

PRAYER - KEEP TO THE ROYAL ROAD

St. Gregory of Sinai

If some have gone astray and lost their mental balance, this is because they have in arrogance followed their own counsels. For when you seek God in obedience and humility, and with the guidance of a spiritual master, you will never come to any harm, by the grace of Christ who desires all to be saved (cf. I Tim. 2:4). Should temptation arise, its purpose is to test you and to spur you on; and God, who has permitted this testing, will speedily come to your help in whatever way He sees fit. As the holy fathers assure us, a person who lives an upright and blameless life, avoiding arrogance and spurning popularity, will come to no harm even if a whole host of demons provoke him with countless temptations. But if you are presumptuous and follow your own counsel you will readily fall victim to delusion. This is why a hesychast must always keep to the royal road.

MAN IN GOD'S IMAGE

St. Gregory Palamas

62. Man is created more perfectly in God's image than the angels, both because he possesses in himself a sustaining and quickening power and because he has a capacity for sovereignty....God, then, by virtue of our capacity for sovereignty, has given us lordship over all the earth.... 64. Even though we still bear God's image to a greater degree than the angels, yet as regards the likeness of God we fall far short of them.

WE CAN'T BE SAVED BY OUR OWN EFFORTS!

St. John of Kronstadt

When you have sinned, and your sins torment you, then seek at once the only sacrifice for sins, eternal and living, and lay your sins before the face of that sacrifice. Do not think that you can be saved by your own efforts.

A PRIEST'S SOUL

St. John Chrysostom

For the priest's soul must be purer than the rays of the sun, in order that the Holy Spirit may never leave him desolate, and that he may be able to say, 'I live; yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me'.

BELIEVE IN HIM YOU HAVE NOT SEEN!

King Abgarus of Edessa's Letter to Christ and His Reply

...For it is reported, that you cause the blind to see, the lame to walk; do both cleanse lepers, and cast out unclean spirits and devils, and restore them to health who have been long diseased; and raisest up the dead; All which when I heard, I was persuaded of one of these two, viz: either you are God Himself descended from heaven, who do these things, or the son of God. On this account therefore I have wrote (sic) you, earnestly to desire you would take the trouble of a journey hither, and cure a disease which I am under...

Jesus' answer sent by Ananias the footman declined to come but promised to send one of His disciples to cure him after His Ascension, accompanied by the towel with His image, the "Ikon made without hands":
*Abgarus, you are happy, forasmuch as you have **believed on me, whom ye have not seen** (emphasis supplied). For it is written concerning me, that those who have seen me should not believe on me, that they who have not seen might believe and live...*

PAVEL FLORENSKY, MARTYR, PRIEST, ICONOGRAPHER

But the deeper work of his last ministry was hidden from the eyes of the authorities: he served the needs of the poorest, most ravished prisoners. A crucial image survives the darkness - Fr. Pavel saved the scraps of bread from his own meagre meals and fed them to the starving and dying." KGB file on Pavel Florensky, found in 1987 "Florensky, Pavel Alexandrovich is to be shot... The sentence of the Special Triad of the UNKVD concerning Florensky, Pavel Alexandrovich was carried out 8 December 1937."

ORTHODOX DIVINE LITURGY: FROM OUR LORD TO JAMES THE JUST OF JERUSALEM

Divine Prayers and Services (ed. Nassar)

This service of the Divine Mass, in its present arrangement, was transmitted to the Catholic Orthodox Church by St. James the Apostle, who was the *first* Bishop consecrated by Christ before His Ascension, to the throne of the Church of holy Jerusalem, God's dwelling-place and throne, and the *mother* of all the churches of the world, where Christ was born, where he came together with His Disciples, performed the sacramental Supper, and where the Holy Spirit descended on the Day of Pentecost. The Church of Jerusalem was followed by that of Antioch, the

first seat of St. Peter. This same church was the house of Theophilus, which he endowed it as a church after embracing the faith in Christ. And it was Christ Himself Who taught His brother [note: not His real (blood) brother of course] James the service of the Mass, having first appeared to him and later to him and the Apostles (emphases supplied).