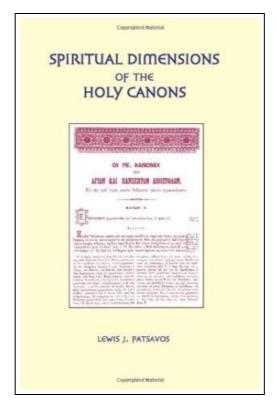
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Holy Cross Orthodox Press April 2007, 2007. Paper Back. Condition: New. "The canons are not the expression of a legalistic spirit, which tends to envelop everything in regulations and to reduce the life of the spirit to juridical norms. They are the expression of the Church's pastoral concern for the salvation of her members never considering them an unbearable burden, but a staff for the Church on her way to the kingdom." So Patsavos capsulizes the Orthodox understanding of canons, and in addition informs us that many Orthodox theologians prefer the terminology of "tradition of the canons" rather than "canon law," distancing them even further from a juridical interpretation of the decisions of synods and councils. Rather than the neat, legal concision of Roman Catholic canon law, Orthodox canons (numbering over a thousand) exist in several different collections and defy such treatment. They require rather the critical exercise of akribeia (strictness) and economia (flexibility) by bishops, priests and spiritual fathers: the Church understands that in some situations "logic is not always the happiest weapon to apply." Patsavos' admirably clarifying treatment is supplemented by a long appendix which sorts the canons by category.

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