



September 24, 2009

Protocol 09–12

The Reverend Clergy, and
The Pious Faithful of
the Holy Metropolis of Denver

Beloved in the Lord,

Earlier this year I attended the 25th Anniversary Banquet of one of our parishes, and was invited to offer a few remarks before the final prayer, which I did. As I do at all anniversary celebrations of parishes, I express the hope and the prayer that the parish will continue to exist even to the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In mentioning the glorious return of the Lord, I also allude to the final day events in the world which the Lord states will be like the final days of Sodom and Gomorrah (Luke 17:29,30) and that the people of the Church must try to live according to the teachings of Christ for their salvation.

At this particular parish I did the same thing, using two examples to stress the fact that we are living in the last days before violent events take place. I mentioned the legality of abortion in this country, which has killed tens of millions of unborn infants. I also mentioned the idea of making “same sex marriage” legal in our country. I neither condemned nor did I criticize anyone, because I could not do this.

Unfortunately, one or two persons took offense at my mentioning the legality of “same sex marriage”, and one of them verbally accosted me as I sat down. Since that day I have received two letters condemning me for what I said in regard to “same sex marriage”.

As God is my witness, I have neither criticized nor have I condemned anyone because of their lifestyle. As a clergyman, and especially as a Christian, I have no right to condemn anyone. I have criticized the act, but never the person. In attempting to serve God as faithfully as I can, I have no right to condemn anyone. If God does not condemn a sinner, neither do I have the right to do so.

It is clear from Holy Scripture that, if God were to condemn any person, He would be condemning Himself, as every human being is made in the image of God. However, God does condemn wrongful behavior and sinful lifestyles. We are born into this life to change and not remain the same. Only God remains the same because He is perfect. If we are to say that a particular person is “born” homosexual, then we can also say that a person is born an adulterer or a robber or even a murderer. Moreover, if it were true that we come into the world with certain unchanging tendencies, such as homosexuality, then why would God give to every person intellect and a free will, when one is born into the world, only for a person to remain the same?

Unfortunately, we tend to forget that Satan exists here in this world, with all the fallen angels. They are ever active, attempting to convince us that we are normal, even if our behavior

goes contrary to the teachings of the Church. Sadly, many parents and teachers convince children that they are more important and better than they actually are. This false philosophy is called self-esteem. In other words, we esteem ourselves above other people.

In Holy Scripture, we read that we tend to seek our own ways rather than the Lord's (Phillipians 2:21). In extreme cases, there are some people today who believe that they are female in male bodies, or male in female bodies. These are tricks of Satan in order to confuse their true identity. Satan did the same with Adam and Eve, making them believe that they were something else than what they were.

I write this letter to the parishioners of this Metropolis as a clarification that I neither criticize nor condemn anyone as an individual. Unfortunately, some took my remarks personally at that banquet. The fact that this happened, as well as the two letters written to me, convinces me even more that we are living in the last days. Thirty years ago, **no** Greek Orthodox Christian would have argued against or dared to be critical of his priest or his bishop in this manner in order to support the "gay" lifestyle.

Yet, I believe our people will continue to love our family members, our relatives and our friends who may be living abnormal lifestyles. Why? Because they recognize they are all members of the human family, under God, as we all are. And I believe that our prayers will continue on their behalf, so that they may come to themselves, and to know that they, and we, are all in the active state of becoming, rather than that of being. This is why the Church, first and foremost, has periods of introspection and repentance and fasting, so that we can change and become more Christlike in our walk through this temporary life. For our one and only purpose is to become heirs of God's coming Kingdom.

With Paternal Blessings,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Metropolitan Isaiah of Denver". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

✠ Metropolitan Isaiah of Denver

MAY BE PRINTED IN ALL PARISH BULLETINS AND NEWS LETTERS