



November 5, 2023
Protocol 11/002

To the Clergy, Monastics, and Faithful of the Orthodox Church in America,

My Beloved Children in the Lord,

Soon we will enter into the season of the Nativity Fast. Once, two millennia ago, the Three Wise Men, Caspar, Balthazar, and Melchior made ready to journey from their eastern homeland to meet the newborn King of Angels, bearing their treasures with them. Today, as we approach this holy season, it is likewise fitting that we prepare to meet our infant Lord and Savior, the God-man born as a little child, with gifts of our own.

What gifts shall we bring? Our fast? But our fast is for our sake, not God's. Our prayer and worship? Yes, above all—but not only. The Child who will be born comes to bring us heavenly blessings, but he nevertheless needs our earthly care. Just as he once relied on his Mother for warmth and nourishment and on Joseph for protection and support, so his Church now relies on our good will in order to maintain its operations in this world.

On this Steward Sunday 2023, I ask all of our parishes and institutions to make a special collection on behalf of the Stewards of the Orthodox Church in America. Through its offices, the Orthodox Church in America works behind the scenes to support your local communities in preaching and living out the Gospel. Whether it is the local and national clergy Synaxes organized by the Office of Pastoral Life, or the free liturgical texts, rubrics, and musical downloads provided by the Department of Liturgical Music, the central Church is doing crucial work to equip the entire Body of Christ for worship, ministry, and witness.

I ask all our clergy and faithful to consider supporting this humble and selfless labor which the dedicated servants of the Orthodox Church in America carry out on behalf of our parishes throughout North America. This is an excellent opportunity to make a special gift in honor of the little Child who is the Benefactor of all, the Giver of our being, our life, our renewal, and, one day, our resurrection. To him be all the glory.

With the blessings of the coming fast, I remain sincerely yours in Christ,

+TIKHON
Archbishop of Washington
Metropolitan of All America and Canada

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