

The Divine Transfiguration and Orthodox Hesychasm

*Your Eminence, Metropolitan Vlasie,
Most Holy Hierarchs and Reverend Shepherds of the
Old Calendar Orthodox Church in Romania:*

With profound emotion and inexpressible joy in the Holy Spirit, I convey to you the blameless kiss of love, peace, and of our unity in Christ from our blessed homeland of Greece, where the Apostles once trod.

Our Much-Revered Elder, Guide, and Metropolitan, who bears the seal of Christ, as well as the entire Hierarchy of our Holy Synod in Resistance in Greece, embrace your Episcopacy with a holy kiss and, through you, we embrace your most reverend clergy, venerable monks and nuns, and your most pious flock.

a. Glory to God for all things!

We have been vouchsafed to ascend from the fragrant vale of our Saint-bearing homeland to a lofty mountain, to sweet-scented Romania.

We mentally behold our Transfigured Savior on this Divinely-glorified mountain, in the midst of two new Prophets of the new people of Grace: St. Niphon Dionysiates and St. Paissy (Velichkovsky).

- The former lived in the fifteenth century, served as Patriarch of Constantinople three times (1486-1488, 1497-1498, 1502) and as Metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia (1498-1505), at which time he acted as another Apostle in modern Romania and literally saved Orthodoxy in Moldo-Wallachia.

His legacy is Apostolic, Patristic, Hesychastic, and anti-Papist; that is, it lies fully within the spirit of genuine Orthodox Tradition.

- This salvific legacy was renewed by the second new prophet, St. Paissy, who lived in the eighteenth century, acting as a God-bearing *Staretz*, here in Moldavia, for the last thirty years of his life (1763-1794).

b. These two leading figures of Romanian Orthodoxy, transfigured in the Uncreated Light of Mt. Tabor, inspire us today, on the Dominical Feast of the Transfiguration.

They inspire, teach, guide, and exhort us: “If you want to call us your Fathers, emulate our lives and actions.”

These boasts of Romania, St. Niphon and *Staretz* Paissy, had Orthodox Hesychasm, the ethos of the *Philokalia*, purification, illumination, deification, noetic activity, and the prayer of the heart as the center of their lives.

- Only by means of Orthodox Hesychasm and the Eucharistic life is a person able to be transfigured in the Uncreated Light of the Holy Trinity and, moreover, to incarnate the great Mystery of Love, in the image of the Holy Trinity, in his social surroundings.

I humbly remind you that St. Sergey of Radonezh (1314-1392)—that great figure of Russian Orthodoxy—dedicated his celebrated monastery to the Holy Trinity, precisely because he wanted his monks to show mutual love among themselves, just as is the case among the three Divine Persons in uncreated reality.

- God is not just one Person, existing alone, but three Persons, each of Whom participates in the life of the others with perfect love; that is, God exists as Love, as a communion of Persons.

Precisely the same thing must take place with man: He is an authentic person only when he has been transfigured in the Uncreated Light of the Transfiguration and shares his being with others, departing from the bounds of his egocentrism for the sake of love for his neighbor and living in a communion of love with others.

c. In practical terms, our personal transfiguration means activating the Divine gifts of the Comforter, which gifts sealed our innermost being, our heart, when we received Holy Chrismation.

Christian asceticism and prayer of the heart rekindle these Divine gifts, illumine us, and lead us to the vision and knowledge of God, to right belief, to the heart of Orthodoxy, far from delusions and heresies.

- Such is the legacy of Sts. Niphon and Paissy, who stand on either side of our Glorified Savior on the high mountain of blessed Romania, leading us on the path of our personal transfiguration.

“Shine forth on us,” O Christ our Master, “Thine eternal light,

through the intercessions of the *Theotokos* and of Sts. Niphon and Paissy. O Giver of Light, glory to Thee!”

Holy Monastery of the
Transfiguration of our Savior,
Slătioara, Romania

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Transfiguration of our Savior

† *Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi*