

On The Call to all Christians
to be SAINTS

By St. Nikolai Velimirovic, from "The Prologue from Ochrid"

St. Paul writes: "To the saints which are in Ephesus..." (Eph. 1:1)
The Apostle calls the Christians in Ephesus saints. He does not call one or two of them saints, or any one group of them, but them all. Is this not one of God's great wonders: that men, not in the desert but in the city, and that an idolatrous and dissolute city, should be saints? That married men should be saints, men who had children, who worked and traded. Such were indeed the first Christians. Their dedication, faithfulness and zeal in the Faith, as well as their holiness and purity of life, gives them the right to be called saints. If saints have become the exception in the latter days, the unholy were the exception in those first days. Saints were the norm. We must not, therefore, be surprised that the Apostle calls all baptised souls in Ephesus saints – and has another, yet more lofty, name for all Christians: that of sons, sons of God (Gal. 4:6). The Lord Christ Himself gave us the right to call ourselves such, when He taught us to address God as 'Our Father'.

Oh, my brethren, do we not say to God every day: 'Holy God'? Do we not call the angels holy? Do we not call the Mother of God holy? And the prophets and apostles, and the martyrs and the righteous? Do we not call heaven, and the Kingdom of heaven holy? Who, then, can dwell in the holy Kingdom but the saints? If we hope for salvation, we hope also for sanctity.

O holy God, who dwellest in the holy place and resteth among the saints, calling the holy to Thyself and having mercy on them; help us also, that we may be sanctified in thought, word and deed – to Thy glory and our salvation. To Thee be glory and praise for ever. Amen!