

The Voice of One



Crying in The Wilderness

DEATH TO THE WORLD  
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# DEATH TO THE WORLD



*The Last True Rebellion*



Issue

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## DEATH TO THE WORLD

is a zine to inspire Truth-seeking and soul-searching amidst the modern age of nihilism and despair, promoting the ancient principles of the last true rebellion: being dead to this world and alive to the other world. Correspondence is encouraged and articles for submission are welcomed. DTTW is created by the Youth of the Apocalypse and each article printed herein is true to life and has been written out of pain of heart for love of Truth.

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### What do we mean by: DEATH TO THE WORLD

"The world is the general name for all the passions. When we wish to call the passions by a common name, we call them the world. But when we wish to distinguish them by their special names, we call them passions. The passions are the following: love of riches, desire for possessions, bodily pleasure from which comes sexual passion, love of honor which gives rise to envy, lust for power, arrogance and pride of position, the craving to adorn oneself with luxurious clothes and vain ornaments, the itch for human glory which is a source of rancor and resentment, and physical fear. Where these passions cease to be active, there the world is dead.... Someone has said of the saints that while alive they were dead: for though living in the flesh, they did not live for the flesh. See for which of these passions you are alive. Then you will know how far you are alive to the world, and how far you are dead to it."

St. Isaac of Syria (6th century)

COVER PHOTO: DESERT DWELLER ANGELINA - THIS PAGE - ST. SIMON OF SERBIA

## FAITH

*"Faithless and perverse generation, how long must I suffer you?"*  
Jesus Christ.

Faith is the belief and the trust in something unseen. Faith that is not active is dead. It is dead faith that turns people to madness and insanity, for when all faith is lost there is no reason left to live. Thus insanity is death; a death of the soul which comes before the death of the flesh. Faith is the belief in the triumph of God, just as fear is the belief in the triumph of evil. It is this lack of faith that is causing the end of our world as we know it, for faithlessness is shortening our days as death approaches.

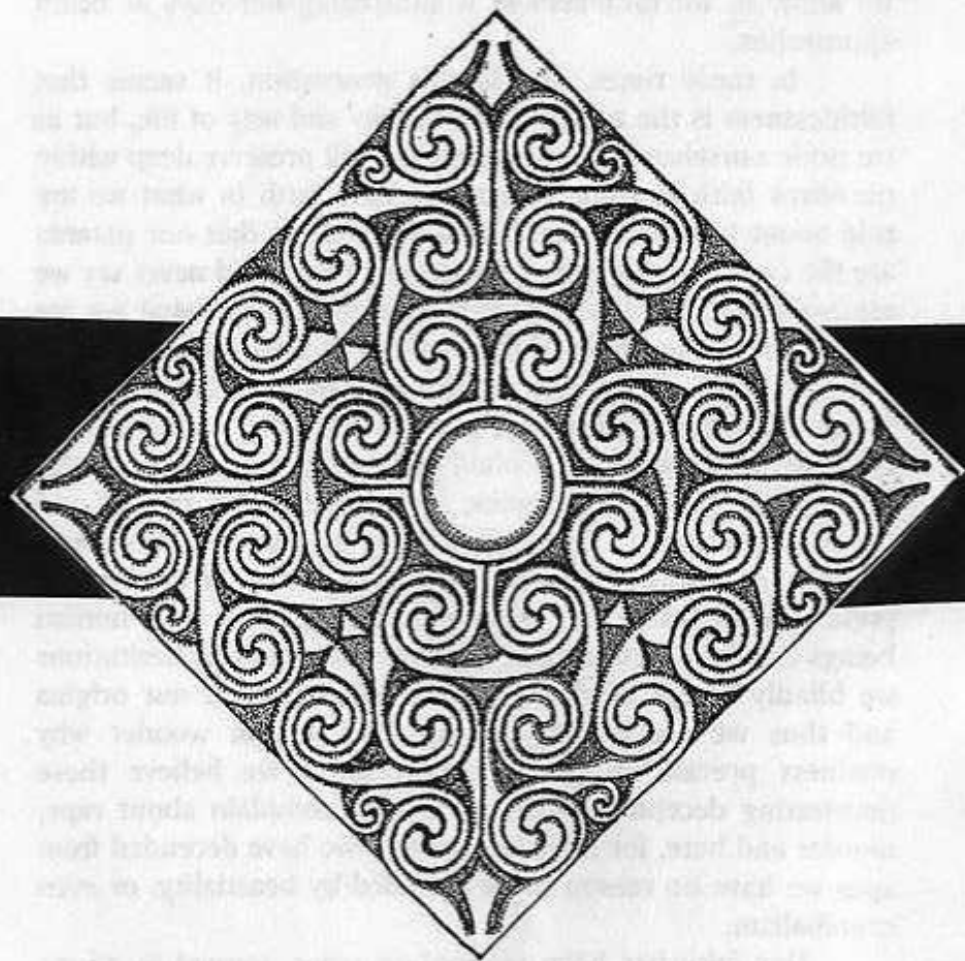
In these times, and in this generation, it seems that faithlessness is the accepted philosophy and way of life, but as we pride ourselves in faithlessness we still preserve deep within ourselves faith in some things. We have faith in what we are told about history, we have faith and believe that our parents are the ones who conceived us, although we could never say we remember the incident; we have faith and believe what we are taught about the origin of the world, although we could never say we were there and remember that incident either. To some it may sound strange and even shocking but those who do have faith, although a blind faith, in our decaying world, believe that this very complex, ununderstandably perfect and beautiful earth with its endless skies and stars came about through an explosion from nothingness. They preserve and prefer the idea that life came from nothing and that human beings are the decedents of monkeys. Without any hesitations we blindly accept what the system tells us about our origins and thus we are led to insanity. One cannot wonder why madness prevails in our small world. If we believe these devastating deceptions then we cannot complain about rape, murder and hate, for if we believe that we have decended from apes we have no reason to be offended by beastiality, or even cannibalism.

Our faith has been reduced to ashes, burned by those who put the little faith they had in evil. We are left to clean up



these ashes before the Apocalypse, and we, the frightened and hardened children, are expected to live in faith, nothing wavering, for he that wavers is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.

It can be said that it takes little, blind, dead faith to believe that the answer to the question "Why?" is that our origin is nihilism – nothing – nonexistence, rather than to have faith that we were created by God. But in an ocean of Faith, I do believe that God is love, and my Faith is in Love.



## THIEF IN THE DESERT

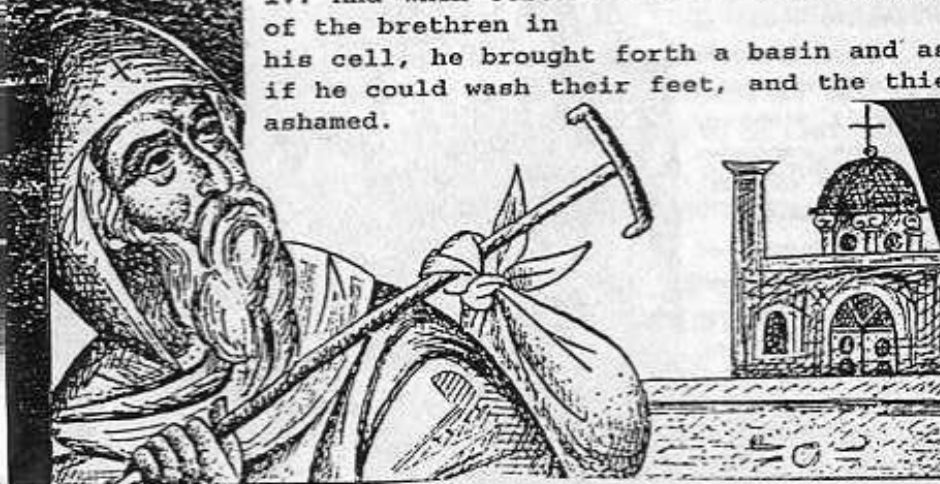
True stories from the ancient manuscripts of the Paradise of the Fathers.

I. On one occasion thieves came to the cell of an old monk, and said unto him, "We have come to take away everything which thou hast in thy cell," and he said unto them, "My sons, take whatsoever ye please;" and they took everything which they saw in His cell and departed. Now they forgot to take a wallet which was hanging there, and the old man took it and ran after them, and entreated them, saying, "My sons, take this wallet which ye have left behind in your cell." and when the thieves saw this they marveled at the good disposition of the old monk, and they gave back everything which they had taken from his cell, and they repented, and said to each other, "Truely, the man is a man of God."

II. Abba Macarius the monk loved money so little that on one occasion when thieves came to his cell by night, and took out whatsoever they could find in it, as soon as he perceived what they were doing, he helped them in their work and also to carry their plunder out of the desert.

III. And another of the fathers when he was being plundered said unto the thieves, "Make haste, and be quick, before the other brothers come."

IV. And when certain thieves rose up against one of the brethren in his cell, he brought forth a basin and asked them if he could wash their feet, and the thieves were ashamed.





## Be Still And Know That I Am God

The following letter was written on the twenty-first of May in the year 1797 by a monk of the name of Zosima. He lived in the dark untouched regions of Siberia as a recluse, or one who abandons the temptations and evils of the world in order to live all alone in an uninhabited corner of the vast wilderness. But a recluse in his loneliness is in truth not alone, but in the embrace of God. The life that the monk Zosima lived was a hard life of sorrows that brings an unearthly joy and peace upon the soul. Of this anchoretic, or secluded life, monk Zosima says that it is likened to crucifixion on a cross.

The importance of this letter is that it is one of the greatest in depth descriptions of the soul of a monk and his trials in the inner desert and his struggles with his own imperfections and barrenness within. The word monk comes from the Greek word monos, meaning alone. "A monk is one who is alone, dead to this world and alive only to God."

My sincerely beloved Elder and Father in the Lord,

Glory be to God!

Our hermitage is quite suited to the life of silence and labors of salvation. The inner desert, I trust, will be a teacher leading one to spiritual advancement. There are no comforts there, as in the world, with which the soul might busily preoccupy itself; there is no need for excessive handywork, and there is no one to visit for entertainment or idle conversation.

One must suffer the horror of demons, and the loneliness and languishing of daily and continuous confinement and seclusion. The fear of death settles continuously in one's soul, frightening it with thoughts of being

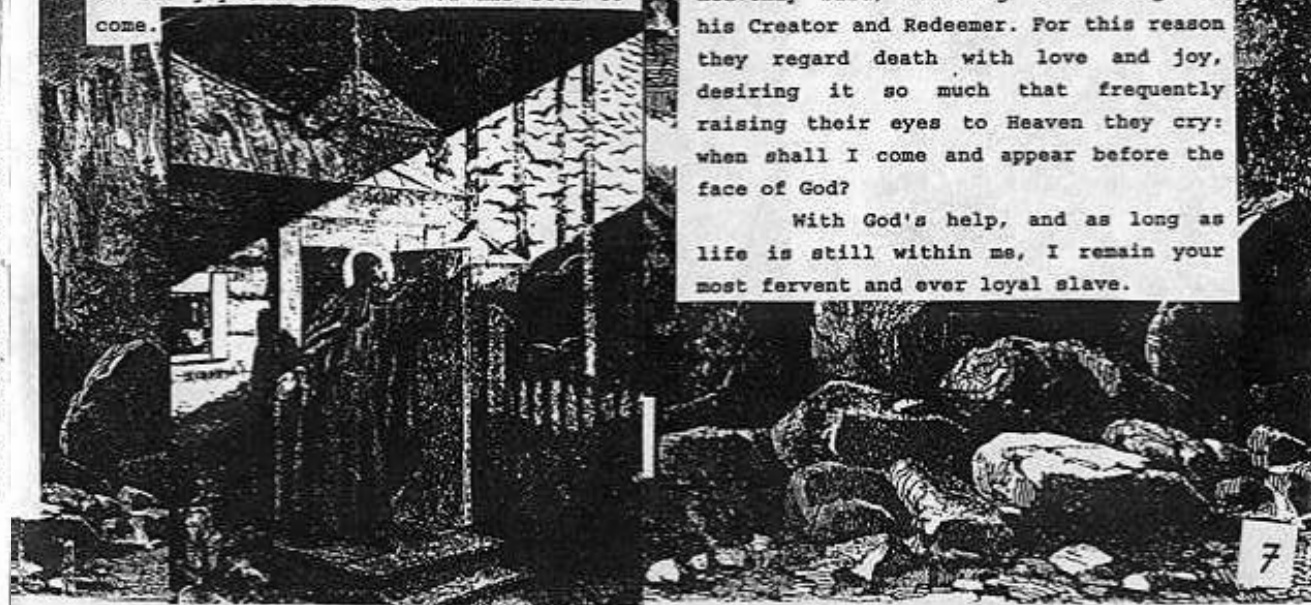
attacked and possibly killed by animals, snakes and evil people. One suffers extreme need in everything, dire poverty, and lack of the most essential things, living in a meager hut which has nothing in it save a few books which are one's only joy and consolation. One hears

neither of his friends and how they live, nor of the health of his relatives, nor of his loved ones. All the pleasures of the past life have departed. In a word, he has died to the world, and the world to him. There is nothing temporal over which to rejoice, thus darkening the mind, drawing it away from God. The whole mind, reason, memory and feelings, the whole person, is immersed in God, ascending to Him through the contemplation and vision of His wisdom, His greatness, and His providence in His works. Heaven and earth are as two constantly open books before Him, in which He reads of the greatness and wisdom of our God. To Him alone he weeps day and night, falling down in prayer, begging to be strengthened and preserved till the end of his days in this way of life, the demands of which exceed his strength, but which he nevertheless undertook for God's sake. I trust that for his life of constant seclusion without exit from the desert, poverty and complete isolation from everything and everyone, the Lord will grant such a one the gift of tears, as a kind of betrothal to the joy and salvation of his soul to come.

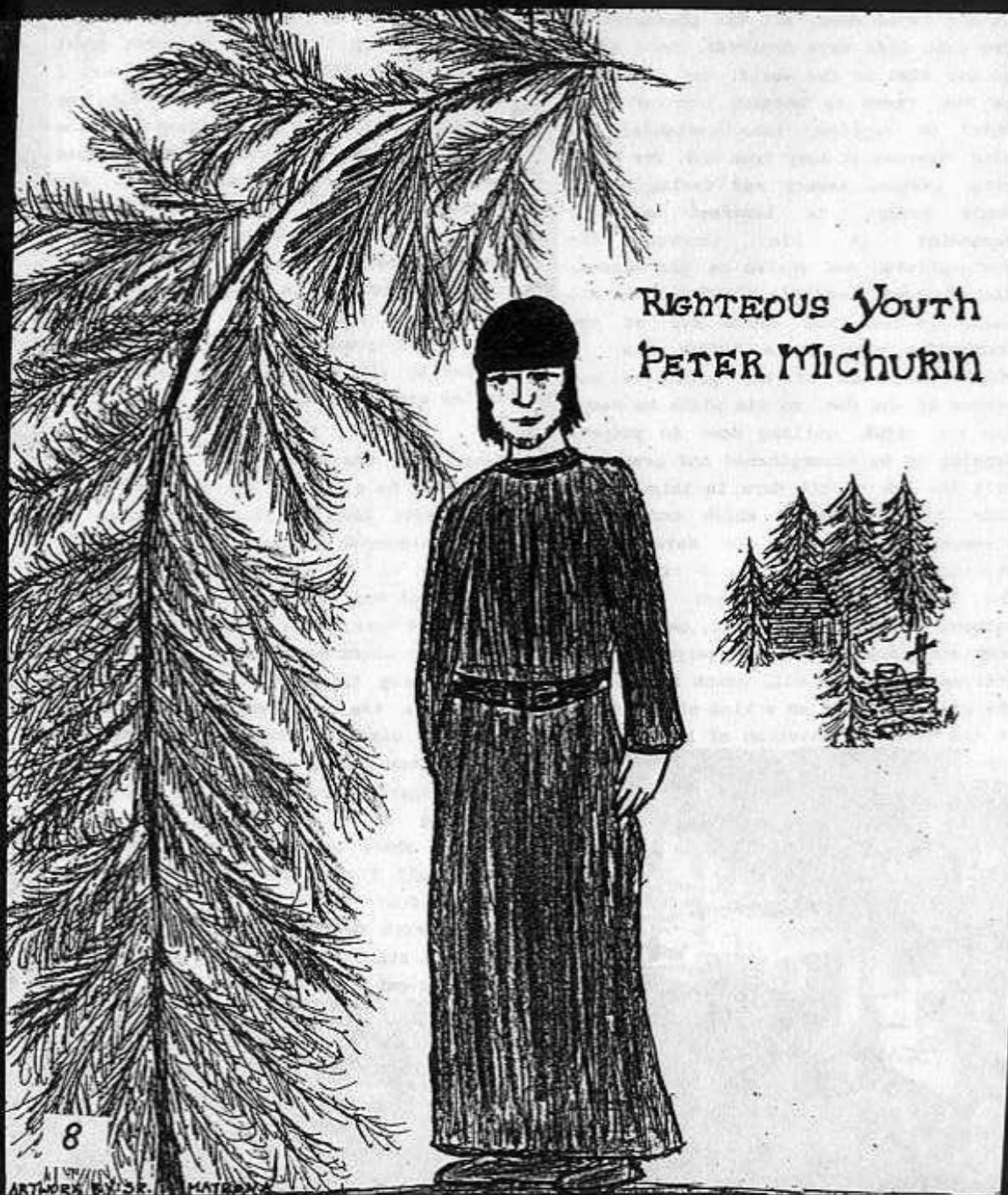
By thus departing to the inner desert, I will prove to my Lord the sincerity of my desire for salvation. With His help I will strive with great effort to do all that is in my power. I have shown my desire to God with my actions, that is to say, I first left the world and came to a monastery to avoid falling into sin. Then I left the monastery to lead the life of a desert dweller, from where I now wish to retreat to the inner desert. One cannot acquire purity of prayer, in which the mind does not wander, distracted by vain thoughts, nor is it possible to pray with tears warmed by love for God, if one does not follow His commandments.

However, I believe that if one departs for the inner desert overcome and persuaded by a divine love for Christ, he will truly live as if in Paradise. No longer hindered by any obstacles, he will be free to delight constantly in the thought of God and in sweet prayer of the heart and mind, with God and in his God. No longer shedding tears of grief alone, but weeping in joyful sorrow, he will dwell in the mountain heights as a heavenly bird, offering sweet songs to his Creator and Redeemer. For this reason they regard death with love and joy, desiring it so much that frequently raising their eyes to Heaven they cry: when shall I come and appear before the face of God?

With God's help, and as long as life is still within me, I remain your most fervent and ever loyal slave.







## RIGHTEDUS Youth PETER MICHURIN



## Righteous youth Peter Michurin

Glory be to God! There has always been and still remains hope for those who desire salvation. Presently, in these last times, the grace of the Holy Spirit has also manifested itself unto us in the form of Righteous youth, Peter Michurin. He was born in the Tomsk province of Siberia, to the nobles Alexis and his wife Dominica. He received a good upbringing in the home of his parents until entering the military service. At only twenty years of age, he had already fulfilled all of God's commandments. He then dedicated himself to the monastic life, to stand as an animate candle before God, by which Christ invites all by saying, ... "Go, sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and come follow me." However, few pay heed to these words of Christ's and few indeed are they that become inflamed with living faith in and love for our Savior, Jesus Christ. Our eyes have been blinded by the vanity of our age. Our affliction is worse than that of infants born blind.

That great joy it is to follow in Christ's footsteps and to order one's life in accordance with His Will and, after death to stand by His side. As Christ Himself said, "I desire that they be with me where I am."

The blessed youth Peter became inflamed with zeal to imitate the Holy Fathers, coming to love Christ alone. Just as the Apostle Paul, he accounted all as rubbish for the sake of Christ. Leaving his loving relatives and friends, as well as all sweet and wonderful things that enchant the people of this world, he departed to the deserted, forested regions and settled there, following the words of St. Hilarion, "Go and embrace the desert life as you would your beloved mother. Your mother raised you on milk, the desert will teach you to love God with all your heart and will allow you to drink deep of spiritual wisdom, with which you will succeed in leading your life in the direst poverty and painful ascetic struggles."

Peter was so simple of heart and friendly towards all, and loved by everyone for his truthful character. Seeing in him such a striving for God, his parents did not forbid him to leave them in order to join the desert dwellers.

Taking nothing with him he departed to join the desert dwellers as a true pauper and entrusted himself to one of the elders named Basilisk, ready to perform any obedience with unquestioning love and faith.

Peter avoided excessive sleep and dressed in ragged and sloppy clothing. He never did anything of his own volition but acted only after having received permission. He trained himself to be satisfied by only one pound of bread that he usually took plain



at about three in the afternoon, sometimes softened with water or absolutely dry. Instead of sleeping on a bed, he would sit in a tender slumber of contrition and thus obtained his rest, and from this suffered swelling in his legs, which he ignored. He was filled and driven by heartfelt love for all the brethren and served them eagerly with his help.

For his guileless heart and his love for Him, the Lord granted Peter purity of prayer, consoling and sweetening his soul and entire inner being. So consumed was he by love for God, due to the turbulent boiling of the sweetness of grace throughout his entire body, which he was unable to endure and conceal, that, as it happened, he would begin to call out and cry to God in a loud voice warmly and contritely thanking Him for giving such mercy. Sometimes he sensed a fragrance within and about himself that surpassed all perfumes and spices in sweetness. When questioned by the elder, Peter would answer, "Forgive me father! I cannot refrain from crying out, for with my spiritual eyes I behold how my Master and Lord Christ suffers innocently and is tormented. I see as it were, His most holy body beaten and torn into bloody tatters. His life-giving blood flows in streams. This I cannot endure, forgive me father." From such feelings, the desire for the inner desert life was kindled even more within him and he longed to sit with Mary (the



THE NORTHERN DESERT WILDERNESS

one who hath chosen the good part) at the feet of the Lord.

One would marvel at Peter's ascetic life and great patience. He did everything willingly and fervently without excuses. He was ready to surrender himself to any work lovingly and with a cheerful countenance. He mortified his own will and desires and cast them away from himself. He was never upset, never murmured and did everything lest his elder have to work. But at times, he was so overwhelmed with Divine Love, that he often seemed to be in ecstasy, and so filled he would be with tender feelings of contrition, that he would completely forget the task he was given to perform. In his heart he would feel himself wondrously raised entirely to God, no longer able to restrain himself, he would weep openly before all, tears flowing profusely.

From severe fasting and abstinence, from suffering great thirst, lack of sleep, and all-night vigils, his entire body wilted and was so dehydrated that his bones were covered by skin alone as if he were a living corpse. He was pale, his lips caked shut from thirst, his eyes were deep in their sockets, and he was unkempt and unwashed. His ribs protruded out from his chest cavity, and from prostrations, the skin on his hands, knees, and face wore coarse. He exhorted all to struggle in the labors of fasting and inner prayer by the example of his life and virtues of sobriety, humility, true love, and a silent life.

Often, leaving his cell, he would stand for entire nights beneath the open sky. Once, in emulation of the young virgin Eupraxia and others who before had prayed this way, he stood in an open spot, raising his arms heavenward, intending to stay this way until morning. His arms were exposed and began to ache severely, and became stiff from the extreme cold. By God's providence a bitter frost struck that night. Reluctant to abandon the prayer which of itself flowed through his heart, he reasoned to himself, "If I show impatience in my first trial before God, how then shall I be worthy to receive His love and mercy?" He began to cry out to the Lord in a tearful entreaty. He felt the prayer in his heart gradually intensify, flowing ever so sweetly. Suddenly he was overcome by a great surge of grace which set the heart within him aboil as over a fire. At that moment a flood of warmth rushed throughout all his body, and the pain from the cold passed away without having damaged his arms in the least. "My heart grew hot within me and in my meditation a fire was kindled." Thus with God's help he remained standing that way until morning.

Peter related all that he experienced to his elder. Having acquired the gift of prayer to such an extent he told the elder, "upon waking, I feel it moving within my heart. It never ceases. It embraces the whole of me, comforting me night and day. The prayer is ever with me and deep within myself the words thereof vividly etched upon my heart, 'Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.'" Elder Basilisk marvelled greatly at the grace Peter had received from God. Along with prayer, Peter had the gift of tears. Warm, joyous tears came gently, sometimes in small drops flowing into great streams and other times coming forth unreservedly like a hailstorm accompanied by intense emotion. In spirit he was wholly immersed in God, enraptured by such grace. Within him his heart would boil sweetly, and from the unbearable sensations, his whole body would sway like a young tree, or flutter like a leaf in the wind.

Once the elder had to leave behind Peter to visit another elder for a few days. Peter's heart languished and suffered so that he knew not how to help himself, and



although the elders and others bid him, it was impossible to stop the flow of bitter tears which were an expression of his love for the elder. He bowed to him frequently, falling to the earth. He repeatedly kissed the elder's feet, accompanying him a great distance, sobbing along the way. And when the elder gave him the final blessing and farewell kiss, bidding him to return, then, regardless of how insensitive, anyone would have been pierced with pity looking at him. He appeared as one struck by a drastic misfortune. After weeping and calling out after him, he finally turned back and continued walking quietly, constantly looking back at the elder and prostrating himself in the elder's direction, even though the elder did not look back. Once at home, Peter spent the entire time of the separation in sorrow, as if his soul sensed it's imminent separation from the elder in this world.

When he was brought the old icon of the Mother of God with which his parents had blessed him, his soul was filled with such joy as it would be impossible to describe. How he was consoled! His entire countenance changed as he venerated the holy icon with tears of joy. From this we saw his great love and faith in the Mother of God.

Once, after ten days of fasting, Peter thought to himself, "While I still have the strength and am not yet exhausted, let me go chop some wood." While chopping, he missed and struck his leg, inflicting a severe wound, and having lost a great deal of blood along the way, Peter was hardly able to reach his cell.

In this state of illness and exhaustion, Peter asked the elder, "Bless me, father, to spend this night in prayer to God out of gratitude for Him." And neglecting his leg he stood all night until the elder summoned him for Matins. After service he went to work in the garden and did not give himself even the slightest rest or consolation, so that he even began to moan. The illness suddenly subsided unexpectedly, and Peter stood looking lovingly and contritely at the elder, who then said to him, "Spare your leg, my beloved." Quietly smiling, Peter replied, "I can stand firmly on both legs, but I could use something to drink." The elder objected, "You can, but wait awhile. We are expecting a priest, he will give you Communion."

Soon thereafter Peter's face changed color and he turned towards the East. Watching him the elder was amazed at this. Gazing again quickly heavenward, Peter fell to his knees and bowed his head, resting it upon the table. Seeing this, the elder thought that he had fallen asleep. Awhile later the elder began to wake him, but Peter had already passed on to eternal rest from the pain and grief of this age, reaching endless repose where, with all the saints he supremely exalts the one God above all.



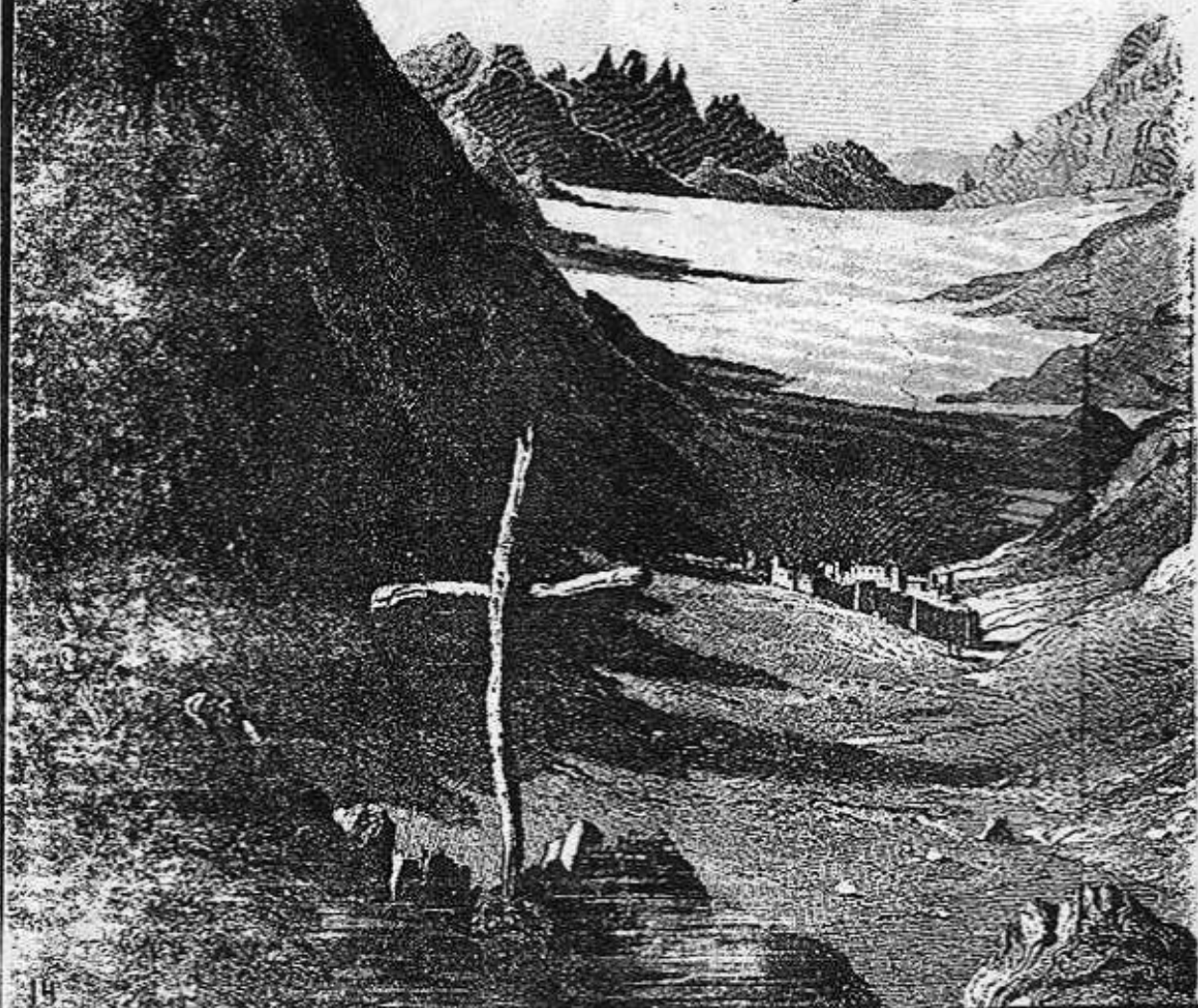
*O, our Holy Righteous Youth Peter, entreat Christ God that we may taste of the unutterable sweetness which you behold constantly in Heaven, that our souls may be ignited with Christ's Divine love, and that our hearts may be warmed now as the hearts of many are growing cold, and that our souls may be saved!*





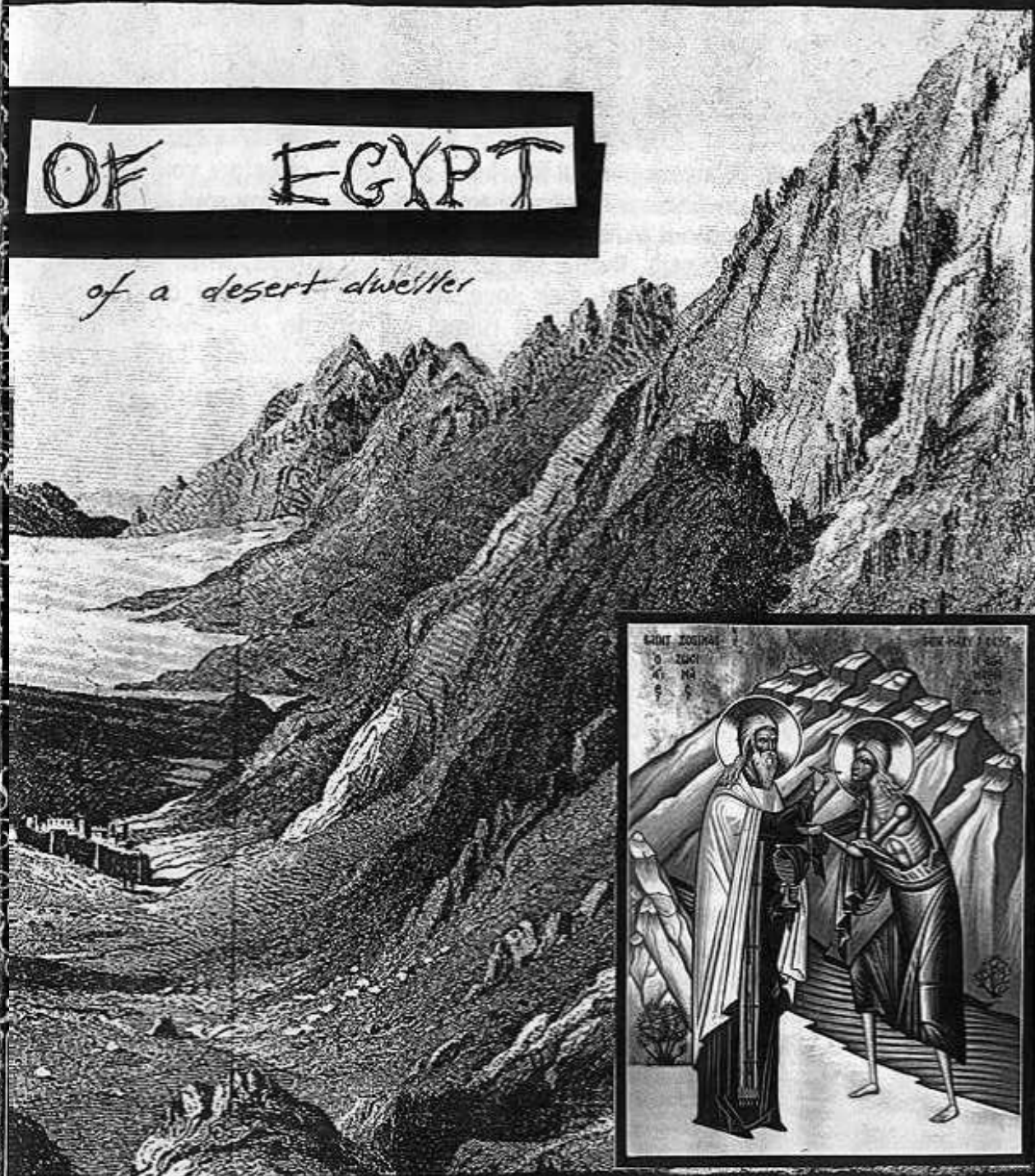
# SAINT MARY

*The Autobiography*



# OF EGYPT

*of a desert dweller*





I am ashamed to speak of my disgraceful life, but I shall lay bare before you my work, so that you may know with what shame and obscenity my soul is filled. I shall tell you all without hiding anything.

My native land was Egypt. During the lifetime of my parents, when I was twelve years old, I renounced their love and went to the city of Alexandria. I am ashamed to recall how I ruined my virginity and then unrestrainedly and insatiably gave myself up to sensuality. I lived this way for about seventeen years. I was like a flame of public debauch. And those things I did were not for the sake of gain - here I speak the pure truth. Often when they wished to pay me, I refused the money. I wanted as many men as possible to try to obtain me, doing free of charge what gave me pleasure. Do not think that I was rich; I lived by begging. I had an insatiable desire and an irrepressible longing for lying in filth. This was life to me. Every kind of abuse of nature I regarded as life.

Then one summer I saw a large crowd of libyans and egyptians going to Jerusalem for the feast of the Cross. I said, "I have neither money nor food. But I shall go with them and shall go aboard. I have a body - they shall take it instead of pay for the journey."

Seeing some young men in the shore, I mingled with them saying, "Take me with you. You will not be disappointed." Seeing my shamelessness, they eagerly took me aboard, and we set sail at once.

At last we arrived at Jerusalem. I spent the days before the festival in town, since I was not content with the youths I had seduced at sea. On the holy feast day of the Exaltation of the Cross I followed the crowds to the church, but stopped by some force which prevented my entering through the doors. Having repeated my attempt to enter three or four times at last I felt exhausted and had no more strength to push and be pushed, so I went aside and stood in a corner of the porch. Only then with great difficulty it began to dawn on me and I began to understand the reason why I was prevented from entering.



The word of salvation gently touched the eyes of my soul and revealed to me that it was my unclean life which was barring the entrance for me. I began to weep, and lamenting bitterly I beat my breast and sighed from the depths of my heart. And so I stood weeping when I saw above me the icon of the Most Holy Mother of God. Turning to her I said a prayer admitting my impurity and begging to be allowed to enter the temple, promising that if I might enter to see the actual Cross that Christ was crucified on, I would never again defile my body with the impurity of fornication, and that I would renounce the world and its temptations, go wherever led by God.



Going forward now through the door nothing hindered my entering into the church. So it was that I beheld the Cross. Seeing the holy mysteries of God and how He accepts repentance, I threw myself on the ground, worshipping the earth and kissing it with trembling.

Then I went to the place where I sealed my vow, and bending my knees I ask God to guide me in fulfilling my vow. Then I heard a voice from on high, "If you cross the Jordan, you will find glorious rest."

Weeping I continued on to the church of St. John the Baptist, which stood on the banks of the Jordan. After praying I partook of the Holy Mysteries and crossed the Jordan, where I found myself in the desert. Up until this very day I am estranged from all. I live clinging to my God who saves all who turn to Him from faintheartedness and tempest.

Forty-seven years have passed, since I left the Holy City. The clothes I had when I crossed the Jordan became threadbare. I suffered greatly from the weather: at times the sun burned me mercilessly, and at other times I shivered from the frost; frequently falling to the ground I lay without breath or motion. I regretted not having wine which I loved so much. For I drank alot of wine when I lived in the world, while here I had not even water. The mad desire for profligate songs also entered me and confused me greatly, edging me on to sing satanic songs which I had learned once. But when such desires entered me I

reminded myself of the vow I had made, when going into the desert. In my thoughts I turned to the Mother of God which had received me and to her I cried in prayer.

And how can I tell you of the thoughts which urged me on to fornication, how can I express them to you? A fire was kindled in my miserable heart which seemed to burn me up completely and to awake in me a thirst for embraces. As soon as this craving came to me, I flung myself on the earth and watered it with my tears. And I did not rise from the ground until a calm and sweet light descended and enlightened me and chased away the thoughts that possessed me.



Seventeen years have I passed in this desert fighting wild beasts - mad desires and passions. After weeping for long and beating m breast I used to see light at last which seemed to shine on me from everywhere. And after the violent storm, lasting calm descended.

Mary died in the year 522 A.D. having by her repentance attained to sanctity. The account of her life was told in person by St. Mary to Elder Zosimas who left it to us as a testimony of hope.



MARY MAGDALENE REPENTANT

Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little....



In sufferings and trials, times of weakness, the tendency in man is to find shelter in self-pity, and to close himself off from others. This foolish blindness allows one to neglect and disregard his neighbor's sufferings, while wallowing in his own conceit and self-worship. This leads to insensitivity and complete estrangement from God. This characteristic is easily recognized in the average rich, cold-hearted, capitalist stereo-type, but how easy is it to find it within one's self? It's there, and must be slowly and painfully rooted out if we are ever to rise above the wastes of the self-destructing society in which we live. The following article, written by a Serbian monk of recent times, helps in revealing this by giving a view of mankind through the eyes of a deer. Although in the "concrete jungle" that we are forced to live in, most do not have such encounters with nature, but the neglect, the cruel coldness is still there, within, if you look. It is very easy to relate with the view given, because we live in the same cold world, but the true value is to be found in finding and weeding out the "cold world" hidden within us: dying to the world.

The following article was written by a monk who suffered much at the hands of violent atheists. All his sufferings are expressed, and the common sufferings of all, through the view point of a deer. When the first-created man and woman were cast out of Paradise and perfection, after their disobedience to God, they became mortal and subject to death. This expulsion from Paradise, however, affected all creation, not just mankind. All creation became a lost paradise because of man's decision to disobey God of his own free will. All creation became subject to suffering and death because of man's original sin, which in turn brings us to our day and age where man desires to destroy God. But this is an impossible task, for God is love—who can destroy love?

## A Deer Lost in Paradise

BY MONK JUSTIN POPOVICH OF SERBIA +1979

But how?—I do not know. I see, but I do not understand how. I live, but I do not apprehend what life is. I love, but I do not comprehend what love is. I suffer, but in no way do I understand how suffering sprouts, grows, and ripens within me. Life, and love, and suffering—all this is deeper and more boundless than my knowledge and understanding and comprehension. Everything that is incomprehensible and extraordinary stares at me out of every creature, therefore I am frightened.

Along with sorrow, someone poured something into me that He made immortal and eternal—something that is greater than sensation and stronger than thought, something that is as lasting as immortality and as huge as eternity. It is an instinct for love. In it there is something All-Powerful and irresistible. Do not insult the love in me. For you are insulting my only immortality and my only eternity. For what is of value, except that which is immortal and eternal? And I am immortal and eternal only through love.

My love has made its way through a multitude of deaths to you, O my sweet immortality! Therefore sorrow is my constant companion. Each cruelty is an entire death for me. Most of all in this world I have been surviving the cruelties of one being called—Man. Sometimes he is the death of all my joys. O my eyes, look through him and above him to the One Who is All-Good and All-Gentle! Goodness and gentleness, this is life for me, this is immortality, this is eternity. Without goodness and gentleness, life is hell. When I keep in mind the goodness of the All-Gentle One, I am completely in Paradise. If human cruelty closes in on me, hell closes in on me with all its terrors! Therefore, I am frightened of man, every man, unless he is good and gentle.

I am beside a stream whose banks are adorned with blue flowers. And the stream is from my tears. Men wound me in the heart, and instead of blood, tears flow. O Gentle Heavens, to You I tell my secret: instead of blood I have tears in my heart. In this lies my life, in this my secret. Therefore, I weep for all the sorrowful, all the innocent, all the humiliated, all the insulted, all the hungry, all the homeless, all the distressed, all the tormented, all the saddened. My thoughts soon choke up with sorrow and turn into feelings, and the



feelings pour out in tears. Yes, my feelings are boundless, and my tears are countless. And almost every feeling in me grieves and weeps, because as soon as it turns from me to the world around me, it encounters some human cruelty. Oh, is there any being more cruel and brutal than man?...

Why was I cast into this world among men?... Oh, once—long, long ago—when I, in my dense and boundless forests, did not know man, the world was joy and paradise for me. But he stepped into my paradise. He—cruel, brutal and arrogant man. He trampled my flowers, chopped down my woods, and darkened the sky. And thus, he transformed my paradise into hell.... Oh, I do not hate him for this reason, but rather I feel sorry for him. I feel sorry for him because he has no feeling for Paradise.

I have heard that demons exist. Is it really possible that they are worse than men? The birches told us: "We saw Satan falling from heaven onto earth, falling among men and—remaining." He, the one who fell away from heaven, has declared: "It is very pleasant for me among men, and I have a paradise of my own—men..." I have been listening, the blue sky has been whispering to the black earth this eternal truth: On the day of judgment men will have to give an answer for all the torments, for all the sufferings, for all the troubles, for all the deaths of all earthly beings and creatures. All the animals shall rise up and charge the human race with all the pains, with all the injuries, with all the evils, with all the deaths that it has caused them in its arrogant love of sin. Oh, have mercy on me, All-Good and All-Gentle One. Oh, save me from men, from cruel and evil men. In this way you will transform my world into Paradise and my sorrow into joy....

More than all that I love, I love freedom. It consists of goodness, gentleness, and love. And evil, cruelty, and hatred—this is slavery of the worst sort. By being a slave to them, one is a slave to death. And is there any slavery more fearful than death? Men—these fabricators and makers of evil, cruelty, and hatred, led me away into such a slavery. Man invented and made sin, death, and hell. And this is worse than the worst thing, more terrifying than the most terrifying thing in all my worlds. With intelligence but without goodness and gentleness, man is a ready-made devil.

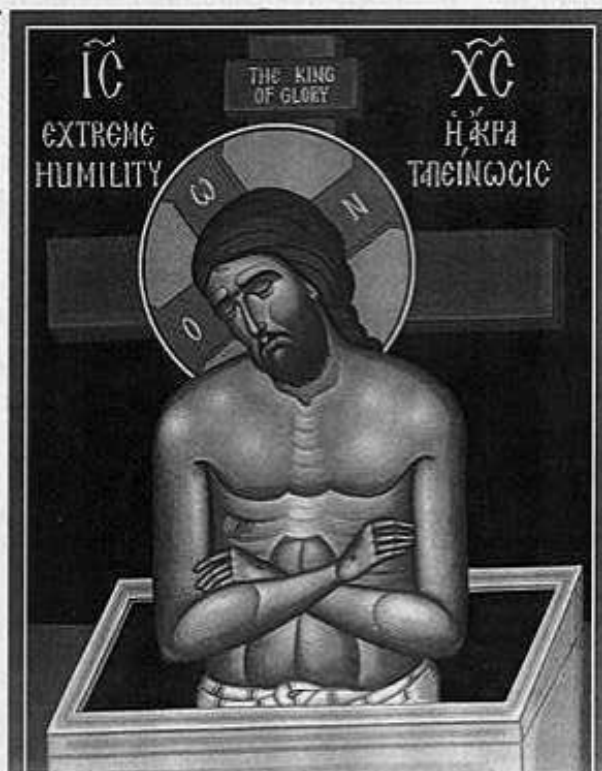
I am a deer. I am the sense of sorrow in the universe. Every being drops dark drop after dark drop of sorrow into my heart as soon as I approach him. And the dark dew of sorrow, like a fine tiny stream, flows through my veins. And there, in my heart, the dark dew of sorrow is refined into a pale and bluish dew. Some magnetic power of sorrow runs through my being. Everything that is sorrowful in the world, that power irresistibly draws and stores in my heart. Therefore, I am more sorrowful than all creatures. And I have tears for everyone's pain.... Do not laugh at me, you who are grinning! I am astonished by the knowledge that in this sorrowful world there are beings who are laughing. Oh, what a cursed and thrice accursed gift.... To laugh in a world where sorrow seethes, pain boils, death rages! What a damnable gift!... On account of sorrow I never laugh. How could I laugh, when you who are grinning are so crude and cruel. When you are so evil and ugly. And you are ugly on account of evil. For only evil makes the beauty of earthly and heavenly creatures ugly.

I recall, I remember: this earth was once a paradise. But now?... Darkness has completely covered my eyes. Every which way I turn there lies a thick gloom. My thoughts are dripping with tears. And memories seethe with sorrows. Everything in me burns with sorrow, but by no means will it burn out. And I alone am the wretched eternal sacrifice—the holocaust offered on the universe's altar of sorrow. And the universe's altar of sorrow is the earth, that grey and somber, pale and darkish planet....

My heart is an inaccessible island in a boundless ocean of sorrow. Is every heart an inaccessible island? Say that you have a heart! Do you know what completely surrounds your hearts? Mine. Therefore my eyes are blurred by tears, and my heart is undermined by sighs. The pupils of my eyes are in pain, because many midnights have spent the night in them. Last night the sun set in my eye, and the morning did not give birth to it. It married the darkness of my sorrow. Something fearful and terrifying has begun to move through my being. It frightens me, everything around me and above me. Oh, would that I could flee from the fear of this world. But does any world without fear exist? I call out to my soul, frightened and chased away by the fears of this world, to return to me, but more and more heedlessly it flees from me, leaving me sad and dejected.... I am a deer.



I have listened to the angels of Heaven, when they wash their wings in my tears. In ancient times the white deer told me that He, the All-meek and All-merciful One passed over the earth and transformed the earth back into Paradise. Wherever He stood, Paradise appeared. Out of Him unto all beings and all creation there would flow boundless goodness and love, gentleness, mercy, meekness and wisdom. He walked over the earth, and brought Heaven down to earth. They called Him Jesus. We saw in Him that man can be wondrous and exceedingly beautiful only when he is sinless. He shared in our sorrow and wept with us. He was with us and against those human creations: sin, evil and death. He loved all creatures gently and compassionately: He embraced them with a divine longing; and he defended them from human sin, human evil, and human death. He was, and has forever remained—our God, the God of the sorrowful and saddened creatures, from the smallest to the greatest. He—our Lord and God! He—our sweet consolation in this bitter world which is passing, and our eternal joy in that immortal world which is coming....



**THE QUESTION OF SUFFERING IS ONE OF THE MOST SENSITIVE QUESTIONS. MANY ASK THEMSELVES: WHY HAS GOD CREATED US TO SUFFER IN THIS WORLD FROM DISEASES, SORROWS, CALAMITIES, TROUBLES AND MISFORTUNES?... SOME IN THEIR DESPAIR EVEN SAY THAT THERE IS NO OTHER HELL BEYOND THE GRAVE, THAT HELL IS HERE, ON EARTH. IN SUCH CASES SUFFERING DOES NOT CARRY ANY MEANING IN ITSELF THAT WOULD SOFTEN IT, MAKING IT DOUBLY HARD.... SUFFERING IN ITS NATURE IS NOTHING ELSE BUT A WITHDRAWAL FROM GOD. WITH GOD IT WOULD BE WELL EVEN IN HELL.**

**+ 1993 MONK SERAPHIM OF BULGARIA**



## Lovers of Truth

We must die  
before we die  
so that we don't die  
when we die

--Ancient saying of monks

Nothing in this world--not love, not goodness, not  
sanctity--is of any value or indeed has any meaning, if man  
does not survive death.

--Monk Seraphim Rose + 1982

It is truly a great thing to endure courageously and  
manfully the burning heat, the tranquillity, and the  
deprivation suffered in stillness...yet it is incomparably  
greater to have no fear of turmoil, and to remain  
steadfast under it's assault with a fearless heart, while  
living with men outwardly, but with God inwardly.

--St. John Climacus

One man inflamed with zeal is enough to reform the  
world!

--St. John Chrysostom

He who smells the smell of his own foul odor does not  
smell the foul odor of anyone else, even though he might  
stand upon the breasts of corpses.

--St. Syncletica

Picture to thyself that thou art standing beside the  
Crucified Savior, or rather, that thou art crucified with  
Him who wast crucified for thee, and cry out to him:  
Remember me, O Lord, when Thou comest in Thy  
Kingdom.

--Aposticha for Wednesday of Cheese-fare Week,

# COMMON SUFFERING

## Readers' Contributions

Forgive Me

Hello "Death to the  
World",

i just read the  
recent issue of  
"Death to the  
World." i have much  
appreciation for it  
and for those  
involved.

i seldom (if  
ever) submit poems  
of any sort, but  
thought this one i'm  
enclosing to be  
somewhat appropriate  
to "Death...."

i love Orthodox  
Christianity. i love  
what it fights for  
and what it's  
against. i'm  
continually inspired  
everyday.

Please keep us  
in your prayers. You  
are all in mine.

Your sister in  
Christ +  
of Santa Cruz, CA

There are days  
and i must confess  
when i'm filled with  
hatred, skepticism, murder.  
then there are others  
when i'm filled with awe  
and a desire for God.  
i'm rarely compelled  
to feel so strongly  
about things  
but somehow  
today is different  
because i have compassion today.  
i've almost made it to absolute  
unconditional Love.  
but lets dwell on the subject  
hatred.

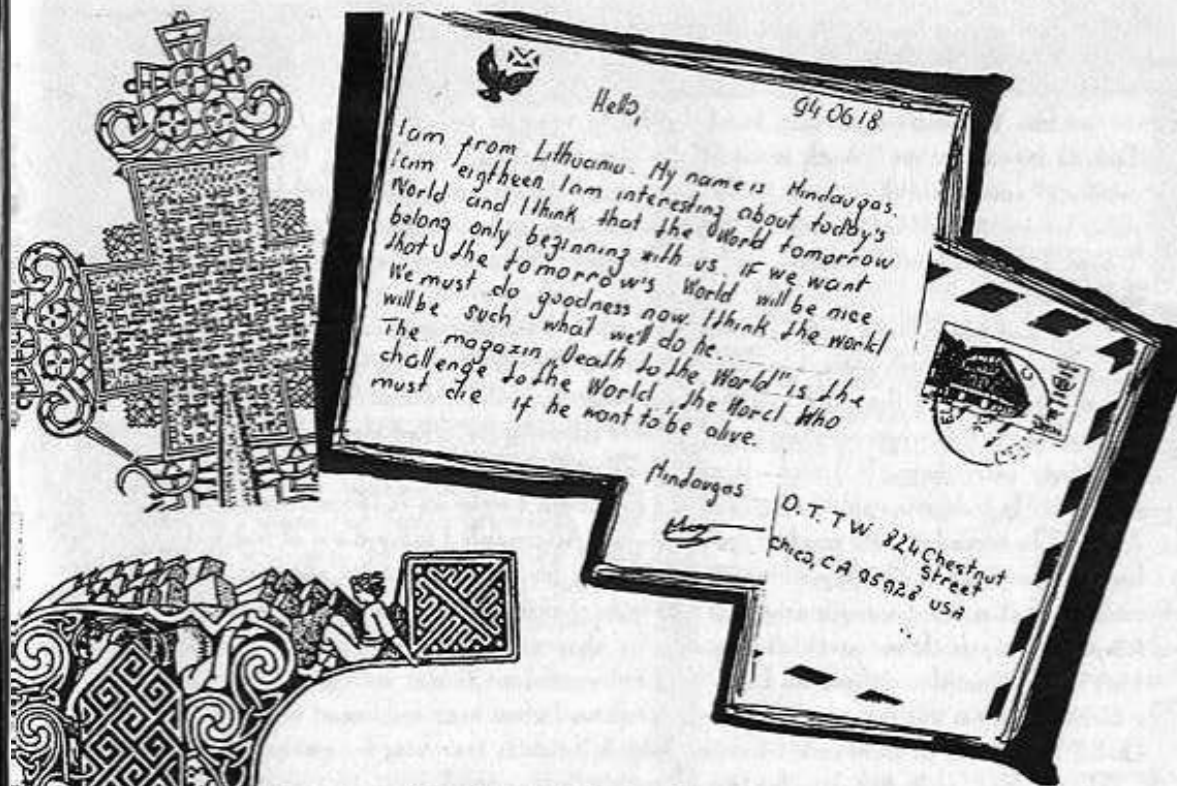
I had that the other day  
and I do not understand  
how I can murder one  
and then live for another  
and then now  
what is with now?  
what is leading me now?  
the other day i grasped  
and scratched at the Holy Mother  
possessed by profanity  
and now I'm repentent....  
So please forgive me  
i'm so unfinished, very rough  
i don't know how to do things  
or where to begin to repent of myself.



## Nocturne

A chill wind pierces to the bone,  
 snow falls in the fading light,  
 the candles out that burned alone,  
 And evenings melting into night:

Although it is a summers day  
 On which I write this, still my heart  
 Will in that night of winter stay  
 we, my Love, must be



## Greetings Death to The World:

By rejecting the world do you refrain from charitable acts? Do you engage in feeding the hungry? That you feed the spiritually hungered is obvious. I find the words within your zinc strike a chord deep within me-yet I fall back from the extreme you seem to endorse.

You are correct in that the forms of media are slowly destroying the soul. Our pre-occupation with materialism is drowning our souls. Godly input comes from within. God's input is being drowned out with everything else. You see someone who is willing to search the fringes for any truth, any truth at all to cling to as a drowning man would cling to a piece of driftwood.

I know God, He is the awareness of beauty in a landscape, the sermon in the trees, the melody of the meadows. His is the glory of the sunset, sunrise, the majesty of a blue sky, a cloudy day. His is the Love for all things, the acceptance of the unknowable. He is not manmade, nor is His Truth knowable from any direction but within. I do not feel as if another could teach me of God. Another could aid me in my search, but not lead me to the finish.

-John Colgan  
 Big Springs, Texas





Hi. You don't know me, but I decided to write to you. I'm from Lithuania. Today a friend sent me "Death to the World." I've read it and was amazed. It's really a wonderful zine. I think it helps us by knowing what other people feel and know. It shows we are not alone. I enjoyed all the stories in it, especially the last one entitled "Never Kneel." I went through a very similar thing this summer, and would like to share it with you.

I had two dreams one night after the other. I felt like someone or something was pulling me on both sides. One side was full of terrible creatures--black monsters and skeletons and on the other side there was something white, which I couldn't see. I was running to this white side and monsters were following me. I saw blood, dead bodies and bones everywhere. It lasted all night long and the next night too. I woke up petrified. My body was cold like ice. But the first night I woke up in the middle of the dream. The second night I reached the white side. Afterwards I jumped out of bed and began to pray. I felt like something changed in my life. I thought a lot about it and understood that the dreams meant that I have to change myself. I was not very God-fearing and my faith was weak. So Satan got a chance to grab me for himself. I just can't think of another definition. I feel like God wanted me to stay with Him. I made a decision and am not going to change it. Since then, I often pray and live at peace with God. I don't want to serve evil, I hate it. I think Satan is searching for weak, foolish people who can't make decisions for themselves.

Thank you once more!  
God bless you!

Jurga Viltrakyte  
Lithuania



## Fear of God

We shall stand before Him Whose eyes are as a flame of fire and Whose countenance is as the very sun in its strength. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God.

Yet, there is another "Gospel", an easy, man-centered, comfortable religion which claims to be Christian, yet it has no cross, no sacrifice, no fear of God, no humility, no reverence for holy things, no sacraments, no repentance. Sadly it is all around us....

Realize that society around us is playing out its suicidal fiction of "majority rule" and the will of the masses.

Let us hunger for the will of God. Straight and narrow is the way and few there be which find it.

—David Johnson  
Milton, Washington

we want to be the masters  
of our own destiny  
but we end up the slaves  
We Keep trying to substitute  
our own will for God's will  
but our pride always brings  
us to a fall  
we want to be worshipped  
but we end up on our knees  
before the idols of our own  
making  
we are our own worst enemies  
who can save us?

—MAN,  
Seattle Washington



# CHRIST IS BORN

Located in high desert-like mountains, up a muddy dirt road we traveled. It was a cold and gladsome Christmas Eve, my first Orthodox Christmas in an Orthodox Monastery. Something happened that I will always have in my memory.

When I look back at that night—how beautiful it was to me. The cold church was crowded with people. It was only lit by candle light, making everything dim and shadowy, but the light we gazed upon was bright, soft and full of peace.

There was a choir of monks and a separate choir of nuns. The priest would utter entreaties to God in a loud voice—"Help us, save us, keep us O God, by Thy grace." The two choirs antiphonally answered, singing: "Lord, have mercy." Over and over we cried to God for help.

How strange that night was. Perhaps we were waiting for something we could not see. We had an expectation, and in the deepest part of our souls we awaited the fulfillment.

At that time, I was not aware of what was going on. As the hours went by, standing in the same place my heart grew despondent. I asked myself why I didn't "feel anything," why didn't I receive from God spiritual joy on this quiet, solemn night. I expected something to happen in my soul, but nothing came. My legs were getting weaker and I was becoming more upset with myself. My faith was very weak.

As I grew too tired to stand I decided to find a place to sit. I walked down to the lower church. There were two narrow, cement staircases on the same wall. One led up to the main church where the services were held, and the other led outside, to the front of the church. I came in from the outside, walked down the staircase and sat on the third step from the bottom.

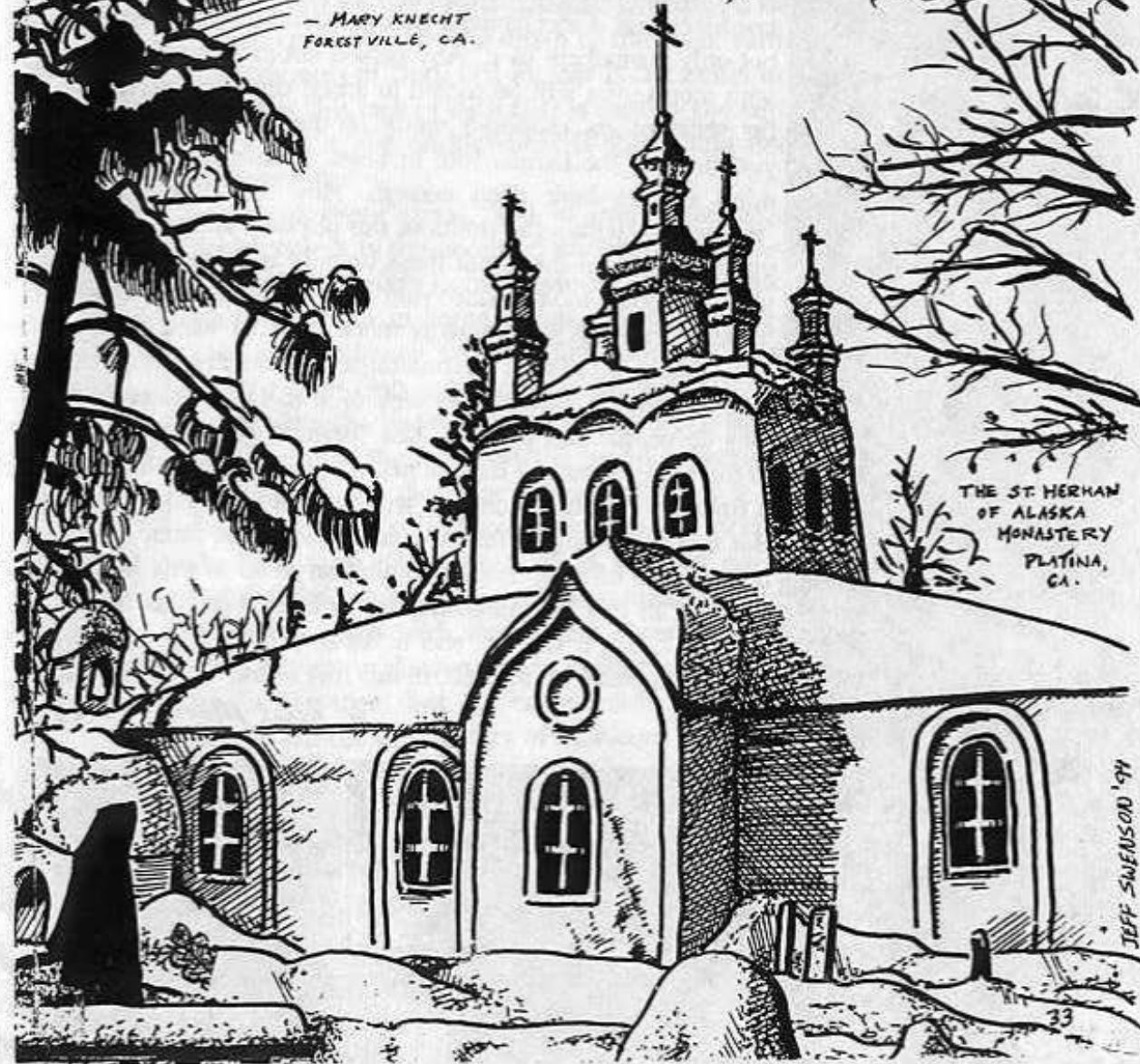
Perhaps I sighed, I don't remember. I covered my face with my hands and proceeded to sit. Soon after, I looked up and saw a figure sitting on the opposite staircase. I recognized the dark shadow as a nun. She was pressed against the cold wall, not showing anything of her face, weeping involuntarily and clutching her knees tightly. As much as she tried to conceal her



sobbing, it was not at all possible. Her cry reached the depth of her soul. I did not know who it was. It might as well have been an angel in my eyes.

I was ashamed. I felt like I was intruding. As quietly as I could I walked up aircase, slipped out the door and went back to church.

— MARY KNECHT  
FORESTVILLE, CA.





# The World Knows Not Perfection

"Art will attain the high point of its flowering only after the artist's imperfect hand has been replaced by the precise machine."  
--Yuri Annenkov (1924)

Is life merely a chance to obtain a cold geometric perfection within the boundaries set by the calculations of inhuman machines? What about the soul? The heart? The "perfection" found in machines and a mechanized human society is not true perfection, but only a mockery of it. Any person strong enough to be truthful with themselves will be forced to admit that this "perfection" falls far short of its proposed value in that it does not satisfy the yearnings of the human soul or heart. It does not even satisfy the mind if you look deep enough. How could it? It may find "perfection" within the limits of our physical surroundings and our understanding of them, but these bounds are extremely limiting. If you take one look inside your own feelings and emotions, it becomes obvious that there is much more at work than what we observe in our physical surroundings. It is exactly this "look inside" that completely shatters the idea of a mechanized perfection. So why do people still proclaim this "perfection," and even cling to it as their only strength? Human nature longs for perfection, for in this it finds a sure foundation, and without it, it knows that it is nothing. But stripped of the perfect love and peace to be found in God, man is forced to offer up his best imitation of it. In this he can find a balance. In this he can justify his existence. In this he can pride himself.... But it is a lie, and he knows it. For this reason he will never find peace for himself, in this life, or the life to come....

—R. Monk Martyrius Hope

## SCHEMA-MONK STEPHANOS

MONK STEPHANOS DIED TO THIS WORLD AND PROPHESED DURING



THE MONK BONES FOREVER. ONLY AFTER HIS DEATH WAS HE UNDERSTOOD.

HIS LIFETIME THAT HE WOULD BE WATCHING OVER  
HE NOW KEEPS GAURD AT THE ENTRANCE TO  
THE OSSUARY, WHERE THE BONES OF  
THE MONK ARE KEPT,  
AWAITING THE LAST RESURRECTION.