



To the beloved brethren, esteemed hierarchs, and faithful of the Holy Church: Shlama lukh!

When the lot of election has been cast and the voice of the Church has resounded, it is not to man that the honour belongs, but to Him “who worketh all things according to the counsel of his pleasure” (Ephesians 1:11). It is with trembling heart and bowed spirit that I receive the appointment to the high and dread office of Catholicos Patriarch, for truly “no one taketh this honour on himself, but he who is called of Alaha, as Aaron” (Hebrews 5:4).

I stand before you not as a man who wishes to be exalted, but as one chastened by the remembrance of my own weakness. As the Apostle Paul confessed, “I am the least of the apostles; and am not worthy to be called an apostle” (1 Corinthians 15:9), so also I confess my smallness before the great mystery of the Church of Alaha. Yet if “Alaha hath chosen the foolish ones of the world, to shame the wise; and he hath chosen the feeble ones of the world, to shame the mighty” (1 Corinthians 1:27), then may His power be perfected in my infirmity.

Beloved in Mshikha, we are ever reminded that “whoever shall exalt himself, will be abased: and whoever shall abase himself, will be exalted” (Matthew 23:12). In this, we find the true pattern of leadership—not in lording authority over the flock, but in washing the feet of the brethren, even as Maran stooped to gird Himself with a towel and serve His disciples (John 13:14–15).

Let none of us imagine that this appointment has been made for the elevation of one man above others. Rather, it is that the whole body of Mshikha may be ordered in charity, “for we are members one of another” (Ephesians 4:25). The Catholicos Patriarch is but a servant of servants, a guardian and steward, charged to hold fast “the faith which was once delivered to the saints” (Jude 1:3) and to shepherd the

people in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace.

It is written in the Epistle to the Hebrews, “Confide in your guides, and hearken to them; for they watch for your souls, as men who must give an account of you” (Hebrews 13:17). This word is not given to the faithful alone, but presses upon the shepherd the greater burden—that he will one day render an account before the Chief Shepherd Yeshua Mshikha. Therefore, my prayer is that I may always remember that the flock is not mine, but His who purchased it with His own blood (Acts 20:28).

The Church in every age has endured trials, persecutions, and divisions, but she remains the Bride of the Lamb, adorned for her Husband. If the storms rise, let us not be shaken; if the night lengthens, let us await the dawn. For the promise remains: “I am with you always, unto the consummation of the worlds” (Matthew 28:20).

Therefore, in receiving this office, I do not seek the honour of men but the grace of Alaha, beseeching Him that I may be granted the humility of Moses, who said, “I wish that all the people of Mar-Yah were prophets, so that Mar-Yah would put his Spirit upon them” (Numbers 11:29). I pray also for the zeal of Elijah, the wisdom of Solomon, and the charity of the beloved disciple John, that the service entrusted to me may be pleasing in His sight. May I never forget that the Church is not mine to possess, but His to sanctify. And may my hand be ever stretched forth to lift the weary, to comfort the sorrowful, to guide the erring, and to strengthen the faithful. For Mshikha Himself said, “I am among you, as he that serveth” (Luke 22:27).

Now, dearly beloved brethren, let us walk together in unity of faith, in steadfastness of hope, and in the labour of love. Let no man glory in men, “for all things are yours; and ye are Mshikha’s; and Mshikha is Alaha’s” (1 Corinthians 3:21, 23). Let us then lift our eyes not to the frailty of the servant, but to the majesty of Maran, who has seen fit to call the least among His brethren to this sacred task.

Pray for me without ceasing, that I may not stumble in the way, but that with clean hands and a pure heart I may minister before the altar of the Most High. And together let us await the crown that fadeth not away, which the Chief Shepherd shall bestow upon all who are faithful unto the end.

Given this day with fear and trembling, yet with hope in the mercy of Alaha,

*+Mar Mattai Beita d’Mshikha*

By the Grace of Alaha

Catholicos Patriarch

7 September 2025