



Office of the Metropolitan

312 Garfield Street

Johnstown, PA 15906

Protocol No. 4/2021

February 17, 2021

Christ is in Our Midst!

Dear Reverend Fathers:

With the Lenten Triodion period beginning this coming Sunday, our thoughts necessarily turn to the upcoming Season of the Great Fast. Each year we look forward to this opportunity for spiritual growth and renewal which comes from actively embracing all that this holy season has to offer.

Each year, our Diocese, through the stewardship of the National Sr. ACRY, has offered opportunities for our faithful to gather together in Spiritual Retreat, during Great Lent at various regional locations. They have been well received and appreciated by those who participated.

This year, however with the continuing reality of the Covid-19 Pandemic, it is not possible for us to offer our Annual Retreat Program as we have in the past. However, I am pleased to inform you that we will do so in another format.

On Saturday April 3, 2021 we will hold a Diocesan-Wide Lenten Retreat for adults and teenagers using the online Zoom Platform. It will begin at noon and will be 90 minutes in duration. It will include a keynote presentation and a Q & A discussion. Fr. Jonathan Bannon will be the keynote speaker and his presentation is entitled *Nepsis-Watchfulness: Being Attentive in a Distracted Age*.

Please note: our younger children will have the opportunity to participate at another time in an age appropriate retreat in a different venue through the Diocesan Vine and Branches Program on Sunday April 11, 2021. Details on this program will be coming soon.

In blessing the ACRY to proceed with a virtual format this year, I am fully aware that many of us as clergy and certainly our parishioners are pretty much “zoomed-out.” However, I feel strongly that not gathering our faithful together is not a prudent option. Using the technology at hand, we can still gather as a Diocese and receive spiritual profit from what I know will be an excellent presentation. To make this a more communal event, local parishes with large enough facilities and internet connectivity may wish to consider participating as a group from their parish church or community center, while observing social distancing and masking recommendations.

With this letter I ask that you and your parish faithful make every effort to take part in the Retreat in a manner that best fits your individual situation, virtual from one’s home and/or in a hybrid fashion from your parish facilities. Please take time to actively promote this Retreat in your parish, stressing to

your parishioners the spiritual benefits that come from spending time in retreat, even if only for a part of a day.

To assist with the promotion of the Retreat, I ask that you do the following:

1. Please post the **enclosed promotional flier** which contains information on the Retreat on your parish's bulletin board and include it as an insert in your next parish bulletin. Follow-up announcements should be made from the ambon and included in your weekly bulletin.
2. Please send this information to everyone on your parish e-list and especially your teens and young adults.
3. Please be sure that you and any parishioners who will be participating from home via Zoom, to register online at <http://www.acrod.org/retreat> by March 21, 2021. Those parishes who are planning to offer a viewing from their parish facilities are also asked to sign up, indicating this in the appropriate place when prompted. Please don't delay as space in Zoom will be limited.

Those parishes who are interested in possibly participating in a hybrid fashion from their parish facilities are kindly asked to contact Fr. Peter Paproski at infotech@acrod.org or 610-933-3336 who will guide you through the process.

Grateful for your anticipated assistance in promoting the upcoming Lenten Retreat, and bestowing my Archpastoral Blessing, I remain,

Working in His Vineyard,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Metropolitan Gregory". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

+ Metropolitan Gregory of Nyssa