

Beloved children of the Holy Metropolis of America,

I greet you all in Our Lord for the first time as the Primate of the Holy Metropolis of America.

We are entering the blessed stadium of the virtues. It is the time for repentance, the time for cleansing, the time for spiritual renewal, and the time for dedication.

The services teach us *how* to enter this period:

“By fasting from foods, O my soul, and yet not cleansing thyself from passions, in vain dost thou boast in not eating. For unless the undertaking is unto thy correction, like a liar hated by God, thou art likened unto the evil demons who never eat. Do not sin, therefore, thereby making the Fast useless, but remain unmoved by unseemly impulses, resolving to stand before the Saviour Who was crucified, yea rather, to be crucified together with Him that was crucified for thee, crying unto Him: Remember me, O Lord, when Thou comest in Thy Kingdom”.

Let us take note that we need to be crucified together with Christ, that is, we need to pick up our Cross and endure the hardships of this life with thanksgiving.

Let us pray for our Local Church, that our merciful Lord would continue to guide us all into His heavenly Kingdom.

May God give you all the strength to endure the struggles of Great Lent, with peace, humility and repentance.

Your fervent suppliant before the Lord,
+Demetrius of America