



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Statement on the Appointment of Apostolic Administrator of Parma & Phoenix

In the scriptures yesterday, we heard how Zacchaeus, the tax collector, a man despised as a collaborator by his own people, found salvation when Jesus traveled through Jericho on his way to Jerusalem. In his eagerness to see Jesus, he climbed a sycamore tree. He heard the sublime words, "Hurry down. I mean to eat at your house today."

In this first pre-Lenten Sunday, we also feel that eagerness as we prepare ourselves to travel with Jesus through the desert around Jericho, up the mountain passes, and into the holy city of Jerusalem to commemorate the sacred mysteries of the suffering, sacrificial death, and resurrection of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ and to be fed in the upper room with His own most pure body and life giving blood.

This morning, our Holy Father Pope Francis turned his gaze as a good shepherd on our Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic Church in the Americas, and asked me to assist him temporarily in caring for the good people of the Eparchy of Parma and the Eparchy of the Holy Protection in Phoenix. I look forward to sharing our Faith in God, "in Spirit and in truth". (John 4:23) I look forward, as St. Paul says, to walking "in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with humility and gentleness, bearing with one another in love, eager to preserve the unity of the Spirit which is the bond of peace. For there is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is over all, and through all, and in all." (Eph 4:1-6)

The Sunday before last, we read St. Paul's very personal story of his own deliverance when he said, "Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the first. For this reason, mercy was shown to me as the first so that in me, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who would believe in him for eternal life." Humbly praying with St. Paul, we also say, "To the King of ages, the immortal, the invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever. Amen" (1 Timothy 1:15-17)

May God bless every one of you abundantly, and may you find the same peace and healing as the Apostle Paul, and the same confidence in God's mercy and patience. I commend you to the prayers of St. Clement of Ancyra the Martyr, and especially to the care of the all holy Mother of God.

Your servant,

+ Kurt

Most Rev. Kurt Burnette
Bishop of Passaic
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