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How can I stand out? (Archimandrite Nikon Koutsidis)

[Ξένες γλώσσες / In English](#)



In 2002, Nicolas Hayek, CEO and Chairman of the Board of Swatch, the Swiss watch
Greece. He
n he said,



‘What’s

the good of standing out, if nobody respects you? Nobody’s ever been made happy by having an enormous bank account. In any case, in biological terms our real survival needs are very few. Just two and a half thousand calories...’

Q. What is it that makes people think only of themselves and no-one else?

A. It’s the new situation that’s going on all around us. This new ideology has led to a society of little egotists. Throughout my life, I’ve never been happy if the people

around me weren't. My wife can't really go and buy whatever we need to eat and clothe ourselves when other people's children see her in the supermarket and wonder: 'Why can't my mother buy any of that? Because she's out of a job?' How can you be happy living in such an unjust society?

What Mr Hayek realized from his experience of life is – in its most perfect form- the normal practice of our Church. [It may be of interest that Mr Hayek was born into a Lebanese family who were Greek Orthodox Christians. WJL]. And here's a shining example which shows the outlook we should have and the way in which we should apply it.

In 610, Ioannis (known as 'the Charitable') was elected Patriarch of Alexandria. His nick-name came from the numerous acts of charity he performed both before and after he became Patriarch. We commemorate him on 12 November.

Saint Ioannis had a young nephew called Yeoryios (George) This young man had a serious disagreement with a taverner. The latter was a coarse and ill-mannered person, who cursed the young man roundly. The young man was very upset and went to see his uncle. With tears in his eyes, he described the rudeness and insults of the tavern-keeper.

The saint said: 'So he dared to swear at you. I'll take such revenge on him that it'll be the talk of Alexandria!'

Having comforted his nephew and calmed him down, he said: 'Look, if you really want to call yourself my nephew, prepare yourself. Not only for curses but also for whippings, because the Lord Himself taught us to do good even to our enemies.

Then the Patriarch summoned his steward and told him: 'Don't take any rent from the taverner who swore at my nephew. Not for any of the shops he rents from the Patriarchate'.

And Alexandria did, indeed, 'buzz' with the Patriarch's unique method of extracting revenge, which demonstrated his tolerance. It's the perfect method for making us stand out before God and other people.

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