

2024 ORATORICAL FESTIVAL THEME

"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose." – Romans 8:28

THIS YEAR'S THEME FROM ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS SERVES AS A REMINDER OF THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN TEACHING ON OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD AND THE IMPLICATIONS OF THAT RELATIONSHIP IN OUR DAILY LIVES. ALTHOUGH YOU DON'T NEED TO ADDRESS EACH POINT, YOU MAY WANT TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING AS YOU COMPOSE YOUR ORATION:

FIRST, WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO LOVE GOD? WE TALK ABOUT LOVING GOD, AND GOD LOVING US, BUT AS A YOUNG PERSON IN THE CHURCH, WHAT DOES LOVING GOD LOOK LIKE? WHO ARE SOME EXAMPLES THAT COME TO MIND WHEN YOU THINK OF "THOSE WHO LOVE GOD?"

SECOND, WHAT IS ST. PAUL REFERRING TO WHEN HE USES THE WORD GOOD? SOMETIMES THINGS DON'T SEEM GOOD! AND SOMETIMES, WE DON'T EVEN FEEL LIKE THEY WORK OUT TO BE GOOD DESPITE OUR BEST EFFORTS. PERHAPS MORE OFTEN, THINGS SIMPLY DON'T GO THE WAY WE PLANNED. DEALING WITH DISAPPOINTMENT AND THE UNKNOWN IS A VERY REAL STRUGGLE THAT EVERYONE MUST FACE. HOW CAN WE LOOK AT CHALLENGES AND DISAPPOINTMENTS THROUGH THE LENS OF THE CHURCH AND THIS VERSE?

THIRD, THE ICON CHOSEN TO REPRESENT THIS THEME IS "THE COMMUNION OF THE APOSTLES." IT IS WITHIN THE CHURCH THAT WE ARE ABLE TO CONSIDER WHAT ST. PAUL IS TALKING ABOUT IN THIS VERSE AND THROUGHOUT THE BOOK OF ROMANS. CONSIDER THE ROLE THE CHURCH AND THE CHURCH COMMUNITY PLAY IN OUR LIVES AS WE JOURNEY TOWARD UNITY WITH CHRIST AND OUR UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE.

FOURTH, WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE "THE CALLED?" INVESTIGATE THE GREEK WORDS PAUL USED IN THIS TEXT AND CONSIDER WHAT THEY TEACH US ABOUT THE INVITATION WE RECEIVE FROM GOD.

Keep in Mind:

You can and should consider using other verses in Scripture, direct quotes from the Church Fathers, other Orthodox theologians, and liturgical texts in your oration. There are many Orthodox writings on this verse. Reference what they share and discuss applications to your own life and the lives of other teens in the Church.

This speech is not meant to be a sermon or an instructive presentation for the benefit of others. It is meant to be an opportunity for reflection on and study of a piece of Scripture and how the Church helps us discern and apply it. Share personal applications and revelations, and avoid tones of lecturing whenever possible. No one knows it all! Take this an opportunity to learn what you might not know and to deepen your understanding of the Faith.



for more information & registration

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