

CrossRoad 2009 Take-Home Readings and Bibliography

Staff Picks/Bibliography:

Nicole Hillas recommended readings

The Mountain of Silence, Kyriakos Markides
Wounded by Love, Elder Porphyrios
The Ascetic of Love, Nun Gavriilia
Left to Tell, Imaculee Ilibagiza
Saint Nektarios, Saint of our Century, Sotos Chondropoulos

Jonathan Resmini recommended readings

Bible

Orthodox Study Bible Old & New Testament
New Jerusalem Bible
Pocket Psalter from Holy Transfiguration Monastery

Biblical Readings

Book of Job
Book of Tobit
Book of Psalms
Wisdom of Ben Sirach

Spiritual Readings

Evergentinos- four volume set from CTOS
Philokalia: *The Complete Text* – five volumes from St. Tikon
The Spiritual Psalter of St. Ephraim

Prayer & Service Books

Prayer from Holy Transfiguration Monastery
Book of Akathists- Volume 1 & 2

Eleftherios Constantine recommended readings

Daily Reading Material

Prologue of Ochrid (lives of saints, reflections, & homilies for everyday of the year), St. Nikolai Velimirovic

The Bible and the Holy Fathers for Orthodox (Daily scripture reading followed by a homily of a Church Father), Johanna Manly

Orthodoxy In General

Entering the Orthodox Church, Met. Hierotheos of Nafpaktos

Patristic Theology, by John Romanides

Orthodox Spirituality, Met. Hierotheos of Nafpaktos

The Truth of Our Faith, Vols. I & II, by Elder Cleopa

Ecclesiasticus I & II, Rev. George D. Dragas

The Orthodox Veneration of Mary the Birthgiver of God, St. John Maximovitch

The Feasts of the Lord, Met. Hierotheos of Nafpaktos

A Cloud of Witness, David Bell

An Outline of Orthodox Dogmatics, John Romanides

"*One Lord, One Faith*", Arch. Vassilios Bakoyannis

The Church at Prayer, Arch. Aimilianos of Simonopetra

Contemporary Saints

Precious Vessels of the Holy Spirit

Fr. Arseny, 1893-1973: Priest, Prisoner, Spiritual Father, Alexander and Vera Bouteneff

Pearl of Great Price, Sergei Hackel

Counsels for Life, from the Life and Teachings of Fr. Epiphanius Theodoropoulos

Talks with Father Paisios, Athanasios Rakovalis

Repentance/Confession

The Forgotten Medicine: the Mystery of Repentance, Arch. Seraphim

Return, Arch. Nektarios Antonopoulos

Prayer

On the Prayer of Jesus, Ignatius Brianchaninov

The Way of a Pilgrim & The Pilgrim Continues His Way

A Night in the Desert of the Holy Mountain, Metropolitan Hierotheos of Nafpaktos

Miracles

Experiences During the Divine Liturgy, Stephanos Anagnostopoulos

Miracles Which Mine Eyes Have Seen

Easy Read

From I-ville to You-ville, Mersine Vigopoulos

Pascha Transforms Wolfman Tom: The Story of a Repentant Sinner

My Godmother the Panghia, P.M. Sotirhos

Dan Belonick recommended readings

Stronger Theological Content

The Orthodox Way, Kallistos Ware

On the Incarnation, St. Athanasius

The Mystery of Christ, Fr. John Behr

For the Life of the World, Fr. Alexander Schmemmann

Orthodox Spirituality

The Way of the Pilgrim, Anonymous

In Thy Presence, Lev Gillet

From Brokenness to Community, Jean Vanier

St. Silouan the Athonite, Elder Sophrony

Mary Long recommended readings

On the Incarnation, St. Athanasius

The Life of Moses, St. Gregory of Nyssa

On The Hexaemeron (Six Days of Creation), St. Basil the Great

Wisdom from Mt. Athos, St. Silouan

Ascetic of Love, Mother Gavrilia Papayanni

Father Arseny: Priest, Prisoner, and Spiritual Father, Alexander and Vera Bouteneff

Mother Maria Skobtsova: Essential Writings (Orbis Books), Helene Klepinin-Arjakovsky (Editor)

Way of the Heart, Henri Nouwen

The Great Divorce, CS Lewis

Mere Christianity, CS Lewis

Liturgy and Life, Alexander Schmemmann

For the Life of the World, Alexander Schmemmann

Living in Christ: Essays on the Christian Life by an Orthodox Nun, Mother Raphaela

Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers, Christian Smith

The Thrill of the Chaste (for women), Dawn Eden

On the Life of Christ: Kontakia, St. Romanus and Ephrem Lash

Writings of the Apostolic Fathers (Ignatius, Clement, Polycarp, etc); many can be found online here: <http://www.goarch.org/resources/fathers>

Any other Orthodox Christian hymnography, especially the hymns of Holy Week and Pascha

Stella Hondros recommended readings

The Ascetic of Love, Mother Gavrilia Papayanni

Father Arseny, 1893-1973: Priest, Prisoner, Spiritual Father, Alexander & Vera Bouteneff

Wounded by Love, Elder Porphyrios

The Sayings of the Desert Fathers, Benedicta Ward

Readings:

1. Excerpts from Augustine's *Confessions*

2. Excerpts from Theophan the Recluse's *Letter to A Young Girl*

1. Excerpt from Augustine's *Confessions*

Great are you, O Lord, and exceedingly worthy of praise; your power is immense, and your wisdom beyond reckoning. And so we men, who are a due part of your creation, long to praise you – we also carry our mortality about with us, carry the evidence of our sin and with it the proof that you thwart the proud. You arouse us so that praising you may bring us joy, because you have made us and drawn us to yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.

Grant me to know and understand, Lord, which comes first. To call upon you or to praise you? To know you or to call upon you? Must we know you before we can call upon you? Anyone who invokes what is still unknown may be making a mistake. Or should you be invoked first, so that we may then come to know you? But *how can people call upon someone in whom they do not yet believe? And how can they believe without a preacher?*

But scripture tells us that those who seek the Lord will praise him, for as they seek they find him, and on finding him they will praise him. Let me seek you then, Lord, even while I am calling upon you, and call upon you even as I believe in you; for to us you have indeed been preached. My faith calls upon you, Lord, this faith which is your gift to me, which you have breathed into me through the humanity of your Son and the ministry of your preacher.

How shall I call upon my God, my God and my Lord, when by the very act of calling upon him I would be calling him into myself? Is there any place within me into which my God might come? How should the God who made heaven and earth come into me? Is there any room in me for you, Lord, my God? Even heaven and earth, which you have made and in which you have made me – can even they contain you? Since nothing that exists would exist without you, does it follow that whatever exists does in some way contain you?

But if this is so, how can I, who am one of these existing things, ask you to come into me, when I would not exist at all unless you were already in me? Not yet am I in hell, after all but even if I were, you would be there too; for *if I descend into the underworld, you are there*. No, my God, I would not exist, I would not be at all, if you were not in me. Or should I say, rather, that I should not exist if I were not in you, *from whom are all things, through whom are all things, in whom are all things?* Yes, Lord, that is the truth, that is indeed the truth. To what place can I invite you, then, since I am in you? Or where could you come from, in order to come into me? To what place outside heaven and earth could I travel, so that my God could come to me there, the God who said, *I fill heaven and earth?*

Who will grant it to me to find peace in you? Who will grant me this grace, that you should come into my heart and inebriate it, enabling me to forget the evils that beset me and embrace you, my only good? What are you to me? Have mercy on me, so that I may tell. What indeed am I to you, that you should command me to love you, and grow angry with me if I do not, and threaten me with enormous woes? Is not the failure to love you woe enough in itself?

Alas for me! Through your own merciful dealings with me, O Lord my God, tell me what you are to me. Say to my soul, *I am your salvation*. Say it so that I can hear it. My heart is listening, Lord; open the ears of my heart and say to my soul, *I am your salvation*. Let me run towards this voice and seize hold of you. Do not hide your face from me: let me die so that I may see it, for not to see it would be death to me indeed.

2. Excerpt from Bishop Theophan the Recluse, *Letter to a Young Girl*

*The following letter of Theophan the Recluse is from the book **What Is the Spiritual Life and How to Dispose Oneself to it**. Here Bishop Theophan addresses a young girl who is looking for meaning in her life, and the thoughts he sets down are particularly applicable and important for the young people today.*

What has happened to you? And what kind of questions are these: "I don't know what to do with my life. Must one do something? Must one set oneself some kind of goal?" As I read, I am at a loss to discover where such strange thoughts have come from. Hadn't you already decided all these things when you expressed the desire to attain that high dignity which God has appointed for man? And what have you and I been discussing if not that? How, then, have all these problems arisen? I can guess that there are modernists among your acquaintances, or that on occasion you have fallen in with a group where there were such people propagating their "wise words." They usually rave in such a way. They have on their tongues unceasingly the words, "the welfare of mankind," "the welfare of the people." And now you, in all likelihood, having heard plenty of such elevated ideas, have succumbed to them, and turning to look at your own present life, have discovered with regret that you are vegetating among your family and relatives without use of purpose. Alas! How is it that no one has yet opened your eyes?!

If my guess is correct; then you ought to be ashamed. why on earth didn't you tell me about this, since you gave your word to write candidly about everything? But whether all this is so or not, I can't leave your problems unsolved. Our entire correspondence will serve as a full solution of them, but now I will express only a brief and general thought that you might see that the life' which' you lead and have led up to now is real life, and there is nothing to be changed in it.

Certainly one must know the goal of life. But is this difficult? And hasn't it already been determined? The general situation is this: since there is life after death, then the goal of all our present earthly life must be, without exception, not here, but there. Everyone knows that this is the case, and there is nothing more to discuss, although in practice few people actually remember it. But set yourself a rule of life - with all your strength to pursue this goal - and you yourself will see what light will pour forth from this on your contemporary life on earth and on everything you do. First will be revealed the conviction that everything here is merely a means to the other life. There is a law regarding the means: make use of them and in such a way that they- lead toward the goal and do not deviate from' it or hinder, it. This, then, is the answer to the problem of not knowing what to do with your life. Set your sight on heaven

and order every step of your life so that it will be a step in that direction. It seems to me that it is all so simple, and yet so all-embracing.

You ask, "Must one do something?" Of course one must! And do whatever comes along-- in your circle of friends and in your surroundings -- and believe that this is and will be your real work. More will not be demanded of you. It is a great misconception to think, whether for the sake of heaven or, as the modernists put it, to "make one's mark on humanity," that one must undertake great, reverberating tasks. Not at all. It is necessary only to do everything according to the commandments of God. Just what exactly? Nothing in particular -- only those things which present themselves to everyone in the circumstances of life, those things which are required by the everyday happenings we all encounter. Let's take an example: a beggar comes up to you; it is God Who has brought him. God has brought you the beggar, of course, desiring you to act toward this beggar in a manner pleasing to Him, and He watches to see what you will actually do. It will please Him if you help. Will you? If you do what is pleasing to God, you will be taking a step toward the ultimate goal, the inheritance of heaven. Generalize this occurrence, and you will find that in every situation and at every encounter one must do what God wants him to do. And we know truly what He wants from the commandments He has given us. If someone seeks help, then help him. If someone has offended you, forgive him. If you yourself have offended someone, then hasten to ask forgiveness and to make peace. If someone has praised you, do not be proud. If someone has scolded you, do not get angry. If the time has come to pray, then pray. To work, then work, - etc. etc.

If, having considered all this, you commence to act in all situations so that your actions, performed unswervingly according to the commandments, are pleasing to God, then all the problems regarding your life will be solved completely and satisfactorily. The goal is the blessed life beyond the grave; the means are actions according to the commandments -- actions demanded by everything that happens in life. It seems to me that this is all clear and simple, and there is no reason for you to torment yourself with difficult problems. You must get out of your head all plans for the immensely useful, all-embracing humanitarian activity that the modernists rave about, and your life, having been set in a peaceful frame and leading without commotions toward the primary goal, will then have a focus. Remember that the Lord does not forget even a glass of cold water given to him who thirsts.

You will say, "But all the same, one must still choose and determine a way of life!" But how can you and I determine it? When we start to consider it, we grow confused. It is better and more reliable to accept with obedience, thankfulness, and love that direction which God reveals in the course of one's life. Let's take a situation that concerns you. You are now under your parents' roof, safe, and comfortable. So live, not letting your thoughts fly off into the distance, but conscientiously doing everything you ought to do. "But all the same, " you say, "consider, one can't remain that way forever -- eventually one's own individual life must begin. How will this come about? And how is one to avoid thinking about it?" Well, here is the best thought along these lines. Place yourself in God's hands and pray that He will guide you as He finds best, so that your lot in life does not hinder, but rather helps you to attain

the blessed life beyond the grave, without your dreaming of a brilliant destiny. Having thus attuned yourself, wait patiently, and eventually God will give you instructions. And He will instruct you through the conjunction of circumstances and through the will of your parents. Being firm in these thoughts and resting in God, live without constructing empty plans and do those things which your relationship to your parents, to your brothers and sister, to other relatives, and to all people requires you to do. But in no way think this life empty. Whatever you do according to this rule will be a real deed, and if you act with the realization that this is the way it should be done according to the commandments, and that God wants it this way, than it is an action pleasing to God. In like manner treat every trifle.

It seems that now I have explained everything. I will add only the wish that you dig well into the depths of what I have written, learn it by heart, and adapt yourself to it. I can prophesy that you will obtain complete peace and will no longer be confused by the thoughts: "My life is not good for anything – I am doing nothing useful," etc. Only you will still have to exercise restraint on your heart, or it will talk much nonsense. It's true that to have no heart at all is bad, for where there is no heart, what kind of life is there? But all the same one should not give it its own way. It is blind and without strict guidance will immediately lose its footing.

May the Lord bless you!