

Conclusion

Brethren, such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. Not that we are competent of ourselves to claim anything as coming from us; our competence is from God, who has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant, not in a written code but in the Spirit; for the written code kills, but the Spirit gives life.¹

“You are Saints” is the echo of the pastor’s words who told his parishioners: “Look among you, search in your hearts and there you will find saints.”² Sainthood is in each human being, but it is only recognized through those who are living in the Assembly of the Trinitarian God. Although other religions do not acknowledge nor recognize sainthood, they still have that embedded opportunity to become a saint, for God has created all, and our purpose as human beings reaches the same objective. This objective is to go beyond our human nature and connect with God. This is the role of the Holy Spirit in the Assembly of God. Our purpose is to become as holy as we can, using all the tools God has given us for the greater good of our existence, which is serving Him.

One main distinction between Christians and other people remains, however. This is that Christians are already saints due to their participation and partaking in Jesus Christ. The saint is a member of the assembly whose only task and role is to live in conformity to the teachings of this assembly. These teachings were delivered alive by the Head of this assembly – Jesus Christ the Incarnated Son of God. The saint’s only task and role is to breathe the Holy Spirit and become a living holy temple of and for God. He is the one who makes his life a testimony to the Living Christ in him, and imitates Paul the Apostle and says with him: *“It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.”*³

So the earthly life of the saint is to reveal Christ. He is a saint because of Jesus Christ, and as such, he has to live his life in Christ. Christ is in him, so he is to become Christ-like in his earthly ministry. He is a living member even after his death. The power that

¹ 2 Cor. 3: 4 - 5.

² See Introduction, p. 1 & 2.

³ Gal. 2: 20.

the saint manifests is God's power. This miraculous actions and events are accomplished by God's Name. The saint-man is alive physically in this world or alive while he is asleep in the hope of the resurrection.

The life of the saint makes the assembly acknowledge him as a saint. This acknowledgment may happen while he is still alive or after his physical departure. Therefore, the assembly recognizes and reveals him as a canonized universal saint.

The saint, as a result of this exploratory and comparative study, is the one who rejuvenates the embedded particles of sainthood that are created by God in him, and sets himself apart by putting on Christ and becoming a member of the assembly of Jesus Christ. He, then, acknowledges God, the Origin of his sainthood, and he recognizes that his only and fixed task is to reveal Christ through his life. He is the one who claims through his deeds that *"every good and perfect gift is from above,"*⁴ from the Saint par excellence, whose uncreated essence set Him apart from creation. The saint is the one who sees every human being as a saint and creation as an altar on which the act of sanctification is performed by God through his saints.

Thus, sainthood for Orthodox Christians is not mere acts of mercy, righteousness, and social work, but a grace from the Trinitarian God. These actions of love are the result of that grace that is bestowed on them. Sainthood is a loving live ministry for the living. It is a true action of love, in love and for love. The saints are God's image and unto His likeness they minister because they are, from the beginning, created in the Image of God and unto His Likeness. So will the created image of God become Christ-like?

⁴ James 1: 17 and the closing prayer of the Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom.