



"AM I THEREFORE
YOUR ENEMY
BECAUSE I TELL YOU
THE TRUTH?"

DEATH WORLD

The Last True Rebellion




PLEASURE AND PAIN

There are two great forces that reign in contemporary man. They are pleasure and pain. From childhood we are raised to seek first the Kingdom of pleasure for we are told that the kingdom of God has been burned down. And in a twisted way this is true for in our materialistic world the flames of pleasure consume the Kingdom of Heaven which is within us. Thus, we are left with pain. From experience it is proven that every pleasure is inevitably succeeded by pain yet man still attempts to direct all his effort towards pleasure and does all he can to avoid pain--but all is in vain. By doing this he hopes to keep the two apart from each other which is impossible. Dominated by the passion of self love he is ignorant that pleasure can never exist without pain. In our times a vivid example of this spiritual law is in the mindless pursuit of sex, drugs, and violence. For many it seems that there is no escape from this war of pleasure vs. pain but this is not so. On this subject a 7th century monk named Maximos said the following:

"A man no longer experiences pleasure and pain when, freeing his intellect from its relationship with the body, he binds or rather unites it to God, the real goal of love, longing, and desire."

Although the kingdom of God has burned down within us due to the unquenchable flames of pleasure we must arise from the ashes and restore the kingdom of Heaven within through conquering the flesh and setting the spirit free through union with God.

The Editors



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: to be dead to this world and alive to the otherworld. Correspondence is encouraged and articles for submission are welcomed. Each article printed herein is true to life and has been written out of pain of heart for love of truth.

DEATH TO THE WORLD
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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)



RESTLESS HEART

Autobiography of ST. AUGUSTINE

My name is Augustine, and this is the story of my life. I write it to praise You, my God, for I lost You, and was miserable; I found You, and was happy.

I was born in the year 354 and raised in Northern Africa. My father was a pagan and a rough and angry man. My mother was a Christian. She taught me to pray to You, my God, as soon as I could speak. She taught me to fear death and judgement and it was this that drew me back at last from the mouth of hell.

I hated school. Instead of doing my lessons I would run away and play. My teachers beat me cruelly for this and to escape the beatings I told them endless lies. What was the use in studying when they taught us to read the stories and plays of Greece and Rome, but they were nothing more than stories of the sex and adulteries of the so-called gods and goddesses? But I loved these stories and they crept into my heart and filled it with corruption. I used to steal money from home to go and see the actors on stage. Then I would talk about them with the other boys and we longed to do the evil things we saw done there. And our teachers praised them and did the same things themselves.

I lusted to thief, and did it, compelled by no hunger, nor poverty, but through a satisfied well-doing, and a spoiledness in sin. For I stole that of which I had enough. Nor did I care to enjoy that which I stole, but thrived in the theft and sin itself.

When I was thirteen I went to school far away from home. There I fell with bad companions. I became an animal. I burned for all the pleasures of hell. All my thoughts were of lust and impurity. And though I was rotten inside, I

was clean outside.

I forgot You, O God of my life. I closed my ears to You, I went farther and farther away from You, O God of Love. Yet You were silent and patient while I wandered into more sins and sorrows. For I was not happy. My sins made me more sad and dark. I tried to find rest for my heart in more and more pleasures. But they only made me more sad and dark. For that is Your way, O God of Mercy. You pour bitterness into our bad pleasures to make us turn away from them and seek our joy in You. Our hearts are restless until they rest in you.

If only someone had been near to warn me and to say, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." But there was no one to help me.

I then returned home and spent a year doing nothing. I went from bad to worse. My mother trembled with fear to see me on the edge of hell. She begged me not to fall with women, above all with another man's wife. But I laughed at her. And You, O God of my Heart, it was You who warned me through her mouth and when I despised her....I despised You.

I was one of a gang who wandered the streets at night looking for evil. I was ashamed to appear innocent and pure. We even did evil for the sake of evil itself.

At the age of seventeen I went to a university. It was full of people from all over the world and full of all wickedness. There I had complete freedom. Lust and impurity were all around me. I plunged into it. I was not in love, but I was in love with loving and my love was only lust. I was never satisfied until I had enjoyed the bodies of women who said they loved me. I lived seduced and seducing, deceived and deceiving, in divers lusts; openly by sciences which they call liberal; secretly, with a false named religion; here proud, there superstitious, everywhere vain.

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THE MAW OF HELL swallows up both the damned and their

tireless tormentors, and is then locked up forever by an angel



And still I was unhappy. My heart was sick. My heart was dead because You were not in it, O God of my Life. But I did not want You. I hated to think of You. I hated the pure, calm lives of good Christians. And all this time I did not truly love anybody....except myself.

I did not wish to hear words like, "Unless you become like little children, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." And, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." So I closed Your book and went back to my madness.

Until then I had always believed in You, my God, even though I was bad. But then I found the Atheist party in the university. They said, "You Christians are fools. You believe all that your priests tell you as children. We intellectuals believe only what we can prove by our own reason. Your Jesus was a deceiver. Your Bible is only a collection of stories. There is no such person as God." They would say, "You Christians worry about your sins. You feel guilty when you commit adultery. You should not feel guilty. For it is not you who sin. Inside yourself there is a darkness and a light. They are at war with one another. When you sin it is darkness that does it, not you. So do what you like, have a good time and don't feel guilty."

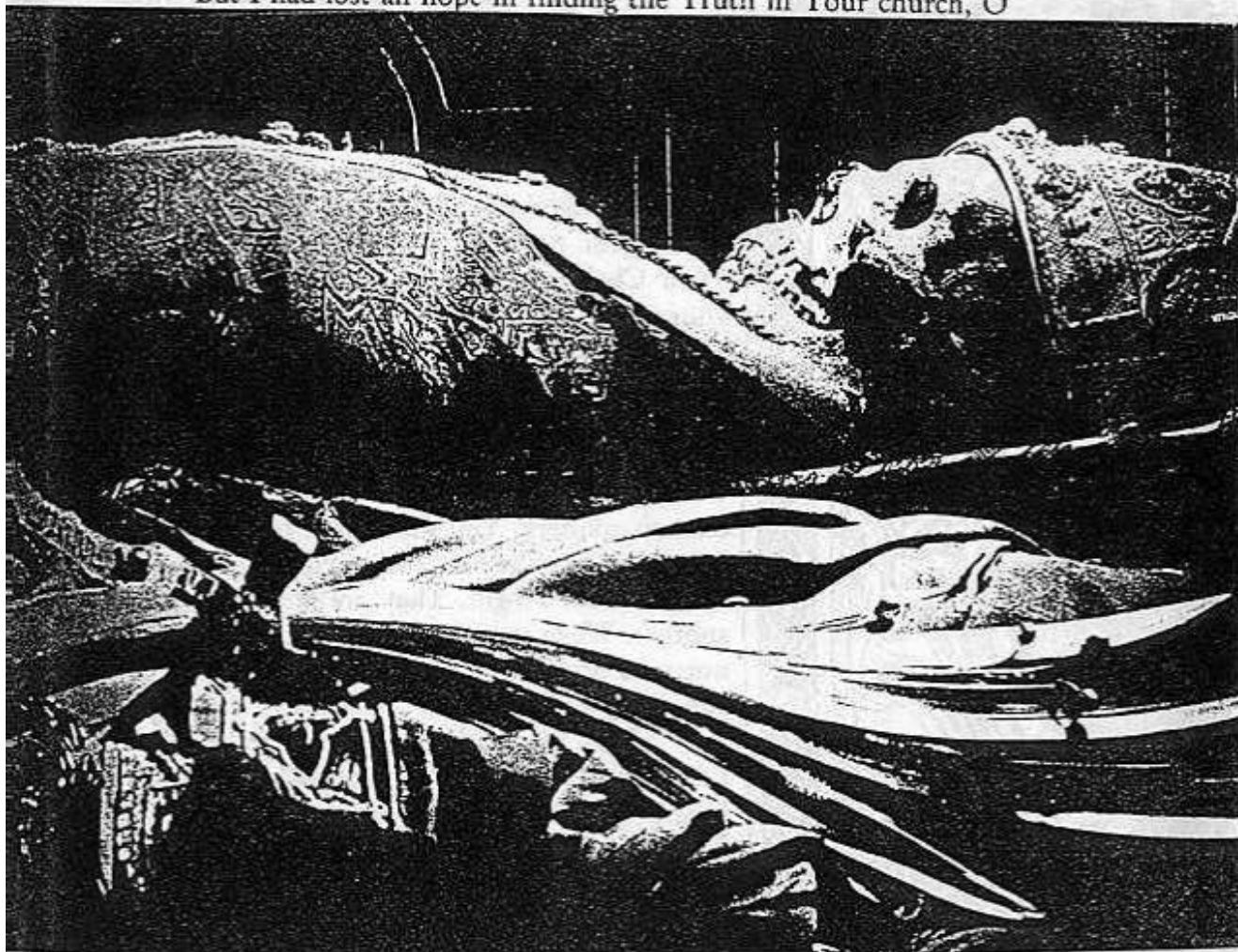
How I loved that doctrine! It was just what I wanted. It suited the pride of my mind and the lust of my body. Never to feel guilty for my sins! Never to have to confess them! No authority over me! Wonderful!

And so they fooled me, O God of Truth. For nine years, until I was twenty-eight, I was caught in those lies. I was dying of hunger like the prodigal son and I tried to fill my heart with the food of pigs.

Yes, I had abandoned You, my God of Love, but You did not abandon me. You listened to my mother's prayers. Because my soul was dead, she wept for me. More bitterly than other mothers

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weep when their children's bodies die. I was a dead soul walking about in a living body. When she prayed, she used to be flat on the ground and press her face against it and water it with her tears. And You, O God of mothers, did not despise her tears. I then went to Rome and from Rome to a city called Milan and there I met a Holy man by the name of Ambrose. I began to hear him speak not for what he said, but for the way he said it. But I had lost all hope in finding the Truth in Your church, O



The Bones of Ambrose. God. Little by little, as I listened to how beautifully he spoke, I began to feel how truly he spoke.

The one thing that frightened me was his purity - that being a Bishop and a monk he did not marry or touch women. This seemed to me to be a terrible thing, beyond the power of man. And I listened to Ambrose as if he were an angel from God. And slowly I saw that what Ambrose taught was the Truth.

My trouble was that I wanted to understand every part of the Truth myself, as clearly as two and two are four...as if a mere man can understand everything about You, my God, Who are infinite and eternal Truth. Then You began to enlighten me mind. I saw that a man cannot discover all the Truth about You by reason alone. It is necessary that You reveal Yourself to us.

O merciful God, I thank You. When I was thinking about these things You were near me. When I cried out to You, You heard me. When I knocked, You opened to me, my Light, my Love, and my Life.

I now believed but was afraid to follow. Why? Because I knew that I must give up all my old sins and impurity. The thought of them held me back. Must I give up these? And forever? I believed but did not pray. And so I fell back worse than ever. What held me so bound was the habit of lust that could never be satisfied. For awhile I even thought of following the doctrine of, "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die."

One day a visitor came to me and happened to tell us the story of the monk, St. Anthony of Egypt. This was the story:

Anthony's parents were very rich and when he was eighteen they died and left him all their property. One Sunday morning he came to church and heard these words from the Holy Scripture, "Go and sell what you have and give the money to the poor; then come, follow me."

Anthony felt that God had spoken these words directly to himself. He went home and sold all his property and gave away all the money to the poor. Then he went off into the Egyptian desert to be alone with God. He lived there until he was over a hundred years old, praying, fasting, and reading the Word of God.

Other men heard of him and they too gave up everything for the love of God. They followed him to the desert and lived as he did.

I was amazed to hear this - that I could give up everything for love of God. I kept saying in my heart, "O my God, why cannot I do the same? Why not now?"

That story pierced my heart like a sword. I saw myself as I was, wicked and shameful. How could others give up everything for You, O God of Love, in one single moment? And here I was for years I had been begging You, "Give me purity - but not yet!"





As there was a storm in my heart, I turned to my friend and cried, "Oh what is wrong with us? See how simple, uneducated people run to God. But here we are, with all our learning, stuck fast in sin. Why can't we follow them? Why don't we? O God, what is wrong with us?"

I ran into the garden behind our house. I fell on the ground. I beat my forehead. I tore my hair. I wept aloud. I cried out, "O God, why not now? Why not now? Why not turn to You now! with all my heart? O God let it be now! I have only to will it. Let it be now."

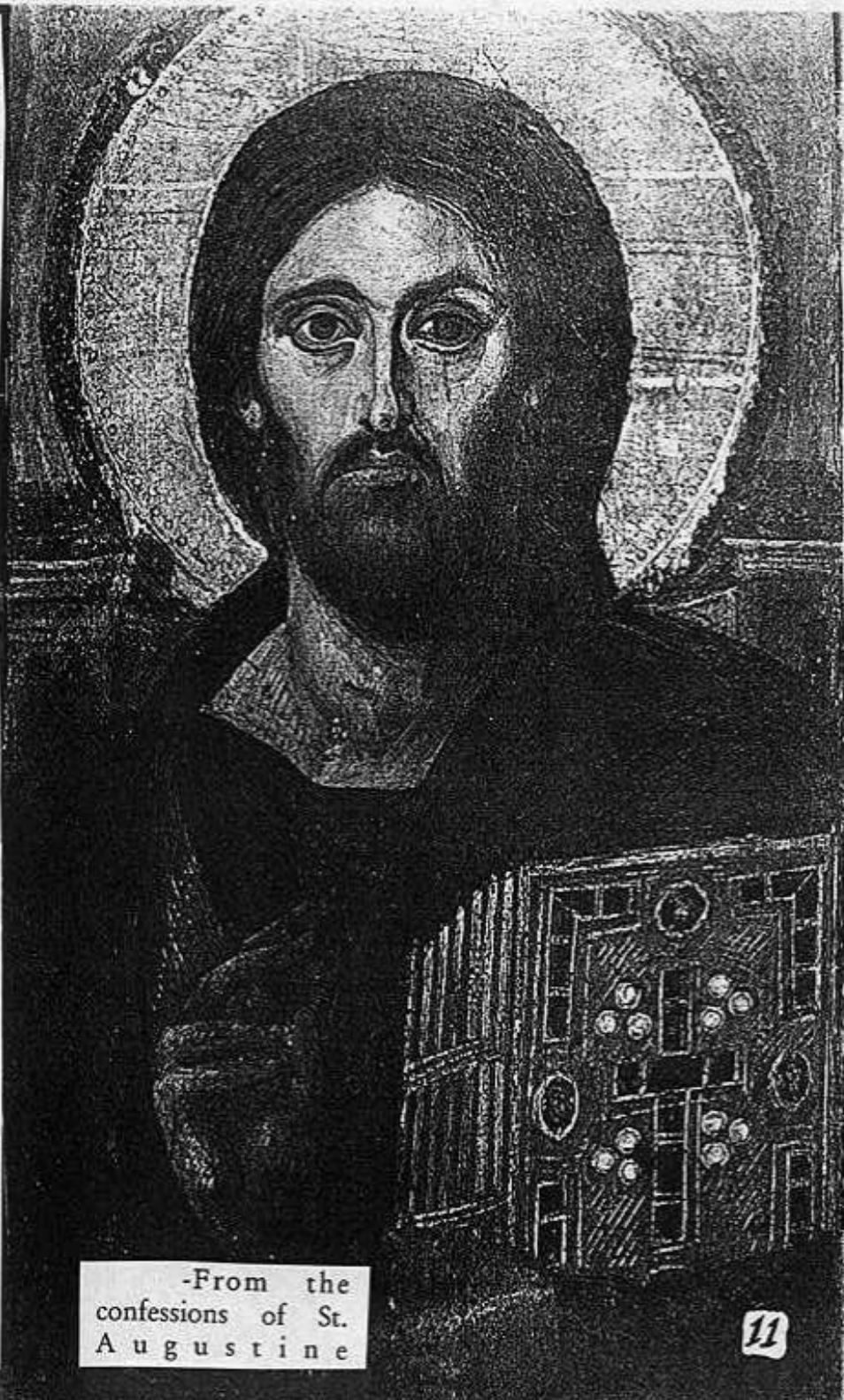
And I almost willed it and yet I did not; and I was almost there and touched it and still I did not. For my old habits, my sins, whispered to me, "Are you going to leave us? Are you sending us away? Shall we never meet again? Do you think you can live without these pleasures?" I felt as if they were whispering behind my back, pulling at my clothes to make me turn around. And I cried out, "How long, O Lord, how long? Will You be angry forever? Remember not my past sins. How long, O Lord? Tomorrow? Why not today? Why not now, this very hour?" Suddenly I heard a child's voice from some nearby garden. It was singing over and over, "Take up and read. Take up and read." I tried to remember if there was any game in which children used these words. But no, I could think of none. Then I thought perhaps that it was a command from You, my loving God, to open the Bible and read the first words I should see.

I opened and the first words that met my eyes were: Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; Not in rioting and drunkenness, Not in lewdness and lust, Not in fighting and envying. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to enjoy evil."

I read no more. There was no need. My doubts and fears had ended. O God, You alone knew what tears I shed. Now that I am an old man and have made these, my confessions, what shall I say to You, my living and true God?

Late have I loved You, O Beauty so ancient and so new; late have I loved You. For behold, You were within me, and I outside; and I searched for You outside and tried to fill my heart.

You did call and cry to me to break open my deafness. You shined Your light in my heart to drive away my blindness. You breathed on me and I drew in Your breath. I now yearn for You. You touched me and I burn for Your peace. You have made us for Yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You.



-From the confessions of St. Augustine

The hand of the Lord was upon me and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones and they were very dry. And He said unto me: Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, Thou knowest. Again He said unto me: Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, 'O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.' So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I prophesied there was a noise, and behold, a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came upon them, and skin covered them; but there was no breath in them. Then He said unto me: Prophesy unto the wind. Prophesy son of man, and say unto the wind: 'thus saith the Lord God. Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain that they may live.' So I prophesied as he commanded me and breath came into them, and they were alive. Then He said unto me: Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold, they say, 'Our bones are dry and our hope is lost. We are cut off for our parts.' Therefore prophesy and say unto them: thus saith the Lord God.

DRY BONES

Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put My Spirit in you and you shall live.

The prophesy of Ezekiel

LOVERS OF TRUTH

"True escape from the world is for a person to know how to control his tongue, wherever he might be."

-Abba Tithoes of Egypt +4th century

"My dog is in a more advantageous position than I; for he has love and does not have to give a defense for his deeds."

-Monk Ilidoros of Egypt +4th century

"Pleasure of the senses is succeeded by pain of the soul, while acceptance of pain of the senses is succeeded by pleasure of the soul."

-St. Maximos the Confessor +7th century

"Only struggle a little bit more. Carry your crosses without complaining; Don't think you're anything special, don't justify your sins and weaknesses, but see yourself as you really are; and especially, love one another."

-St. Macarius the Great of Egypt +4th century

"Tribulation worketh patience. And patience, experience; and experience, hope."

-Apostle Paul

"O my soul, at least now you are tired of vanity. Entrust everything you have to the Truth and you will lose nothing."

-St. Augustine +4th century

with my own eyes

A LUTHERAN PASTOR'S FIRST-HAND ACCOUNT OF PRISON LIFE



BY PASTOR RICHARD WURMBRAND

Imprisoned by the Rumanian Communists for his work in the Christian Underground, and subjected to medieval torture, Wurmbbrand kept his faith - and strengthened it. For fourteen years, he shared that faith with suffering cellmates, and solaced them. In Room Four, the "death room," he helped dying patients even though his lungs were riddled with tuberculosis and his body lacerated and bloody from whips and kicks. Anguished over the fate of his wife and son, he could still tell jokes and stories to make despairing prisoners laugh. Sorely tempted by the promise of release and reprieve, he refused to become a Communist collaborator.

And the miracle is that he survived and is still alive.

My former fellow-prisoner, the Romanian deacon John Stanescu, suffered in jail for his faith.

Colonel Albon, director of the slave labor camp, was informed that someone had dared to preach in a cell. He entered the cell carrying a cane and demanded to know the culprit. When no one responded, he said, "Well, then all will be flogged."

He commenced at one end of the cell, and there was the usual yelling and rising in tears. When he came to Stanescu, he said, "Not ready yet? Strip this minute!"

Stanescu replied, "There is a God in heaven, and He will judge you."

With this, his fate was sealed. He would surely be beaten to death. But just at that moment, a guard entered the cell and said, "Colonel, you are called urgently to the office. Some generals have come from the Ministry."

Albon left, saying to Stanescu, "We will see each other again soon." However, the generals arrested the colonel (Communists hate and jail each other for no reason), and after an hour Albon was back in the cell, this time as a prisoner.

Many inmates jumped to lynch him. Now Stanescu defended the defeated enemy with his own body, receiving many blows himself as he protected the torturer from the flogged prisoners. Stanescu was a real priest.

Later I asked him, "Where did you get the power to do this?"

He replied, "I love Jesus ardently. I always have Him before my eyes. I also see Him in my enemy. It is Jesus who keeps him from doing even worse things." Beware of a faith without a cross!



When I was in jail I fell very, very sick. I had tuberculous of the whole surface of both lungs and four vertebra were attacked by tuberculosis. I also had intestinal tuberculosis, diabetes, heart failure, jaundice, and other sicknesses I can't even remember. I was near to death.

At my right hand was a priest by the name of Iscu. He was an Abbot of a monastery. This man, perhaps in his 40's, had been so tortured he was near to death. But his face was serene. He spoke about his hope of heaven, about his love of Christ, about his faith. He radiated joy.

On my left side was the Communist torturer who had tortured this priest almost to death. He had been arrested by his own comrades.

And so it happened that the Communist torturer who had tortured this priest nearly to death had been tortured nearly to death by his comrades. And he was dying near me. His soul was in agony.

During the night he would awaken me saying, "Pastor, please pray for me. I can't die, I have committed such terrible crimes."

Then I saw a miracle. I saw the agonizing priest calling two other prisoners. And leaning on their shoulders, slowly, slowly he walked past my bed, sat on the bedside of his murderer, and caressed his head - I will never forget this gesture. I watched a murdered man caressing his murderer! That is love - he found a caress for him.

The priest said to the man, "You are young; you did not know what you were doing. I love you with all my heart." But he did not just say the words. You can say "love," and it's just a word of four letters. But he really loved. "I love you with all my heart."

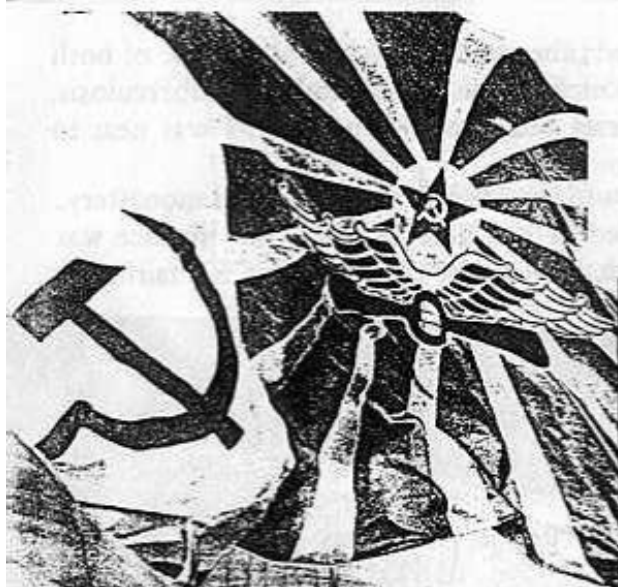
Then he went on, "If I who am a sinner can love you so much, imagine Christ, Who is love incarnate, how much He loves you! And all the Christians whom you have tortured, know that they forgive you, they love you, and Christ loves you. He wishes you to be saved much more than you wish to be saved. You wonder if your sins can be forgiven. He wishes to forgive your sins more than you wish your sins to be forgiven. He desires for you to be with Him in heaven. He is love. You only need to turn to Him and repent."

In this prison cell in which there was no possibility of privacy, I overheard the confession of the murderer to the murdered. Life is more thrilling than a novel - no novelist has ever written such a thing. The murdered - near to death - received the confession of the murderer. The murdered gave absolution to this murderer.

They prayed together, embraced each other, and the priest went back to his bed. Both men died that same night. It was a Christmas eve. But it was not a Christmas eve in which we simply remembered that 2000 years ago Jesus was born in Bethlehem. It was a Christmas eve during which Jesus was born in the heart of a Communist murderer.

These are things I have seen with my own eyes.





ATHEIST

soldier looks for God

The following is a translation of a remarkable poem that was found on the body of a young Russian soldier killed in action. His name was Alexander Zatsapa.

Hear me, O God; never in the whole of my lifetime have I spoken to You.

But just now I feel like sending You my greetings.

You know from childhood on they've always told me You are not.

I, like a fool, believed them.

I've never contemplated Your creation. And yet, tonight, gazing up out of my shellhole, I marveled at the shimmering stars above me and suddenly knew the cruelty of the lie.

Will You, my God, reach Your hand out to me, I wonder?

But I will tell You, and You will understand.

Is it not strange that light should come upon me

And I see You amid this night of hell?

And there is nothing else I have to say.

This, though: I'm glad that I have learned to know You.

At midnight we are scheduled to attack.

But You are looking on, and I am not afraid.

The signal... well, I guess I must be going.

I have been happy with You.

This more I want to say:

As You will know, the fighting will be cruel.

And even tonight I may come knocking at Your door.

Although I have not been a friend to You before.

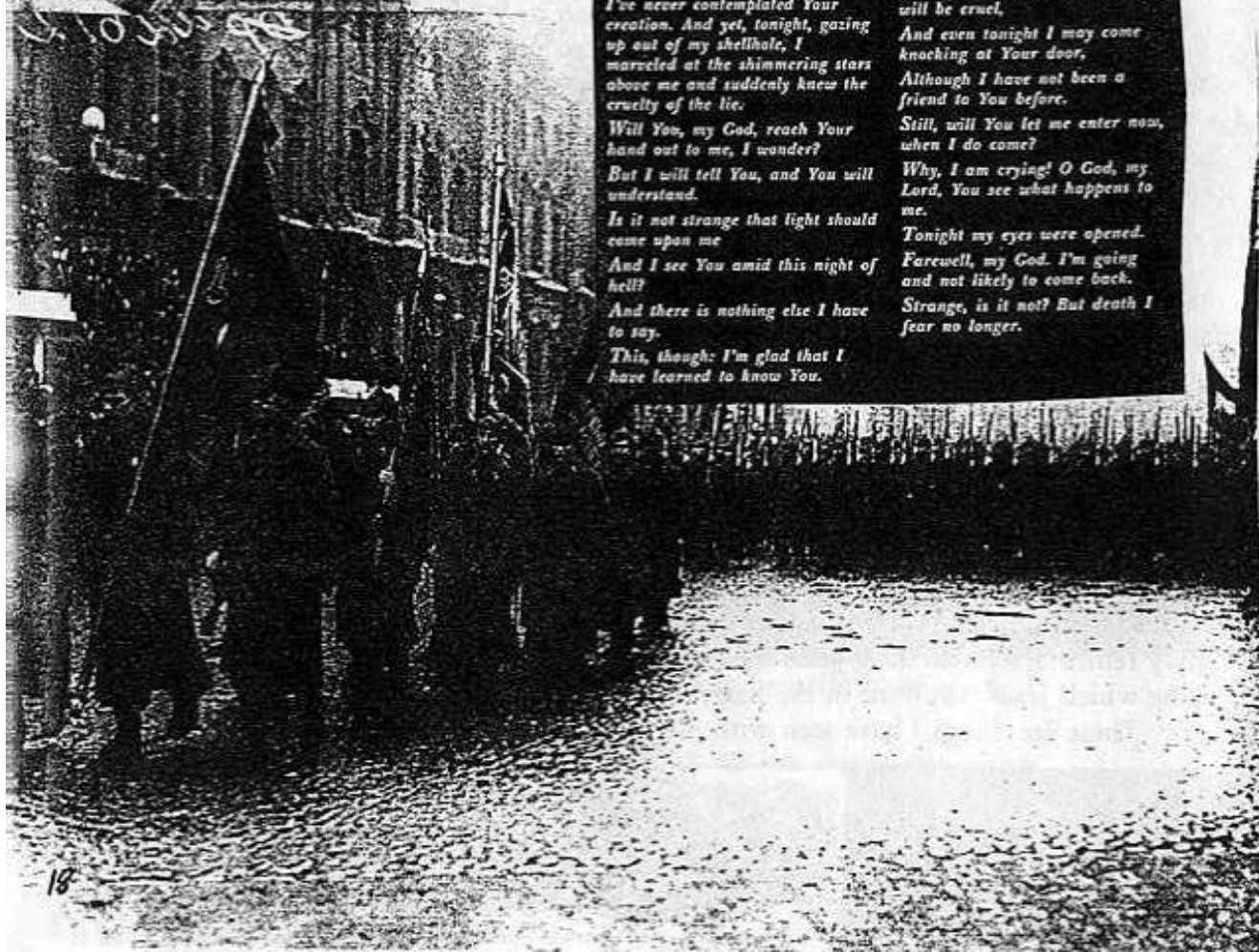
Still, will You let me enter now, when I do come?

Why, I am crying! O God, my Lord, You see what happens to me.

Tonight my eyes were opened.

Farewell, my God. I'm going and not likely to come back.

Strange, is it not? But death I fear no longer.



The Nuns of SHAMORDINO



In the summer of 1929 there came to the Soviet concentration camp of Solovki about thirty nuns from the monastery of Shamordino. Their age one could give as an "eternal thirty" years, although undoubtedly there were those both older and younger. In their faces there was something from the expression of the Mother of God, "Joy of All Who Sorrow." Their meek appearance was of a spiritual beauty which could not but evoke a feeling of deep contrition and awe.

Years later, from the mouth of an American prisoner who was in a slave-labor camp, comes the following information:

Three of the nuns of Shamordino reached the concentration-camp of Vorkuta under sentences of hard labor. The many thousand women prisoners at Vorkuta did not work in the mines but performed other rugged work, and the nuns were assigned to a plant which made bricks for construction work throughout the whole Arctic area of Russia.

When the nuns were first taken to the brick factory, they told the foreman that they regarded doing any work for the Communist regime as working for the devil and, since they were the servants of God and not of satan, they did not propose to bow to the orders of their foreman despite any threats he might make.

Stripped of their religious garb, the rebel nuns' faith was their armor. They were ready to face anything and everything to keep their vow and they did face their punishment, a living testimony of great courage. They were put on punishment rations, consisting of black bread and



rancid soup, day after day. But each morning when they were ordered to go out to the brick factory, into the clay pits, or to any other back-breaking assignment, they refused. This refusal meant, of course, that they were destined to go through worse ordeals. Angered by their obstinacy and fearing the effect upon the other slave laborers, the commandant ordered that they be placed in strait-jackets. Their hands were tied in back of them and then the rope with which their wrists were bound was passed down around their ankles and drawn up tight.

In this manner, their feet were pulled up behind them and their shoulders wrenched backward and downward into a position of excruciating pain.

The nuns writhed in agony but not a sound of protest escaped them. And when the commandant ordered water poured over them so that the cotton material in the strait-jackets would shrink, he expected them to scream from this pressure on their tortured bodies, but all that happened was that they moaned softly and lapsed into unconsciousness. Their bonds were then loosed and they were revived; in due course they were trussed up again, and once more the blessed relief of unconsciousness swept over them. They were kept in this state for more than two hours, but the guards did not dare let the torture go on any longer, for their circulation was



being cut off and the women were near death. The Communist regime wanted slaves, not skeletons. The Soviet government wanted coal mined. Slave laborers were expendable, of course, but only after years of labor had been dragged out of them. Thus the commandant's aim was to torture these nuns until they would agree to work.

Finally, however, the commandant decided that he was through trying. The nuns were either going to work or he was going to have to kill them in the attempt. He directed that they again be assigned to the outdoor work detail and, if they still refused, that they be taken up to a hummock in the bitter wind of the early Arctic winter, and left to stand there immobile all day long to watch the other women work. They were treated to this torture, too. When the pale light of the short Arctic day at last dawned, they were seen kneeling there and the guards went over expecting to find them freezing, but they seemed relaxed and warm.

At this, the commandant ordered that their gloves and caps be removed so that they would be exposed to the full fury of the wind. All through the 8-hour working day they knelt on that windy hilltop in prayer. Below them, the women who were chipping mud for the brick ovens were suffering intensely from the cold. Many complained that their feet were freezing despite the supposedly warm boots they wore. When in the evening other guards went to the hill to get the nuns and bring them back to the barracks, they expected to find them with frostbitten faces, hands, and limbs. But they did not appear to have suffered any injury at all. Again the next day they knelt for eight hours in the wind, wearing neither hats nor gloves in temperatures far below zero. That night they still had not suffered any serious frostbite and were still resolute in their refusal to work. Yet a third day they were taken out and this time their scarves too were taken from them.

By this time news of what was happening had spread throughout all the camps in that region. When at the end of the third day, a day far colder than any we had yet

experienced that winter season, the bareheaded nuns were brought in still without the slightest trace of frostbite, everyone murmured that indeed God had brought a miracle to pass. There was no other topic of conversation in the whole of Vorkuta. Even hardened MVD men from other compounds found excuses to come by the brick factory and take a furtive look at the three figures on the hill. Even the commandant was sorely disturbed. If not a religious man, he was a somewhat superstitious one and he knew well enough when he was witnessing the hand of a Power that was not of this earth!

By the fourth day, the guards themselves were afraid of the unearthly power which these women seemed to possess, and they flatly refused to touch them or have anything more to do with them. The commandant himself was afraid to go and order them out onto the hill. And so they were not disturbed in their prayers, and were taken off punishment rations. They were guarded with awe and respect. The guards were under instructions not to touch them or disturb them. They were preparing their own food and even making their own clothes. Their devotions were carried on in their own way and they seemed at peace and contented. Though prisoners, they were spiritually free. No one in the Soviet Union had such freedom of worship as they did.



What their example did to instill faith in thousands of prisoners and guards there, in a region of death, cannot be described.



He that plants good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seeds are the children of the Kingdom, but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that plants them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels. Matt 13:37