

His Eminence  
The Most Reverend  
Metropolitan JOSEPH



Archbishop of New York and  
Metropolitan of  
All North America

**ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE  
OF NORTH AMERICA**

March 21, 2021

**To Be Read from the Pulpit and Printed in the Bulletin**

Reverend Fathers, Esteemed Members of the Parish Council, and Beloved Faithful:

Greetings and blessings to you in the Name of Our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ!

I pray that, having completed the first week of the fast, you have been strengthened by the beautiful services and fasting discipline in order to complete the rest of this holy journey.

When we wrote this appeal to you last year and celebrated the Sunday of Orthodoxy, who knew that just over one week later our world as we know it would change and, for the first time in a century we would have to endure the consequences of a world-wide pandemic and restrict access to our churches during this most holy season. What we hoped would be a short period of suffering has lasted for an entire year. While there are many signs of hope we remain vigilant, but nevertheless are thankful that we can participate liturgically in the Fast this year *in person*. I encourage you therefore, to come back to the Church if you have been missing, being mindful and careful, but also realizing that it is time to return home to the cradle of the Church.

Having said that, we remind you that it is been a long-standing tradition in our archdiocese to give scholarships to our seminarians studying for the priesthood. We are blessed this year to have 19 seminarians studying in three seminaries (St. Vladimir's, St. Tikhon's and Holy Cross). More than ever, these young men (and their families in many cases), have had to endure so much this past year including being locked down on campuses, unable to travel to our parishes for training, attending classes virtually, and missing out on the full liturgical life of the Church that is so necessary to their priestly formation while at seminary. Let us show our love and appreciation for this sacrifice by at least making sure they can start their ministry to you and your families without the added burden of great debt from seminary. Please give generously so we, in turn, can continue to be generous with them. Believe me when I tell you that they are deeply grateful for this expression of love.

Wishing you all a blessed journey that will help lead us to the heavenly kingdom, I remain,

Your Father in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Metropolitan Joseph". The signature is written in a cursive style and is preceded by a large, stylized cross symbol.

**+JOSEPH**

Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of all North America

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

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