

# The Notre Dame Fire

Post by "Elli" of April 16, 2019 at 1:59 PM

## On The Outskirts Of Antioch - Poem by Constantine P. Cavafy

We in Antioch were astonished when we heard  
what Julian was up to now.  
Apollo had made things clear to him at Daphni:  
he didn't want to give an oracle (as though we cared!),  
he didn't intend to speak prophetically, unless  
his temple at Daphni was purified first.  
The nearby dead, he declared, got on his nerves.  
There are many tombs at Daphni.  
One of those buried there  
was the triumphant and holy martyr Vavylas,  
wonder and glory of our church.  
It was him the false god hinted at, him he feared.  
As long as he felt him near he didn't dare  
pronounce his oracle: not a murmur.  
(The false gods are terrified of our martyrs.)  
Unholy Julian got worked up,  
lost his temper and shouted: "Raise him, carry him out,  
take him away immediately, this Vavylas.  
You there, do you hear? He gets on Apollo's nerves.  
Grab him, raise him at once,

dig him out, take him away, throw him out,  
take him wherever you want. This isn't a joke.  
Apollo said the temple has to be purified."  
We took it, the holy relic, and carried it elsewhere.  
We took it, we carried it away in love and in honor.  
And hasn't the temple done brilliantly since!  
In no time at all a colossal fire  
broke out, a terrible fire,  
and both the temple and Apollo burned to nothing. 😄  
Ashes the idol: dirt to be swept away.  
Julian exploded, and he spread it around—  
what else could he do?—that we, the Christians,  
had set the fire. Let him say so.  
It hasn't been proved. Let him say so.  
The essential thing is—he exploded.