

## Orthodox Dogma and “Sin Nature”.

A question from a prisoner in a Texas prison.

Priest Seraphim Holland PO 37 McKinney, TX 75070

May 20/June 2. 2017 Martyrs: Thalaleas, Alexander and Asterias (+ C. 284).

Dear -----: I am concerned about your confusion about the “Sin nature” vs the “fallen nature”, and all things pertaining to this subject. I think it is a “rabbit trail”. Delving into Theology, especially for those of us who are not theologians (the famous definition is that a theologian is one who prays, and we poor ones barely pray!) is distracting, and can be dangerous.

The most important and stupendous news in your letter was your battle against your **fallen nature** and recent great successes. This made me very happy, and it is what I want you to focus on.

Since you wrote me about this subtle theology, and my answer confused you, because I was not very precise, I have done some research, and will try to answer you as best as I can. No matter what I say, I want you to understand the main point of all of this – Jesus Christ became man so that our nature could be completely united to God, and we would have only peace in our hearts - only fire, and no coldness - only light and no darkness. This will fulfil our destiny, and the reason for our creation. We obtain this “one thing needful” by struggle against our passions, faith in God, repentance, prayer that increasingly is in our heart, and of course, only with grace helping us in everything.

Your question, transcribed from your handwritten letter, follows.

“Do you remember when I asked you about whether we have a sin nature or not? I told a class that early Christianity also as well as Orthodoxy does not believe that man is born with a sin nature. In our discussion you told me that, “Yes, we are born with a sin nature, which is evident in babies etc.”. I felt my understandings from all that I have read in Orthodox material was correct in my assessment stated in class, although most of our material doesn't specifically say “no we were not born with a sin nature”.

It does lead you to understand it as such until the next day I was reading a scripture from one of our class's books which comes from the NIV version. It was Romans 7:18 and it stated “I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature, for I have the desire to do what is good but I cannot carry it out.” This verse with the actual word “sinful nature” made me wonder why I thought I was wrong in my previous understanding (that we are not born with a “sin nature”), if it says it in scripture then what I hope I was misunderstanding, especially disagreeing in front of the class.

So, I wanted to see what Orthodox study notes say exactly about this verse so when I turned to Roman 7:17 and read the notes in the Orthodox Study Bible my heart fell. Fr Seraphim, it does say that the Orthodox Church rejects any teaching that man has a sin nature. I have tried to find it say this in our Orthodox dogmatic theology book but it was nowhere to be found except in concerning evil and sin on page 169 note 15. It states that from Adam we have indeed inherited our tendency towards sin, together with death and corruption that now that is now part of our sinful nature but we have not inherited the guilt of Adam's personal sin.

I completely understood that we don't agree with the Roman Church that we inherited Adam's guilt and that we are not totally depraved to the core but how do we correctly use the term sinful nature? Is it past tense in the sense of understanding the term as the world around us is sinful by nature, or we and our nature of good are born into a world that corrupts our good nature thus becoming a sinful nature, or do we like the study Bible States, reject any teaching that man has a sin nature either before death, during our birth, after our birth.

Why and what context was Father Michael Pomazanski using this term “sinful nature”?

I'm very disturbed by all of this. Are the Orthodox Study Bible and Orthodox dogmatic theology contradicting each other or what?”

I am sometimes too practical for those delving in the abyss of theology. All I care about is the following, because I experience it! It is clear that I am inclined towards sin. I do some things I do not want to do. I do not do some things I want to do! Even the holy Apostle Paul agree that this is a problem of the human condition. I cannot on my own overcome my corrupted, *fallen nature*, but my nature can be transformed, as I repent, and struggle, and grace fills me. Of course, we are not born “guilty” – almost any Orthodox Christian knows that, but we get “guilty” soon enough. We are not born with sin, but we are attracted to sin, because of the corruption of our flesh. Any struggling Christian feels this corruption in the depths of his being, and fights it.

The term “sinful nature” is a “loaded” Protestant term. I do not think we should use it. I am sorry that I did not make this clear, and made the mistake of using it, even though I was describing to you our “*fallen nature*”, or “corrupted nature”.

We should not use the term "sin nature" or "sinful nature" at all. It has a specific meaning within Protestant thought and those who can be confused by them, since we are exposed to their toxic theology, born outside of the church, and we are men with passions and therefore are easily confused when examining the deep abyss of incarnational theology. It means among many, a human is so sinful that he cannot even will to accept the Gospel. This idea, called “total depravity” in Calvinist circles, but coloring the theology even of those who do not accept Calvinism officially, is a lie from the great liar, Satan. Thinking on this term too much could make one believe that man is fundamentally flawed in his nature.

Remember that what God made, He labeled “good”. He made us in His image, in order to obtain His likeness, and there is nothing sinful in His nature. Our nature itself is always good, even if corrupted, just like the fact that we are made in the image of God is not removed, even if marred, by our sin (corruption from Adam) and our sins (those that we commit).

Forgive me: the NIV should always be avoided. It is well known for its interpretive translations rather than a word/phrase/concept translation. RSVCE & NASB are much better here, and my favorite. The translation by the Holy Apostle’s convert. We must be careful when reading translations of the bible from those who are not in the church, and therefore, not nurtured by the mind of the church, and the Holy Fathers, and of course, grace.

A friend of mine, not Orthodox by the way (I think of him as “pre-Orthodox”), but with an Orthodox daughter, whom I baptized, expresses the thought I am trying to express:

“NIV translators translated “sark” as “sinful nature” because of the difficulties posed (for their theology, comment by Priest Seraphim) if they translated it as “flesh”. Reading “sark” as “flesh” in that verse can lead to Christians despising what God has made, their physical bodies (but not in for those in the church and obedient to her teachings, which make it clear that the body is never to be despised – Priest Seraphim). That was not what Paul intended. He was using “sark” in a figurative sense, to stand for this awful tendency we find in ourselves to sin.”

“Some theologians take this further to one end or another. *Such projections do not concern your prisoner or you.* Your prisoner, and you, and I, are *inclined* to sin. His problem is not where it comes from (the various theories of the theologians), but **that it is there**. He, and you, and I, need to find a rescue from this awful, pernicious tendency.”

The word for nature in Greek is “phusis” - “φύσις” - which does not appear in the verses in question. This modern mistranslation is where the confusion comes from.

Of course, you, and I know the “rescue” – faith in the God-man Jesus Christ, and struggle to live a life according to the commandments.

I understand your concern about the difference between “Orthodox Dogmatic Theology” and the “Orthodox Study Bible”. The former was written by an Orthodox Christian theologian. The latter was edited by many who had substantial spiritual formation outside of the Orthodox church. I would believe Fr Michael on his worst day, over the notes in the Orthodox Study Bible, although the latter are sometimes useful, but also, sometimes, inexplicable.

It is manifestly true that Adam and Eve “fell”, and since that time, man has a “*fallen nature*”. This is the better term, without as much “baggage” (although, one can misunderstand or twist almost anything into “baggage”). The incarnation was God

becoming man, except that Jesus Christ did not have a fallen nature, but a human nature that was *not attracted* to sin, and therefore did not sin, although his nature, being fully human, was subject to death. One could say that Jesus Christ's human nature was akin to the first Adam, in that it was not fallen and capable of perfection. It was unlike Adam's nature only in that Jesus, taking on His nature from a human being subject to death, was also subject to death.

Jesus Christ took on our nature. If it is flawed, Jesus would be flawed, and we would remain flawed. He took on our nature, but not its corruption.

We were made good, and with the ability to be good, and grow to perfection. Sin is *not a change* of our nature, just as a *disease of the body does not change the body's nature*. A disease of the body sickens it, but when the body repels the disease, the expression of its true nature, which had been suppressed by the disease, reasserts itself. The human nature was never lost or even altered, but a disease attacked it. Sin is a disease. It entered into the life of mankind after disobedience and pride, the first sins.

St Augustine has an example somewhere where he talks about an arrow. It is made straight, to fly true to the mark. If the arrow gets damp, and is stored incorrectly, it may become curved. It can no longer fly true to the mark in this condition, but it is still an arrow. A skilled craftsman can straighten the arrow, and it is again capable of fulfilling its purpose.

Remember that the scriptures promise that the God-man Jesus Christ, in His humanity would never see "corruption". He would die, but His human flesh would not corrupt – it was not fallen, because it had no attraction to sin. After Jesus died on the cross, His human flesh remained incorrupt in the tomb, awaiting its resurrection. After baptism, our nature is given the ability to become wholly incorrupt, as Jesus' human nature is. St. Cyril of Alexandria has commentary on Pentecost gospel. He speaks about human nature in this commentary. His expression is that Christ "renewed" it and "restored it to its former condition." This is the same as a doctor treating a disease. He does not change the nature of the body, but returned it to its former condition.

"For Thou wilt not abandon my soul in hades, nor wilt Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption." (Psalm 15:10, Septuagint, "Boston" Psalter)

Let's look a little at the Scripture that troubled you.

St Paul is teaching that it the *fallen flesh* that wars against our mind, which convinces us to act *against* our nature, i.e.. to sin. One can say, truly, that to sin is to be "NOT" human. The old saying: "I am only human", when explaining our sins is a lie. The actual truth is "I am not yet fully human, as the God-Man Jesus Christ is". Jesus Christ is the answer to this problem. We are fully human when we become a "perfect man" (see below). This, indeed, is our purpose, and the purpose of the incarnation – for us to become "perfect men".

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; (12) For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: (13) Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a **perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ**" Ephesians 4:11-13 KJV

Please note that in translation, below, the KJV, the words "sinful nature" never appear.

"Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. (14) For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. (15) **For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.** (16) If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that *it is good*. (17) Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. (18) For I know that **in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.** (19) For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. (20) Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. (21) **I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.** (22) **For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:** (23) **But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.** (24) O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this

death? (25) I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." Romans 7:13-25 KJV

The Christian who strives to follow God feels this "tug of war" in his members. Verse 22 should resonate in our souls (because of our EXPERIENCE) – we were made good, to love good and strive to be good, but there is another force within us – sin. God did not put sin in us. We are inclined to it. This is actually unnatural – it is "**warring against the law of (our) mind(s)**" - it is a foreign interloper.

I have tried my best, within my limited theological abilities, and with the help of some friends to explain this to you. I will end this letter with some "meat", although already "chewed" a little – an explanation of the writings of St Maximos the Confessor. This is heavy sledding, but very edifying. I am just including a few things from this explanation.

Before this, what is the take home? You and I are not acting fully human yet. We are allowing something unnatural to our nature war against us – sin. Jesus Christ became man to help us attain unto a perfect man – without sin, or darkness. We must struggle to our last breath to obtain this. God will not "give" us this condition, nor can we "earn" it. We must struggle, and our struggle will attract God's grace (that is, He will visit us, and we will experience Him), and we will become perfected.

Excerpts from "ORIGINAL SIN ACCORDING to ST. MAXIMUS THE CONFESSOR" by John Boojamra

"Maximus describes this natural movement of men towards God as being interrupted by the Original Sin and the fall. Man, by his rejection of God as the proper end of his being, submitted himself to his body, lusts, and, more especially, self-love (φιλαυτία).<sup>9</sup> In this context, evil and sin are then seen as movements outside of those appropriate to the created human nature. Sin, in Maximus' understanding, is more than a legal phenomenon and involves the realm of ontology; that is, to be "in sin" is to be inhuman."

In reading "Original sin", above, understand this to be the first sin, of Adam and Eve, and not that loaded theological term which is used to form the Latin heresies know. Also, note how SM understand sin to NOT be part of created human nature, but outside it. (ps)

The first man, according to Maximus, was created in a state of "potential perfection" in the image of God. It is this state of dynamic potentiality which is for Maximus the "*natural*" state of man; his movement was yet directed towards God. Moreover, Adam was without sin and consequently not subject to death.<sup>13</sup> Man's body, along with all of created existence, was to have possessed a fine physical mixture or balance (κράσις), a harmonious blending of separate qualities (ποιότητες), from which all changes and contradiction was excluded. He was to live in freedom from all needs, sharing in God's grace and impassibility (ἀπάθεια). In this state, the first man was to have enjoyed an unconditional vision of God.<sup>14</sup>

...

Adam, created in the *image* of God, was yet, by freely directing his nature and its powers towards God, to achieve that *likeness* promised him. Along with Adam, all created natures were to move to their respective goals (λόγοι) in the one Logos. Unhappily, Adam failed, embroiling all created existence in an unruly movement away from the Creator. The first sin rests on a deliberate choice of Adam to direct his growth or movement away from God and towards evil.<sup>15</sup> The sin for Maximus is always an "error" (παράβασις), rooted in disobedience to God.<sup>16</sup> Instead of God, the created world of sense objects became the source of his pleasure and enjoyment.<sup>17</sup> Hence, in addition to the theme of disobedience, Maximus points to the misuse of bodily sensations (αἰσθησίς), the turning of man's attention to the things of the world, or exclusively to that which is sensible (αἰσθητά), as inherent in the nature of the Original Sin.<sup>18</sup>

...

Man is truly free only when he acts in accordance with his nature; similarly, God is always totally free, since he always acts in a manner consistent with His being.

...

Maximus sees three fundamental spiritual evils resulting from the fall: ignorance, self-love and tyranny.<sup>34</sup> Ignorance (ἀγνοία) is the lack of knowledge of God as the source and end of all things. In his discussion of the Tree of Disobedience in the Prologue to *Questiones ad Thalassium*, Maximus writes that ignorance of God was the first effect of the Original Sin and resulted in the divinization of the creaturely existence and self-love (φιλαυτία).<sup>85</sup> It is self-love which leads to the fundamental fragmentation of humanity and tyranny. This tyranny (τυραννίς) expresses itself both in the disorder of the

soul, and in social oppression and inequality.<sup>36</sup> With this fall, man's role as the nexus or unifier of created existence is put aside, and disorder becomes the new pattern of created nature, self-love (*φιλαυτία*) being the mother of all vices and disunity.<sup>37</sup>

...

It is only through Christ's efforts that the vicious cycle of birth and death, pleasure and pain is overcome. For Maximus, this liberation from the law of sin and death was initially accomplished through Christ's birth by a virgin: ... In an approach strongly reminiscent of St. Ireneaus' theory of recapitulation, Maximus affirms that Christ in Himself recapitulates the Adamic life with the opposite results. The disobedience of the first Adam is cancelled by the obedience of the "second Adam," Christ.

Ok, this will give you enough to chew on, and no time to get into trouble!

May God bless you and help you in all things. I am including an article I wrote that I think applies to delving into theology, and especially discussing it. There be dragons there, and we had best beware! I take a simple approach.

---

### Useless Questions

### Prayer for others is like oxygen

### A Simple Prayer Rule

### Read the Prologue (online) everyday!

### A Simple prayer rule, complete text

[http://www.orthodox.net/full-voice/full-voice\\_2017+-theodore-the-sanctified-on-useless-questions+a-simple-and-essential-prayer-rule.doc](http://www.orthodox.net/full-voice/full-voice_2017+-theodore-the-sanctified-on-useless-questions+a-simple-and-essential-prayer-rule.doc)

[http://www.orthodox.net/full-voice/full-voice\\_2017+-theodore-the-sanctified-on-useless-questions+a-simple-and-essential-prayer-rule.pdf](http://www.orthodox.net/full-voice/full-voice_2017+-theodore-the-sanctified-on-useless-questions+a-simple-and-essential-prayer-rule.pdf)

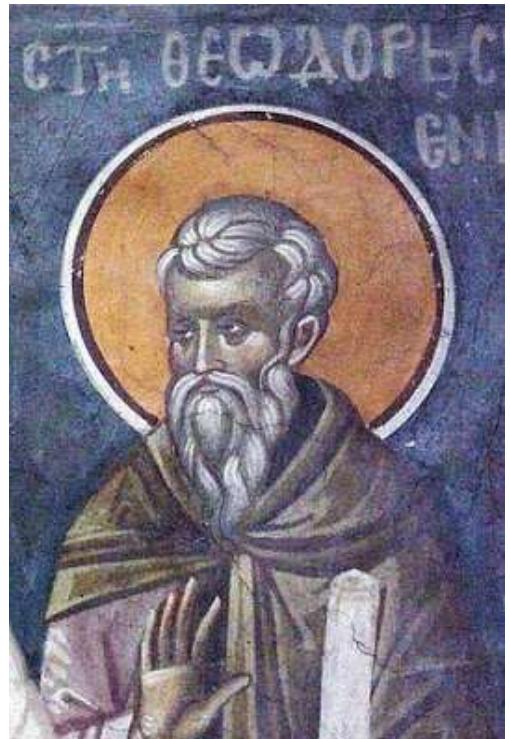
[http://www.orthodox.net/full-voice/full-voice\\_2017+-theodore-the-sanctified-on-useless-questions+a-simple-and-essential-prayer-rule.html](http://www.orthodox.net/full-voice/full-voice_2017+-theodore-the-sanctified-on-useless-questions+a-simple-and-essential-prayer-rule.html)

When Theodore the Sanctified was in Panopolis with St. Pachomius, his spiritual father, a philosopher came to him and offered to debate with him about the Faith. The philosopher then posed these three questions to Theodore: "Who was not born, but died?" "Who was born and did not die?" "Who died and did not decay?" To these questions, St. Theodore replied: "Adam was not born and died. Enoch was born and did not die. Lot's wife died and did not decay."

And the saint added this advice to the philosopher: "**Heed our sound advice; depart from these useless questions and scholastic syllogisms; draw near to Christ Whom we are serving and you will receive forgiveness of sins.**" The philosopher became mute from such a pointed answer and being ashamed, he departed. From this, the enormous difference is clearly seen between a pagan philosopher and a Christian saint. The one [the philosopher] loses himself in abstractions, in cleverly twisted words, in logical provocations and in thoughtful sport while the other [the saint] directed his whole mind on the Living God and on the salvation of his soul. The one is abstract and dead, while the other is practical and alive.

From the Prologue for today: **May 16 (5/29 on the civil calendar).** (<http://98.131.104.126/prolog/May16.htm>)

Christian life is very practical. If you do not pray, and struggle to love God and neighbor, and follow all the commandments with humility and effort, it does not matter how much philosophy



you know. Let us poor ones apply St Theodore's words to our own lives. Much in our daily life is not essential. Much is intellectually arrogant and lazy. It is not so important that we have a clever argument on Facebook or some other social media, and this is definitely corrosive to our souls if we do not pray and read the scriptures with attention and humility.

### Prayer for others is like oxygen

#### A Simple Prayer Rule

##### Applying St Theodore's words to something very practical, essential and hard – praying for others.

In my personal and pastoral experience, praying for those on my commemoration list is the most important thing that I do, and it is warfare. Thank God, I am writing these words after I have finished my morning rule. There is no substitute for effort in the Christian life. Knowing stuff and learning stuff and being able to talk about stuff is not "effort", but forcing ourselves to pray, and to read the scriptures, and to humble ourselves – this is salvific Christian effort.

Try this, if you do not have a consistent prayer rule, or do a lot of reading of "spiritual" things on unspiritual mediums, and engage in many intellectual arguments about Christianity.

Make a list of all significant people in your life. These would be those you love, and those you struggle to love, or even, perhaps (God forgive us our sins!), do not love. They include your family, friends, pastor, those you have conflicts with, those who have hurt you in the past (and when you think of them, your heart does not feel at peace), those who have asked you to pray for them, and those who have "crossed your path" and touched your heart in some way. Consider prayer for these people to be as necessary as oxygen, as food and water.

Pray for these people, at your BEST time of the day. For most people, this is the morning, unless, of course, you are getting up 15 minutes only before you need to leave for work.

Here is a *simple rule*\*:

The Trisagion prayers, then "Lord Have mercy" 12x, then "Glory... Both now...", "O Come let us worship...", the morning troparia, the 50<sup>th</sup> Psalm, the Symbol of Faith. This is all from the morning prayers, which are in the Jordanville prayer book, and any complete prayer book. If you say these prayers often, you will memorize them, and this will greatly assist your prayer. Then, for each person, make the sign of the cross, while making a low bow\*, and say: "**Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on (N)**". It is even better to make a prostration\* for each person, or at least for certain people. You are free to change things up, but try to do "less" consistently before you try to do "more".



\* **A low bow, or "poklon".** Make the sign of the cross, and as you are finishing the cross, bend at the waist, and at your knees a little, and bow your upper body and head in such a way that your right hand touches or is near to your right knee. Praying with your mind, and body is very beneficial, and increases compunction and attention.



\* **A "Prostration".** Make the sign of the cross, and as you are finishing the cross, get on your knees, and bring your face close to the ground, then stand back up. The hands should be relatively close to the knees.

**Both of these (low bow, prostration) are demonstrated here:**

<https://youtu.be/r4FaqRa1KFE>

---

**Read the Prologue (online) everyday!**

It is good to sanctify your "smart" phone by reading this essential literature (the Prologue) every day.

Go to: [http://www.rocor.org.au/?page\\_id=925](http://www.rocor.org.au/?page_id=925) or go here: <http://98.131.104.126/prolog/my.html> and select the date you want (according to the church calendar – you gotta be able to subtract 13 days from today's date on Joe's Garage Calendar, which can be a challenge before coffee in the morning)

Or, go here: <http://98.131.104.126/prolog/my.html> All links have the same text, with slightly different presentation.

I keep the previous day's entry open, and adjust the url manually. This way I do not need to do any arithmetic:

Today is: <http://98.131.104.126/prolog/May16.htm> Tomorrow is: <http://98.131.104.126/prolog/May17.htm>

### A Simple prayer rule, complete text

From the Morning prayers:

#### The Trisagion prayers:

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

O Heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of Truth, Who art everywhere present and fillest all things, Treasury of good things and Giver of life: Come and dwell in us, and cleanse us of all impurity, and save, our souls, O Good One.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (*Thrice*)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Lord, blot out our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy name's sake.

Lord have mercy. (*Thrice*)

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, Who art in the Heavens, hallowed by Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

*A layman then says:* "Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Amen"

#### Morning Troparia: (TONE 1)

Having risen from sleep, we fall down before Thee, O Good One, and the angelical hymn we cry aloud to Thee, O Mighty One: Holy, holy, holy art Thou, O God; through the Theotokos have mercy on us.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

From bed and sleep hast Thou raised me up, O Lord, enlighten my mind and heart, and open my lips that I may hymn Thee, O Holy Trinity: Holy, holy, holy art Thou, O God; through the Theotokos, have mercy on us.

Now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Suddenly the Judge shall come, and the deeds of each will be laid bare; but with fear do we cry at midnight: Holy, holy, holy art Thou, O God; through the Theotokos, have mercy on us.

Lord have mercy. (*12 times*)

O come, let us worship God our King.

O come let us worship and fall down before Christ our King and our God.

O come, let us worship and fall down before Him, Christ Himself, our King and our God.

*And three "reverences" (low bows, described above))*

#### PSALM 50

Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy; and according to the multitude of Thy compassions blot out my transgression. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know mine iniquity, and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee only have I sinned and done this evil before Thee, that Thou mightest be justified in Thy words, and prevail when Thou art judged.

For behold, I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins did my mother bear me. For behold, Thou hast loved truth; the hidden and secret things of Thy wisdom hast Thou made manifest unto me.

Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be made clean; Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow.

Thou shalt make me to hear joy and gladness; the bones that be humbled, they shall rejoice.

Turn Thy face away from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.

Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and with Thy governing Spirit establish me.

I shall teach transgressors Thy ways, and the ungodly shall turn back unto Thee.

Deliver me from bloodguiltiness. O God, Thou God of my salvation; my tongue shall rejoice in Thy righteousness.

O Lord, Thou shalt open my lips, and my mouth shall declare Thy praise.

For if Thou hadst desired sacrifice, I had given it; with wholeburnt offerings Thou shalt not be pleased.

A sacrifice unto God is a broken spirit; a heart that is broken and humbled God will not despise.

Do good, O Lord, in Thy good pleasure unto Sion, and let the walls of Jerusalem be builded.

Then shalt Thou be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, with oblation and wholeburnt offerings.

Then shall they offer bullocks upon Thine altar.

#### **The Symbol of Faith:**

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten, begotten of the Father before all ages. Light of Light; true God of true God, begotten, not made; of one essence with the Father by Whom all things were made;

Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from the heavens, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became man;

And was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried;

And arose again on the third day according to the Scriptures; And ascended into the heavens, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father.

And shall come again, with glory, to judge both the living and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life; Who proceedeth from the Father; Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; Who spake by the prophets.

In One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

I confess one baptism for the remission of sins.

I look for the resurrection of the dead, And the life of the age to come. Amen.

#### ***Then, for each person in your dyptichs (list of people you want to pray for):***

make the sign of the cross, while making a low bow\*, and say: "**Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on (N)**". It is even better to make a prostration\* for each person, or at least for certain people.

This letter is at: [http://www.orthodox.net/prison-ministry/prison-ministry-letters\\_2017-05-31+orthodox-theology-fallen-nature-or-sin-nature.doc](http://www.orthodox.net/prison-ministry/prison-ministry-letters_2017-05-31+orthodox-theology-fallen-nature-or-sin-nature.doc)

[http://www.orthodox.net/prison-ministry/prison-ministry-letters\\_2017-05-31+orthodox-theology-fallen-nature-or-sin-nature.html](http://www.orthodox.net/prison-ministry/prison-ministry-letters_2017-05-31+orthodox-theology-fallen-nature-or-sin-nature.html)

[http://www.orthodox.net/prison-ministry/prison-ministry-letters\\_2017-05-31+orthodox-theology-fallen-nature-or-sin-nature.pdf](http://www.orthodox.net/prison-ministry/prison-ministry-letters_2017-05-31+orthodox-theology-fallen-nature-or-sin-nature.pdf)