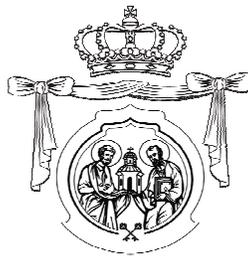


His Eminence
The Most Reverend
Metropolitan JOSEPH



Archbishop of New York and
Metropolitan of
All North America

**ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE
OF NORTH AMERICA**

Great Fast, 2018

TO BE READ FROM THE PULPIT AND PRINTED IN THE BULLETIN

If you cannot remember everything, instead of everything, I beg you, remember this without fail, that not to share our own wealth with the poor is theft from the poor and deprivation of their means of life; we do not possess our own wealth but theirs.

-Saint John Chrysostom

Beloved in Christ,

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

As we look ahead to our journey into the Great Fast on Meatfare Sunday, our Holy Orthodox Church offers us a stark and fearful reminder of the coming of Our Lord in glory to judge all the tribes and nations of the earth. He teaches in the gospel reading that He will judge us according to whether we ministered to Him by our ministering to the needy, the sick, and the imprisoned. As we begin this time of fasting and increased attendance at divine services, we are thus reminded not to forget our calling to also increase our love and care for others – especially through almsgiving.

One of the truly beautiful ministries of our Archdiocese is the *Food for Hungry Program*. During these days of the Great Fast, we can sit together with our families and make the intentional decision to do with less that we may share with others. While we learn from experience that we can indeed live more simply, we should remember – as we are exhorted by Saint John in the quotation above – that the wealth we have is truly not ours but the possession of those without. I call on all of the faithful of our Archdiocese to offer bountiful support to this grace-bestowing, life-giving program.

As we begin our journey to the Life-giving and Saving Passion and Glorious Resurrection of Our Lord, let us offer to Him a pleasing fast that is not simply a time of abstaining from foods but a time of fervent love of God and neighbor, victory over our passions, reconciliation with our enemies, and generous outreach to the needy, infirm, and imprisoned.

Praying for all of you to be granted a holy, pure, and grace-filled fast, I remain,

Your Father in Christ,

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

+JOSEPH

Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of all North America

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

358 Mountain Road, P.O. Box 5238, Englewood, NJ 07631-5238
(201) 871-1355 T Archdiocese@antiochian.org (201) 871-7954 F