

The Vigilant Heart and Satan's Three Leviathans*

“Quench not the Spirit.”
(I Thessalonians 5:19)

Beloved Children in the Lord:

I PRAY THAT, in the new Year of Salvation 2005, we may continue our journey toward deification with renewed zeal and spiritual fervor, by the grace of the most blessed *Theotokos*, which directs and which strengthens us.

The Saints and the God-bearing Fathers teach us with particular constancy that “we have need of nothing but a vigilant heart,” that is to say, that we need nothing in order to maintain the light of the Holy Spirit unquenched within us, save a heart which is in a state of unceasing vigilance, celerity, and attention.

Experience has shown that, if a man fails to guard his heart with attention and care, he is then dominated by *demonic lethe*. Thereafter, there reigns within him gloomy *ignorance*, which ultimately leads him into deadly *negligence*.

For the pious Christian, who has been vouchsafed the experience of the Holy Spirit, there is no state more horrific than that in which “the thrice-gloomy darkness of ignorance” comes to rest on the three faculties of the soul.

For it is then that the consolation of the Divine Comforter has departed; the fervor of the soul has been lost; and that Satan’s three leviathans—*lethe*, *ignorance*, and *negligence*—have enslaved the sovereign mind. Spiritual darkness increases, and man becomes prey to the most hateful passions.

Hence, the lamp of our heart demands constant care, that it might be kept ever bright and warm. In constant wakefulness, let us fuel the fire with the oil of Grace and the wood of virtuous deeds, for, as the Holy Elders were wont to say, “our work is the burning of such wood.”

The Saints exhort us: “Do not hide and conceal the spark of Divine Grace in the earth and ashes of the passions, or of worldly cares; rather, add kindling



and wood to this spark and, fanning it with eagerness and love, ignite from it a large flame.”

Let mindfulness in Christ dispel forgetfulness (lethe); let Divine knowledge expel ignorance; let blessed eagerness break the bonds of sloth; through prayer and the Mysteries, let the fire of the Comforter warm our hearts, such that the demons might be consumed, the mind enlightened, and, through it, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit made to reign in our beings. Amen.

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***Source:** *Orthodox Tradition*, Vol. XXII, Number 1, (2005) pp. 2-3.