



Office of the Metropolitan

312 Garfield Street

Johnstown, PA 15906

Protocol No. 4/2020

February 2020

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Dear Diocesan Faithful,

Our Diocese is pleased to announce a new endeavor to support families in their life of Faith. The endeavor is a ministry devoted to helping families pray and read Scripture together at home. It is called SPF 50 which stands for Scripture-Prayer-Family. The “50” stands for 50 minutes per month. The idea is simple: Help families (moms, dads, sons and daughters) pray and read Scripture TOGETHER at HOME 50 minutes each month and support them as they do so.

SPF 50 now has space on our Diocesan Website (acrod.org) and, for the time being, will be sending each parish the necessary material which is also available on our Diocesan Website.

I am sure I do not need to list for you the challenges facing your families out in the world and the fight you are engaged in to keep hold of your Faith at home. One need only look at your schedules to see how rapidly life moves for you, and how precious little time is spent truly together as a believing and God-fearing household. While Church Services are essential and form the foundation of our spiritual life, and while a formal Church School Program is important, our Faith must be practiced in each home. Praying together and reading Scripture together as a family are essential parts of a believing household and so our Diocese is pleased to offer SPF 50 as a way to help families pray and read Scripture together.

First, and most important, I am asking you to support this initiative through your prayers. Ask our Lord to bless our families and this new endeavor.

Second, obtain from your parish Priest the Program’s simple material (which will also be available on our Diocesan Website) and read and make use of it. This is crucial NOT to the success of this endeavor, but in helping your family learn to love to pray and read Scripture together.

Third, make a commitment as a family. SPF 50 is designed to help you pray and read Scripture together as a family for 50 minutes each month, or just over 12 minutes each week. Use the “Our Family is Invested” card to write down your commitment. Give that Commitment Card to your parish Priest and join other families in your parish and around the Diocese in this endeavor. Invest your time and effort into something that will bear the right fruit. Let me assure us by the words of Isaiah the Prophet when he said, “. . . again take root downward, and bear fruit upward. . .” (Isaiah 37:31) These words were spoken to Hezekiah, king of Judah, when the “world” in the form of Assyria was closing in on Judah

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ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE OF CONSTANTINOPLE

and threatening destruction. The world threatens our families' lives of Faith every day. Help your family "...take root downward, and bear fruit upward."

I encourage and exhort you in this new endeavor. It may seem simple and obvious to you, but in a world always racing toward destruction, the simple and obvious are often difficult to see. Help your family pray and read Scripture together.

Looking forward to partnering with you in this endeavor, with blessing I remain

Working in His Vineyard with much love,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "+ Metropolitan Gregory". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the text "Working in His Vineyard with much love,".

+Metropolitan Gregory of Nyssa