FROM THE DESK OF FATHER JOHN

THE UNITY OF THE BELIEVERS IN THE TRUTH

Unity or unification are meanings and practices which are observed and especially concern contemporary people. The common disposition of most people is to bridge the differences for the sake of peace and of supporting one another, which comes from the good of unity.

While much more so in the Church, unity, having the same opinion, and the same voice, are virtues which are demanded beforehand, because as Saint John Chrysostom characteristically says “the name of the Church is the name of agreement and of one mind”. If we want, in other words to give one name to the Church, it is that of harmony and peace, of agreement and common confession.

Because it is the common faith in one person, our Lord Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul calls on the name of Christ in order to urge the Christians of Corinth as follows: “Be ye all saying the same thing”, in other words, that everyone be confessing the same faith. And their confession should comprise a common train of thought of everyone, “in the same mind”. Because it happen that we have in mind the same faith, but we have a different opinion when we express it. (Nikodemos the Haghiortite).

Divided opinions and favoritisms
Patronizing and favoritism is observed in believers who follow certain persons who inspire genuineness, authenticity or integrity in them, projecting faith and the spiritual life. Something analogous had been observed also in the local Church of Corinth and the Apostle wanted to correct the divided opinions among the believers, the recriminations and the preferences of certain persons who in their opinion, more so were expressing the truth of the Gospel.

Each one tells you that I am (a follower) of Paul or of Apollo or of Cephas” (1 Cor. 1:12). In other words, some preferred the Apostle Paul and his teaching. They considered him a genuine expresser of the Gospel. Others followed Apollo, a man with fervent faith and a teaching gift, who continued the apostolic work of Paul in Corinth.

See Father John, page 4
Father John C. Katsoulis, Parish Priest  540-645-1427  fr.john_katsoulis@verizon.net
FATHER’S OFFICE HOURS—TUESDAY—FRIDAY 9 A.M.—3 P.M.  OTHER HOURS BY APPOINTMENT
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: nativityofthetheotokos@verizon.net  OFFICE HOURS: TUES. & THURS. 9 A.M.—3 P.M.
TREASURER: pctreasure@verizon.net WEBSITE: www.nativity.va.goarch.org FACEBOOK: NTGOC Friends

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SACRAMENTS IN SEPTEMBER
MEMORIALS
Athanasios Kakvoyannis, beloved husband of Nitsa
Georgia Kapataidakis, beloved wife of George
Ioannis Apostolides, beloved father of Maria Yiasemides

CHURCHING
Konstantine Panagiotes Zotos, son of Alex and Georgia

PASTORAL GUIDELINES

WEDDING  Marriages are not performed on fast days, during fasting seasons, or on the feasts of the church, specifically September 14 (Exaltation of the Holy Cross), December 13-25 (Nativity), January 5 & 6 (Theophany), Great Lent and Holy Week, Pascha (Easter), Pentecost, August 1-15 (Dormition Fast and Feast), and August 29 (Beheading of St. John the Baptist) Exceptions can only be made with the permission of the respective hierarch.

BAPTISM  A person who wishes to sponsor a candidate for Baptism or Christmation must be an Orthodox Christian in good standing and a supporting member of an Orthodox parish. A person may not serve as a godparent if the Church has not blessed his or her marriage, or, if civilly divorced, he or she has not been granted an ecclesiastical divorce, or for any other reason he or she is not in communion with the Orthodox Church. Baptisms may not be performed from Christmas Day through the Feast of Theophany (December 25-January 6), during Holy Week, or any of the Great feast days of the Lord.

FUNERAL  Funeral services are permitted on any day of the year, except for Sundays, and Holy Friday, unless permission is granted by the Archbishop or Metropolitan.

MEMORIAL  Memorial services may not be chanted from the Saturday of Lazarus through the Sunday of Thomas, or any Feast days of the Lord or the Theotokos.

Please contact Father if you wish to schedule a sacrament, or know of a parishioner who is sick or in the hospital.
### OCTOBER 2013

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Others considered Cephas (in other words the Apostle Peter) a genuine teacher of the Christian truth. His stature as chief of the twelve apostles probably impressed them, even though he himself does not seem to have ever visited Corinth. Finally there were those who preferred Christ. Not because they had realized the incomparable superiority of him as God and man before the Apostles. But this was their personal choice, as if Christ were one of the Apostles.

Attachment to Christ unifies the believers. The fact that Christ is One escaped them. There don’t exist many persons with the qualities of Christ, there don’t exist many types of Christ. This truth, if everyone who followed or is following Christianity had perceived it, there would be no disputes, nor schisms, nor heresies. The phrase of the Apostle is very strong: “Is Christ divided?” (1 Cor. 1:13).

Is it possible for Him who loosened the enmity between God and man due to sin, and preached peace to all the peoples of the earth, to become an object of disputes and disagreements? Christ himself in his High Priestly prayer told his Father “that they may be one” (Jn. 17:11), in other words, for his disciples and whoever believed in Him to be united, as He is united with His Father.

The Apostle Paul very aptly observes that maybe was Paul crucified (or whomsoever else) for the sins of men? Maybe were you baptized in the name of Paul? Only Christ was crucified for our sins, in the name of Christ we are baptized, we commune Christ. So why these division? Did He not send one unique Holy Spirit and He enlightened the Apostles what to teach? This Spirit of Pentecost does it not lead the Church “into all the truth?”

Faith in the one God unites. There don’t exist many truths about God. God is one and true, faith is one and true, consequently our train of thought and opinion are identified in the person of the one God. And this person for the Church and for the Sacred Tradition is the person of Christ, who as the Apostle again reveals, is: “the God over all who is, blessed unto the ages”.

We are called in our age to concentrate our faith in the one God, the Father Almighty and Savior of the world. His Only Begotten Son, Christ also preached the one God. The All Holy Spirit taught and enlightened the one God to the apostles and they to the world. The one Triune God. This truth as a unifying power, the Church projects to today’s world. If all people embrace it, they will live the miracle of the unity of the faith and the prayer will become a reality: “one flock, one shepherd”.

Archim. Ch. N.

ATTENTION STUDENTS

Mathematics, French, Greek tutors for middle, high school, and college students. Cost: free will offering to benefit AHEPA. Contact: Demetrios Serakos, Ph.D. 540.663.2523, for math, and Dr. John Manolis, 540-373-0808 for Greek or French.

IMPORTANT NEWS!

During the month of October we will be updating our church database. An information sheet is in the center of this newsletter and will be included in the weekly bulletins. In addition, we will place this on our website and send it as an email attachment. Please fill it out and return it by September 29th, in the offering tray. Thank you for your assistance!

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Due to the success of last year’s pageant and family night celebration, this year’s event has already been scheduled for Saturday, December 21, at 5 P.M. The pageant will be performed, carols will be sung, the tree will be decorated, and our church family will sit down for a pot luck dinner. Parts will be assigned during Sunday School the last two weeks of October. If your child wishes to participate, he/she must be in attendance one of those Sundays.

COFFEE HOUR

Host and/or hostesses are needed for the coffee hour after church. If you would like to host, please sign-up on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall.

HALL RENTAL

The fellowship hall is available for rent. Please spread the word, and refer all inquiries to our website, www.nativiy.va.goarch.org.
STEWARDSHIP HONOR ROLL

Shown below is a list of families & individuals who are participating in The Nativity of the Theotokos Stewardship Program as of August 25, 2013. We would like to thank all of these families and individuals for responding to the needs of our parish. If your name does not appear, and you have filled out a stewardship card, please see Maxine Calamos or Jim Malamas.

Fr. John & Pres. Stacy Katsoulis
Ladies Philoptochos Society
Kyriacos & Yiannoulla Adamou
Paul & Helen Bards
Richard & Angela Beamer
Michael & Ornela Bizhyti
Mary Booth
Nancy Costas Breckinridge
Kevin & Chrysoyula Brickey
Maxine N. Calamos
Mike & Angelina Campbell
Costas & Sophia Constantine
Markella Countouroudas
Leonard Cowherd
Victoria Dobrescu
Lucretia Edreos
Michael and Evanthia Euripides
Paul & Hannah Fallon
Lucas & Nina Frank
Helen Frazier
Carl & Christine Fulmore
Angela & Maria Galatis
Kiki Georges
Julia Getso
Jim & Katherine Giannopoulos
Theofilos Giannopoulos
Pauline Gorton
Thomas Harris
Anthony & Kai Hatzis
Phillip & Monica Hicks
Bill & Stella Kaltounis
George Kapataidakis
Paraskevi Kapataidakis
Jim & Bessie Karellas

Kosta & Chryse Kartoudi
Helen Katsarelis
George & Chrissy Katsourakis
Michael Kavros
Maria Kipreos
Michael & Kathy Klezaras
Dennis & Anthoula Makrinos
James & Koula Malamas
John & Maria Manolis
Gino & Marika Marchica
Peter & Jennifer Margaros
Judy Marrs
Cynthia & Daniel Miller
David & Mary Moody
Phil & Jane Moore
Robert and Barbara Morrison
Ioanna Nicholas
Bill & Dorothy Nosal
Elena O’Donaghue
Aslanis Pappas
George & Sarah Parent
Georgia Pournaras
Emanuel & Sophia Psaras
Mitchell & Georgia Raftellis
Chris & Yvonne Rigopoulos
Nicholas & Melissa Roman
Stelios Salagaras
Gamal Salama
Halina Schreckinger
Dimitri Serakos
Wayne & Liz Skinner
Jim & Christina Smith
Alin and Andrea Son
Mary Stram
Carrie K. Swann
Stefan & Niki Theodore
Georgia L. Tidler
Vasilios & Helen Troupos
Bill & Sandy Winkler
Joe & Maria Winslow
John & Ellen Xydias
Chris & Darlene Yiasemides
Eleni Yiasemides
Harry & Maria Yiasemides
Vicki Yiasemides
Paul and Martha Ziegenfuss
Christos & Lambrini Zourzoukis
SAINT DEMETRIOS, THE GREAT MARTYR

Great Martyr Dimitrios, the Myrrh-flowing and Wonderworking Saint, was a Christian and the son of the military commander of Thessalonica in the early fourth century. St. Dimitrios was the only son and was, because of this, most carefully cherished and educated. When his father died, Dimitrios was appointed by Emperor Maximian to take his place. Maximian was an opponent of Christ and charged Dimitrios to persecute and to kill the Christians in that city.

Instead, Dimitrios disobeyed Maximian and openly confessed and preached Christianity. Hearing of this, the Emperor was furious and on his way back from battles against the Sarmathians he went to Thessalonica to look into the matter. He summoned Dimitrios and questioned him about his faith. Dimitrios confessed his belief as well as his disgust for idolatry (and thus openly criticizing the Emperor himself). The enraged Emperor cast him into prison, and Dimitrios, knowing his fate, had his servant Lupus give his wealth to the poor (being glad that suffering for Christ was to be his lot).

An angel of God appeared to Dimitrios saying, "Peace be with thee, thou sufferer for Christ; be brave and strong!" After several days, the Emperor sent soldiers to the prison to kill Dimitrios. The soldiers came into the cell finding the Saint at prayer, and killed him with their spears. Christians secretly took his body and buried it, and his relics began producing a healing fragrant myrrh. A small church was soon built over his relics, and when an Illyrian nobleman, by the name of Leontius, ran prayerfully up to the relics of St. Dimitrios and was completely cured of an incurable disease, he built a much larger church replacing the small one.

Once, when barbarians plundered the city, two maidens were abducted. When the leader of the barbarians learned that the maidens could embroider, he threatened them to produce the likeness of St. Dimitrios. They finished on the eve of the Saint's feast and they wept asking for his forgiveness. Suddenly, Dimitrios appeared and transported them like an angel of God to the safety of his church in Thessalonica and left them among the people during a vigil.

The Saint appeared on other occasions. When Emperor Justinian attempted to move the Saint's relics to Constantinople, flames shot out of the tomb and a voice commanded them to, "Leave them there, and don't touch!" and thus the relics have remained since in Thessalonica. Another time was when a young man responsible for the candles of the church was stealing them and reselling them from his home. Dimitrios appeared to him and told him that he was harming himself and the church. The embarrassed man obeyed for a little while but soon returned to his old ways. One day, when he was about to steal some large candles that had just been lit near the tomb of St. Dimitrios, a booming voice said, "Are you doing this again!" He fell over unconscious, and when he awoke, he related the whole story.

As the defender of Thessalonica, St. Dimitrios has many times appeared and saved the city in times of trouble. The Russians also regarded St. Dimitrios as the protector of Siberia.
The Whole Shebang!
A Multi Vendor and Craft Event
10 A.M., November 16, 2013
Dozens of Crafters & Vendors
Snack Bar to benefit
The Athenian Dancers
No Admission Fee

GREEK AGORA
GREEK MARKET PLACE
CRAFTERS & VENDORS ON SITE

SATURDAY October 5th
10 A.M. – 4 P.M.

Featuring Greek Food: Pastichio, Gyro, Spanikopita, Stuffed Grape Leaves & more!
Greek Pastries: Baklava, Finikia, Koulourakia, Breads, & much more!

SPONSORED BY:
Ladies Philoptochos Society
(We are the “Friends of the Poor”)

*******ADMISSION IS FREE*******
**A KLEZARAS FAREWELL**

We never had a chance to say a proper "goodbye" to our friends in Fredericksburg. Suffice it to say, the situation that brought us to have to leave did not permit us the luxury of being able to say "goodbye" to you in a normal way. Only a handful of people in the community who "had" to know knew we were leaving. Believe us, it was a very difficult thing to do. We had a wonderful two years in Fredericksburg and the community of the Nativity of the Theotokos was most welcoming to us. While things did not turn out as we would have liked, the opportunity to relocate to Fredericksburg gave us the honor of getting to pray with, work with, and get to know you. There is a reason for everything and the complete reason for our coming to (and leaving) Fredericksburg is still playing out. God willing, we shall return. Perhaps next year to help with the Festival. And yes, the reason we could not help this year IS that our daughter mistakenly scheduled BOTH grandsons' birthday parties that weekend in Delaware. We miss you all and trust that God will continue to show us the way forward and to bring us back to you in the not too distant future. If you're ever in Delaware (or passing through on I-95), please make a pit stop. We're only 10 minutes off the interstate. So it's not really goodbye....rather Farewell!

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**Recipe for Prosforo**

5 cups all purpose flour  
1 1/2 cups warm water  
1 tsp. salt  
2 tsps. yeast

Dissolve the yeast in the warm water. Add the salt and flour and knead until smooth and elastic. Place in a bowl, cover and let rise. When the dough doubles in size, punch down and knead again. Then divide the dough in half and knead again for about 10 minutes until smooth and elastic. Shape the dough into a ball and gently press into a floured (not greased) cake pan. Allow to rest for a minute or two, then gently press the seal into the bread. Remove the seal and allow to rise about 30 minutes. Bake at 375 for about 30 minutes.

After the prosfora has been baked, the following prayer may be said "Dear Lord, this bread that has been baked represents each one of us in this family and in our community. We are offering ourselves to You, our very life, in humble obedience and total commitment to You. We place ourselves on Your Holy Altar through this bread to be used by You in any way that You feel will help enlarge Your Kingdom. Accept our gift and make us worthy to receive the greater gift that You will give us when You consecrate this bread and give it back to us as Your Precious Body. Amen"
The Prosfora Seal

The prosfora seal is a round wooden or plastic stamp that is used on the bread that we bake for the liturgy. When the seal is stamped on the bread, it then becomes a prosfora.

The overall symbol of the seal is the cross. When you look down at the seal, this is what you see. The symbol of the cross is seen all over the seal because the cross is the central symbol of the Orthodox Christian Faith.

In the middle of the seal are the letters IC XC NIKA which translates JESUS CHRIST CONQUERS. This is the most important part of the seal because this is the piece that is the Lamb and will be used solely for the preparation of Holy Communion.

The other symbols that make up the seal on the prosfora symbolize Christ, His Holy Mother and all the Saints. The image of Christ as a lamb is prominent throughout the New Testament, and it parallels with the sacrificial lamb offered to God from the Old Testament practice of blood and burnt offerings.

The lettering on the top and under the LAMB represents the abbreviations for JESUS (IC) CHRIST (XC) CONQUERS (NIKA).

On the right side of the LAMB is a group of triangles that are actually two Greek letters superimposed on top of one another M and Q. The "M" is the first letter in the Greek word for "Mother" (M thy), and the Q is the first letter of the Greek word for "of God" (Theou). The symbol overall represents Mary the Virgin Mother of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ who sits at His right hand in fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy.

The nine triangles to the left of the LAMB represent the nine orders of the saints who are commemorated at the Divine Liturgy. The first triangle is in remembrance of Archangels Michael and Gabriel and all the orders of the bodiless heavenly powers: Cherubim, Seraphim, Thrones, Dominion, Virtues, Powers, Principalities, Angels, and Archangels. The second triangle is in remembrance of Saint John the Prophet and Forerunner of our Lord, as well as all the Prophets and Prophetesses. The third triangle is for all the Disciples and Apostles of our Lord and those who are equal to the apostles. The fourth triangle is for the holy fathers among the saints such as Saint John Chrysostom, Saint Basil the great, and Saint Gregory the Theologian.

The fifth triangle is for the great martyrs, St. George the trophy-bearer, Saint Demetrios the exuder of myrrh, and all the martyrs. The sixth triangle is for the holy women martyrs. Saint Katherine the all-wise, Saint Barbara, Saint Anastasia...and many others. The seventh triangle is for the men and women enlightened through ascetic struggle, such as Saint Anthony the great, Saint Efthymios, Saint Mary of Egypt and others. The eighth triangle is for the holy unmercenaries such as Saints Kosmas and Damian and many others. The ninth triangle is for the hierarch whose liturgy we celebrate, for instance, Saint John Chrysostom or Saint Basil the Great.

The triangles are reminders of God the Father, God the son and God the Holy Spirit. The saints represented in the prosfora lived their lives in accordance with God's will and glorified God with their lives and with their deaths. It is fitting therefore that the symbol of the triangle which represents the Holy Trinity, be used in commemorating all the orders of the saints.

When baking the prosfora and offering it to the Church to be used in the Liturgy, we must remember that it is our ministry to God that we offer ourselves to Him so He can in turn give Himself to us. Also when baking the prosfora, we must remember that it is a very special and holy service to God and that prayer is a very important part of baking the prosfora. Baking the prosfora is so important, that in some monasteries there is a separate area and oven to prepare the prosfora.
10/1/2013

10/2/2013
Epistle: St. Paul's First Letter to Timothy 1:12-17  

10/3/2013
Epistle: Acts of the Apostles 17:16-34  

10/4/2013
Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 4:8-21  

10/5/2013

10/6/2013
Gospel: Luke 7:11-16

10/7/2013
Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 4:28-31; 5:1-10  
Gospel: Luke 7:36-50

10/8/2013
Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 5:11-21  

10/9/2013
Epistle: St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 4:9-16  
Gospel: Matthew 9:36-38; 10:1-8

10/10/2013
Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 1:1-9  

10/11/2013

10/12/2013
Epistle: St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 10:23-28  

10/13/2013
Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to Titus 3:8-15  
Gospel: Luke 8:5-15

10/14/2013

10/15/2013

10/16/2013
Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 3:8-21  
Gospel: Matthew 27:33-54

10/17/2013
Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 9:18-33  

10/18/2013
Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians 4:5-11, 14-18  

10/19/2013

10/20/2013
Epistle: St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 6:16-18; 7:1  

10/21/2013
Epistle: St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 9:6-11  

10/22/2013
Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 5:20-25  

10/23/2013
Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 1:11-19  
Gospel: Matthew 13:54-58

10/24/2013

10/25/2013
Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 6:18-24  

10/26/2013
Epistle: St. Paul's Second Letter to Timothy 2:1-10  

10/27/2013
Matins: John 20:1-10  
Epistle: St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 9:6-11  

10/28/2013
Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 9:1-7  

10/29/2013
Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians 1:8-14  

10/30/2013
Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians 1:12-20  

10/31/2013
Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians 1:20-27  
Guidelines for Respectful Worship

Probably the most important duty that we each have as worshippers attending church services is to do all that is in our power to see that a proper decorum and atmosphere is maintained so that all of the congregation is able to pray sincerely, peacefully and meaningfully. It is with this fact in mind that we have set forth the following guidelines:

Upon entering the Church, at all times, but especially during services an individual should remember that he or she is in the House of God. Reverence and good manners are required so as not to disturb those who are already engaged in prayer, but, even more importantly, as an expression of sincere faith and awareness of the presence of the Lord. No irrelevant conversations should take place, either in the Narthex or in any part of the Church.

According to actual church service procedures, each and every member of the congregation is required to be seated in the pews at the beginning of the service. It is only by leniency that anyone is allowed to enter the Church once the services have begun. Thus it behooves us not to take undue advantage of this leniency.

There are several parts of the service during which no one should be moving about. Wherever a person happens to be at these moments, he or she should stop and stand reverently, until the proper time to proceed. These parts of the service are:

1. The Procession of the Priest and Altar Boys with the Gospel;
2. The reading of the Gospel;
3. The Cherubic Hymn and the Great Procession of the Priest and Altar Boys with the Holy Gifts;
4. The recitation of the Nicene Creed (in which the entire congregation should participate);
5. The prayers of offering “Take, eat…” and the prayers of the consecration of the Holy Gifts;
6. The Sermon;
7. Any special services (memorial services, processions, prayers).

One basic rule to follow is that, whenever the Priest is facing the people or outside of the altar, either with the censer or giving the blessing, everyone should stand wherever they are. Please remember that the Parish Council members and the ushering staff are required to keep order during services, and all should follow their instructions at all times.

THANK YOU
Why Non-Orthodox are Excluded from the Sacrament of Holy Communion

In the light of Church history, the question might better be asked, "Why does anyone allow for 'open communion'?" The fact is, from the very beginning the Eucharist was offered only to baptized and chrismated believers. The second century writing known as The Didache instructs believers to "let no one eat or drink from your Eucharist except those who are baptized in the Lord's Name." So restricted were the Eucharistic meetings of Christians in the first centuries that rumors arose among the pagans that they were actually involved in human sacrifice and cannibalism.

Even reformed churches practice closed communion. Only baptized believers who had undergone examination by the leaders of the churches were admitted to the Lord's Supper. In times past, communion tokens were used to gain admission to the sacrament as, for example in the Church of Scotland and also in Methodist churches.

The Orthodox Church does not consider it sufficient to express belief in Jesus in order to be admitted to the sacrament. Many heretics believe in Jesus. Arius, the fourth century heretic, believed in Jesus. Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons believe in Jesus. Hindus believe in Jesus. But none of these individuals or groups believes in the One Lord Jesus Christ known and proclaimed by the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

In the historic understanding of the Church, Communion has always been understood as the goal, the climax and expression of our unity in Christ. Today there are over 25,000 denominations worldwide and among them are many different views of Jesus.

The Orthodox practice closed communion, not for triumphalistic reasons, but for very important theological reasons. In doing so, they follow the practice of the ancient Church; a practice that was retained by the Reformers. "Open communion" was a relatively recent innovation and an exception to the practice of the Church beginning in the New Testament period.

In our pluralistic American culture, we object to anything that excludes individuals. We have been taught that all faiths are relative in their claims. One denomination is as good as another to the average American; the Orthodox Church appears to be just one more "denomination." However, the Orthodox Church pre-dates denominations, and the practice of the Orthodox Church pre-dates the practices of later Christian denominations by at least 1500 years.

From Discovering the Rich Heritage of Orthodoxy by Fr. Charles Bell, Ph.D Light & Life Publishing, Minneapolis / www.light-n-life.com