



## Fire & Light

### St. Symeon Orthodox Church

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✠ March 6, 2016 ✠

## Sunday of the Last Judgment

### Meatfare Sunday

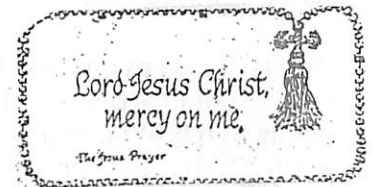
42 Martyrs of Ammoria (845)

✠ Wed. March 9, 6:30pm ~ Compline with Canon of Repentance

✠ Sat. March 12 10:00am ~ Divine Liturgy – Memorial Saturday & St. Symeon

Judgment is in accord with grace; and as you have used what was given you, so shall the Judge judge you.

~ St. Basil the Great



✠ **Great Lent begins Monday, March 14** ✠

✠ **Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete: First week - March 14 – 17**

✠ **Friday, March 18 – First Presanctified Liturgy {All evening services - 6:30pm}**

✠ **Sunday, March 20 – Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers – 5:00pm**

## BACK FROM THE OTHER WORLD

The testimony of Vasily Lazarev who died, saw Christ and came back to life

“Here on earth, people carry the embryo of their future life that will be either eternal agony or eternal happiness with God.” - St. Gregory of Sinai

*A transcript from the Spas (Savior) TV program in Russia, “My Path to God”, on which Priest George Maximov interviews people who converted to Orthodoxy. The experience of today’s guest is both dramatic and optimistic at the same time, because it completely changed his self-destructive life and turned him toward Christ. We will learn how Vasily got to the other world, what he felt over there and how Christ’s love helped him to reconsider his way of life here.*

### Vasily Lazarev



**Father George Maximov:** Hello! You are watching My Path to God. I’ll tell you right away that the guest of today’s program experienced very dramatic events in his life that led him to God. Non-religious people often say that nobody ever returned from the other world. They imply that nobody knows what awaits us after death. However, the story of our guest disproves this statement. Before we start talking about his death and return to life, let’s talk about his background. Vasily, would I be correct to assume that like many people of your generation [in Russia] you grew up in a non-religious environment and didn’t know anything about faith?

**Vasily Lazarev:** Yes. I was born and grew up in a different era. After serving in the army—it was in 1989—a totally new paradigm appeared. The Soviet Union broke up. I had to earn my living somehow. I had recently started a family and we had a baby. After the army, I worked at a factory for a while and then found employment at a private security company. Today the company is bit different, but at that time it provided security personnel who after hours acted as thugs collecting money from debtors. I did many terrible things. I don’t have blood on my hands, but I was involved in quite a few bad things. I am still ashamed of what I did, even though I repented. Many people in my surroundings died. Some were imprisoned. After my daughter was

born, I decided to leave that path. Gradually, without too many losses, I managed to get out. I simply moved to a new place and completely cut off my previous connections. I tried to set up my life, but as I had no money, I had to take odd jobs, selling stuff at the market or gypsy cab driving. I met some people at the market who were involved in a con game and worked with them for three years in the markets of Moscow and Greater Moscow area. That was when I got addicted to drugs.

**Father George:** How did this happen? You were an adult then and probably knew how dangerous drugs are.

*Heroin is a very persistent demon. He grabs a person and never lets go. Two times is all it takes to form an addiction.*

**Vasily Lazarev:** At that time, I had had a quarrel with my wife and moved out to a shared apartment where I used to hold parties for a big group of drug addicts. I looked at their satisfied faces after they took the drug, while saying to me, "You don't need this." It sounded more like "Just don't throw me into the briar patch," so I wanted to try it. At first, it was scary. I snorted heroin, but did not feel anything special. Then I got an injection, then the second one, the third... That was how it started. I think two times is all it takes to form an addiction. Heroin is a very persistent demon. He grabs a person and never lets go. Many people took treatments and tried to quit somehow, but only few of them succeeded. I know only one girl who pulled it off, but it took a lot of efforts and cost her the ability to give birth. Others died. People experienced clinical death from overdose but still went for the new dose after that.

I remember what happened to a friend of mine. He, his girlfriend and I were sitting in the kitchen. We got injections and he fell down. He felt bad, so we called an ambulance. They arrived quickly, carried him out into the vestibule, opened up his chest and performed a direct cardiac massage... This wasn't a sight for the faint-hearted, I should tell you. They resuscitated him. Still, this didn't help him in anyway and only two months later he died of overdose. It's terrible. I was hooked for about one year. This is a relatively short period. The addiction affects people differently. Some heroin addicts live for 10 or 15 years, I don't know why, but usually a drug addict lives for 5-6 years maximum.

**Father George:** Was your death also caused by overdose?

**Vasily Lazarev:** Not exactly. There was a popular belief then that if you drink vodka and alcohol it will help you quit using heroin. It turned out to be wrong. It was during the May holidays, so I kept on drinking to quit using heroin. It didn't help. I gave in and on May 11 my friends and I made injections in the lobby of an apartment building. It was in the evening, after 10 pm. Vodka and heroin is a deadly combination. I don't know what influences what, but the death is practically immediate. I was still intoxicated by alcohol. I remember the darkness as my conscience shut down in a way. My eyes closed and I heard bells ringing in my ears.

**Father George:** Did you experience a clinical death?

**Vasily Lazarev:** It was the very moment of death. I didn't feel any pain. My eyes quietly shut and I fell and rolled toward the garbage chute. There I stayed. I only remember that a moment later I saw as if through water and in slow motion that the girl who was with us was running and knocking on the doors shouting and asking to call the ambulance—There were no mobile phones at that time. My friend Sergey tried to do CPR, but probably didn't really know how. Then I remember lying in front of the entrance. The ambulance came. I saw my body from the side. The doctors were doing something, but it didn't matter to me. Absolutely. I felt that something was pulling me up and to the right, faster and faster. I heard an unpleasant hum-like sound. Everything started swirling and I was carried up through some kind of a large pipe. My thinking processes didn't stop for a moment.

**Father George:** Were you frightened when you realized that you were dead?

**Vasily Lazarev:** At first, I didn't realize that I was dead. The realization came later. The pulling became faster and faster. At an increasing speed, I flew through a tunnel with semi-transparent walls. There were pictures around me that could be compared to photographs of stars taken by the Hubble telescope. A bright light was ahead. It was extremely bright. This was similar to the aqua park attraction when you spiral down into the pool

of warm water. I heard a chord of some kind of ethereal music. That was when I looked at myself. Only then did I realize that I was dead. I didn't feel any regret. Instead, I felt joy, calmness and delight. I looked at myself and saw my body lying in the ambulance. Somehow, I didn't care about it... absolutely. I didn't feel any contempt or hatred toward it, I simply looked at it...

**Father George:** As if it was something foreign to you?

*I understood that it was Him right away. He was like a true Father. Nobody talked to me like that before.*

**Vasily Lazarev:** Yes. Just like a stone that is lying on a street when you're passing it by. You don't care if it is there or not. Then something pulled me up, you know, as if a warm hand lifted me up. I felt the waves of happiness and absolute calmness. Absolute protection. Everything around me was full of such a strong love that I don't even know how to describe it. I was pulled through some kind of clouds. It felt as if I was on an ascending airplane that went higher and higher. Then I saw a figure in a shining light. It was dressed in long clothes like a tunic. You know, I never even opened the Bible before that and never had any thoughts about God or Christ, but at that time I understood with every fiber of my soul that it was Him. He was like a true father. He met me, his prodigal son, with love that you can't find on Earth. Nobody ever talked to me like that. He did not reproach, assure or scold me. He just showed my life to me. We communicated telepathically and every word of His sounded like a law. There were not any doubts about it. He spoke quietly and affectionately, and it became clearer and clearer to me that my attitude not only toward myself, but also toward my relatives and everybody else was very wrong. I wept loudly and as my heart was breaking and purifying, I gradually felt better.

You know, the following comparison came to my mind: when a potter makes a pot and it falls, he starts correcting it with his hands... So like a potter, He was correcting my soul that was so unclean... He made my life flash before my eyes like a movie.

This is known to happen, later I read about it in the books written by Moody and others who had similar experiences. There is nothing new. I am not making things up. People lie in order to achieved a certain goal, I think, while I just want to tell about what I saw so that people would hear it. I am used to the fact that many people don't believe me and sometimes think that I'm crazy.

Anyway, He could stop the life at any point. It was like some kind of movie. But the most interesting thing was that at any point I could walk in and look at myself and feel the situation from the point of view of everybody around me.

**Father George:** And understand what they thought about it?

**Vasily Lazarev:** Yes. I understood how you could hurt people by words. It is like... for example, the knife and bullet wounds that I had cannot even be compared to the pain caused by a single word. It is something that you remember for the rest of your life. I understood the consequences of that. I understood how you should be careful in your actions. Many people think that there is only this life and after that there is just some utter darkness and nothingness. No, my friends, everyone will have to answer for the things they did. Everyone.

So, He and I reviewed those situations. Then He took my hand and we walked... I remember that under my feet there was some misty shimmering substance. The brightest light. There were no shadows at all, although here it is difficult to visualize. I felt that I was semi-transparent, like in the Invisible Man movie where you can only see the contours of his body. He took me by the hand, led me, and shone this brightest light on me. Then we were at the place where we first met. I don't remember what He asked me, but I realized that I had to come back to my earthly life. Images of my wife and child flashed before my eyes. By the way, this was after we broke up. At that time, we had been living apart for about a year. Anyway, I understood that I needed to come back. I promised to Him that I would clean up my act and become a better person. I felt the greatest sorrow, but at the same time, it was indicated to me that we would meet again. I live by that hope since then. To tell the truth, I want to go back there. I'm willing to go back any minute.

Of course, even though my experience was wonderful, it could be equally bad for those who would be in hell. I wasn't in Paradise; it was probably some kind of a vestibule to Paradise. I don't know how to explain... That feeling was probably more powerful than all the drugs in the world multiplied by eternity. The explosion of omniscience literally knocked me off my feet. The truth only brushed by me, but I realized what an endless potential we had in ourselves. Knowing everything... There is no way of explaining it, simply take my word for it: it is great, we won't be bored there for sure. It was so wonderful, warm and cozy there with Him. I felt that He was the father. The true father. Unlike my earthly fathers... I wasn't very lucky with my biological father or my stepfather.

To cut a long story short, I was coming back, as if the movie was running backwards. The sun sets down late in May... I remember it was still sunset and I was descending through the leaves of the tree, the roof of the ambulance and back into my body. My conscience kicks back. I take a deep breath, feeling a strong pain in my ribs, and grab the paramedic by the hand. He held a watch, keys, and money in his hand.

**Father George:** Were they yours?

**Vasily Lazarev:** Yes, they had been in my pockets. My pockets were pulled inside out. I don't want to say anything bad about the paramedics. My parents were doctors. My sister used to work as an ambulance paramedic. I later learned that I had been dead for 14 minutes. Of course, they no longer tried to resuscitate me and simply were driving my body to the morgue. Well... So, I just grabbed his hand. You should have seen his eyes when I did that. I never saw anybody so horrified.

**Father George:** I bet that after that he never risked rummaging through dead peoples' things (*laughs*).

**Vasily Lazarev:** There wasn't much money anyway... I gave him half of what I had, just enough to buy a bottle of beer. I used the remaining money to buy a bottle of beer for myself, sat down right there and started thinking. Next day I was woken up by the doorbell. I still didn't fully understand what happened to me. It took me several weeks to realize it. So, I open the door and see my wife standing there. We hadn't seen each other for about a year. We spoke for about an hour. I left everything I had in that room. I locked it and we went to her place. I never came back. Cut all my ties with the past at once.

I was still addicted to heroin, though. By the end of the day, I was feeling very bad. For the next two and a half months I lived on the following diet: a bottle of vodka, Dimedrol, Tazepam, Phenazepam, all taken so that I could simply pass out for the withdrawal period. My wife was a real saint. She took care of me. I was staying at home. When you take heavy drugs, you don't think about what will happen next. You feel good and the rest can wait. But when you want to quit, you realize that the demon is not letting you go. You don't have veins because you already "burned" the ones you had. You feel rotten, shaking and literally falling apart. Withdrawal is a terrible pain. It cannot be compared to the pain you feel when you get a cut or hit something. It is more like rheumatic pain, when your joints are turning inside out, but much stronger. Moreover, this pain is inside and you can't bandage the place that hurts. You're twisted inside out. You can't stand, lie or find any rest. All of this is accompanied by various nightmares. It is terrible. And it is very easy to stop, all you have to do is make a call and in half an hour you'll get the injection and everything will be back to normal. But I promised that I would quit. It is extremely difficult to overcome withdrawal on your own, so it is very important to have the support of friends and relatives and, of course, your own desire to quit. But the most important is God's help. Now I understand that it was God who made it so that my wife took care of me and gave me strength. I wouldn't have made it on my own.

It was a terrible summer. But eventually I came around. Then I quit drinking. Can't say that I did it on my own. After all this "vodka treatment", my skin got very yellow one day. The ambulance came and they told me, "You have hepatitis C. If you continue drinking, you'll get cirrhosis and that will be the end of you." So I started drinking beer instead of vodka. This made things even worse. It looked like my end was approaching—caused by alcohol this time, rather than drugs. We went to a clinic where they use the Dovzhenko coding method. I've been sober for 17 years now. And I don't want to drink. I look at drinking people and it seems funny, as if I'm in a circus. People don't understand what they are doing. After I quit, being at all those drinking parties simply became boring for me. I quit using drugs and drinking alcohol after what happened to me. I got some kind of inner directive.

Now I understand that all of this is related to God. He sets you on the right path. I went to work, and stopped cheating on my wife right away. Then gradually, step by step, I quit smoking and swearing. I asked God to help me in all my endeavors. I simply asked silently and He always helped. By the way, a month after my skin got yellow, I took the blood test again and the initial diagnosis was not confirmed. I took several more tests later and the results showed that there was no hepatitis. It simply went away.

**Father George:** Still, you did not embrace the Church right away?

**Vasily Lazarev:** No. It was a long journey. It was as if I had to remove all the unnecessary things first, and then embracing the Church was like fine-tuning to reach perfection. Getting rid of all the above-mentioned addictions was, I think, just a coarse tuning, and now I have to fine tune. This fine-tuning will continue till my last breath. It is far more important and infinitely more difficult that the first stage. Quitting smoking is much easier than quitting being jealous, and it is easier to quit drinking than to stop hating somebody or to forgive somebody.

I did not embrace the Church right away. At first, I read a lot about the near death experiences. I studied some farfetched teachings, like Blavatsky, Roerich... I was looking for the truth. I found it only when I read in the Bible that "God is Love" (1 John 4:8). This is what Orthodoxy teaches us. I didn't find that in any other teachings. Being *over there* during my near-death experience, I knew that God was Love. Absolute love. It was *over there* that I understood it. I was protected, loved and understood. Like a son who found his father. Christianity teaches that, "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name" (John 1:12), "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ" (Galatians 4:7). Following this idea, I embraced the Church, went to confession and received Communion for the first time after my baptism, I think. I was baptized in 1980. We were in Vladimir because it was that time when they held Olympic Games in Moscow and sent many people away. While we were there, my mother took me to church to be baptized, even though she and my father were communists and doctors...

**Father George:** They did it simply for the sake of tradition, I guess?

***After my first communion, I was surprised, "How could it be? I had the same feelings as I had over there".***

**Vasily Lazarev:** Yes. At that time, I didn't attach any significance to that. Frankly speaking, I didn't think about God or His existence until I was 20. We just live, that is it. Probably six years have passed after what happened to me, before I went to church... I started going to Communion once every three weeks. I went to confession, received Communion. When I received Communion for the first time, it was something out of this world. I'm quite an abrupt person and sometimes I can be rude, but at that time I simply relaxed and everybody seemed like kind angels to me. This lasted for about a day, I think. It was very similar to the feeling that I experienced *over there*. The feeling of bliss. When we partake of the Body and Blood of Christ, we become akin to Him. And after my first communion I was surprised, "How could it be? I had the same feelings as I had over there." It doesn't happen every time now, but that first time, it was something... It almost knocked me off my feet in the church.

I understood many interesting things when I was thinking about what I saw *over there*. The people that will end up in hell will be thrown into outer darkness. People that get there after their death, they are... Their souls are so sinful, that they move away from God. They condemn themselves. The more sinful you are, the farther you are from God and His Light. You can't approach Him when you're covered with the dirt of your thoughts and deeds. You are carried further and further away into the pitch darkness, where all your fears await you; while near Him there is no fear, only bliss. Life always ends unexpectedly and when you stand before Him and all your deeds are exposed, nothing can be changed. You'd condemn yourself and wouldn't allow yourself to come closer to Light, for its burning will be unbearable. Only similar things can be together. It is not like the Final Judgment as it is often described...

**Father George:** Well, you haven't really lived to see the Final Judgment yet. The Final Judgment will be at the end of time, when the dead will resurrect. The souls will join with the bodies of the dead and then the

people with their bodies will stand before the Terrible Judgment. Heaven and hell will come after the Judgment Day. Before that, according to Mark of Ephesus, the souls will be in a state of waiting for the Final Judgment. Depending on the state of their souls, people will either suffer by awaiting their future torments or experience bliss by anticipating the future blessings.

**Vasily Lazarev:** Perhaps, it was a pre-judgment. My own condemnation. I went through a lot, but I don't want to even think about angering God in any way. I don't have a single thought like that. I used to do crazy things. Now, knowing all that could be *over there*... How good or how bad it can be *over there*... I can't even think about that. Earlier, I could not imagine my life without cigarettes and thought that, "If you didn't smoke pot or get an injection today, you've wasted a day." After all the things I learned, I quit all that. I am not a coward, but I'm on my best behavior now. I don't want to go there. It is frightening.

**Father George:** Do you mean that outer darkness?

**Vasily Lazarev:** Yes. Especially, because it is for all eternity. I also understood that in a way we have two births. First is when we are born, and the second is when we die. In this life, while we are in this world, we must decide who are we with and what actions do we do. I am very lucky to have another chance. God gave me a new life so that I could understand what love is. You just have to clean up your act in time. As Saint Seraphim of Sarov said, "We must acquire the Holy Spirit".

**Father George:** We have to do it here on earth, because *over there* you won't have any choice. Your words about the birth reminded me the words of Gregory of Sinai who said, "Here on earth, people carry the embryo of their future life that will be either eternal agony or eternal happiness with God." In fact, in death people get the eternity that was determined by whether their actions were directed toward God or sin.

***I remained conscious all the time. This confirms that we do not die. I say this for atheists, for those who reject Our Lord.***

**Vasily Lazarev:** That was actually what moved me to tell my story. All this is very personal... Not everybody would tell something like that about himself or herself. I want to attest that the personality is indestructible. I remained conscious all the time. This confirms that we do not die. I say this for atheists, for those who reject Our Lord. Here they hope for something, maybe for the prince of this world to help them; but he won't protect them *over there*. *Over there* they will get what they deserve. It is absolutely true.

You shouldn't only believe, you should also do good deeds. Think—Why were you were born? Can it be that the most complicated biological organism on the planet was created just to pass time idly? Our life on earth is just a moment, but it is a very important moment, as it is here that we decide if we go to Him or not. There would be no other moment like that and you can't change anything after you die. Try to avoid doing evil, while you still have time, and ask for forgiveness from people you've hurt. And dedicate all your actions to the glory of God.

I'll remind you about two commandments that Jesus Christ gave us: "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind..." and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Mark 12:30, 31). If all people followed these two commandments, the entire Earth would be protected by love. In this respect, the Orthodox Church is the flagship. I think that it is the only true teaching that leads us to the afterlife. I experienced the afterlife personally. Perhaps; my story would help some people to think about their actions and reconsider their ways. Many people told me, "You just had hallucinations under the influence of drugs. Some kind of delirium that occurs when cerebellum does something..."

**Father George:** But the fact that your life changed so drastically is already an evidence that that could not have been mere hallucinations. Drug addicts see hallucinations all the time, but they don't change their lives. Life can be changed only by a real experience. I think that God showed you in advance the things that could happen, because everything in your past life led you to a different place, that outer darkness. Through His love, God showed what awaits you, so you could make the right choice. Thank God that you made good use of your second chance.

~ pravoslavie.ru/english

## **Curing the Sickness of Pharisaism (Conclusion)**

**“Help your children to not be dependent on television, because they will be filled with all those obscene images, and so will you.”**

Transcript of a tape-recorded homily by  
**Metropolitan Athanasius of Limassol, Cyprus**

Another important element that I would like to say something more about (also because some of you have asked me to) is **the matter of time**. Did you notice during these days that we have been spending on this ship, how we had no external distractions? We had nothing to draw our attention elsewhere, like at home - for example, television. Did you see how much time we had available? We even conversed among ourselves. You who are married had time to talk to each other - the spouses and the children. The children played together, they talked amongst themselves, and we had lots of time to ourselves and we communicated with each other, and that is the most important element of all: that we could communicate. The most tragic thing is at home, when everyone is sitting in front of the television and they don't talk to each other... time slips away and people do not communicate with each other. And the worst of all? It is the things we see on television... that's the source of the worst corruption for the ones close to us, our children and our souls.

On one of these days, when we had disembarked and were walking about the place, I noticed in one of those places where the youngsters serve different things, where they are offered refreshments, that they had a television switched on which was playing, and even though nobody was paying attention to it, it was still on. So I stood there for a moment, to see what it was showing - although I don't know what kind of film it was... I guess it was something... it was showing some people who were chasing after some other people all the time, and there was a constant chase....there were guns, bullets, cars, explosions, jumping from one house to another... But these are things that your children - your young children - sit and watch; so much violence... and I'm not even talking about all the other obscenities that I don't want to mention, which have even destroyed elderly people. And don't you tell me that it's not like that, because I know it is, first hand: these are admissions that we hear during confession. Elderly people, very old people, who are otherwise very respectable, have been ruined by television, from all that vulgarity that they are exposed to every day. I'm not referring to that specific damage right now; I am referring to all the other things - all the violence that the television projects. How do you expect the children to not become familiarized with violence? They will naturally become unruly and disobedient and do things that are entirely foreign to their nature!

Have you any idea what an ugly sight it is, when you see young children mimicking older people? They mimic adults, and they destroy their innocent childishness. Sometimes, when I'm invited to an event, they bring along tiny toddlers and tell them to dance. And you see these little girls or boys, ten or twelve years old, full of innocence, making dance moves that they have seen older women do - women who are entirely disgraceful, with another morality altogether. You can actually see how those children are being destroyed, with their emulations of the adults that they see on television. And also doing all sorts of things and entertaining themselves with choices that are catastrophic. And I am not saying this from the spiritual aspect only, but from every aspect - psychological and social and family. Keep them as far away as you can from all these things. Help your children to not be dependent on television, because they will be filled with all those obscene images, and so will you. If you don't allow your children to watch obscene movies, but you the adult does, then what's the use? And what about those silly warnings that they write on screen - that the movie is not suitable under 18 or something... or whatever else it says... younger than 12 or something like that... Does that mean that if they turn 12 the sight is a suitable one? Of course those warnings only arouse the youngsters' curiosity and every one of them will inevitably watch

the film. They think to themselves that if this movie is forbidden for those younger than 12, it must have something that is deserving of every curiosity...

In my opinion, the destruction that is inflicted on people's inner world is incalculable. Because, as we said yesterday, all positive images, all the good images that one absorbs are extremely beneficial in one's spiritual life. The same applies in reverse, with the bad images that a person observes - they create so many bad situations, that the damage caused is literally incalculable and sometimes we can't tell if it can be cured. But if someone were to observe matters and study them, he will see just how great a catastrophe television can wreak on a person's psyche, and especially in younger people. But it is not only that; you see, one evil will bring on another. It will be a whole chain of evils, because it destroys communication, it destroys time, it destroys the innocence of a person's soul, and then man becomes exhausted, and being exhausted, he has no desire to do anything. Because his soul was filled with things that wearied him, and then he wonders why he is tired - he can't understand why... Try to experiment, by eliminating or at least minimizing these evils, and you will see how much more relaxed you will become and how much free time you will have at your disposal, which will be far more fruitful for anything else that you may do.

Naturally, these things are not unrelated to our spiritual life, because a person's spiritual life is a product of all the activities that a person has. By this, I don't mean to say stop watching television altogether. I am not against it per se; it's just that things like these make our life more difficult instead of making it easier, and they destroy it, the way it was destroyed by technological "progress" which has otherwise facilitated our lives. You catch a plane, and you're there. You get on a ship, and you get there quickly - you don't need to row with oars like they used to do in olden times.... or a thousand other conveniences... which in the long run are conveniences that may have facilitated our lives, but they also trapped us inside one big difficulty and made us lose ourselves, they made us lose the beauty of our life and we eventually destroyed the world we live in, and now we want even more sciences and discoveries, to see if we can salvage what is left of it...

Of course all these things that constitute the tragedy of our Fall and the mangling of our personality make it abundantly clear just how impossible it is to humanly tackle the problem, and yet, if one turns to God, then we will see that which Christ had said: that whatever is impossible for man to accomplish, is possible by God. Whatever seems impossible for people is possible for God - and we can see around us that miracle by God, which, even in our day, with all the information and all these provocations taking place around us, and the accessibility to sin, still, **there are people who love God and from among the thorns, we see roses spring forth... Roses blossom from among the thorns, and the immense miracle of man's salvation becomes reality, regardless of our own human weaknesses, our wretched state, our problems, the difficulties with our self, our church, our family, our society and the other elements that unfortunately bombard every person.** That is why - to return from all these things - we need to return where we started from, when we said that the solution and the answer to all problems is for man to turn towards loving God, and that when man loves God, then God will cure him, God will resurrect him - even if that person is dead and decomposing - God will restore him, provided man discards from inside him all that is useless and put in his heart a love for God, and build his life around that love for God, and atop that love for God - to build his life, his marriage, his family, his path, his studies, his course. If man does that, then he will truly come to enjoy life and his life will become a paradise, because paradise is nothing more than God's love, whereas "hell" is nothing more than the absence of God's love.

So, it is my wish, as a conclusion to our broadcast, that the love of God will always accompany all of you, and that we should not forget that everything we do, we must do for that reason, and not just to be religiously behaving people. We must become God-loving people, so that our lives can be transformed correctly and we ourselves be transformed into Jesus Christ our Lord. God be with you.