

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 13, 2015

Choir and Chanter Appreciation Sunday

*“O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful
noise to the rock of our salvation” Psalm 95:1-2*

Beloved in Christ,

Each year in the month of December we remember our choirs and chanters. This sacred ministry of the Church is essential to the beauty of our divine services. Oftentimes, a person’s first experience of our Holy Orthodox Church is witnessing one of our beautiful services. This experience can either be enhanced by a beautiful and well-prepared choir, or diminished by an unprepared one. We are grateful to all of our choir directors, chanters and singers for their dedication, effort and commitment to making the divine services in their respective parishes beautiful to both God and the faithful.

Because of the need for all of our choirs to be provided with as many resources as possible and the importance of this sacred ministry, we recently created a full-time position for the chairman of the Department of Sacred Music. After many years of dedicated service on a part-time basis, Mr. Christopher Holwey stepped down as the chairman of the Department of Sacred Music earlier this year. As a result, I appointed Mr. Paul Jabara of Montreal, Canada as the first full-time chairman of the department. We are thankful to Chris and his dedication and we welcome Paul.

With this recent “upgrade” of this ministry in the Archdiocese, we hope to achieve more interaction between the department and the parishes with programs such as the Choir Outreach Program and Youth Music Ministry. We also intend to provide improved resources on our website, and coordination with the Department of Liturgics and the Department of Translations so there is consistency across the board with regard to translations of hymns, etc. Completing these changes will take time; however, you the faithful should begin noticing some of these improvements in the near future.

Wishing you all a blessed remainder of the Nativity Fast and, in advance, a joyous feast of our Lord’s Nativity, I remain,

Your Father in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name 'Joseph'.

+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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