

His Eminence
The Most Reverend
Metropolitan JOSEPH



Archbishop of New York and
Metropolitan of
All North America

ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE
OF NORTH AMERICA

December 9, 2018

Choir and Chanter Appreciation Sunday

Beloved Brother Hierarchs, Reverend Clergy and Christ-loving Faithful of our Archdiocese:

Greetings in the Name of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! I pray you and your families are well as we prepare to receive the incarnate Lord in our midst and in our hearts.

As we make our way through this beautiful season of fasting and preparation for the Nativity of our Lord in the flesh, we cannot but feel inspired by the beautiful hymns of our Church that are an integral part of this season. The Christmas Canon, "Christ is Born, glorify Him!" and the beautiful Kontakion of this holy period, "Today the Virgin comes unto the cave" are but two of many such hymns that we love to sing and hear. For us as Orthodox Christians, these hymns give depth and meaning to the season and to what we believe about the God-man.

As we listen to these hymns and others throughout the Church year, we are so grateful to our choirs and chanters, and especially to those who lead them. The work and effort they put into preparing for the services is a labor of love. On the archdiocesan level, we have promoted the continued education of these leaders through our Sacred Music Institute so that they can become more and more educated in the music and traditions of our Church. Through such institutes and workshops, they are also able to share their experiences with others so that, together, we can build strong choirs and chanters throughout the archdiocese. To this end, we are grateful to our department chairman, Mr. Paul Jabara, and all who help him in the Department of Sacred Music.

With that in mind, we set aside one Sunday in December each year to honor our choirs and chanters. This year, that day is Sunday, December 9th. Let us use this day to honor them and say thank you for their effort to enrich our worship through the proper singing of our sacred music throughout the year. May God grant them many years!

Wishing you all a blessed remainder of the Fast and, in advance, a blessed feast, I remain,

Your Father in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Metropolitan Joseph". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

+JOSEPH

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"The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch" (Acts 11: 26)

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