

PATRIARCHAL MESSAGE

To the participants of the “My Life in Christ”
Annual Diocesan Youth Conference

July 12-18, 2010
Des Plaines, IL

Dear Father Philip Tolbert,

Beloved spiritual children of BOYA,

On behalf of the Holy Synod and ourselves we greet you paternally on the occasion of your Annual Youth Diocesan Conference. We thank His Eminence, our brother in Christ Metropolitan Joseph, who informed us, asking our blessing upon all of you at this your Conference.

As you know in October last year we celebrated our 95th birthday. We thank you all for your prayers on this special event.

We also want to assure you that you are in our prayers as our dear spiritual children in the Diocese of the USA, Canada and Australia.

We come to you with this, our patriarchal message, because sometimes you just need something spoken over your life. You need someone to jump start your faith, to breathe new life into year dreams. You may have been through a thousand disappointments. In the natural, worldly way of viewing things, you may have every reason to give up on what God has put in your heart. But we are asking you to let this simple phrase take root: *Your time is coming.*

Do not forget that God is in control of your life. He knows exactly where you are. He knows even the hidden dreams He has put in you. The Holy Bible calls this “the secret petitions of our heart”. These are the dreams you have not shared with anyone. Maybe you thought they would never work out. Or you buried them because they didn't happen on your timetable.

But God still has a way to bring them to pass. Draw the line in the sand and say: “That's it, I'm done being complacent. I believe every dream, every promise, even the secret petitions of my heart will come to fulfillment.”

When you have that kind of attitude, all the forces of darkness cannot stop God from bringing your dreams to pass.

You may be discouraged. Negative thoughts may come. You have to shake off those thoughts and stay in an attitude of faith, an attitude of expectancy.

You will go through unfair situations. We all do. When somebody does you wrong or you get some bad breaks, do not make the mistake of constantly dwelling on the downside. Stay in an attitude of hope, an attitude that says: “It may look impossible, but I know God is my vindicator.”

You may have been through a series of losses. Life may not seem fair. Be aware: if you are not careful, your negative thoughts will draw in more of the negative. It begins with one unfair situation, and then we perpetuate it by having and holding onto the wrong mind-set. Paternally we are asking you to break out of that rut. You may have been through an unfair situation, but it's not over until God says it's over.

God always has the final say, and He is a God of justice. God sees every wrong that's ever been done to you. He sees every unfair situation. He says that if you will stay in faith, if you will keep your hopes up, He will make your wrongs right. He will bring justice into your life.

So, this conference is your time to put your shoulders back and boldly declare: “My time is coming. I am a victor and not a victim.”

May the blessing of the Lord be always with you!

+ Maxim

Patriarch of Bulgaria

July 12, 2010 Sofia