14/06/2020

His Eminence Metropolitan Evangelos of New Jersey issues All Saints Encynclical



June 14, 2020

The Very Reverend and Reverend Clergy
Esteemed Members of the Metropolitan Council, Esteemed Members of the Parish Councils, Philoptochos Sisterhood, Faculty and Students of the Catechetical and Greek Afternoon Schools, Directors and Participants of all Youth Organizations, and all devout Orthodox Christians of the Communities of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey

My Beloved in the Lord,

By the grace of God, we have arrived at the feast of All Saints which marks the end of the Pentecostarion period and the beginning of our preparation for the feast of the Synaxis of the Holy Apostles. The celebration of today's feast and our preparation for the Synaxis of the Holy Apostles is underscored by the fundamental element of faith. It is by the faith expressed through the Prophets and Patriarchs of old that the path was made ready for Christ to be received as our Savior. It is by the faith of the Holy Apostles that their witness to our Lord's actions and teachings have been passed down to us. It is by the faith of the martyrs, ascetics, and countless saints throughout the centuries that we have better come to understand the mystery of salvation.

Therefore, today we celebrate all of the saints throughout the ages who had put their unwavering faith in God and who had sacrificed themselves for our Orthodoxy faith each in their own way. In the celebration of today's feast, we also prepare ourselves for the coming feast of the Synaxis of the Holy Apostles. The Apostles, who experienced Christ's numerous teachings and miracles, are celebrated by the Orthodox Church for their steadfast devotion and sacrifice. Their faith was so great that they had gone to the ends of the earth preaching the Gospel of Christ and their commitment to spreading the Word of God was so great that all but one would be martyred.

In reflecting on the Holy Apostles and all of the saints of the Church, we come to recognize that their devout faith is what preserved and sustained them in times of troubles, tribulations, and tortures. Whether one speaks of the Prophets of the Old Testament, the Holy Apostles who walked with Christ, the martyrs who gave their lives in defense of the faith, the ascetics who struggled in prayer, or any of the saints of our Holy Orthodox Church, one of the elements which united them all is their boundless faith for our Lord. It is to this example that we all must aspire since faith gives us the ability to do that which is thought to be impossible. In Holy Scripture, Christ reminds us by saying,
"For truly, I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to thismountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you" (Mat. 17:20). I encourage each and every one of you to nurture your faith by increasing your prayer life, by participating in the Divine Services, and by constantly devoting yourselves to the philanthropic work and various ministries of the Church. In this way and as a united Community of faithful and devout Orthodox Christians, we may emulate the saints who have gone before us as we continually seek to give glory to our Lord, God, and Savior,

Jesus Christ.

Praying that the Saints and especially the Holy Apostles guard and guide each of you and your families, I remain

With Paternal Love and Blessings,

† E V A N G E L O S

Metropolitan of New Jersey

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