THE HOLY AND GREAT FAST

Fully Bathed in the Light of the Resurrection

“Walk as children of light” • “he that loveth his brother abideth in the light”
(Ephesians 5:8; I St. John 2:19)

A

Let us rediscover the true meaning of asceticism:
• a joyous rejection of what is beyond what one needs
• the sharing of what is excess with the poor
• the continuous glorification and appreciation of God
• a Godly orientation “towards the Other”—towards our Lord, our brother, towards all creation—with reverence and dutifully.

B

Let us not forget: • without love, no act of asceticism will lead us to the Great Encounter, to the Nuptial Mystery of our union with Christ...!
• We will be brought to judgment first and foremost “for negligence in things virtuous and for not having loved our neighbor.”

C

The Holy Ascetic Saint Theodore dwelled atop a pillar (as a Stylite) for forty-eight years.
• To his naive question about his “future recompense,” a Holy Angel informed him:
• “It will be the same as the recompense of a certain actor in Damascus, who gave away all of his possessions to a poor woman...!”

D.

“The Devil does not eat, drink, or marry....!
• And he, who is technically the greatest ascetic, is not, for all that, any less a demon”!

E.

Let us constantly direct our asceticism towards its main purpose:
• purity of the heart and its receptivity to love, that it might be filled with the Light of the Resurrection!

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