

**ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN MONTH**  
**“MESSAGE”**  
(March 2017)



Good morning!

*Christ is in our midst!*

I am so glad that I can speak to all of you today on behalf of our (*name of parish*) chapter of The Antiochian Orthodox Christian Women of North America. I would like to take this opportunity to briefly tell you about the important work we have been given by His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH for our 2017 Antiochian Women Project.

In 1972, His Eminence Metropolitan PHILIP, of thrice blessed memory, established our Antiochian Women organization. He designated the month of March as “Antiochian Women Month” in order to highlight the offerings of time, talent, and treasure that the women across our archdiocese contribute throughout the year, supporting every aspect of the life of our parishes. Very often our women make these contributions without fanfare, preferring to support our parish in a nurturing and quiet way. But for one month of the year, the charitable work that lies at the heart of our Antiochian Women’s activities is highlighted, and the many talents of our women are openly displayed.

Our beloved Metropolitan JOSEPH has continued this tradition. So, throughout this month of March, the women of our parish will take a more visible role in parish activities. Some of these will include the reading of the

Epistle, ushering, taking the collection, and speaking about the role of Antiochian Women in our parish, our diocese, and our archdiocese. We will also be raising funds for the Antiochian Women's current project: **STRENGTHENING THE MINISTRIES OF OUR CHURCH.**

His Eminence wants our Archdiocese to focus particularly on the following ministries:

- Senior Housing Projects
- Clothing and Feeding the Poor
- Caring for the Elderly
- Supporting our Youth
- Protecting the Unborn
- Teaching about our Faith
- Assisting Seminarians and their families
- Establishing and nurturing Missions & Monasteries

In speaking of his vision for our archdiocese, Metropolitan JOSEPH emphasized that the ministries of our Church need to be given an extra boost of funding in the years ahead. It is true that many of our faithful parishioners and clergy are already involved in these ministries throughout our Archdiocese -- the Project poster shows this dedicated work as lights shining brightly across North America. But to have a lasting and positive impact, all ministries need to be continually encouraged and supported, both locally and at the Archdiocesan level. **MINISTRY**, done by the Church in the Name of Christ, is an outward and visible sign of God's love for the world. As the Church, it is our mission to preach salvation and the love of God, and then to put our message of love into action. This action happens in our ministries!

In focusing on our 2017 Project --“Strengthening the Ministries of our Church” -- His Eminence calls us to re-double our efforts to fund these Godly ministries, and put our faith into action. Therefore, this is our goal for 2017. The funds we raise this year will strengthen our Church by supporting these essential ministries. Significant funds are needed so that they can be spread across all of these worthy programs.

This is quite a wide-ranging and far-reaching vision. However, His Eminence is passionately dedicated to strengthening these ministries. He is motivated by St. James’ forceful proclamation: *“What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,’ and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.”* (James 2:14-17)

These “works” are the ministries of our Archdiocese. They need our encouragement. They need our involvement and support. They need our generous financial funding. THANK YOU for your dedicated efforts to make our 2017 Project a success.

Finally, I would ask for your prayers for our Antiochian Women. We thank all of you for your generous support. May God bless this parish, and the work of the Antiochian Women. Amen. ❖

