

ASCETICALLY SPEAKING, pp. 27-28

THE FUNCTION AND PURPOSE OF CELEBRATING THE HOLY EUCHARIST

St. Nicholas Cabasilas

The function of the celebration of the sacraments is to convert the gifts offered into the Body and Blood of Christ, and its aim is to sanctify the faithful who, through receiving the sacraments, gain remission of sins, the inheritance of the Kingdom of Heaven, and similar good things.

NO CREMATION

Archpriest Victor Potapov

People who agree with the custom of burning the bodies of the dead may not necessarily think that they are denying life beyond the grave. But this does not change the fact of the matter, that at the root of the recent practice of cremation lies the denial of eternal life. The practice is anti-Christian. The faithful children of the Orthodox Church must flee from it.

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One ought not to forget that the incorruption of the remains of many saints testifies to God's particular good will toward these righteous ones and their flesh. Holy relics are the visible expression of an existence transfigured and glorified. Holy relics remind us that the body of a Christian can be incorrupt and can become a relic. In the Church's Order of the Funeral Service, the body of the deceased is plainly called *relics*: *And so, taking up the relics, we go forth to the grave, followed by all to the grave. The hierarch, or the priest, taking a shovelful of soil, streweth it crosswise over the relics saying: The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof, the world, and all that dwell therein. And then the grave is filled up in the usual manner...* The Church teaches us to bury the bodies of the dead in the earth. Everything that the Church has decreed is for our salvation. If we seriously strive for the blessed life of eternity, let us submit to the will of God and His Holy Church, for everything else is truly *vanity and corruption*.

WE'RE HELPLESS WITHOUT PRAYER!

St. Tikhon of Zadonsk

As a bird without wings, as a soldier without arms, so is a Christian without prayer.

THE WORDS OF SCRIPTURE ARE VERY IMPORTANT!

Dr. Alexandre Kalomiros

In all matters, the Holy Fathers of the Church sought always, insofar as it was possible, in combatting the diverse heresies, to make use of the very words of the Holy Scriptures themselves. This was true also of their strategy in refuting the iconoclasts of the 8th century.

THE BIBLE ANSWERS ALL QUESTIONS:WHEN THERE IS ANY DOUBT AS TO MEANING THE HOLY FATHERS ARE CONSULTED

St. Justin (Popovich)

All that is necessary for this world and the people in it - the Lord has stated in the Bible. In it He has given the answers to all questions. There is no question which can torment the human soul, and not find its answer, either directly or indirectly in the Bible.... Just as important as knowing why we should read the Bible is knowing how we should read the Bible. The best guides for this are the holy Fathers, headed by St. John Chrysostom who, in a manner of speaking, *has written a fifth Gospel* (emphasis supplied).... By reading the Bible you are adding yeast to the dough of your soul and body, which gradually expands and fills the soul until it has thoroughly permeated it and makes it rise with the truth and righteousness of the Gospel.