15/07/2024

Remarks at the Banquet for the Thyranixia of the Saint Anna Greek Orthodox Church



Your Eminence, Metropolitan Constantine of Denver,

Your Grace, Bishop Spyridon of Amastris,

Protopresbyter Anthony Savas and Reverend Clergy,

Parish Council President Steve Simos, and Members of the Parish Council,

Dear Sisters of the Philoptochos and all the Members of the Church Organizations,

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

We have exited the Church we just entered a little while ago, and prayed with all our hearts to the Lord of All. Tomorrow, we shall celebrate His Mystical Supper and receive the Bread of Eternal Life and the Chalice of Immortality. And now, we gather in this wonderful Agape Feast that has been prepared with such obvious loving care.

Your Eminence Metropolitan Constantine, beloved brother, I am so very pleased to be with you and I thank you for your graciousness. I want all of you to know that in the five years since my Enthronement as your Archbishop, Saint Anna is the first community for which I have had the privilege to sign the Charter. For me, this is unforgettable.

Thus, this weekend celebration of your Thyranixia becomes a milestone for me as well for you, and I thank all of you for including me in your midst.

I am moved by the faithfulness I feel and the authentic piety that I perceive. You are truly a community dedicated to worship, and I know your Temple’s doors will remain open and welcoming:

To those who are seeking kindness in a world that can be very unkind;

To those who are seeking the authentic manifestation of the Gospel,

To those who have needs but do not know how to meet them;

And to your fellow Orthodox, who may have wandered from their spiritual home. You will attract them through your love of worship and your love of one another. Remember what the Lord said:

“This is how all people will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another.”*

There is no greater hallmark of a Christian Community, and the love that you have for one another will fill the Temple we have opened tonight with a spiritual light and freshness that cannot be denied.

People will enter through those doors we opened and say:

“This church is different.”

“This community is a real spiritual home.”

And, “I feel welcome here.”

Never underestimate the impression that your Parish gives to the stranger and the occasional visitor. Love and compassion are palpable. And they enhance with spiritual fragrance the atmosphere of your church, just as the incense we offered this evening at the Vespers elevates our minds to the Divine.

As you go forward in your journey of faith, my beloved Christians, make sure that your travel the road together. You will not always agree about every detail, but the solidarity of the Holy Spirit surpasses every distinction that we make.

May the doors of your hearts, minds, and souls be always open to the goodness of God, just as you have opened the doors to this Temple of His Glory.

Thank you, and again, congratulations to all.

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