

**His Eminence
The Most Reverend
Metropolitan SABA**



**Archbishop of New York
and Metropolitan of
All North America**

**ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE
OF NORTH AMERICA**

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Beloved in Christ,

I extend my heartfelt greetings to each of you in these blessed days of the Nativity, holding you in my prayers and asking our loving and incarnate Lord to lift you to His glory and to pour upon you His abundant earthly and heavenly blessings.

On this sacred day, heaven bent down to embrace the earth, lifting it to itself. Before Christ, humanity knew God as a mighty, powerful, awe-inspiring, and distant figure, one whose wrath they sought to avoid. Yet, in Christ, we came to see a completely different face of God. Through His incarnation, we encountered a God who is loving, embracing, near, and fully present—one who shares in all things with us, except for sin.

God did not merely come to us; He became one of us, like us. He shared in our suffering, and through this, He raised us to Himself. The birth of Jesus Christ in the flesh forever transformed humanity's understanding of God. But have we, as individuals and as Christian communities throughout history, always lived according to what He has revealed and given to us? Often, we have failed to reflect His loving and participatory nature. Yet history is also rich with luminous examples—countless saints and faithful who have reflected the face of Christ in this suffering world.

In this joyous season, let us ask ourselves: How can we be born anew in Christ? How can we contribute to comforting this broken and weary world in which we live? This holy feast challenges us to follow the example of our Savior by embracing those in pain, those who are afraid, and those weighed down by the burdens of life. It calls us to offer them a spark of hope—a light to lift them beyond their worries, their pain, and their fears.

On this feast, let us remember our brothers and sisters throughout the world, especially those in the East, who endure hardships and long to experience the joy of our Lord. Let us prepare our hearts to receive Him within ourselves first so that we may see His presence in the faces of others.

I greet you with love and joy, saying: *Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year.*

In Christ,

+SABA

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

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