



February 19, 2009

HIS EMINENCE METROPOLITAN ALEXIOS` REFLECTIONS ON GREAT LENT

"For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, no angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created things, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:38-39

As we all know, the Triodion is a special period during the course of the year, one of three parts preparing us for Great and Holy Pascha. The first part is the three weeks before Lent, the largest part is the five weeks during Lent, and the last part is Holy Week. In the course of the first three weeks, the Church attempts to prepare us for Great Lent, by giving us examples of prayer and repentance and the Second Coming and Judgement of our Lord.

Particularly as we approach the beginning of Great Lent, we have to start thinking and asking ourselves about our relationship to god.

if we are honest, we know deep down inside that we are unworthy of such a great love, because we are weak and sinful, full of infirmities and disabilities. Often it seems that it is impossible for us to even simply think in the right way, much less act in the way that God would have us act.

This love of our Father for His children is so great that there is no hesitation - we are received immediately in His open arms, to live with Him in His Kingdom, unto the ages of ages.

This is our true joy and happiness - that our Lord is waiting for us in the Church, that He calls us to Him always, gives us opportunities to experience His grace and love through the sacramental life of the Church.

Truly if we understood His love and mercy with our heads and our hearts we would be amazed and humbled and filled with love for Him.

The holy season of Great Lent is given to us by the Church to assist us in understanding and experiencing the reality of God's great love and mercy. Through the discipline of prayer, fasting, reading the holy scripture, attending special services, and acts of charity, we begin to understand and experience this wonderful reality, and in this way, we are constantly drawing nearer to Him, to receive the abundant life He has promised us.