

WE MUST CRY FOR THE SINS OF OTHERS

—from the book *The Art of Salvation*—

Let us cry not only for our own sins, but also for the sins of others.

Has someone else sinned? Do not judge him; that is, do not criticize and condemn him. Cry for his mistake as if it was your own fall. We are **“each other’s members” (cf. Rom. 12:5)**. The other person is a member of and belongs to the same body as you: he is a member of the body of Christ. You should cry for this person just as the Apostle Paul would cry for others: **“I did not cease to admonish everyone night and day with tears” (Acts 20:31)**. Cry for your child who transgressed; for the Christian who slipped and fell.

Sin is like fire. The droplets that extinguish this fire are the droplets of repentance. If the house next door to you catches fire, won’t you run to help put out the fire? If you remain indifferent, the fire will spread to your home as well. Similarly, you cannot remain indifferent when someone else is being burned by the inferno of sin. Shed tears in order to put out the fire. If you remain indifferent, you will also be at fault; you will also have a sin. If, however, you not only remain indifferent but also make fun of, criticize, and openly ridicule the other person’s sin, then God will permit you to fall as well, and the fire of your sin may turn out to be your initiation into Hell, according to Saint John Chrysostom.

The venerable Chrysostom insists that we must lament for the sins of others, if we truly love them. If the other person is about to be devoured by a wolf, will we allow him to perish? If another person is in danger of drowning, will we let him sink?