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Gifts of the Desert: The Forgotten Path of Christian Spirituality

Kyriacos C. Markides

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In Kyriacos C. Markides's newest book, Eastern Orthodox mysticism meets Western Christianity as the internationally renowned author takes readers on a deep journey back in time to unveil the very roots of authentic spirituality.

In his previous book *The Mountain of Silence*, Markides introduced us to the essential spiritual nature of Eastern Orthodoxy in a series of lively conversations with Father Maximos, the widely revered charismatic Orthodox bishop and former abbot of the isolated monastery on Mount Athos. In *Gifts of the Desert*, Markides continues his examination of Easter Orthodox mystical teachings and practices and captures its living expression through visits to monasteries and hermitages in Greece and America and interviews with contemporary charismatic elders, both male and female.

Markides's pursuit of a deeper understanding of Orthodoxy takes him to the deserts of Arizona and a stay at a new monastery in Sedona; to the island of Cyprus and a reunion with Father Maximos; on a pilgrimage to holy shrines aboard a cruise ship in the Aegean Sea; and finally to the legendary Mount Athos, home to more than two thousand Orthodox monks. Markides relates his journey and reflections in a captivating style while providing important background material and information on historical events to give readers a highly accessible, in-depth portrait of a tradition little known in the West.

Gifts of the Desert will appeal to a wide range of people, from Christians seeking insights into their religion and its various expressions to scholars interested in learning more about the mystical way of life and wisdom that have been preserved on Mount Athos since the fall of the Byzantine Empire and the Great Schism that separated the Eastern and Western Churches. Perhaps most important, however, is the bridge it offers contemporary readers to a Christian life that is balanced between the worldly and the spiritual.

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