

His Eminence  
The Most Reverend  
Metropolitan SABA  
The Right Reverend  
Bishop ANTHONY



Archbishop of New York  
and Metropolitan of  
All North America  
Diocese of Los Angeles  
and the West

**ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE  
OF NORTH AMERICA**

**Wednesday, January 8, 2025  
After-feast of Theophany;**

**Righteous George of Hozeva; Righteous Domnica of Constantinople**

Beloved: Greetings in our Lord Jesus Christ.

We expect the New Year to start out restfully, but we are asked to be resilient as we resist the encroaching winds and wildfires beside us.

We ask our Lord for protection and provisions for all our faithful and all our fellow citizens in our counties and cities, especially those enduring the wildfires raging in Los Angeles County.

St. Paul, who had been constantly confronted by difficult conditions and hard choices, said so well: “We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed” (2 Cor. 4:8-9).

When Joshua was to lead the people across the Jordan River, the Lord said: “Be strong and of good courage; be not frightened, neither be dismayed; for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go” (Josh. 1:9).

Faith turns into a foundation for future blessings. “Do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength” (Neh. 8:10b).

And through the holy Prophet Isaiah, our Lord beautifully encourages us: “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you... Because you are precious in my eyes, and honored, and I love you” (Isa. 43:2, 4).

I am praying for all of you. I ask all of you to follow the instructions of those in charge of the wildfire disaster to ensure that you and your families stay safe.

Here are some petitions that I offer to you to include in your prayers, especially before the icon of Christ:

We pray for our frontline workers, community leaders, and all those who are involved in dealing with the present danger and ongoing tragedy: Lord, have mercy!

We pray that Orthodox Christians are a light of peace and wisdom during this time so we can assist others: Lord, have mercy!

We pray that we can help those in need after this challenge passes: Lord, have mercy!

Again, please be assured of my love and prayers for you before our Almighty God.

Yours in Christ,  
**+ Bishop ANTHONY**

Bishop of Los Angeles  
Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

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

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