

May 6, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters of Holy Archangel Michael's Serbian Orthodox Church, Hibbing, MN,

I greet you in the name of the Risen Lord.

Christ is Risen!

We probably all know some fragments about the story of St. George the Great Martyr. He was a warrior, saved a maiden, slew a dragon, gave all his wealth to the poor, was tortured and, in the end, martyred. These are a few, among the many, characteristics of St. George which may not seem fully relevant to our personal everyday lives. However, there is one core gift, which St. George was given from the Lord that we can all try and emulate. St. George had a courageous confession of faith. He was willing to lose everything earthly for the sake of eternal bliss in the Heavenly joy of the Holy Trinity. St. George was a rising young soldier with wealth, power, and all the entrapments of that lifestyle, but he abandoned everything for the love of God. Again, this may not seem fully relevant to our personal everyday lives, but, with a little meditation on the Holy Scriptures and writings of the Holy Fathers of the Church, God will illumine us to see opportunities for our own relevant contemporary confessions of faith.

When we think about our personal lives, how much do we put before God? How many things are we just not willing to give up for the sake of the One Who created us?

Someone like St. George was completely stirred up in heart and mind as soon as he came to know Jesus Christ the Incarnate One of the Holy Trinity. Not only did he give up everything, but he was also tortured most horrifically and he endured courageously until martyrdom. This was because he allowed himself to be fully stirred up in the purity of heart and mind towards God and God became his sole/soul's focus.

Let us think how often we don't want to experience this courageous stirring up of the heart and mind when we are in our "comfort zone." How often do we not want to leave our "comfort zone." More often than not, we ebb and flow between the celestial and the mundane. One day we are zealous. The next day we are "lazy."

The truth is that the opportunity for martyrdom, to be a real Christian witness, is always right before all of us. The opportunity to witness is ever before a Christian. To become real witnesses to Christ, we have to leave the door of our hearts open to the Lord and make Him our priority. When He calls, we have to be willing to step outside our "comfort zone." As the Psalm says, "It is time for the Lord to act (Ps.199:126)."

With the blessings of God,
Father Constantine "Dean" Franck