

HOLY TRANSFIGURATION

SPIRITUAL BOOK CLUB



Do you

- Enjoy reading spiritual books about the Orthodox Faith
- Like talking about what you have read
- Want to expand your knowledge about our faith

If so,

**You are invited to join our Church's very own
SPIRITUAL BOOK CLUB**

- We will meet **once, every two months**, on the **last Sunday of the month**.
- Time** : 7.00pm till 9.30pm
- Where**: On a rotation schedule at the home of members of the group.
- Light refreshments and wine/soft drinks will be served, as well as coffee and dessert. Members can contribute to refreshments if they so wish.

Meeting Format

- Food and fellowship for the first hour, followed by discussion thereafter.
- The discussion leader will be Fr. Panayiotis.
- Each member should come prepared to each meeting, having read the book, and with either a couple of discussion questions/topics or a favorite passage to talk about.

The First Meeting

- The Book : For the sake of convenience, the book for the first meeting has already been chosen, but thereafter, members can also make suggestions for the next meeting. The title for the first meeting is:

The Mountain of Silence by Kyriacos C. Markides (See book review on next page)

- **The Date** : Sunday, November 30, 2008
- **The Place** : Home of Elene Catrakilis
4409 Belvedere Close
Marietta, GA 30067
- Closer to the date, please RSVP the hostess at elenecat@yahoo.com. to facilitate catering.

Under the guidance of a spiritual father, spiritual book clubs are a great way to enhance one's spiritual growth, challenge oneself to examine new ideas, and get to know others better on a journey where deeply personal ideas are shared and explored together.

Any questions can be directed to Fr. Panayiotis at fr.panayiotis@comcast.net

BOOK REVIEW

The Mountain of Silence, A Search for Orthodox Spirituality by Kyriacos C. Markides

This book is a treasure of spiritual teachings and stories of spiritual direction. It is an excellent resource for seekers of authentic spirituality at all levels. It has something for everyone. Not only will beginners and agnostics find it interesting, but even a great theologian like Bishop Kallistos Ware has stated that he has learned many things from it.



The author, Markides, a Maine sociologist who was raised in the Greek Orthodox faith and later drifted into agnosticism, continues his spiritual journey homeward in this collection of captivating conversations with the monk "Father Maximos". The book is set on the island of Cyprus, where the author and his monastic mentor spend extended periods of time together.

Most of the teachings of Father Maximos' which Markides relates are in answer to questions raised by Markides himself (or sometimes by others), and include discussions of topics such as: monasticism and its place in today's world; what it means to know God; illnesses of the heart; various kinds of *logismoi*, or negative thoughts, and how to deal with them; the difference between icons and idols; the activities of demons and of angels; the difference between human ideas of justice and divine justice; and much more. He also includes in several places Father Maximos' remembrances of Elder Paisios and the extraordinary events he experienced or heard about in connection with him.

Every time I go back to this book, I find something new in Father Maximos' teachings. One of my favorites is the following argument found in Chapter 10 on Strategies [against negative thoughts]: "...through the reading of divinely inspired literature we create spiritual antibodies in our psyche that can combat the destructive mental viruses of negative *logismoi*." He explains how texts like the Bible were written under the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Just by reading this material, the individual becomes spiritually empowered by the Grace embedded in the words themselves.

This is a fascinating book which I highly recommend to anyone who wants to learn more about our faith.

Elene Catrakilis

Note: This book is available in the Church Bookstore