

THE SAINTS DESIRE OUR SALVATION AND HAVE THE ABILITY TO HELP US

—by St. John of Kronstadt—

We are obligated to have a living, spiritual union with the heavenly world: with the Saints, the Apostles, the Prophets, the Martyrs, and the Righteous. Because all of them are members of Christ's Body, of His Holy Church, to which we also belong, despite our sinfulness. This is why we call upon them during worship, we speak with them, we thank them, and we praise them. It is an urgent need for all Christians to be united spiritually with them, if they desire to advance in the way of the Gospel. Because the Saints are our friends who guide us toward salvation by praying and interceding for us.

The Saints, through the grace of God, see us because they live in God and God lives in them. They are all one spirit with the Lord, for "he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit" (1 Cor. 6:17), and the Lord sees and hears everything. Therefore, when you go to church—for example—and you see the icons of the Saints of God, believe that they are looking at you, and, above all, that they see what is in your heart.

God "rests upon the Saints" (Isa. 57:15). His power is found both within their names and icons. When someone calls upon the Saints with faith, their icons can perform miracles.

The Lord greatly respects the works of His hands, whom He adorned with logic and free will (that is, the angels and the Saints), and through them He carries out our sanctification and salvation. Therefore, don't say, "I will ask help only from God for my various needs." Sometimes it is necessary for you to also go to the Saints, as His instruments. God Himself does not want these temples of His Grace and Holy Spirit to remain inactive in our salvation.

The Saints kept and fulfilled the word of God. The Lord now fulfills their word. They worked for Him; He now works on their behalf. The Lord Himself stated, "with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again" (Mt. 7:2). This is why the Lord quickly fulfills the requests that the Saints make on our behalf.

The Saints of God are successful merchants who became rich by acquiring all the spiritual treasures, all the virtues: meekness, humility, abstinence, patience, fervent faith, hope, and love. Thus, we ask for their holy prayers, just as a pauper asks for assistance from a wealthy man: so they can help us in our

spiritual poverty; so they can teach us how to pray and how to improve in all the virtues; so they intercede for us with the boldness they possess before God for the sins we have committed until now to be forgiven; and so we can be shielded from the sins that await us in the future. We go to the shops of earthly businessmen to purchase their merchandise. How is it possible for us not to address the heavenly merchants as well with our fervent prayer? How is it possible for us not to ask for their intercessions before God for our sins to be forgiven and for us to receive grace? It is very natural for us to do this.

Call upon the Saints with wholehearted faith and sincere love, if you want them to hear and fulfill your prayer. The Saints pleased God with their faith and love. They desire the same from you. Along with your faith and love, also unite the honor that is due to them.