



On The Human Condition: St Basil the Great (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press "Popular Patristics" Series) (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press "Popular Patristics" Series)

By Nonna Verna Harrison, Basil, Verna E. F. Harrison

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This informative and enjoyable little book serves as a valuable introduction to major themes in Greek Patristic anthropology—the image of God in the human being, the Fall of humanity, and the cause of evil—and brings together the main writings of St Basil the Great, fourth-century archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, on these subjects. St Basil deftly addresses the questions posed by the human condition with characteristic clarity and sobriety. He formulates a balance between humility grounded in our creation from the earth and confidence based on the dignity of being created according to God's image. In addition to two discourses on the creation of humanity, this volume includes Letter 233 to Amphilochius of Iconium, St Basil's spiritual son—a succinct and pointed discussion regarding the functions of the human mind, the activity for which God created it, and how it can be used for good, evil, or morally neutral purposes. This letter complements the discussion of emotions in St Basil's Homily against Anger, also included in this volume. Finally, the book includes excerpts from St Basil's fatherly instructions to his ascetic communities, commonly known as the Long Rules or the Great Asceticon, which emphasize the communal dimension of human identity: humans are naturally interrelated, social, and interdependent.

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