

Introduction to Orthodoxy Fall 2016: A Basic Catechesis in Orthodox Christianity

Part 1: Encountering the Mystery



Welcome to our 11-Part Series!

Who am I?

My story in brief...



Course Schedule for this Introductory Series

1st 3 Parts: Spiritual Foundations and Orthodox Worldview

Part 4: Sin, the Passions, Asceticism

Part 5: Christ and the Tradition Revealing Him

Parts 6-9: Exploring the Tradition

Parts 10-11: Confessing Christ and Being Conformed to His Image

Encountering the Mystery

His All-Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew I

Born in 1940 as Δημήτριος Αρχοντώνης, Dimítrios Archontónis

Elected Ecumenical Patriarch in 1991

Resides in Istanbul, Turkey (aka. Constantinople)

Considered “first among equals” of Orthodox bishops



Experience is the gold standard...

“Our religion is founded on spiritual experience, seen and heard as surely as any physical fact in this world. Not theory, not philosophy, not human emotions, but experience!”

--St. Nikolai of Zhicha
and South Canaan



“Person as Mystery”

“Within the heart...
unfathomable depths... In it
is death and in it is life...”

--St. Macarius the Great



“Person as Mystery”

If only there were **evil people** somewhere insidiously committing **evil deeds**, and it were **necessary** only to separate them from the rest of us and destroy them. But the line dividing **good** and **evil** cuts through the **heart** of every **human** being. And who is willing to destroy a piece of his own heart? Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *Gulag Archipelago*, 1973



Person as Truly Free



“The human being, as an existential reality, can be a person only when living in freedom. Only in conditions in which the dull range of possibilities is open to our free and conscious choice are we able to transform our temporal reality and ourselves into the image of the divine Kingdom.” Patriarch Bartholomew, *Encountering the Mystery*, xii

Person as Relational

“As human beings, we cannot be genuinely free in isolation, repudiating our relationship with our fellow human beings. We can only be genuinely free if we form part of a community of other free persons. Freedom is never solitary but always social.” --Patriarch Bartholomew



Persons are Relational...

... Because God is Relational

The Mystery of the Trinity:

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit



Person as Icon of Wholeness

Wholeness (healing) exists when:

We have internal integrity.

We have integrity with others.

We have integrity with creation.

By Christ's power!



The Dignity & Calling of Person are revealed...

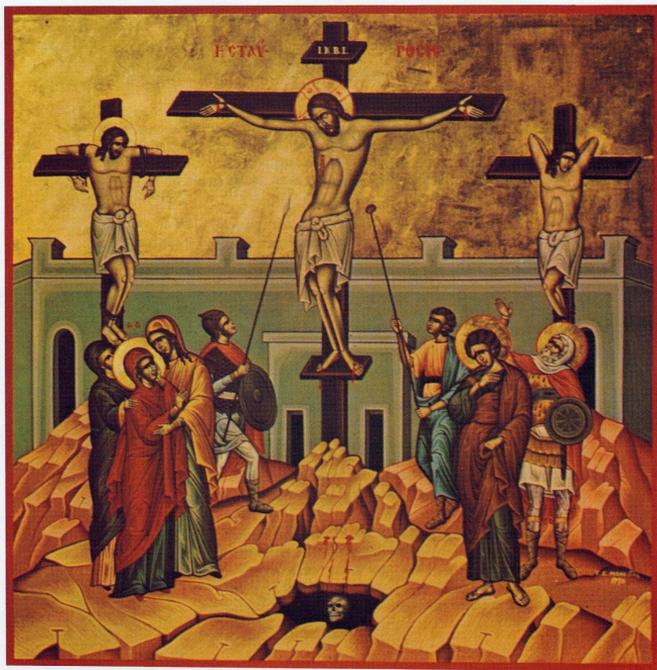
How???



... in the Trinity



... in the Person of XC



...in the Sacraments of the Church



...in the Sacraments of the Church



...in the Sacraments of the Church



... Prayer



Next Week... Part 2

Introducing the Orthodox Worldview: Formation in Christ 1

How does an Orthodox Worldview contrast with a pagan one?

How does an Orthodox Worldview contrast with other Christian worldviews?