



October 5, 2025

10/002

To the clergy, monastics, and faithful of the Orthodox Church in America, beloved children in the Lord,

Christ is in our midst!

The holy services constantly urge the faithful to join music and song: “On this solemn day of our feast let us strike the spiritual harp.” “Come, O ye faithful, and let us honor in hymns the Ever-virgin Maid.” “With the whole assembly born on earth we honor the Cross, singing its praises.” “Therefore we cry to thee, O Theotokos, in song.” “Today let us, the faithful, dance for the joy, singing to the Lord with psalms and hymns.” “Let us sound the cymbals: let us shout aloud in songs.” Pages could be filled with such exhortations gleaned from the pages of the service books.

This is a reminder that Church music is our common responsibility: whether we participate by singing in the choir, serving in the altar, or prayerfully listening, our liturgical worship is given voice through song. However, though we all have a responsibility for liturgical music and beauty in worship, God has given some people the special talents and vocation needed to lead the people in liturgical music. These are our choir directors, and without trained choir directors, orderly and beautiful worship in the tradition of the Orthodox Church in America is challenging, if not impossible.

God, of course, grants musical talents as he sees fit, and the vocation, the calling to serve, comes from him. But it falls to us as a Church to help foster these talents and encourage responsiveness to this vocation. In recent years, our communities have made efforts to foster priestly vocations; on this Church Musician Sunday, I ask our communities to make efforts to foster the vocations of choir directors as well.

This is not a matter of wishful thinking. Our parishes can take concrete steps to raise up choir directors. Our communities can identify candidates and pay for training such as that offered online by our Department of Liturgical Music and Translation. We can financially support choir directors and trainees who wish to take on more extensive studies. Crucially, our parishes can and should provide remuneration for choir directors and their substitutes and assistants, recognizing the dedication, skills, training, and time commitment that the work of the parish choir director requires.

I conclude by thanking our choir directors throughout the Church. May God bless and reward your work. I hope that parishes, missions, and institutions throughout the Orthodox Church in America will

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join me in this thanksgiving and in this commitment to ensuring that we will have trained choir directors to facilitate our worship for generations to come.

With my primatial prayers and blessing,

+Tikhon  
Archbishop of Washington  
Metropolitan of All America and Canada