



Orthodox Church
of the Annunciation

An Orthodox Christian Mission
Bearing the Light of Orthodoxy
on the Central Coast of California

Archpriest Lawrence Russell, Rector

877 Francine Lane
Santa Maria, California 93456
(805) 938-7877

02/21/21

Patriarch Zechariah

Beloved Faithful of the Diocese of the West:

His Eminence, Archbishop BENJAMIN has directed a diocesan-wide Lenten Appeal for 2021 in support of the Gobezie Goshu Home for the Elderly and Support for Children, located in the town of Adwa, Tigray Province, northern Ethiopia. This year's appeal for this worthy charitable work—which our Diocese has supported for over a decade—via individual contributions, individual parish support, and tri-annual, diocesan-wide Lenten appeals—is being cast into the even graver-than-usual circumstances of the pandemic and a devastating civil war. With access to journalists being denied and all means of electronic communication being shut down by the Ethiopian government, piecemeal information gathered and reported by the New York Times estimates that 2 million Tigrayans have been displaced (many fleeing to Sudan) and also reports widespread and life-threatening shortages of food and water, along with the tragedy of lives lost in military conflict, and those harmed by reported looting and sexual assault.

Our parish is the home parish to Tsige Gobezie, the founder of the charitable work. Only within the last week did we finally hear that Tsige and the co-director, Abraham Teklu, are alive and, for the time being, safe. They have distributed all the funds they can currently access to those most needy among the 270 invalids and destitute people they support on a monthly basis.

We ask your prayers for a speedy resolution to the conflict and your financial donations for the suffering people of Ethiopia that Tsige serves. In a typical year, your donations help enroll up to 1,000 students in school and annually feed and clothe around 250 poor persons per month. While the schools are currently shut down, you will have gathered from the above that the need for assistance created by these new crises is beyond great. Your donations will, I am assured, make a huge difference to those suffering, through the present and always compassionate arm of the Gobezie Goshu Foundation.

Thank You,

Archpriest Lawrence Russell, Chairperson for Diocesan Department of Charities

Please send donations to:

Diocese of the West
c/o Rev. Andrew Smith
1520 Green Street
San Francisco, CA 94123-5102