



Sunday, September 1, 2019

Gospel: St. Matthew 18:23-35

Tone 2

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 9:2-12

11th Sunday after Pentecost / Church New Year

St. Simeon Stylites, the Elder

**SEPTEMBER Bulletin Sponsor: Fr. Andrew
In memory of His Grace, Bishop John Martin**

Liturgical & Events Schedule

Sunday, September 1

9:05 am: Hours followed by Divine Liturgy /
Social / Final Rehearsal before Bishop
visitation

Thursday, September 5

10:00 am: Deanery Meeting- Cleveland

Friday, September 6

10:00 am: Respect Life Meeting- Port Clinton

Saturday, September 7

5:00 pm: Great Vespers w/ Lytia w/ His Grace
Bishop Paul Presiding followed by Meal
w/ Officers

Sunday, September 8

8:40 am: Hours
9:10 am Greeting Bishop at church followed by
Hierarchical Divine Liturgy / Pot-luck
Social

40 DAY REMEMBRANCE

September 1: Shooting victims from CA
shooting / Sue Parker

September 8: Serviceman Brandan &
Michael from the Army killed in
Afghanistan / Shooting victims from
the mall in El Paso, TX / Mass
shooting victims from Dayton, OH

September 15: Serviceman killed in Iraq

September 22: Archpriest John Matusiak /
Thomas Hutnyan

September 29: IL State Trooper Nicholas /
Damien Bailey

**DANBURY FOOD PANTRY -
SEPTEMBER**

Suggested donation of **canned fruit** (and other
non-perishable goods) will be collected through
September 15.

September donations will be delivered to the food
pantry Thursday, September 19.

Thank You & God Bless.

September

	<u>Cleaners</u>	<u>Readers</u>	<u>Social</u>
1	Tina R.	Wayne	<i>Open</i>
8	<i>Open</i>	Tim	POT-LUCK
15	Laura K	Joe S	<i>Open</i>
22	Joe & Valerie S	Ron	<i>Open</i>
29	Sandy Martin	Natalie	<i>Open</i>

**CANDLE / BULLETIN SPONSORS
FOR SEPTEMBER**

Bulletin (\$50): Fr. Andrew: in memory of his
Grace Bishop John

Chandelier (\$50): Tina: in memory of her
brother Peter Rindfleisch (9-19-06)

Altar Candles (\$50): Joe & Valerie: In memory
of Rose Haburt & Dorothy Czuhra

Candles on the tomb (\$25): Layne in memory of
her sister Desiree on her b-day

Eternal Light & Icon Screen (\$25): Joe &
Valerie in memory of Violet Bargdill &
LaVerne Schutt

**SEPTEMBER SPECIAL
COLLECTION**

Support our Seminarians Month (SOS)

Holy Assumption Orthodox Church

OCA - Diocese of the Midwest

Parish Council President: Matthew Adamcio

Fr. Andrew Bartek, Rector



110 E Main Street, Marblehead, OH 43440
www.holyassumptionmarblehead.org

Rectory 419-798-4591 / Cell 570-212-8747
padrebartek@gmail.com

ATTENDANCE - AUGUST

Sunday, August 4: 25 Total (21 members; 1 non-reg member; 2 children; 1 guest; 17 Communicants; 7 attended Vespers

Tuesday, August 6: 13 attended Liturgy; 8 attended vespers

Friday, August 9: 9 attended Liturgy

Sunday, August 11: 35 Total (20 members; 1 non member reg.; 14 guests. 23 communicants; No Vespers

Thursday, August 15: 37 total for Patronal Feast (24 guests; 13 members; 12 attended Vigil)

Sunday, August 18: No info was taken

Sunday, August 25: 24 Total (20 members; 4 guests; 17 communicants; NO Vespers

Wednesday, August 28: 8 attended Vespers; 9 attended Liturgy on Thursday

OTHER WEEKLY INCOME

Sunday, Aug. 4: \$29 Candles; \$100 Altar Candles; \$75 Vigils; \$50 Eternal Light; \$1 Special Collection (Respect Life) / **TOTAL DEPOSIT: \$1,653**

Sunday, Aug. 11: \$22 Candles; \$50 Chandelier; \$45 Vigils; \$36 Special Collection (Respect Life); \$20 Bookstore / **TOTAL DEPOSIT: \$697**

Sunday, Aug. 18: \$12 in candles; \$35 Vigils; \$524 Collection for Dormition; \$110 Special Collection (St Herman's Seminary); **TOTAL DEPOSIT: \$1,417**

Sunday, Aug. 25: \$58 Candles; \$90 Vigils; \$171 Special Collection (Respect Life); \$10 Restoration; \$100 Cemetery / **TOTAL DEPOSIT: \$2,238**

MONTHLY TITHING ONLY

Goal Pledged per month: \$4,100

Sunday, August 4: \$1,398

Sunday, August 11: \$ 524

Sunday, August 18: \$ 736

Sunday, August 25: \$1,809

TOTAL MONTH: \$4,467

OTHER WEEKLY INCOME-MONTH TOTALS

Candles:	\$121
Altar Candles:	\$100
Eternal Light:	\$50
Vigils:	\$245
Chandelier:	\$50
Special Collection:	
Respect Life	\$208
St Herman's Seminary	\$110
Bookstore:	\$20
Dormition Collection:	\$524
Restoration:	\$10
TOTAL:	\$1,438

Bishop Paul's Travel Schedule

FOCA Convention, Columbus, OH, August 30th to September 2nd

- *Presentation of St. John of Chicago Cross to Fr. Daniel Rentel*

Holy Assumption, Marblehead, OH Sept. 6-8

St. Vladimir's Seminary, Yonkers, NY, September 11th to 12th

- *Student Visit and Episcopal meeting with SVS staff*

Christ the Savior Church, Chicago, IL, September 13th to 15th

- *Feast of the Exaltation*

St. Nicholas Church Joliet, IL, September 21st to 22nd

Holy Resurrection Church, Fargo, ND, September 28th to September 30th

- *10th Anniversary of Mission, church to be elevated to parish status*

PRAYER LIST Updated 9-1

Clergy:

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius
His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman
Archbishop Nikon from New England
John Duranko (*Father's home pastor*)
James Gleason (*Father's Spiritual Father*)
Moses Barry
Joseph Gibson
Emilian Hutnyan
Josef Von Klarr
Vladimir Lecko
Christopher Phillips
Peter Tutko
Deacon Paul Mitchell
Deacon Mark Sauskojus
Sub-deacon Wylie Meath

Matushkii:

Pani Patricia Duranko
Virginia Lecko
Sonya Tutko
Victoria Kopistiansky

Parishioners / & their Family:

John Beadle (*Elcishko*)
MaryAnn Cook (*Cousin to Twarek's*)
John Richard Elchisco
Ruthe Flewelling
Debbie Garnek (*Roddie's sister*)
Michael Glovinsky (*Basil's nephew*)
Ernest Gresh (*Basil's nephew*)
Shirley Gresh (*Wife of Ernest*)
Aldin Griffith (*Soski*)
Julia Guzy
Joseph Habegger (*Laura brother-in-law*)
Alice Jackson (*Mazurik*)
Kathy Jacob (*Lorain*)
Michael Kouznetsov (*Mary Hiser's son*)
Kristen (*Cassell's daughter*)
David LaValle (*Fr.'s cousin*)
Eileen Libb (*Royhab*)
Helen Lis
Walter Litzie (*Fr.'s cousin*)
Maria (*Terrie's mom*)
Greg Mazur
Jim Mazur
Judy Mazurik (*Paul Mazurik's*)
Baby Stella Miller
Katelyn Pipenur (*Niece of Jean*)

Helen Jean Rofkar (*Elchisco*)
Joe Rose
Margaret Rose
Steven Schirtzinger (*Soski*)
Christy Schutt (*Joe's sister*)
Peter Truta (*Jean H's cousin*)
Diane Tryon
Greg Tryon
Christine Twarek
Valentin (*Cassell*)
Bob Whitham (*Fr's cousin*)
Katie and her newborn Bodhi
(*Cassell's daughter-in-law*)

Other Requests:

Alexia
George Bicheler
Dick Biro (*Natalie's friend*)
Anna Burch (*Wayne's friend*)
Mary Ann Cook (*Twarek*)
Bob Cook (*Twarek*)
Danielle (*Cassell's friend*)
Ben Franklin (*Laura friend*)
Theodore Geletka
(*St. Michael Broadview Heights'*
choir director)
Brad George (*Christi's friend*)
Donald Gresh (*Basil*)
Elliot Joy (*Police chief's son*)
Tommy Leonchik (*Fr's friend*)
Jake Lipstraw (*Twarek*)
Andy Kukay (*Village resident*)
Anna Maiani (*Friend of Wayne*)
Pauline Meath (*Fr's*)
Charlie Nowak (*Avery's*)
Beth Reinhard (*Diane friend*)
Elvis Reyes (*Fr's friend*)
Sandy Scafaria (*friend of Jean*)
Matthew Sterling (*Tyron*)
Janice Timko
Becky Yatsko (*Twarek*)
Rachel (*Darlene M.*)
Bonnie (*Cassell*)
Kim (*Cassell*)
Sharon (*Cassell*)
Susan (*Cassell*)
Dominic (*Cassell*)
Allison Spoerl (*Cassell*)

Mat. Carley & her unborn
baby (*Cathedral in Chicago*)
Elizabeth McDonald & her
unborn Baby (*Fr's friend*)

Military:

Craig Cassell
Nathan Brown

Captives:

Metropolitan Paul
(*Orthodox Archdiocese of
Aleppo*)
Archbishop John
(*Syriac Archdiocese of
Aleppo*)
The UN & IOCC humanitar-
ian aid workers in & around
Syria; Those suffering perse-
cution in Iraq, Syria, Israel,
Egypt, Ukraine and through-
out the world

*NOTE: Please let Fr. Andrew
know when someone needs to*

For Your Prayers

Julia Guzy (95 ½ yrs old)
1601 Church Rd
Marblehead, OH 43440

Please remember her & Susan
(her daughter) in your prayers.
Send a card of greeting.

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon meets with His Eminence, Archbishop Elpidophoros

On Wednesday, August 14, 2019, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon [met with His Eminence, Archbishop Elpidophoros](#) of the [Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America](#). Having been in Cappadocia with His All Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew during the time of the enthronement of Archbishop Elpidophoros, this was the first opportunity for His Beatitude to personally greet and congratulate His Eminence on his enthronement.

During the morning visit, His Beatitude and His Eminence discussed current relations and areas of future collaboration between the Orthodox Church in America and the Greek Archdiocese of America, and others matters of mutual interest.

His Beatitude was accompanied by Archpriest Alexander Rentel, Chancellor of the Orthodox Church in America and Archdeacon Joseph Matusiak.



PILGRIMAGE TO ALASKA 2020 DIOCESE OF THE MIDWEST

When: August 19-25, 2020

Cost: \$2,525 per person / Single add \$675

Join your fellow Orthodox believers in the 50th Anniversary celebrations of St. Herman of Alaska's canonization and the 50th Anniversary of the OCA'S autocephaly in 2020. There will be weekly trips to Alaska over the summer of 2020 sponsored by each of the dioceses of the OCA. This will be a special trip for all Orthodox believers.

Includes:

- *6 days/5 nights accommodation
- *round trip air to Kodiak from Anchorage
- *Excursion to Spruce Island
- *Touring and sight seeing as listed in itinerary
- *Daily breakfast

Visit website for complete details and register. Space is limited.

Call 713-688-6793 or visit

www.culturallycreativetravel.com/pilgrimage-to-alaska-2020

See flier on bulletin board in church basement.

PRAY FOR OUR CATECHUMENS

Tim Heffernan
Luke Welch
Tristen Welch

Rachael Adamcio
Lydia Welch

Possible Catechumans:

Loreen Welch Cheyenne Welch

May God & the Holy Spirit guide them in their journey in the Orthodox Church and the Orthodox way of Life.

SEPTEMBER CELEBRATIONS

ANNIVERSARY	BIRTHDAY NAMESDAY	
3- Frank & Crystal Batura 11- David & Roddie Mazurik 11- Wayne & Heidi Golob 13- Sam & Angie Dardovski 13- Fr. Peter Zarynow priestly ann. 13- Tom & Jean Hileman 24- Mike & Diane Tryon 9-28-1990: Retired Bishop Lazar of Ottawa	1-Denny Bird 2- Julia Guzy 5-Chico Elcisko 11- Fr. John Beskid 18- Fr. David Lis 19- Cooper Kowal 20- Fr. Matthew Moriak 20- Charisse Hileman 23- Rita Mazur 25- Nikki Twarek 25- Noah Adamcio 30- Jaxson Monschein	9-9: Retired Metropolitan Theodosius 9-30: Archbishop Michael of NY & NJ

If there are those names to be added or removed, please contact Fr. Andrew. He would like to list all members of your family Orthodox and non-Orthodox.

SEPTEMBER REPOSED LIST

2- David Douglas (2015) 4- John Mataleska (1986) 4- Archpriest John Grandziuk (1947) Former Pastor 5- Archpriest Michael Dziama (1944) Former Pastor 6- Anna Dahulich (2017) 14- Archpriest George Breyan (2009) Former Pastor 14- Mary Kamiotis (2017)	15- Peter Rindfleisch (2006) 16- John George Mazurik (1997) 18- Bernie Labouda (2018) 20- Nora Bird (2017) 21- Joseph Mazur (2002) 27- Michael Ittescu (1968) 27- Alison Pickney (2017)	27- Karen Milano (2017) 28- William Felenchak (1977) 30- Bishop John Martin (1984) William Rose (1980) Joseph L. Mazurik (1944) Anna Mazur (1945) Anna Danchisen (1945)
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WEEKLY VIGILS- AUGUST 18

Susan Guzy (4) Special intentions

Janice Timko (1) In Blessed and loving memory of my precious parents Sophia and Peter Monak, August 21st, Mother's Anniversary. "Vechnaya Pamyat!"

Jim Mazur(2) health of family and friends

Cheryl Ressetar (2) For Roman Rakowsky & Kim Laurello

WEEKLY VIGILS- AUGUST 25

Laura Kovach (3) safe travels for family, health of Joe, Joe, Dana, Jessica, Special intentions

Sandy Martin (1) Special intentions

Jim Mazur(2) health of family and friends

Darlene, Nick and Gabe Mazurik (2) special intentions

David and Roddie Mazurik (4) special intentions

Joseph and Valerie Schutt (3) Joe said that this was from previous for Howard Bailey

Twarek (6) In loving memory of Aunt Martha (8/23), In loving memory of Sue, Health and recovery to Liz, Christine, MaryAnn and Bob, Health of Joe, Sonya, Julia, Diane, Stella, Ron, Steve, John, Becky, Jake, Helen, special intentions, special intentions

US Parishes Prepare for Disaster with International Orthodox Christian Charities' Homefront Program

[International Orthodox Christian Charities](#) (IOCC) has expanded its Homefront program, equipping Orthodox parishes across the country to plan ahead and respond effectively when disasters arise.

The Orthodox Homefront comprises parishes that have undertaken disaster preparedness planning so they can help avert disasters and effectively respond when disasters arise. Homefront parishes are equipped to open their doors to the larger community as distribution centers or shelters, for example; they might house teams of volunteers working nearby or meet other community needs in an emergency.

Homefront training guides parishes through step-by-step preparation for and potential response to incidents that could disrupt an area or the parish's own activities. Lay leadership, in consultation with the clergy, plays a prominent role in preparation, and the Homefront connects parishes to a network of agencies involved in emergency management that includes IOCC itself. The training involves, among other activities, creating a parish preparedness plan, conducting risk assessments, evaluating vulnerabilities, and taking steps to reduce them. Over 50 parishes nationwide have completed the training so far.

"By thinking through their resources, whether that's people or facilities, Homefront parishes lay the groundwork for truly effective service when an emergency happens," said Daniel Christopoulos, IOCC's US Country Representative. "Preparing in a systematic way strengthens both the parish community at the local level and the national network that IOCC relies on to move quickly when we need to respond here at home."

The Orthodox Homefront is part of IOCC's US Program, which since 2001 has provided more than \$60 million in aid and gifts in kind, plus over 55,000 volunteer hours of service, to survivors of disasters across the United States. Parishes interested in learning more about the Homefront may contact IOCC's US field office at 952-930-3286.

To support IOCC's work with a financial gift, please [contact IOCC online](#) or by phone (877.803.4622).

International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) is the humanitarian and development agency of the [Assembly of Canonical Bishops of the United States of America](#). Since its inception in 1992, IOCC has provided more than \$692 million in humanitarian relief and sustainable development programs in over 60 countries worldwide. Today, IOCC applies its expertise in humanitarian response to natural and manmade crises in Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and the United States, offering assistance based solely on need. Learn more at [iocc.org](#) and follow @IOCCRelief on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook.

Notes from Undergrad Halls: On Nihilism, Mysticism and Genuine Christianity By Fr. Steven Kostoff

I was pleasantly surprised - if not startled - on my first day back to XU for the Fall semester this past Monday. As I approached my classroom, a student actually approached me with the greeting, "Hello, Fr. Kostoff." He then went on to introduce himself and tell me that he is in my class for the upcoming semester and so forth. The pleasant surprise was the simple fact that a student actually greeted me in the hallway. As I have commented before, it seems as if every single student roaming or standing in the hallway has his/her face buried in their smartphones, more-or-less oblivious to the world around them, including fellow human beings such as myself. So I am programmed not to disturb this intense concentration and I simply stand aside as an observer of the student traffic as I await my turn to enter the designated classroom.

This semester I am teaching my course on Christian Mysticism. This, in turn, allows me to essentially teach a course on Orthodox Spirituality. After the preliminary introductions and class description that I have prepared, my students are always asked to answer four questions before we depart from this opening session. The primary question is: "What *is* Christian Mysticism?" These initial answers are not at all promising. Past experience has braced me to maintain a level of modest expectations as related to this question. Most students simply write: "I do not know," thus economizing on their time and brain energy. Some take a stab at it. One answer read as follows: "Christian mysticism is a disbelief or skepticism of some aspect of Christianity." This one I had

OCA represented at enthronement anniversary celebration of Metropolitan Onufry of Kyiv

With the blessing of His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon, and the invitation of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Onufry of Kyiv, His Eminence, Archbishop of Benjamin of San Francisco and the Diocese of the West and Fr. Daniel Andrejuk traveled to Kyiv, Ukraine, August 16-20, 2019. Archbishop Benjamin represented Metropolitan Tikhon here at the celebrations for the fifth anniversary of the enthronement of Metropolitan Onufry as metropolitan of Kiev. On August 17, Archbishop Benjamin concelebrated with Metropolitan Onufry and other hierarchs of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church at the Divine Liturgy. On behalf of Metropolitan Tikhon, Archbishop Benjamin presented Metropolitan Onufry with an icon and relics of Saint Herman of Alaska at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, and read a letter of congratulations to Metropolitan Onufry from Metropolitan Tikhon, the text of which appears below.

After the Liturgy, Archbishop Benjamin and Fr. Daniel had the opportunity to meet privately with Metropolitan Onufry where they discussed matters of common interests and the possibility of future collaboration.

A photo gallery can be viewed on the OCA [website](#) and [Facebook page](#).

Congratulatory Greeting of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon to His Beatitude, Metropolitan Onufry of Kyiv and All Ukraine Saturday, August 17, 2019

Your Beatitude, Dear Brother and Concelebrant in the Lord's Mysteries:
Christ is in our midst!

With joy in the Lord Jesus Christ, I congratulate you on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of your enthronement as Metropolitan of Kyiv and All Ukraine. May our Lord, through the intercessions of his Holy Mother and all the Saints, always guide your service to the Church, and may His light be found to shine in the pastoral labors you do in His Name.

I ask you to receive His Eminence, Archbishop Benjamin of San Francisco, and Archpriest Daniel Andrejuk as representatives of the Orthodox Church in America for this festive event. May their presence, together with the company of all the clergy and faithful gathered with you on this day, inspire and invigorate you and your leadership of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. May the Orthodox of Ukraine in turn, by your example, abide in true Christian love, following the commandment "which we have had from the beginning: that we love one another" (2 John 5).

Many years, Dear Vladyka.

With warmest regards and best wishes in Christ,
+TIKHON

Archbishop of Washington

Metropolitan of All America and Canada

Fr. Steven con't

in the next class session, so as to minimize that particular student's misunderstanding of the content of the class that he (or his parents) are paying for. Yet, one young woman struck a good chord with the following response: "Christian mysticism is the study of the deeper parts of Christianity that are not evident in the outer rites and rituals." Not the whole picture, but a solid starting point from which to begin. A fourth and final question is simply: "What is your religious background?" This serves to give me some context as to where my students "are coming from." This usually yields a round of "Roman Catholic, though no longer practicing;" "Haven't figured it out yet;" and the occasional odd one, such as "non-denominational, non-congregational." What was quite interesting here, though, was the response of the respectful student from our earlier pleasant hallway conversation. He wrote: "Existential nihilist/Buddhist!" That would not have been my first guess. Hope he understands what he is in for in this class! On further reflection I would say that it is not that difficult to label oneself a "nihilist" when only twenty years old. Especially if life has not posed too many challenges as of yet. Mortality is a distant and perhaps abstract fear and the real existential dread of living in a meaningless universe may not just "kick in" until somewhat later in life. And then it all gets a bit more serious. In a strange way, there is a certain romanticism connected with the notion of nihilism. *Con't Pg 8*

Fr. Steve Con't

Or perhaps there is something “heroic” about staring into the abyss. (Also probably a good deal of posturing involved). Recent studies show that one’s brain does not fully develop until about the age of twenty-five. So, hope remains. As to combining nihilism and Buddhism, a good case could be made for the compatibility of the two. Many Buddhist scholars would loosely define - or liken - *Nirvana* to extinguishing a candle. All suffering and reincarnation are over - but is there then “nothing?” Buddhism may just be the world’s noble form of nihilism. Be that as it may, I am sure that my student and I will enjoy each other’s company this semester. He seems very bright and serious. Haven’t seen him on his smartphone yet.

The primary text that I assign for the course is *The Roots of Christian Mysticism* written and edited by Olivier Clement. This has already been accorded the status of a “classic” in Orthodox circles, and deservedly so. On the parish level, we recently read this book together in one of our education classes. In this book, Clement has amassed a collection of the classic spiritual texts from the great Fathers up to the eighth century, something of the “golden age” of patristic theology. He has arranged them thematically, taking the reader through the rigors of asceticism to the riches of contemplation. Clement has included wonderful texts about Baptism and Eucharist, and of course about prayer. The *Preface* of the book, written by a certain French writer by the name of Jean-Claude Barreau, has some deeply challenging thoughts that any “nihilist” or “skeptic” should also ponder. Yet, his first round of challenging thoughts are directed to the Christian churches, and we need to hear this also:

While our consumer society has lost all feeling for mysticism, on the fringes there are thousands of people thirsting for it. When we see the shallow syncretism, the sentimental fascinations with anything Eastern, and the bogus “gurus” crowding round for the pickings, it is easy to sneer. But instead of laughing the Churches ought to be examining their consciences. Whose fault is it that so many have to resort to Tao or Zen in order to rediscover truths which were actually part of the Christian heritage right from the beginning? Who has hidden from them the fact that of all Oriental religions Christianity is the best and most complete; that mysticism is as necessary to humanity as science, if not

more so? Intellectual research may be exciting, but it will not lead us to the secret of life. Nor will the truth be found through consumerism, though of course we must eat. (*Roots of Christian Mysticism*, Preface, p. 7)

Fr. Schmemmann always like to quote I Peter 4:17, “For the time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God.” Barreau then unapologetically makes a short but compelling case for the deeper truths of our human nature only revealed in their fulness through the Christian revelation:

The human being is a craftsman - *faber* - and rational - *sapiens* - qualities which we share with the higher animals (the difference between us being one of degree and not of kind), but more importantly than that, we are mystical. In other words our roots are in fact religious and artistic, and therefore non-rational, or rather supra-rational. As soon as our material needs are satisfied, deeper needs assert themselves. It is now twenty centuries since Jesus declared that ‘man does not live by bread alone,’ and we know today that not even the most effective psychoanalytical treatment can cure us of a deep sense of disquiet within us. There is not a superman or revolutionary who is not beset by unappeased desires. The Fathers of the Christian Church, for whom prayer was as natural as breathing, discovered this truth before we did, saying, ‘Birds fly, fishes swim and man prays.’ ... For mysticism is an existential attitude, a way of living at a greater depth. (p. 7-8)

Olivier Clement himself begins his Introduction with equally challenging and compelling thought: “Not only is Christianity something strange to people today, but it cannot even attract by its strangeness, because people are familiar with the distortions and caricatures of it which are constantly being hawked about.” (p. 9)

I find that statement by Clement to ring loud and clear in today’s contemporary climate here in America. For the simple reason that so many “distortions and caricatures” of genuine Christianity are obscuring the real thing. How can we expect our “younger generation” to be even slightly attracted to the current politicized, moralizing and, frankly, judgmental Christianity that is loudly proclaiming itself? Christianity is being used

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