"For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." (John 3:17)

The topic is from the Gospel of St. John and is part of an answer given by our Lord Jesus Christ to Nicodemus in their conversation about Christ’s miracles.

**FIRST**
Share what it means to you that God sent His Son (Jesus Christ) into the world, not to condemn the world but to save the world.

**SECOND**
God is Love. God loves you and every person in the world. Explain why this matters.

**THIRD**
What does it mean to you that God loves us so much that He did not abandon us in our fallen state?

Consider: Despite who and what we are in our own sinfulness, He loves us so much that He was willing to send His own Son (Jesus Christ) into the world, to become one of us.

Remember: He was sent to dwell among us, to die on the Cross making a way for us and all mankind to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

**KEEP IN MIND THAT…** The logo this year depicts Christ healing a blind man – Christ is the healer. Unlike others, Christ did not condemn the blind man for his affliction. Likewise, He did not condemn those who had fallen and sinned. Instead, He healed and restored them to a new life and a new opportunity. Once they were healed, Jesus then told them to change their lives and sin no more.

In your Oration, you may choose to share additional examples from the Gospel where Christ forgives while others are condemning. When identifying examples, dive into those accounts to understand what Christ was saying, why He forgave, and what He expected the forgiven person to go and do.

Christ’s coming into the world was precisely to give man a second chance to be members of the Kingdom of God here and now on Earth and for all eternity. Recall that, “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

Finally, in your studies, consider what the Gospel of John, particularly chapter three, reveals about the themes of love, salvation, healing, and forgiveness. Consider what the Church Fathers and other Orthodox theologians have to offer on this topic. Along with these citations, share your own mind on the above themes and your own willingness, or lack thereof, to forgive others. Be candid about the complexities involved. Contemplate why our forgiving others and why our being forgiven by others is so important to our Orthodox Christian faith and our salvation. Keep in mind, the admonition from the Lord’s Prayer, “Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us…” (Matthew 6:12).