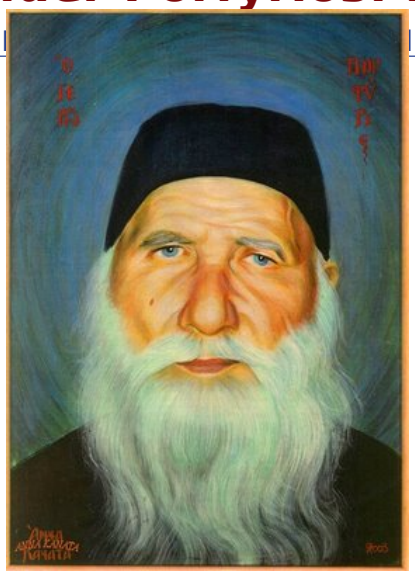
17 Δεκεμβρίου 2012

Elder Porfyrios: How to deal with depression

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Almost all illnesses are caused by our lack of trust in the Lord. This creates stress. Stress is caused by the negation of the religious sentiment. Unless you love the Lord and preoccupy yourself with holy deeds, you will certainly have depression and nasty feelings.

There is one thing which helps someone who is depressed: work and showing an interest in living: For example having a garden, some plants, flowers, trees, or getting outside, going for a walk in the countryside, or for a simple walk. All these create an interest and stop a person's apathy. They act like medicine.

Moreover, being interested in music or the arts is very beneficial. But I specially emphasize the need to show an interest for the Church, for the Gospel and the liturgical services. Just by studying the Lord's word one is healed without realizing it.

We ought not to be discouraged or be in a hurry. We ought not to judge things superficially or by their external appearance. If for example you happen to see a naked woman or one who is dressed inappropriately, do not criticize her but try to enter her soul. She may have a good heart and may express her existential worries through her wild appearance. She may process an inner strength and wish to show off arousing interest. She may have a distorted view of things because of her ignorance. Imagine what will happen if she does actually come to know Christ. She

will become a believer and will direct all this passion towards Christ. She will do anything to attract divine grace. She will become a saint.

Because of our anxiety and our fears we often cause harm to someone without meaning to and without realizing it, even if we love him very much, like a mother does her child. A mother may transfer to the child all her anxiety about his life, his health and progress, even though she does not express it with words. This kind of love, this natural love, may sometimes cause harm. However, this does not happen with the love of Christ which is coupled with prayer and a careful way of life. This love sanctifies and calms a person, since God is love.

Translation of excerpts from the book «ΓΕΡΟΝΤΟΣ ΠΟΡΦΥΡΙΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΜΟΝΑΧΟΥ Ανθολόγιο Συμβουλών»
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