



A humble message of encouraging love

“Beyond the Jordan” and “Before the Jordan”

† *Metropolitan Cyprian
of Oropos and Phyle*

As you know, in the Orthodox Church the whole of Christian life has in view the “discovery” or “revelation” of the heart, which constitutes the essence of the soul and center of every human being.

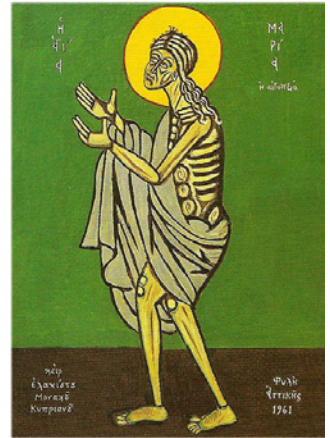
The practice of repentance contributes uniquely to this revelation, especially considering that repentance permeates every aspect of our life in Christ and gives it value.

Repentance, joyful mourning, gladsome sorrow, and the small or great labors involved therein soften our innermost being and bring our heart to the surface.

Very aptly has it been written that the phrase “enter your heart and you will find repose” encapsulates the entire theology of the hesychastic tradition.

The cultivation of repentance gives birth to a humble mind-set and self-reproach. Some brave souls do not lose an opportunity to cultivate self-reproach, which leads to—or rather constitutes—the dawn of the day in which we discover our heart.

Those who are weaker in spirit should not be discouraged or fright-



ened; for them there are other, simpler ways by which a spirit of humility is cultivated and the longed-for day comes to dawn.

Let such souls delight in the gifts of Christ to us, in which we are veritably bathed.

Our very existence, the daily blessings from Heaven, the beauty of nature, and so many other things prompt us to send up unceasing glorification and thanksgiving to our Lord, and they fill us with humble thoughts and humble feelings, which are indispensable preconditions for the revelation of our heart.

A constant inner cry of “Glory to Thee, O God!” can take the place of many labors and feats of asceticism, and our road is travelled more quickly and easily.

St. Mary of Egypt calls us to repentance, but the labors “beyond the Jordan” are not for everyone; there are also labors and methods “before the Jordan,” of most people are capable.

You will remember that the city of Jericho lies before the Jordan. It was in this city that Zacchaeus, the chief among the publicans, humbled himself—not by descending, not by a toilsome and rugged descent of ascetic humility, but simply by climbing up a sycamore tree.

Such humility, by means of ascent, constitutes a model of raising our souls to love of God through gratitude, thanksgiving, and glorification.

A grateful person humbles himself; one who is humble is brought to contrition; one who is contrite sheds tears; one who sheds tears repents; and one who repents discovers his heart.

Your hearts will reveal to you the rest...

*To the Nuns
September 21, 2012 (Old Style)*

