



St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church
Sunday, December 14, 2025
Sunday of the Forefathers (Ancestors) of Christ

His Eminence, Metropolitan SABA
Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of all North America
His Grace, Bishop ANTHONY - Diocese of LA & the West
V. Rev. Fr. Dr. Christopher Salamy, Pastor
Rev. Fr. Peter Samore
Rev. Dn. Raphael Abrahams • Rev. Dn. Serafim Grove
Rev. Dn. Basil Ritchie • Rev. Dn. Michael Haddad
Rev. Dn. Dr. Gregory Abdalah, Pastoral Assistant • Christian Farradj, Youth Pastor
Harpreet Kaur, Executive Assistant to the Pastor
Jane Romley, Parish Administrator • Matthew Peters, Ministry Lead
Valerie Haddad, Director of Ministry, Growth & Development
Erin Thobias, Director of Communications

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION (TONE TWO)

When Thou didst submit Thyself unto death, O Thou deathless and immortal One, then Thou didst destroy hades with Thy Godly power. And when Thou didst raise the dead from beneath the earth, all the powers of Heaven did cry aloud unto Thee: O Christ, Thou giver of life, glory to Thee.

APOLYTIKION OF THE FOREFATHERS (TONE TWO)

Thou hast justified by faith the ancient Forefathers, and through them Thou hast gone before and betrothed unto Thyself the Church of the Gentiles. Let the saints, therefore, take pride in glory; for from their seed sprouted forth a noble fruit, and it was she who gave birth to Thee without seed. Wherefore, by their pleadings, O Christ God, save our souls.

APOLYTIKION OF ST. GEORGE (TONE FOUR)

As deliverer of captives and defender of the poor, healer of the infirm, champion of kings, victorious Great George intercede with Christ our God for our souls' salvation.

KONTAKION OF PREPARATION OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY (TONE THREE)

On this day the Virgin cometh to the cave to give birth to God the Word ineffably, Who was before all the ages. Dance for joy, O earth, on hearing the gladsome tidings; with the Angels and the shepherds now glorify Him Who is willing to be gazed on as a young Child Who before the ages is God.

THE EPISTLE

(For the Holy Forefathers)

*Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our Fathers.
For Thou art just in all that Thou hast done for us.*

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Colossians. (3:4-11)

Brethren, when Christ, Who is our life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. In these

you once walked, when you lived in them. But now put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its Creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all.

THE GOSPEL

(For the Holy Forefathers)

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. (14:16-24)

The Lord spoke this parable: "A man once gave a great banquet, and invited many; and at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for all is now ready.' But, one by one, they all began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So the servant came and reported this to his master. Then the householder in anger said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame.' And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.' And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.' For many are called, but few are chosen."

THOSE TO REMEMBER IN PRAYER...

Living: Romy, Chase, Paul, Joshua, Peter, Richard, Anthony, Laila, Michael, Ray, Pam, Amal, Nejwa, Randa, Regan, Theresa, Kristine, Sherry, Samira, Robert, Daniel, Jane, Jillian, Nicholas, Elizabeth, Mary, Alexandros, Theopisti, David and Donald.

Enaam Hweimel offers Holy Bread in loving memory of Adel (20 years), Abdallah, Jamil, Jamal, Emad, Samaan, Hissen, Lorice, Musa and Rigfa. May their memory be eternal. For the health of Enaam, Susie, Samaan, Linda, Sammer, and Edward.

Robert and Buthaina Salem offer Holy Bread for their health and the health of Joseph, Kristen, Nasri, Ensof, Saman, and the Salem and Saigh families. In memory of Suleiman, Najla, and Tarize.

The Aboukhaled family offer Holy Bread for the memory of their son, Khalil (2 years), and for the memory of Robert, Khalil, and Margaret.

Congratulations and God's blessings to Joseph & Rand Sayegh, on the Churching of their son, Andrew Sayegh. May God grant them many years.

Congratulations and God's blessings to Brian & Brittney Rose on the Baptism of their daughter, Clementine Rose. May God grant them many years.

Aida Dahdal offers Holy Bread for the health of Naseem, Nezar, David and Marilyn Dahdal, Salim and Linda Shleef and their families. For the departed Salim, Karma, Adel, Amer and Dina Shleef, Sida Nasser, Christina Sayegh Dahdal, and Wadi and Badia Dahdal.

Thank you, Georges and Patricia Aboukhaled, for sponsoring coffee hour!

His Eminence
The Most Reverend
Metropolitan SABA



Archbishop of New York
and Metropolitan of
All North America

ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE
OF NORTH AMERICA

Prot. no.: 596/2025

"Be filled with the Spirit, speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Eph. 5:18-19).

Sunday, December 14, 2025

Beloved in Christ,

Throughout the year, we honor and highlight our various organizations across our sacred Archdiocese. This month is no exception.

Each year, on the second Sunday of December, we honor those who chant praises to God in the Divine Liturgy and the divine services of the Church on this "Musician Appreciation Sunday." As we ponder the verses above taken from St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, we cannot help but think of the importance of our sacred music in the life of the Church. The hymnography inspires us to contemplate the divine and ponder our own salvation as we are engrossed in the theology that is transmitted by the sacred hymns of the various feasts and resurrectional cycles of the ecclesiastical year.

St. Theophan the Recluse, when commenting on the purpose of church hymns, said, "All of our liturgical hymns are instructive, profound, and sublime. They contain the whole of our theology and moral teaching, give us Christian consolation, and instill in us a fear of the Judgment. He who listens to them attentively has no need of other books on the Faith."

With that in mind, we are grateful for all those who train, practice, and sing praises to God in our parishes. We thank our thousands of choir members, chanters, readers, and their directors who sing from their hearts to praise God. It is our fervent prayer that not only are they transformed by what they are singing, but that through the beauty of their voices and the content of what they chant, they, in turn, also inspire those who listen.

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

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All this becomes possible through the dedicated efforts of those who train them, led by our Chairwoman of the Department of Sacred Music, Ms. Mareena Boosamra Ball, and her dedicated team. We are grateful for their many efforts in providing sound and correct settings for our sacred music, their biannual Sacred Music Institutes, the Antiochian Orthodox Ecclesiastical Online Music School, as well as the many workshops offered throughout the Archdiocese.

May our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ continue to give them strength, not only on this day in which we honor them, but throughout the entire year!

Your Father in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read '+SABA'.

+SABA

Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of all North America

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His Eminence
The Most Reverend
Metropolitan SABA

Ms. Mareena
Boosamra Ball



Archbishop of New York
and Metropolitan of
All North America

Chairwoman,
Dept. of Sacred Music

ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE
OF NORTH AMERICA

Musician Appreciation Sunday, December 14, 2025

Dear friends, our church musicians across the Archdiocese: Christ is in our midst!

Let me begin with a huge THANK YOU! Your service and dedication to our God-protected churches and communities is truly a blessing.

As I reflect on this past year, it is just astonishing how quickly time has passed since the writing of my last letter!

At my church's recent choir rehearsal, I brought out all the beautiful hymns that we will be singing for the Nativity of our Lord's divine services in just a few short weeks. It was like greeting an old, special friend who you haven't seen in a long time.

The familiarity of the music with those who have been singing in the choir for decades, combined with the introduction of these beautiful melodies to new members, resonates with unending possibilities. This blend ensures that our musical traditions will not only continue to thrive within our own churches but will also spread across the Orthodox world.

There is an instant synergy in the choir that blends the voices of the individual singers to create a single, beautiful tapestry of sound. With the antiphonal song of prayer between our beloved clergy and singers, our combined goal is to aid the faithful of our churches in prayer and worship. As church musicians, we never lose sight of our true purpose of spreading the word of God through our beautiful melodies.

Your dedication to the sacred music of our blessed Archdiocese has enriched our liturgical life and deepened the spiritual experience for the faithful across North America. I encourage you to continue to expand your musical horizons and stay strong by attending classes being offered through our Antiochian Orthodox Ecclesiastical Online Music School, becoming a student at our biannual Sacred Music Institutes to recharge your batteries, but most of all, approaching your ministry with love, humility and prayerfulness.

May our incarnate Lord bless you always and give you strength. Please remember that your Department of Sacred Music is always here to help you in any way we can.

With deepest appreciation and admiration, your servant in Christ,

Mareena Boosamra Ball
Chairwoman, Department of Sacred Music
Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

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

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