

WEEKLY MEDITATION

THE PROLOGUE OF OCHRID

Most of us (we hope) have some rule of prayer which helps us pray every day. But in addition to prayer it is essential to have some spiritual instruction also every day. Just as your physical body needs physical food every day, so your spiritual life needs spiritual food daily as well in order to be healthy and strong. "Give us this day our daily bread" can be interpreted also in this sense. Of course this means daily Bible reading. But in addition it is helpful to read Orthodox spirituality, which kind of provides additional challenges and interprets scripture and shows us how to apply it to our lives. To this end I am not aware of anything better than the Prologue of Ochrid, compiled and written by St. Nikolai Velimirovich (St. Nikolai of Zicha, who also labored in America). This is like a daily reader of Orthodox spirituality, with selections for each day of the year. It will have brief lives of the saints for each day, hymns and some excellent teaching which draws extensively on scripture and from the fathers. There are many edifying stories from church history and many selections from the writings of the Fathers of the Church throughout the ages. The prologue is available for purchase currently as a 2 volume set or it can be read online (for example at www.westsrbdio.org/prolog/prolog.htm). I heartily recommend it! But be warned! It contains strong spiritual meat. It is not watered down at all! In the prologue you will get classic Orthodox spirituality and be heavily challenged. It really could be called "a treasury of Orthodox spirituality" because it contains much spiritual treasure. If I was going to be marooned on a desert island for life, and was allowed to choose only a few books to have with me; together with a Bible and a prayer book, one of the others would be the Prologue.

Fr. Stacey