



March 5, 2009

## HIS EMINENCE METROPOLITAN ALEXIOS REFLECTIONS ON THE SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY

*"Is it not true that Christ draws near with love to those who turn away from him? That he struggles with them, begs them not to scorn his love, and if they show only aversion and remain deaf to his appeals, becomes himself their advocate?"*

St. Dionysius the Areopagite

This Sunday of Orthodoxy is a special occasion for all Orthodox Christians and plays an important role in our lives. Because Orthodoxy is not merely a set of beliefs, but rather a style of life, something that is at once both pragmatic and spiritual. It gives us the ability to enjoy life, because it teaches us the ability to understand ourselves and where we come from.

Orthodoxy involves all the various productions of human beings: art, music, literature, science, architecture and so forth – all practical things. Yet through Orthodoxy, we receive a different understanding or dimension of these practical things, and we see that we are not only human. Through divine involvement, through a miracle, we have the opportunity to be united with God.

Of course, we know, as Christians, that this miracle of divine involvement with us began with one man, who possessed no degrees or diplomas, who was not recognized as a great prophet or philosopher, who possessed no wealth or temporal power, no armies and no worldly recognition. Yet somehow He managed to convey His message of the miracle of divine involvement throughout the world, using simple men such as fishermen, and sinful men such as tax collectors. Thus the message of our Faith is profoundly irrational, in worldly terms. As St. Paul tells us, "but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness." (1 Cor. 1:23)

True, the first followers of our Lord witnessed miracles and heard wonderful stories, but they had heard all that before from prophets and religious leaders, so that they, like we today, did not necessarily understand the truly radical nature of Christ's mission on earth. Even today, as we know the history of persecutions, heresies, animosities,

schisms and many struggles, the Church has grown – there is no corner of the world that doesn't know about Christ, whether or not they follow Him.

On the Sunday of Orthodoxy, all are welcome to play a part as true Orthodox Christians, participating in that miracle of Divine Involvement and Love.