



Excerpt from *Christ Our Pascha*

Pride and its Opposite Humility

Pride is the most dangerous passion and the mother of all sins. It was because of pride that Satan fell from God, and it is precisely pride that has ruined the prolonged endeavors of many an ascetic. Pride is a person's idolatrous self-deification: a person exalts oneself over other people and puts oneself in the place of God. The proud person is closed to God's grace: "The Lord opposes the proud; but he gives his grace to the humble" (Prv 3:34, lxx; see 1 Pt 5:5 and Jas 4:6). St. Augustine teaches that pride is the source of all evil, and in order to overcome all other sins, one must rid oneself of the root cause - pride: "Whence does iniquity abound? From pride. Cure pride and there will be no more inequity. Consequently, that the cause of all diseases might be cured, namely, pride, the son of God came down and was made low." (#777)

The most effective means of combating pride is to train oneself in humility. This opens a person toward God and neighbor, and makes a person capable of receiving God's transfiguring and liberating power. The apostle Paul declares: "We destroy arguments and every proud obstacle raised up against the knowledge of God, and we take every thought captive to obey Christ" (2 Cor 10:4-5). Through the virtue of humility, a person stands in truth before the face of God. Therefore, Christian humility does not demean a person, but allows one to recognize the one's true dignity as a child of God. (#779)