



ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA
DIOCESE OF NEW YORK & NEW JERSEY

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**Archpastoral Letter for
Church Musician Appreciation Day: Sunday, October 4, 2020**

Prot. No. 01-008/2020

October 1, 2020

Pokrov – The Protection of the Mother of God
Saint Romanos the Melodist

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:
Christ is in our midst!

The Diocese of New York and New Jersey will mark Church Musician Appreciation Day on Sunday, October 4, 2020, the Sunday following the feast day of St. Romanos the Melodist. Truly, we need to nurture and encourage our church musicians – and thank them on this day for their pious work.

We must especially commend our choir directors, singers, readers, and chanters for their creativity and determination during this year of profound challenges arising from the pandemic. Choir directors and singers were prevented from gathering to rehearse and to sing the beautiful services of Great Lent, Holy Week, and the Pascha season ... many choir directors and chanters had to sing the services alone for weeks on end ... and directors and singers alike had to adapt to the requirements of reducing and socially distancing choirs when churches began to re-open.

So, I strongly encourage Rectors, Parish Councils, and Choir leaders to offer special thanks to their singers, composers, arrangers, and teachers of church music. Having faced the demands of this year, let us never take for granted the vital relationship between the Rector and the Choir Director; the prayerful connection between the liturgical celebrants and the choir; and the soul-enriching ministry of our church musicians, which uplifts and inspires all those gathered in the Divine Services.

With this in mind, I direct the following petitions to be offered during the Augmented Litany on October 4:

O Heavenly Father, on this day of recognition for the women, men and young people in our parish who give their time and musical talent in service to Thee, our Lord, and to Thy Church, we ask Thy continued blessings for all of them, and we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.

Response: Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy. (Repeat after each petition)

Bless all of our choir members, O Lord, as they sing praises to Thee and glorify Thy Name. That their work may be a witness to Thy majesty and love, reminding us all of Thy presence in our lives; we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.

O God, Whom Saints and Angels delight to worship in Heaven: be ever present with Thy servants who seek through music to perfect the praises offered by Thy people on earth; and entreating Thee to grant unto them even now glimpses of Thy beauty and to make them worthy to behold it unveiled for evermore, we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.

I thank you for joining me in expressing gratitude to our church musicians, singers, and composers, and I appreciate your cooperation in the manner of this request.

With my archpastoral blessings, my humble prayers, and my sincere love to all of you,
especially to the church musicians of our beloved Diocese,

+ Archbishop Michael

Archbishop of New York and the
Diocese of New York and New Jersey