

Future of Orthodoxy

...For I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham...

It is with great joy that the *Future of Orthodoxy* presents the inaugural issue of our newsletter. *Future of Orthodoxy* is a youth

organization representing the next generation of Orthodox Christians. Its mission is twofold. The first is to strengthen the Orthodox youth by bringing them together for events, charities, and more. The second is to give Orthodox youth a forum

where they can connect with other Orthodox youth and adults in the form of a newsletter. The newsletter is written, edited and published by Orthodox children, passionate about their faith and the future of Orthodoxy. Orthodox youth of all

ages will be able to submit articles, opinion pieces, and short stories. It is truly providential that our first issue coincides with the great feast of



Pentecost, on which the Apostles received the gift of the Holy Spirit and, guided by it, preached Christ to the people of all nations. The teaching of the Apostles was handed down to each subsequent generation of correctly believing Orthodox

Christians as a timeless treasure. And since the days of the Apostles, every generation of Orthodox Christians has passed on the greatest gift, the true Christian faith and Apostolic tradition, to their children who have then become the

...continued on page 10

Contents

Elder Ephraim's Clairvoyance.....	2
Plague ended by Saint Spyridon.....	3
Why I prefer Orthodoxy.....	4
The University Professor.....	4
The Blind Kitten.....	5
Saint Spyridon and the Horses.....	6
Stop and Smell the Flowers.....	6
Panagia's Miracles during WWII.....	7
Fiction.....	9
The Quarrel.....	9
The Torn Doll.....	9
"Smile with Us".....	11

Elder Ephraim's Clairvoyance

Once, there was a woman whose spiritual father was Geronda Ephraim, and she was struggling with a passion. She confessed this passion to Geronda Ephraim, and he was very sad about it. Soon he left for Mount Athos. While he was gone, the woman fell into the same passion again. When the Elder came, she decided not to tell him that she fell into the passion again, telling herself that she would "offend" him. Finally, she went to confession and told him everything except for that passion. When she looked up, she saw tears streaming down his face. He told her

to leave and come back later because he could not read the prayer of absolution over her, and she left. There were many people waiting to go in for confession to Geronda, but she managed to get in again. This time she confessed her passion and saw that Geronda was very happy. He told her that he was crying before because he had seen a demon sitting on her shoulder mocking and sticking his tongue out at Christ on the Crucifix that was hanging on the wall behind her. We should never hesitate to tell ALL our sins and passions when we are at confession.

(Author: M., age 12)



Plague Ended by Saint Spyridon

In the year 1855 the death bearing disease of cholera swept through Europe. When the first cases appeared on the Venetian-controlled island of Corfu, the entire population was frantic with fear of contracting this deadly disease, and each family thought it wise to prepare for a mass burial.

The people of Kerkyra unanimously decided to offer up prayers and supplications to Saint Spyridon whose relics were in that city. They prayed fervently to the Saint for three consecutive services of Vespers for him to halt the plague.

On the first Sunday of November, when many would come together at the procession with his holy relics, certain people (especially physicians) were afraid that the great concentration of so many people would cause the epidemic to spread all the more rapidly. None of the people present at the procession, however, shared this fear because they had much faith in the Saint. On that day the entire population of that city and that of the surrounding countryside assembled in the town square through which the relics were to pass. And although

in other places in Europe the deaths were in tens of thousands, the island of Corfu did not share the same fate, because from that day the reports of deaths ceased, and after the 11th of December there were no more deaths from cholera due to the intercessions of the Holy Saint Spyridon.

And so, brothers and sisters, do not let fear of the coronavirus hinder you from attending church services as being “nonessential”; for how can one consider *toilet paper* to be more essential than the *Body and Blood of Christ*?! Or are the saints any less able to save us from the coronavirus than cholera?!

Through the intercessions of Saint Spyridon, may the Lord Jesus Christ our God deliver us from the fear of the coronavirus and have mercy upon us and save us. Amen.

(Author: P., age 16)

Why I prefer Orthodoxy

I prefer Orthodoxy over Roman Catholicism. First, Roman Catholics have statues of saints, and not icons. Next, you must be twelve years of age to receive the so-called communion in the Roman Catholic church. Also, you get baptized when you are a baby, but you do not get chrismated till you are twelve. And you do not have a patron Saint. Another reason for my preferring Orthodoxy, is because Catholics say that the Panagia gave birth like any other person, and that she did not die, but she only ascended. Finally, the priest faces the people when he serves, there is no iconostasis, and girls can serve in the altar.

(Author: A., age 12)

The University Professor

A university professor at a well-known institution of higher learning challenged his students with this question: “Did God create everything that exists?”

A student bravely replied, “Yes, He did!”

The professor answered, “If God created everything that exists, then God created evil. And, since evil exists, according to the principle that our works define who we are, we can assume that God is evil.”

The student became quiet and did not answer the professor’s hypothetical definition. The professor, quite pleased with himself, boasted to the students that he had proven once more that the Christian faith was but a myth.

Another student raised his hand and said, “Professor, may I ask you a question?”

“Of course,” replied the professor. The student stood up and asked, “Professor, does cold exist?”

“What kind of question is that? Of course it exists. Have you never been cold?”

The other students snickered at the young man’s question. The young man continued:

“In fact, sir, cold does not exist. According to the law of physics, what we consider cold is in reality the absence of heat. Every body or object to study when it has or transmits energy, absolute zero (-460 degrees Fahrenheit) is the total absence of heat; and all matter becomes inert and inca-

pable of reaction at that temperature. Cold does not exist. We have created this word to describe how we feel if we have no heat!”

The student continued, “Professor, does darkness exist?”

“Of course it does.”

The student replied, “Once again you are wrong, sir, darkness doesn’t exist either. Darkness is really the absence of light. Light we can study, but not darkness. In fact, we can use Newton’s prism to break light into many colors and study the various wavelengths of each color. You cannot measure darkness. A simple ray of light can break into a world of darkness and illuminate it. How can you know how dark a certain space is? You measure the amount of light present. Isn’t this correct? Darkness is a term used by man to describe what happens when there is no light present.”

And finally, the young man asked the professor, “Sir, does evil exist?” Now uncertain, the professor said, “Of course it does, as I have already said. We see it every day. It is in the daily examples of man’s inhumanity towards man. It is in the multitude of crime and violence everywhere in the world. These mani-

festations are nothing else but evil”.

To this the young man replied, “Evil does not exist, sir, or at least it doesn’t exist unto itself. Evil is simply the absence of God. It is just like darkness and cold, a word that man has created to describe the absence of God. God did not create evil. Evil is the result of what happens when man doesn’t have God’s love present in his heart. It’s like the cold that comes when there is no heat, or the darkness that comes where there is no light”.

The professor sat down.

The young man’s name—**Albert Einstein**.

(Author: X., age 15)



The Blind Kitten

One day, I found a half-blind kitten in a shed in which we feed our cats. I was very sad when I saw it, hungry and weak. I ran to tell this to my mother and father, and they told me to feed it every day. A few weeks passed, and it started to grow. One day, as I was doing my chores, I heard a meow; I looked and saw the kitten

stuck inside an old tire, and it could not get out! I took it back to the catshed. Now that kitten still lives to this day because we took care of it. This shows how important it is to take care of weak baby animals.



(Author: D., age 8)

Saint Spyridon and the Miracle with the Horses

While Saint Spyridon was on his way to the Holy First Ecumenical Council, he stopped to spend the night at an inn. While he was there, hateful Arians arrived and cut off the heads of the horses on which the Saint and his servant were traveling. At daybreak, the servant saw what the heretics had done and informed Saint Spyridon of the wicked deed. Putting his trust in the Lord, the Saint ordered the servant to place the horses' heads against their bodies. Now, one of the horses was white and the other black. The servant obeyed at once but put the head of the white horse against the black horse's body, and the head of the black horse against the white horse's body. He did this because it was not quite light yet and

he could not see very well. As soon as he did this, both horses came back to life and stood up. Saint Spyridon continued on his way, and everyone he passed were puzzled seeing a black horse with a white head and a white horse with a black head. The heretics, meanwhile, slipped away, utterly confounded.



(Author: X., age 15)

The Important Reason Why You Should Stop and Smell the Flowers

Because life can be overwhelming at times, it is important to commit your mind to the beauty that God gave us. Even though we rely on lights, phones and cars, it is ruining the beauty the world once had. Due to all these eye-sores and the stress of work, our mind may drift away to the cause our mind set was for. Flowers among other beautiful things the Lord has given us are here to remind us to stay focused on what life was once intended for.

(Author: Anonymous)

Panagia's Miracles During World War II

The Nazis were invading more and more deeply into the Russian land. At one point, they reached a certain village in Ukraine, which was then under Communist control. Several days after they took control of this village, they ordered all the teenage boys and young men to gather at the marketplace. Whoever would try to escape or hide would be shot. The next morning, the youth of the village gathered at the appointed spot, along with their old mothers and grandmothers, who were believers, though their children did not know much about the Faith or had even scorned it. Then the Nazis told everyone that the young men and boys will be sent to labor camps in Germany. As soon as the old women heard these words, they started shouting and wailing. It was not only a frightened cry, but a cry pleading to God to deliver them from this brutal treatment. The women ran into the



village church, took a big icon of the Theotokos, and started going around the marketplace holding it reverently and singing the troparion to that icon of the Theotokos with tearing hearts. As soon as they walked around it once, Russian bomber planes appeared overhead and started bombing the railroad station where the Nazis had a train ready to take everyone away to Germany. The Nazis panicked and fled, leaving their victims, and the villagers were freed with the help of the Theotokos.

(Author: D., age 15)

Another time, the Nazis came to a village called Zaloushino. They killed all of the men, and ordered the women to dig two big graves. In one they threw all the men, and they lined all of the women up at the second grave and shot them all; they all fell into the grave.

When the village was freed from the brutal enemies, the Russians dug up the graves to witness the Nazis' brutality, and after crying and wailing over the death of their loved ones, they reburied them again. One of the people who saw the grave was a girl, who had lost a mother to the Germans in that grave. She wished to dig up her mother's body so she could bury it properly, and she prayed fervently to the Theotokos to help her with this good deed. That night, the Panagia appeared to her in a dream and said, "Do not touch your mother's remains. All of those women who were shot are with Me in Heaven wearing golden crowns."

(Author: M., age 12)

Here is a story told by a Russian soldier who was captured by the Nazis.

"I was being marched through a forest by the Nazis along with many other prisoners. We had been captured some days before. I had not been an ardent believer, but my mother was, and before I left home, she sewed an icon of the Theotokos into my army jacket. We were all dying from hunger and exhaustion, and

we were not allowed to stop, because there were guards everywhere with their guard dogs, and if anyone would dare to stop, he would be shot on the spot. So then, as I was walking, I remembered my mother and the icon I was carrying on my chest. I started to pray to the Theotokos, asking Her to deliver me from the enemies. Suddenly, I saw Her in the air above me, looking exactly as in the icon, and She told me, "Stop!" I hesitated, but stopped, waiting to be shot. I stood and stood, and everyone kept on walking right past me; fellow-prisoners, Nazi soldiers, guard-dogs all just walked by as if I wasn't there. I just kept on standing there until they all left! Then I hid in the forest, walked back across the front, and fought the Germans until the end of the war".

(Author: F., age unknown)

Fiction

The Quarrel

Under a big tree in the woods, two boys saw a fine, large nut, and both ran to get it. James got to it first, and picked it up. "It is mine," said John, "for I was the first to see it." "No, it is mine", said James, "for I was the first to pick it up."

Thus, they at once began to quarrel about the nut. As they could not agree whose it should be, they called an older boy, and asked him.

The older boy said, "I will settle this quarrel." He took the nut, and broke the shell. He then took out the kernel, and divided the shell into two parts, as nearly equal as he could.

"This half of the shell," said he, "belongs to the boy who first saw the nut, and this half belongs to the boy who picked it up. The kernel of the nut, I shall keep as my pay for settling the quarrel. This is the way," said he, laughing, "in which quarrels are very apt to end."

(Author: M.G., c. 1879)

The Torn Doll

Mary Armstrong was a pretty little girl, but she was heedless about some things. She always left her things lying around, and her mother always had to clean up after her. She had often told Mary the evil effects of carelessness. Being so careless would be of great harm to her in all her life.

One day Mary and her mother went out into their yard to spend some time in the fresh air. Mary ran about and played with Dash, her pet dog, and was having a happy time. But in a corner of the yard she found her nicest doll, all torn and broken, and its dress covered with mud. She knew that Dash had done this, and she scolded him harshly. Then she took the broken doll to her mother and could hardly keep from crying.

Mrs. Armstrong asked Mary if she had left it on the porch where Dash could easily get it; and Mary had to answer, "Yes ma'am."

"Then you must not blame the dog, Mary, for he does not know that it is wrong for him to play with your

doll. I hope this will be a lesson to you hereafter," said Mrs. Armstrong, "to put your things away when you are through playing."

"I will try," said Mary. And her mother promised to mend the doll as well as she could.

(Author: M.G., c. 1879)

The Future of Orthodoxy...

continued from page 1

next generation of Orthodox Christians. Historically, the primary keepers and defenders of the Faith have been the faithful people of God, by enduring persecutions, combating heresies, and in general, striving to preserve the purity of the faith of the Fathers. Orthodox Christian youth are a most vital link to keeping our faith alive in today's difficult times. A united Orthodox youth that is passionate, committed, and unashamed to witness to their faith will first inspire Orthodox of all ages to a more complete living of the faith, and will also serve to bring the evangelical message of Orthodoxy to non-Orthodox. Our hope is to have contributions from Orthodox youth of all ages, ethnicities, and regions, from which our editorial board will choose several to publish. As much

as possible, the theme of the submissions should be the Orthodox faith, from the beauty and timelessness of our faith, to contemporary issues facing the Orthodox world, and everything in between. We ask for prayers and support that this humble undertaking will take flight and become a beacon of light uniting the future of Orthodoxy with the teaching of the Apostles and the dogmas of the Holy Fathers.

Smile With Us

Once upon a time, Mrs. L. was giving a bath to her four-year-old boy. Now this boy did not like his head being washed. So when Mrs. L. started washing his head, he protested: “Mama! The Lord told the Apostle Peter to wash only the feet and not the head!”

My family was discussing what we like about our house. One said that he likes our house because it has a lot of light. Someone else said something else... But when it came to my little sister, she said, “I like this house because this is where mama lives!”

A couple was talking about the president. Their little daughter asked, “Why do they *run* for president? Why don’t they just *walk*?!”

The couple had to feed their daughter, but they wanted her to learn to feed herself. So they asked her, “If you ever became president, and you had a big important dinner with all the presidents of many other countries, don’t you think it would be strange if we were feeding you and everyone else would be eating by themselves?” She answered, “Of course it would be strange! The other presidents would be fed by their parents, too!”

*Thank you very much
for reading this newsletter!*

If you want to subscribe, donate, or contact us,
look us up on our website:

futureoforthodoxy.com

Future of Orthodoxy

Volume 1, Number 1

Pentecost Sunday

June 7, 2020