

Archpastoral Message of His Beatitude, Metropolitan HERMAN
For the 2007 Charity Appeal

**To the Venerable Hierarchs, Reverend Clergy, Monastics and Faithful
of the Orthodox Church in America**

Dearly Beloved in Christ:

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son...”(John 3:16)

The Holy Scriptures and Holy Tradition remind us time and again that love is not simply an emotion. Neither is love a passive state. Love is a choice. The choice to love is expressed in concrete acts. In the famous Scripture verse above, the holy Apostle and Evangelist John the Theologian teaches us that God's love for the world was expressed in an act ultimate of giving. Similarly, one of the prayers of the Holy Mystery of Baptism says, “Thou couldst not endure to behold mankind oppressed by the Devil; but thou didst come and didst save us.”

In his famous book, The Screwtape Letters, C. S. Lewis makes the point that the work of the demons is not necessarily to make bad people. All the demons really need to do is provide the world with people who do not care. Many of us might be able say that we have not hated another person. However, it may be more difficult for us to say that we have never turned our back on the need of another, because his or her struggle did not seem significant to us. Apathy is a more pervasive danger to the soul than hatred. If apathetic people are the demons' victory, then people who reach out to others in acts of love are their downfall.

Each year, the month of November is Charity Appeal month in The Orthodox Church in America. In the past, your generous support to this Appeal has been a source of aid to those in dire need. For all of your loving offerings, I give you my heartfelt thanks on behalf of the whole Church. Now I call upon you to help us once again to support the philanthropic efforts of our Church through you contributions to the annual OCA Charity Appeal. In this way, we all become imitators of Him in whose image we are made: by loving not just in our intentions, but with our very actions.

My prayer is that by our good works of mercy and compassion, Christ's love, active, unconditional and all-embracing, will be manifested in our parishes, our families, and our communities as a whole.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



+HERMAN
Archbishop of Washington and New York
Metropolitan of All America and Canada

