



■ Let opportunities not be wasted

The Lord Guides Us To Heaven By Means of Patience In Works of Love*

It was a funny sort of coenobium, if not exactly original. **K**yra [Mrs.] Basilike, who was a widow, and her younger sister Maria, who had never married, were in their sixties and lived together. **U**pon the death of their brother, they took in their sister-in-law, Kyra-Olga, “so that she would not be alone in her old age too.”

Together they would go to Church and to the market, together they would drink coffee on the balcony. **A**t least, that is how it was at first.

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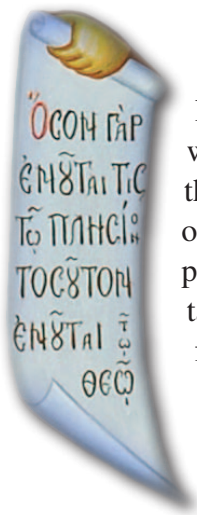
After a few months, things started to go awry. **K**yra-Olga was crotchety. **O**r so she seemed to them. **T**he two sisters simply could not get used to her. **T**here was always something she would dirty a bit, she never seemed to help out enough.... **T**he coenobium did not last even a year.

After eleven months, they told her to go back home, now that she had supposedly “gotten over her mourning.” **T**he parting was not without some unpleasant insinuations on either side.

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In the afternoon, the two sisters would sit leisurely in their living room. **K**yra-Basilike would knit, while Maria would read aloud from an edifying book.

“Listen here, Basilike, how nicely the Elder puts it: ‘If at some point Christ were to send us an Angel to ask us to change our lives and repent, we would certainly accept to do so. **I**f, on the other hand,



instead of an Angel He sent us our ‘neighbor’ (and especially if it were precisely the person whom we do not love and who makes our life difficult), then most likely we would not repent. **W**e might even lash out at him. **A**nd thus the opportunity that God has given us to understand our sins would be wasted. **W**asted on us would be the person whom the Lord sent to be a burden to us, thereby taking us by the hand and leading us, by means of our forbearance, to the Kingdom of Heaven....”

“**I**ndeed, very nice!” Kyra-Basilike murmured, nodding her head pensively. **S**he then took up her knitting again, with a satisfied contentedness.

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Not for a fraction of a second did it cross their minds that the passage had anything to do with them at all.



(*) Source: “Consolation and Edification,” vol. VI (December 2014 - February 2015), p. 2, from the book *As Much As You Can* [in Greek] by Basiles Argyriades (Athens: Ekdoseis “En plo,” 2013), p. 17.