



LET ME MAKE A GOOD BEGINNING...

IF YOU WISH to save your soul and win eternal life, arise from your lethargy, make the sign of the Cross and say: *In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Faith comes not through pondering but through action. We never reach a goal by just sitting in comfort and waiting, say the Holy Fathers. Let the Prodigal Son be our example. *He arose and came* (LK 15:20).

Through His incarnation God gave us the model for a holy life and recalled us from our ancient fall. In addition to many other things, He taught us, feeble as we are, that we should fight against the demons with humility, fasting, prayer and watchfulness.

~ St Hesychios the Priest, *On Watchfulness, The Philokalia*

In baptism you received the command to wage the invisible warfare against the enemies of your soul; take it up now. You must begin again from the beginning: for you have let the purity you received in baptism be sullied in dire fashion.

This moment, the instant you make your resolution, you will show by your action that you have taken leave of your old self and have now begun a new life, with a new destination and a new way of living. Arise, therefore, without fear and say: *Lord, let me begin now. Help me!* For what you need above all is God's help . . .

The new life you have just entered has often been likened to that of a gardener. The garden we have undertaken to tend and watch over is the field of our own heart; the harvest is

eternal life. Night and day the heavenly seed sprouts in your heart and grows, you know not how. The earth produces of itself — your heart's soil — first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear (MK 4:27-28) . . .

The more the rain falls on the earth, the softer it makes it; similarly, Christ's holy name gladdens the earth of our heart the more we call upon it.

~ St Hesychios the Priest, *On Watchfulness, The Philokalia*

The narrow way has no end: its quality is eternity. There every moment is a beginning — the present includes the future, the day of judgment; the present includes the past: creation; for Christ is timelessly present everywhere, both in hell and in heaven... now and here and everywhere, in the depths of your heart. There you meet what you sought: the depth and height and breadth of the Cross: the Saviour and Salvation.



Therefore, arise moment by moment, bless yourself with the sign of the Cross and say: *'Let me, Lord, make a good beginning'*, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

~ From **Way of the Ascetics**,
by Tito Colliander

LOVE, AS MUCH AS YOU ARE ABLE,

the desert [of Great Lent] and throw, as much as you can, your material possessions into the courtyards of the poor. Simplify your life, as much as you can, in order to be free from worldly stress, in order that your life may have meaning.

~ **St. Paisios the Athonite** (†1994)

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GREAT LENT 2024

The Journey to Pascha



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Fr. Steven C. Kostoff, Rector

4285 Ashland Ave., Cincinnati OH 45212
513-351-0907 • www.christthesavioroca.org