20/06/2022

Invocation & Address By His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America At the Saint Basil Academy Graduation

Image not found or type unknown

Beloved children in the Lord – our 2022 Graduates,

Dear Father Costas and esteemed Trustees,

Friends and supporters of Saint Basil Academy,

Let us pray to the Lord:

Heavenly Father, we give thanks to You for Your loving-kindness and special grace for those reared and taught here at Saint Basil Academy.

Bless us and all who live, serve, teach and minister in this sacred institution of our Church, as we gather to celebrate the accomplishments of our graduates. Grant that our graduates may always advance “from glory to glory” in accordance with Your Divine Plan for their lives.

Through the intercessions of our Father among the Saints, Basil the Great, Holy Archbishop of Caesarea of Cappadocia, may we ever ascribe glory, honor and worship to Your Most Holy Name; of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

ADDRESS

In this final day of Pentecost Week, when we “give back” the Feast until next year, I am so very pleased to with the Saint Basil Family for another graduation of our precious children.

We give back the Feast on this Saturday after Pentecost – which we call ἀπόδοσις in Greek – as an act of faith. It is an act of confidence in the abundance of God’s grace in our lives, to supply us with our every need until we come around to the

Holy Feast next year and every year after that.

In the same way, then, we are giving back by entrusting you, the graduates of 2022, to the grace of God, for the continuance of the journey of your lives. None of us can see the future, but I do behold in your eyes the brightness of lives that will be lived well and in accordance with the precepts of God.

This was the way Saint Basil lived his life. He was reared in a Christian family, and even his parents and siblings are called Saints by the Church. But he also journeyed in his own way through life, leaving the comfort of his home in the middle of Asia Minor and going to Athens in order to attend the Academy of Plato. He saw the value of learning – wherever the knowledge came from – and increased his own capacity to embody God in every aspect of his life. And it is to this journey that I commend all of you today. For as you progress "from glory to glory," it is for the purpose of being transformed into the image and likeness of God – to recognize the Divine Presence in all things and in all places.

I pray that your path ahead may be smooth. And if it is a little rocky or bumpy from time to time, I pray that you will use these temporary difficulties to dig a little deeper in your own souls. There is an expression in Greek: Κάθε εμπόδιο για το καλό. Meaning, every impediment is a teacher of something good. Whether it is learning patience, fortitude, humility, moderation, perseverance, or any of the virtuous marks of character that ennoble the human person. There is truth in the saying that "Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts."[1]

I pray that you will take from what you have learned here at Saint Basil's and apply it in your own lives for the rest of your days. For you have learned more than just mere facts and figures here at the Academy. You have learned what it is to love and to be loved; to forgive and to be forgiven; to be kind and to receive kindness. And these are the most valuable lessons of all, because they are lessons that are eternal.

May Saint Basil the Great himself, guide you and be with you all the days of your lives, and prosper you in all your endeavors. Amen.

[1] Winston Churchill.

goarch.org