

**Metropolitan Joseph at Sts. Cyril & Methody Eastern Orthodox Cathedral – Toronto
October 28th, 2017 and October 29th, 2017**



Saturday, October 28, 2017 (Vesper Service):







Sunday, October 29, 2017 (Divine Liturgy):





**METROPOLITAN JOSEPH'S SERMON, DELIVERED AFTER DIVINE LITURGY
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2017**

The Proverbs says: "Where there is no vision, the people perish".

Do you, as members of our Holy Cathedral have a vision? I hope, the answer is "Yes"! Then keep your vision in front of you and see something every day that reminds you of what you're believing for, something that inspires you, ignites your faith.

And what is your vision for our beloved Cathedral? My understanding is to continue to do everything for her existence and fulfill its mission as a house of God, where we pray and prepare ourselves for our salvation.

But don't have just a little vision. Release your faith in a big way.

When you release your faith in a big way, when you believe to do great things, when you believe to set a new standard for our Cathedral, it pleases God.

Then God will put something bigger in His heart. He will help to all our former members to come back and to all our future members to come in, and then we would be such a big Cathedral again.

That is the way God is.

That is why the Holy Bible uses such strong language that says: people perish for lack of vision. That means dreams die when you don't have a vision. If you can't see what God has put in your heart, then you will miss the incredible things God wants to do. I believe and as your Metropolitan, I declare that every dream, every promise, every goal God put in your heart, He will bring to pass.

If people talk about you, being jealous, critical and trying to make you look bad, don't let that change you. You don't need their approval when you have God's approval.

As Diocesan Prelate for 35 years, I learned early on that – to please God I may have to disappoint a few people.

The Holy Bible talks about those, who loved the praise of people more than the praise of God. One of the tests we all have to pass is when someone in our lives that we respect and look up to – wants us to go one direction, when we know in our hearts that we should take another path.

We don't want to hurt their feeling. We don't want to lose their friendship. We want their approval. But if we are to fulfill our destinies, we have to be strong. We have to have this attitude: "I want the praise of God more than the praise of people. I have an assignment. I have a purpose. I will become who God created me to be."

I live by this motto: Everyone has a right to an opinion, and I have every right to not listen to it. If what others say doesn't match what God has put in our heart, let it go in one ear and out the other.

The point is that no matter what do you do, you will never please everybody. You may as well accept the fact that even when you do the best you can, some will find fault with you and that's okay. They have a right to have their opinions and you have a right to ignore them.

Remember, God did not call you to keep everyone happy. It's good to be loving, kind and generous, but you are not responsible for the happiness of others. You are responsible for your own happiness.

Don't take on a false sense of responsibility. You are not the savior of the world. We already have a Savior. You're not supposed to keep everyone happy or fixed. If you take on that job, the one person who will not be happy is you.

I have learned to recognize that some people are always having crises. Every other day they have an emergency or they are in desperate need of something. It's good to help people, who are in real need. But if someone comes to you very often and it seems the emergencies never stop, you need to recognize that's a manipulator.

The truth is if someone becomes upset because you won't meet unreasonable demands, then that person is not your friend. That person is a manipulator. The sooner you break free, the better off you'll be.

Understand this: Your first priority is to keep yourself happy. You don't have time to play games. You have a destiny to fulfill.

Let me ask you, what are you expecting? Big things, little things, or nothing at all? It's easy to anticipate the worst. But if you will switch over into faith and expect the best – to excel, to accomplish your dreams – then you will draw in blessings and favor.

Also do not let negative expectations limit your life. That's no way to live. If you are not expecting increase, you are not releasing your faith. Faith is what causes God to act.

Life is too short to live that way. Every morning when you get up, forgive those, who hurt you. Forgive yourself for mistakes you've made.

Our expectations set the limits for our lives. If you expect little, you are going to receive little.

If you do not anticipate things to get better, then they won't. But if you expect more favor and an increase, then you will see new levels of favor and success.

Your expectation is your faith at work.

But your faith is working, when you are using it in the right direction.

So, upgrade your expectations.

Then goodness and mercy will follow you wherever you go.

You remembered the Holy Gospel of today's Divine Liturgy: "Jesus asked: "Who touched Me?" Everybody denied it and Peter said: "Master, the people are all around You and crowding in on You, and You asked: "Who touched Me?" But Jesus said: "Someone touched Me, for I perceive that when power went out of Me!" (Luke 8:45, 46). Therefore, I say that faith is what causes God to act.

I am talking about having an attitude of expecting good things. You need to start expecting greater things. There are new mountains to climb and new horizons to explore.

So, expect to rise higher.

Expect to overcome every obstacle.

Expect doors to open.

Expect favor at work, favor at the church, favor at home, and favor in your relationships.

Also be careful what you allow to play in your thoughts all day. Your memory is very powerful. One study discovered that positive and negative memories are handled by different parts of the brain. A negative memory takes up more space because there is more to process. As a result, you remember negative events more than positive events. The study said that a person will remember losing fifty dollars more than he will remember gaining fifty dollars.

So, stay tuned to good things.

Do not forget what you should remember – your victories, your successes, and the hard time you overcome.

Collect the positives in your past. Rehearse your victories.

Remembering the good things will make you strong.

Lord Jesus Christ said in the last book of the Holy Bible – in Revelation: “I have one thing against you, you have left your first love.”

The Scripture doesn't say you've lost love, the passage says you've left your first love. That means you can go get it.

You haven't lost your passion. You just left it. Go get it.

You haven't lost the love for your Holy Cathedral. You've just left it. You have to go get it.

Dreams are coming back to life. Your vision is being renewed. Your passion is being restored.

Hearts are beating again. Get ready for God's favor.

You can live a life of victory. You can overcome every obstacle. You can accomplish your dreams. You can set new levels for your Holy Cathedral.

You will rise to new levels. You will live a blessed, successful, rewarding life.

My prayer and encouragement are: Don't settle where you are.

I know you. You have seeds of greatness on the inside. Put these principles into action each day. Get up in the morning expecting good things, go through the day positive, focused on your vision, running your race, knowing that you are well able.

Believe that the Most High God breathed His life into you. You've got what it takes. This is your time. This is your moment. Shake off doubts, shake off fear and insecurity, and get ready for favor, get ready for increase, get ready for the fullness of your destiny.

I am sure. You can, you will!

Through the prayers of Sts. Cyril and Methody, may God bless you and give you strength, peace and wisdom!

Amen!



Dear God,

Thank you for the strength,
wisdom, joy, and peace You
give. When life gets full of
stress, may I be quick to
remember You are in
control of all things and
turn to you in prayer!

Amen

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