



128. May 8/21 1973. St. John the Theologian

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Date : September 2, 2016

Dear Sister in Christ, Sylvia,
Christ is risen!

It's Sunday and apparently Vladimir isn't coming this weekend. The new Orthodox Word is out, so I'm able to think straight for a while (we have that problem too!) so I'll write these comments on your letter.

Yes, you have problems, but they aren't necessarily as bad as the immediate tensions which they cause might make you think. A few days out of the tense atmosphere (which will probably be possible once school is out) should let the muddy waters settle enough to see more clearly the real problems that are there — and that's already half the solution.

Organization is important, but of course, first you have to have a pretty good idea of what you're organizing — that is, what you're doing and want to be doing, and how you can best do it. Sometimes this becomes much clearer just by talking about it with someone from outside the situation, which we'll be glad to help on whenever you come.

The aching thoughts of Maggie are natural — but that's the side that belongs to earth. Her soul is with God, and the trial which you underwent with her was God's visitation to you, and the proof that in everything that has been happening there is something deeper than human logic and feelings can fathom.

Some people seem to have an "easy" and uncomplicated path in life — or so it seems from outside; while for others like you everything seems complicated and difficult. Don't let that bother you. Actually, from the spiritual point of view, those who really have an "easy" time are probably in danger! — precisely because without the element of suffering through whatever God sends, there is no spiritual profit or advancement. God knows each of us better than we know ourselves, and He sends what is needful for us, whatever we may think!

Maggie's grave is a source of great joy for us. On the Tuesday after Pascha week, when the dead are commemorated again for the first time, we went there and sang, mingling the funeral hymns with Paschal hymns, then breaking and eating eggs, symbols of the resurrection, over the grave. Truly the living and the dead are one in Christ, and it's only our blindness that makes us sometimes forget it!

We will be glad to see you whenever you can come. Pray for us.



With love in Christ our Saviour,
Seraphim, monk