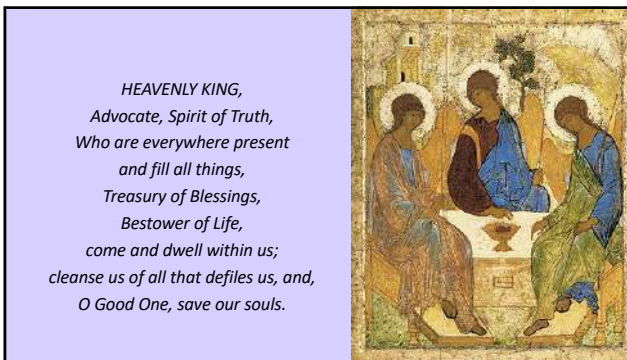
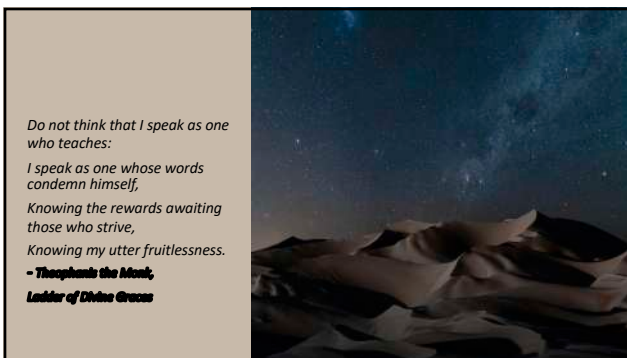


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2



3

*If you need support,
try reaching out
to someone you trust....*

*Friend
Pastor
Teacher
Neighbour
Co-worker
Mentor
Family member*




4

*If you need support,
please call for help...*

Phone:
Emergency: 911 or Healthlink: 811
Addictions help: 1-866-332-2322
Mental health: 1-877-303-2642
Community Resources: call/text 211
Kidshelp: 1-800-668-6868


Online:
211 resources: <https://ab.211.ca>



5

*Experience teaches one, not
words.*

**- Theophanis the Monk,
Ladder of Divine Graces**



6


Session Segments

1. *Introductory Remarks*
2. *Basic Teachings on Virtue*
3. *Characteristics of Virtue*
4. *Stages of Contemplation along the Path of Theosis*
5. *Developing Self-Control*



7

Basic Teachings on Virtue



8

Christ – Our Pascha

214 As the signs of God's action in the time of Christ were his miracles, so in the life of the Church the signs are the Holy Mysteries.


The grace of God acts in the Holy Mysteries through external signs such as water, oil, bread, and wine, as well as various liturgical gestures and actions. **By receiving the Holy Mysteries, a person conquers sinful inclinations and grows in virtue.**



9

Christ – Our Pascha


415 Even after Baptism, however, the person who is not yet tempered in choosing what is good, is inclined to sin. Therefore, one turns to the Mystery of Repentance. In this Holy Mystery, **one continues on the path of repentance, conversion, cleansing from sin, and strengthening in the virtues.**



10

Christ – Our Pascha

455 Frequent Confession **allows us to know** not only our faults and offenses, but also our weaknesses and inclinations to sin. Through the grace of the Mystery of Repentance, the Christian overcomes sins and the tendency to sin. This grace also raises up the Christian after a fall, and **strengthens him or her in the virtues.**



11

Christ – Our Pascha


458 The epitimia is an **ascetic exercise in virtues** that are contrary to the sins that had been committed. The aim is to eradicate the habitual inclination to sin and to correct its consequences.



12

Christ – Our Pascha

267 The bearer of God's grace in the world is Christ's Church. Through the ministrations of the Holy Mysteries, by means of sanctification and blessing, she apportions grace to those who believe in Christ. **Through prayer, ascetical effort, and a life of virtue, Christians grow in the grace of the Holy Spirit to the fullness of divinization....**




13

Christ – Our Pascha

Remember, O Lord, those in deserts and mountains and caves and in the hollows of the earth. Remember, O Lord, those who live in virginity, piety, asceticism, and purity.


- From the Anaphora of the Liturgy of St. Basil the Great



14

Christ – Our Pascha


267 ...Transfigured by grace, human nature abides in God's nature, "without division or confusion." At the same time, in humankind and through humankind, the nature of all creation is **transfigured to its final consummation, as "a new heaven and a new earth"** (Rev 21:1).



15

Christ – Our Pascha

755 So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore, **do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies**, to make you obey their passions. No longer present your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present your members to God as **instruments of righteousness** (Rom 6:11-13).




16

Prayer from Great Vespers

In the evening, morning and noontime, we praise You, we bless You, we give thanks To You, and we pray to You, O Master of all, O Lord who loves humankind. Guide our prayers aright as an offering of sweet incense before You; **let not our hearts incline in words or thoughts of wickedness, but save us from all dangers and from the evil powers that pursue our souls.** For to You, O Lord, are our eyes directed, and in You Have we hoped. Let us not be put to shame. For to You belong all glory, honour, And worship, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen.


- From With God/3 Божом, Sister Theodosia Papirnik



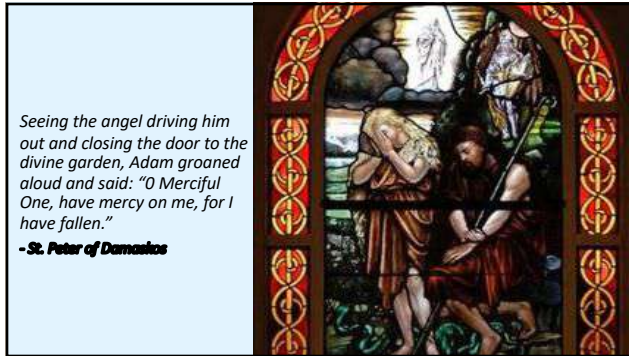
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Those who think of the Lord only as the creator of things which are generated and which decay mistake Him, as Mary Magdalene did, for the gardener.

- St. Maximos the Confessor



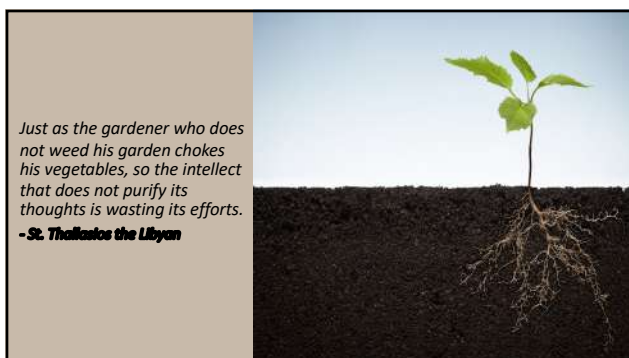
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21

1834 The human virtues are stable dispositions of the intellect and the will that govern our acts, order our passions, and guide our conduct in accordance with reason and faith. They can be grouped around the four cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance.


- RC Catechism



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- RC Catechism



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- RC Catechism



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- RC Catechism



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- RC Catechism



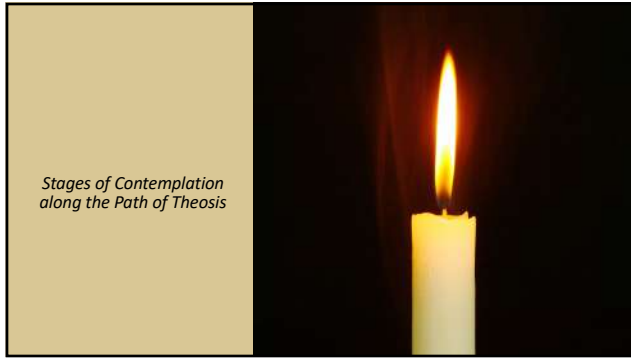
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- RC Catechism



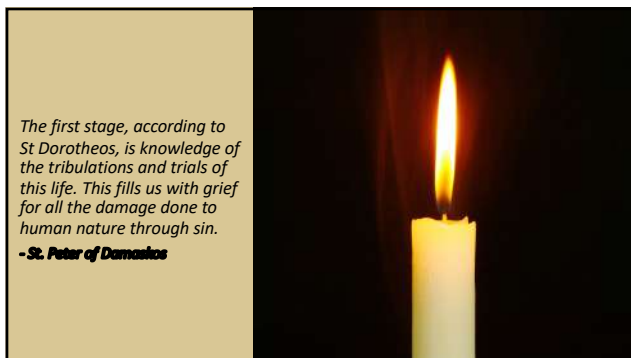
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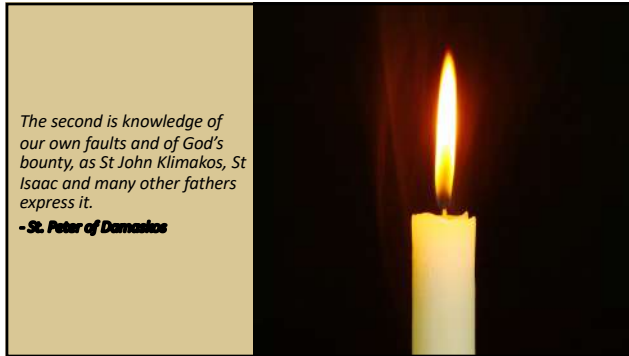
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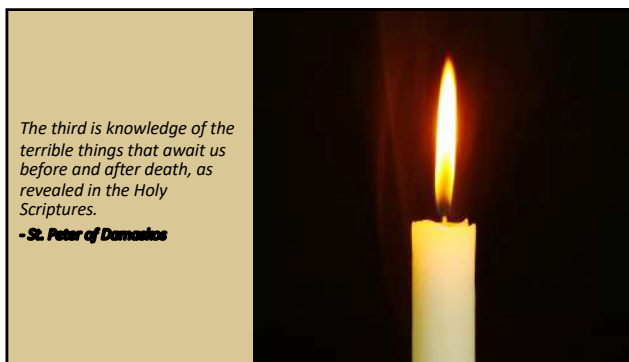
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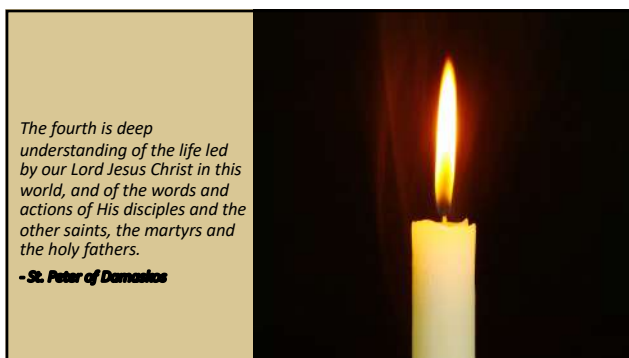
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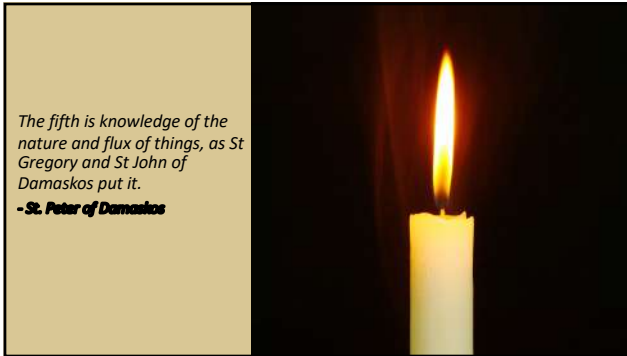
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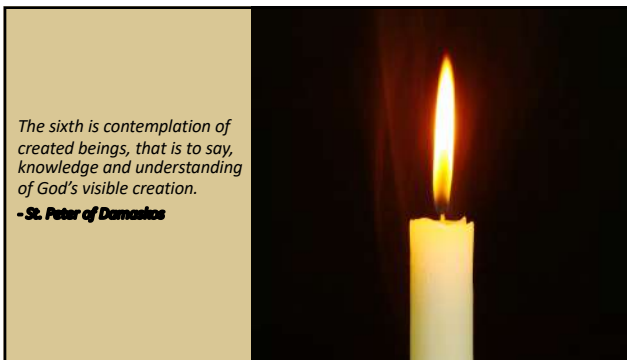
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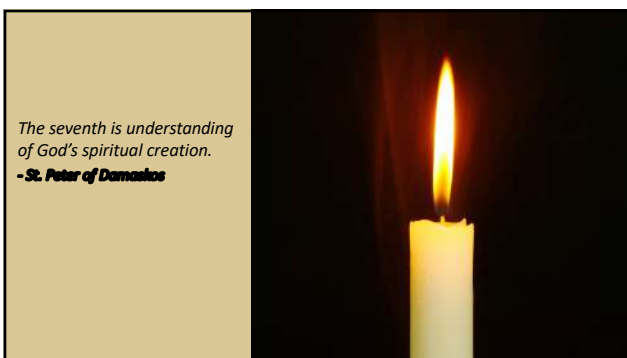
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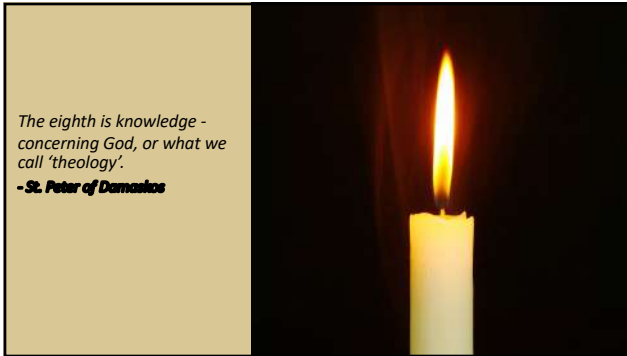
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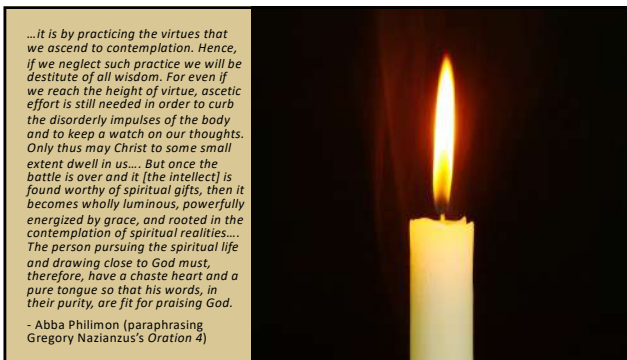
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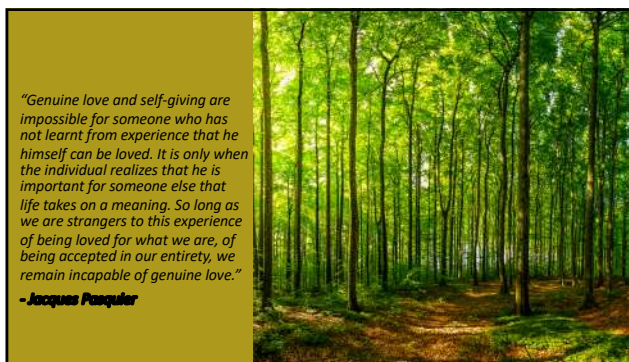
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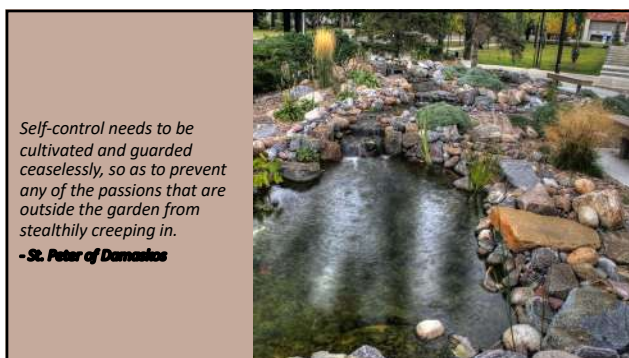
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In discernment, we sort out our thoughts to see if they are of God. God's way is toward peace. When we go God's way, consolation is the fruit. We can expect happiness. Benefits are bountiful and beyond expectations. Even the physical body feels lighter and moves more and more to subtle feelings, emotions, and an abiding disposition of wonder. God will not give us any affliction beyond our capacity.

- Mary Margaret Funk



43

Five-Step Process for Individual Discernment

1. Sort our thoughts.
2. *Virtually live the decision, looking for a confirming sign.*
3. *Make the decision and ritualize the decision.*
4. *Guard our heart and watch our thoughts.*
5. *Pray for Enlightenment*

St. Benedict says that whenever we begin any good work, we should beg earnestly in prayer for guidance about the right action and for the ability to carry out the consent. Here's where a pattern of prayer is the key ingredient. If we only pray when we have a major choice or a divide in the road, we will have a hard time praying at the moment of discernment. There are hints and road signs along our life's way, but what makes our life a way to God is having a practice of prayer. With training, we can sense the impulses of grace and have already in place a willingness to follow God's call.


- Mary Margaret Funk



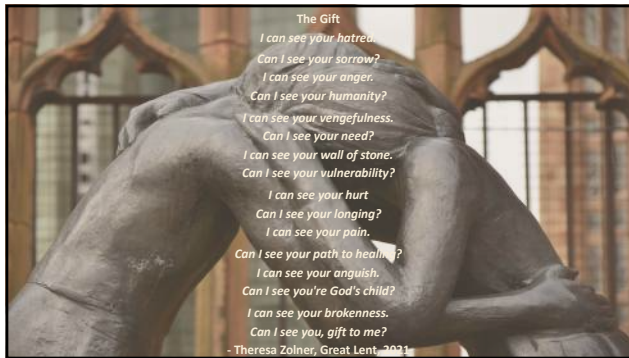
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...willingness to struggle and suffer, renunciation, tears of repentance, stillness, persistent prayer, psalmody, chastity, meditation on scriptures, devoutness, and awe of God.

- Abba Philimon



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48

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Prayer of the Hours

In every season and at every hour, in heaven and on earth You are worshipped and glorified O good God, longsuffering, rich in mercy, loving the just and compassionate to sinners, calling all to salvation by the promise of the blessings to come; now at this very hour, Lord accept our prayers, and direct our lives in the ways of Your commandments. Sanctify our souls, purify our bodies, correct our thoughts, and make our knowledge whole and sober. Deliver us from every distress, evil and pain. Surround us with Your holy angels as with a rampart so that protected and guided by their host we may reach the unity of the faith and the knowledge of Your unapproachable glory; for You are blessed for ever and ever. Amen.



50
