

His Eminence
The Most Reverend
Metropolitan JOSEPH

The Right Reverend
Bishop ANTHONY



Archbishop of New York and
Metropolitan of
All North America

Diocese of Toledo and
The Midwest

ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA

Pentecost 2017

Dear Clergy and Faithful of the Midwest Diocese,

Glory to Jesus Christ!

God sees us, knows us, cares for us, and most of all, loves us. No matter where we go, He is there waiting for us. No matter who we are with, we are never without Him being with us. On Pentecost, we once again begin our daily and liturgical prayers by saying: *“O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, Who art everywhere present and fillest all things...”*

“Wither shall I go from Thy Spirit? Or wither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend to heaven, Thou art there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Thy hand shall lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, ‘Let only darkness cover me, and the light about me be night, ‘even the darkness is not dark to Thee, the night is bright as the day; for darkness is as light with Thee.’” (Psalm 139:7-12)

We need more from the Holy Spirit than Him beside us holding our hands and guiding us. We need Him inside us, molding our hearts so that we become, through the grace He gives us in the sacraments and by the disciplines in the Church, everything God is by nature.

By rising from the dead in His Resurrected Body, Christ has raised all the dead for all time: *“For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. As one man’s trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one man’s act of righteousness leads to acquittal and life for all men.”* (1 Corinthians 15:22; Romans 5:18) *“Christ is Risen!”* He has done His work.

The victory of Christ given to every man objectively must be accepted by each man subjectively. I must want what I have! I make His victory over death my own by living the virtues of Christ personally. The work of the Holy Spirit is to shape us in virtue so that we attain *“... mature manhood ... the stature of the fullness of Christ.”* (Ephesians 4:13) The Holy Spirit’s work is ongoing. It is never done!

The everyday of our lives must express, even in the small details and unnoticed routines, the *“never-ending Day of His Kingdom.”*

St. John Chrysostom said it beautifully, *“Whenever the Holy Spirit is present, He makes men of gold out of men of clay.”*

May the Spirit of Truth continue to guide us to the fullness of Truth, Christ our True God!

Yours in Christ,

+ Bishop Anthony

+Bishop ANTHONY
Bishop of Toledo
Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

PS Pentecost is Mission Sunday throughout our diocese. As we renew our lives in the Spirit, please remember all parishes are asked to take a special offering on this day to support our nine mission parishes. Checks may be made payable to the “Diocese of Toledo Mission Fund” and can be sent in care of Nicholas Ayoub, 1251 Franklin St. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506. Thank you for your generosity.

“The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch” (Acts 11: 26)

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