



THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA
THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX EPISCOPATE OF AMERICA

The Most Reverend Dr. NATHANIEL Popp, Archbishop

February 8, 2023

Great Martyr Theodore Stratelates & Prophet Zechariah

Reverend Fathers and Beloved Faithful,

“As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”
– 1 Peter 4:10

As you may already be aware, a significant **7.8 magnitude earthquake (and subsequent aftershocks) struck Southeastern Turkey and Northern Syria** in the early morning of February 6. The devastation in the area is tremendous, as you can see from the news reports.

The local Orthodox Church, the Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East immediately began organizing efforts to help all those affected in their homelands. The immediate focus is to assist with the humanitarian crisis: to give medical care to the injured, comfort to the grieving, and material support and hope to the survivors. In addition, much work will be required in the future to rebuild the physical structures – homes, public infrastructure, and even churches. Some initial reports claim that ALL of the Antiochian Orthodox churches in Southeastern Turkey, the region of the ancient city of Antioch (where the disciples of Jesus were first called Christians and where Orthodox Christians still live to this day), have been destroyed. Many churches in Syria have suffered significant damage as well.

- **The Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America has organized an EARTHQUAKE RELIEF FUND to help support the Antiochian Patriarchate for swift distribution by its relief agencies to the suffering. Donations may be made directly online at: <https://antiochian.org/earthquake>.**
- **Also, the International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) has established an appeal: <https://support.iocc.org>.**
- We encourage our clergy and faithful to support this cause with whatever contributions they feel moved to offer according to their means. **Donations can be made directly to the two links provided above (the Antiochian Archdiocese or the IOCC) or you may have special collections for the next few weeks in church on Sunday and then forward the checks to the ROEA (payable to the ROEA, mention: Earthquake 2023).** Our Chancery office will forward the donations from the parishes to the Antiochian Archdiocese and the IOCC. Please share the above donation websites addresses in your bulletin, parish email list, social media, etc.

The Antiochian Archdiocese’s website (<https://www.antiochian.org>) provides ongoing updates.

We pray that in a world laden with division, hatred, and war, the love of Christ will show forth through our efforts, together with those of people of goodwill around the world, to come to the aid of the victims of this devastating natural disaster.

With blessings,

+ NATHANIEL, Archbishop