

Regarding St. Porfyrios of Kafsokalivia (+Dec 2, 1991)

by Monk Leontios Dionysiatis

- "Hard times will come and people will need care from the monasteries!..." [link](#)
- "Only the religion of Christ unites. And all of us must pray that everyone comes to this. Thus union will occur, and not by believing that we are all the same and all religions are the same. It is not the same!"...

Saint Profyrios of Kafsokalivia



Given the opportunity of the canonization of Elder Porfyrios, let's remember some of his characteristics:

1. He was very humble, in practice, not in words.

He was feeling the act of grace as a gift that was coming through him, but he didn't view it as his possession, while he was living in this corruptible world, and subject to temptation. On the contrary, his gain in grace brought him a greater feeling of littleness as a spiritual person. This is a healthy feeling because grace reveals better our differences in virtue from Christ, Who is our model. Like Saint Dorotheus of Tyre said, the closer one comes to the king and the palaces starting as a peasant, the more one understands how big a difference exists between him and the king. So the elder said truthfully:

"I have a feeling that my spiritual sins are too many, and I ask all of you who have known me to pray for me (after my death) because I also, while living, very humbly prayed for you". (Anthology of Advice). Therefore, the elder lived a truly high spiritual state, since the Lord first blessed the humble: "Blessed are the poor in spirit." The holy elder did not want the humble talk: "Pray to God to send you the holy humility. Not the one that exclaims I am the least, I am the worthless. This is a satanic humility. The holy humility is a gift from God. Do you hear? A gift..."

2. He had a pure heart, that is why Christ Himself was living in it.

He had a personal experience of Christ: "The person who gives his heart to Christ, like a monk, this person becomes a different person. His mind opens, he becomes a new person. His mind opens, and is filled with Christ. You hear? Do you understand me? With Christ. And when the mind and heart are full of Christ, then this person is wise, intelligent, and the spirit of God teaches him everything..."

... The person who has given his heart to Christ does not suffer no matter how many hardships occur. He is happy, he is full of internal joy. He is vigorous, prudent. He does not make mistakes, or damages. His brain, hands, legs, everything is mobilized by the grace of God. Because when we have Christ within us, we don't live arranging our self. Christ lives inside of us and He arranges our life". (Anthology of Advice)

3. He had a sense of what the love toward the fellow man should be and why.

"If one day," the elder started to tell me, "you are walking relaxed on your way and you see your brother ahead of you walking likewise, but suddenly you see a bad person jump out

from a side-street and attacking your brother with a knife, hitting him, pulling his hair, injuring him and striking him down in blood, you in front of this site. Will you be angry against your brother or will you be sorry for him?"

I was surprised by Elder's question, and I asked him back: "How is it possible to get to become angry against my injured brother who fell victim to the evildoer? The thought didn't even cross my mind. Surely I will be sorry and I will try to help him as much as I can."

"So," the Elder continued, "every person, that offends you, hurts you, slanders you, or wronged you in any way, is your brother who fell in the hands of evildoer devil. When you see your brother wrong you, what should you do? You should be very sorry for him, sympathize him and ask God fervently and silently to support you in this difficult moment of your ordeal and give his mercy to your brother, who fell victim to the robber devil, and God will help you as well as your brother.

Because, if you don't do that, if you on the contrary get angry against your brother, opposing his attack with your counterattack, then the devil who is sitting on your brother's neck jumps up on your neck as well, tormenting both of you."

(Anthology of Advice)

A proof of love is not to judge someone who is at fault, but try to change him / her with lenience and meekness.

The holy Elder Porphyrios used to say, "Our goal is not to condemn something bad, but to correct it. With condemnation the person may be lost, but with understanding and help he can be saved. We have to look at the sinner with love and respect toward his freedom. When a family member drops a vase off the table and it breaks, usually we get angry. However, if that crucial moment we show understanding and excuse the damage with a movement of spiritual lift, we have gained both our soul and the brother's. And this is all our spiritual life: A movement of our uplifting, through the tribulation of sorrows, from the indignation of selfishness to the understanding of love." (Anthology of Advice) Also:

I remember the Elder here who said: "Hey, when you scold someone who is at fault, what will he do then? Not only will he not listen to you, but he will try to defend himself and prove the contrary. And his soul will be closed up more. If however, you leave him alone and you don't scold him and you don't criticize him, his soul softens, you become friends, and eventually he comes and tells you the things you were going to say to him." (Ananias Koustenis' archive, Sayings A)

4. He had great love toward God and the Orthodox Church.

"Inside the Church, therein lies the salvation," the Elder always told us. "Whoever is a member of the Church has no fear of the second death; there is no death for anyone inside the Church of Christ. Our Orthodoxy is perfect, it does not have any flaw." (Anthology of Advice) We observe that the Holy Elder speaks in the same manner that Evangelist John speaks in the Apocalypse:

"Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such, the second death has no power." (Revelation 20:6) Even though he had not studied theology at a University, he still knew it, like the Apostles, by revelations from God. The Elder himself narrates how he lived a heavenly experience in the Cave of the Apocalypse on the island of Patmos:

"At one time, we went on pilgrimage (1964) to Saint John the Theologian in

Patmos... I put some coals in the censer, lit them up, put some incense, censed and then my heart opened. Then came the Divine Grace. A glow came onto my face, I became filled with God, lifted my hands and started crying. My eyes flowed tears continually. At one moment I fell down. As I was told by my companions, I stayed on the ground for twenty minutes... This miracle, which happened to me in Patmos, is a great mystery. It has a great meaning. I saw the event of the Revelation. I saw Saint John the Theologian, his disciple Prochorus, and lived the event of the Divine Revelation exactly like it happened. I heard the voice of Christ from the split in the rock..." (Life and Words, Chania 2004). This and many more experiences documented in front of many witnesses, prove that the Elder had a vision of God.

The knowledge of the truth of God made him jealous based on awareness, and with the discernment to differentiate the secularly driven pan-religious movements from the unadulterated Orthodox church, which is the only in which salvation exists:

"Only the religion of Christ unites. And all of us must pray that they come to this. Thus union will occur, and not by believing that we are all the same and all religions are the same. It is not the same!" ...

5. The Elder reminded us in an eloquent way the need for Sacramental life inside the Church.

A lady mentioned the following: "Once the Elder told me: 'Many of you women, anything destroyed and useless you have, old and worn kitchenware, furniture, shoes, and other shabby items, you go and dump them in some secluded storage room, you lock the door, and relax. You don't realize, however, that the time will come when your dump will be found and you will be exposed.' " I was surprised by the words of the Elder. The symbolism was clear, relating to our sins which we haven't eliminated by repentance and confession, but hastily threw them in the dump of oblivion to rid ourselves of their presence, and which will be revealed on *Judgement Day*. (Anthology of Advice)

6. Summary:

For his love toward fellow man, the Elder received many gifts from God, such as prescience, clairvoyance, healing, etc. The Holy Elder was since his childhood a fighting Christian and monastic. He lived patiently, with prayer, but also with sorrows and tears, hardship, and every kind of asceticism even since he was out in the world, as he narrates himself. All of the Lord's beatitudes found fertile ground in his soul, and he rejoiced, because even though he still lived with his body on earth, he felt that ***his reward is great in Heaven.***

This text in Greek:

<http://www.imdleo.gr/diaf/2014/01/2014.html>

Sunday after Theophany, 13 (26) January, 2014.

Leontios Monahos Dionysiates

MOUNT ATHOS

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