Cross at 1:00 to arrive and be ready to start singing at 1:30.

We hope you can help spread the spirit of the season and join in these special programs and celebrations!

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 gather at Printworks Bistro at 7pm on Wednesday, December 26 for their half-priced wine night. The reservation is under Maggie Woodlief.

Printworks Bistro
702 Green Valley Road
Greensboro, NC 27408

Men's Group: This month we will be doing a service project for our monthly men's group activity. We will be helping to prepare and serve the meal at Open Door Ministry on Friday, December 28. We need some to come early to help cook at 4 PM and to help serve at 5:45 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

| November | Actual | Budgeted |
|----------|--------------|--------------|
| Income | \$10,950.65 | \$12,515.00 |
| Expense | \$8,687.55 | \$10,124.68 |
| YTD | Actual | Budgeted |
| Income | \$132,621.42 | \$137,674.00 |
| Expense | \$108,095.70 | \$118,239.08 |

Thank you for your generous support!



HOLY CROSS ORTHODOX CHURCH



| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|--|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | 1 Nativity Fast 6 PM Great Vespers |
| 2 Nativity Fast 9:00AM Church School 9:40AM Hours 10AM Divine Liturgy 6:30 PM OCAT home meeting | 3 Nativity Fast | 4 Nativity Fast | 5 Nativity Fast 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal | 6 Nativity Fast 6PM Parish Council | 7 Nativity Fast 10AM Prayers at the Property | 8 Nativity Fast 6 PM Great Vespers |
| 9 Nativity Fast 9:40AM Hours 10AM Divine Liturgy | 10 Nativity Fast | 11 Nativity Fast | 12 Nativity Fast 6:30PM Inquirers' Class | 13 Nativity Fast 6PM Parish Council | 14 Nativity Fast 10AM Prayers at the Property | 15 Nativity Fast 6 PM Great Vespers |
| 16 Nativity Fast 9:00 AM Church School 9:40AM Hours 10AM Divine Liturgy 12PM Visit from St. Nicholas | 17 Nativity Fast | 18 Nativity Fast | 19 Nativity Fast 6:30PM Nativity Prefeast Vespers | 20 Nativity Fast 6:30PM Nativity Prefeast Vespers | 21 Nativity Fast 10AM Prayers at the Property 6:30PM Nativity Prefeast Vespers | 22 Nativity Fast 6 PM Great Vespers |
| 23 Nativity Fast 9:40AM Hours 10AM Divine Liturgy 6:30PM Nativity Prefeast Vespers 12PM Children's Nativity Program | 24 Nativity Fast 3PM Vesperal Liturgy 5:30PM Holy Supper 7PM Nativity Vigil | 25 NATIVITY of Christ 9:00 AM Divine Liturgy | 26 7:00 PM Sisterhood | 27 | 28 5PM Open Door | 29 6 PM Great Vespers |
| 30 9AM Dmitri baptism 9:40AM Hours 10AM Divine Liturgy | 31 | | | | | |