

His Eminence
The Most Reverend
Metropolitan SABA



Archbishop of New York
and Metropolitan of
All North America

**ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE
OF NORTH AMERICA**

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Reverend Hierarchs, Priests and Deacons, Esteemed members of the Archdiocese Board of Trustees, Beloved Sons and Daughters of our Antiochian Archdiocese of North America,

On this blessed occasion, I recall the familiar phrase we hear in the Advent prayers:

“Christ is born, glorify Him!”

It is the Church’s call to us since the beginning of the Nativity Fast. We remember it to keep the question alive: How do we glorify Christ? Present in our minds, the answer remains clear: we glorify Him through our actions, our lives, and our conduct. “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven” (Matt. 5:16). Remember, the answer depends on each person’s readiness and response to this divine calling.

Many believe that Christ calls us to be good and nothing more. However, our Orthodox Christian faith teaches us that Christ came for us, and became man, not merely to make us good but to adorn our nature with His divinity. Good deeds are necessary, not as an end in themselves, but as the path to conform to Christ, striving for divine perfection.

Christian theology has succinctly summarized the theology of the Incarnation since the second century with the phrase: “God became man so that man might become God.” Our Lord took unto himself what was not His original nature to clearly show us that it is possible for us to forsake our sinful nature. He opened the heavens and descended to us, teaching us to open the gates of our hearts and forgiveness of sins, offering mercy to our brethren through the likeness of His love toward us.

My prayer for you in these blessed days is that may you always be prepared to receive the birth of Christ within you, to be a warm manger for Him, and to be blessed by His constant presence within you. May He increasingly mold you into His likeness day by day.

May God bless your days and your lives, and may everyone taste the peace of His Nativity.

Wishing you a blessed festal season and a new year filled with His blessings, I remain,

Yours in the Incarnate Christ,

+SABA

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

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