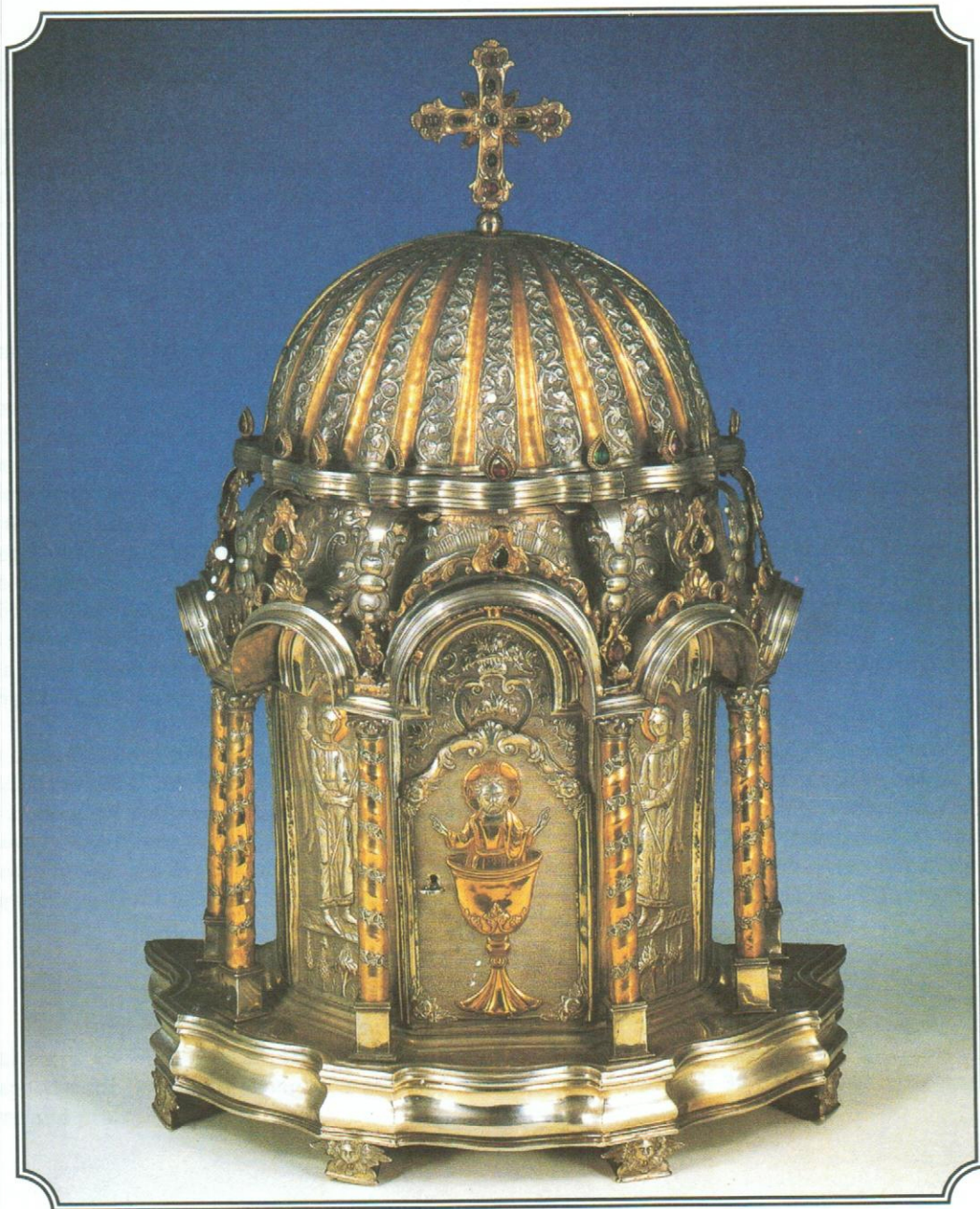
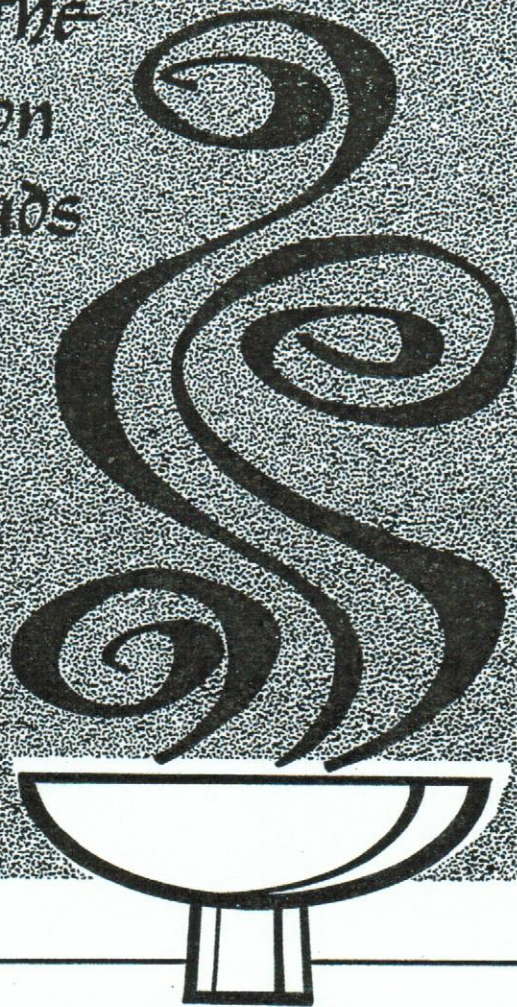


*“He who comes to God must believe that He is,
and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” Heb. 11:6*



The prayer of the
humble person
pierces the clouds
and rises
like incense
to the
LORD.



usually does not trust others and always suspects even the most innocent of their intentions are evilly motivated and need further and deeper inspection.

Second hand stress can even take on a life of its own. Stress hormones effect how you think, making you see situations as worse than they are. You assume the other person is stressed and react in anticipation. You resent the laid back appearance of those who will not submit to stressful influence. When you hear the sound of your husband's keys in the door can trigger your stress response even if he's not stressed any longer.

Sadly that's what has begun to play into the stress Marilyn feels in the presence of her coworker. She gets a sinking sickly feeling when she wakes up and realizes its a weekday and another time for encounter with this debilitating woman. She loves her job, but that woman makes her feel like she does not want to go to it. The stressor is avoided under most circumstances by all people who simply dismiss her as "crazy."

Since stress is contagious, wouldn't the best defense be to learn how not to feel the pain of others? Wrong, the experts say. "Feeling someone's stress is the trade-off for being an empathetic person who has friends that can be relied on. Our ability to catch the feelings of others – positive or negative - ultimately helps us connect with and care about people. Of course, it is true many stressors feel they are providing a stress service with their infliction of stress, but have no sense of reality. Their emotions are sick and degenerative. We should strive for ability to feel what others feel. At the same time, experts say there are ways to be empathetic and still look out for your own mental well-being. The epistle lesson captures it well, "This Spirit he lavished on us through Jesus Christ our Saviour, that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs, in hope of eternal life" Titus 3: 6, 7. "All of us who are spiritually mature must have this attitude. If you see it any other way, God will clarify the difficulty for you. It is important that we continue on our course, no matter what stage we have reached" Philippians 3: 15, 16.

The best coping strategy is to tell the other person up front how his stress is affecting you. As obvious as the that sounds, many women would rather squelch their feelings than assert their own needs and so they suffer in submission to the

your concern and voice your stress emphatically. Ask how you can help, but set realistic limits so neither feels exploited. Verbalizing in this way also helps you wrest

Did You Know That ...

...Christ assumed the guilt of our sin that we might have the gift of his salvation?

...most successes are built on failures?

...nature is an outstretched finger pointing toward God?

...we are pardoned from sin, but not excused from service?

...a little spark of encouragement can ignite great endeavors?

...all sunshine makes a desert?

...room for improvement is the largest room in the world?

...any time you try to borrow trouble, you learn your credit is in good standing?

...faith in Christ puts strength in the soul and a song in the heart?

...only fools are willing to pay a high price for being lost when salvation is free?

...one who is truly kind is truly great?

...although God's timetable moves slowly it always moves surely?

...death for the believer is not tragedy but triumph?

...the more clearly we see the sovereignty of God, the less perplexed we are by the calamities of man?

...it is the little things in life that keep us from accomplishing the big things?

...what we overcome to do God's will is less than what we undergo if we quit?

...man's limited potential points up God's limitless power?

...praying frequently helps pray fervently?

PROPER PROTOCOL WITH GOD

It's unlikely that many of us will ever be privileged to have an audience with the President of the United States, or anyone else of similar stature. If, however, we did, we would be given a **"crash course"** on what **proper protocol** would be for our encounter. Undoubtedly, we would be briefed on how we should dress, what we should say and how we should say it when meeting with the leader of our nation. Certainly we would not act as if we were in the company of a work colleague or a school classmate – our behavior would be expected to be dignified and respectful.

Every Sunday, we have a wonderful opportunity to have an **"audience"** with Someone Who carries much more **"clout"** than the President when we attend Divine Liturgy. We often overlook what a special experience this should be, and that certain things are required of us when we **"meet"** Him. When God spoke to Moses from the Burning Bush, He instructed him to **". . . take off your shoes, for you are on holy ground."** While we need not follow these words too literally, we must nonetheless, remember the sacredness and sanctity of being in the presence of the Lord. Our prayers must always be sincere; our approach to the Lord in this special way should always be with great humility and love. We must never **demand** that our prayers be answered by Him – nor should we **expect** a positive response **every time** we call upon Him to assist us.

May we **"know our place"** in our relationship with God. He is our Father; we are His children. He is the Giver of all good things, and when we come to Him with unwavering faith, we can rest assured that the Lord will certainly listen to our supplications!