

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE UNITED STATES

March 1, 2018

To the American Bahá'í community

Dearly loved Friends,

At sunset tonight, the Bahá'í month of 'Alá'—the final month of our year—arrived, bringing with it our annual period of fasting. Fasting is an act of devotion, intended to express our love for and obedience to the Almighty and to draw us closer to Him. The Fast's place on our calendar—just after the joyful days of Ayyám-i-Há and immediately preceding the Bahá'í New Year—positions it as an ideal time to take stock of our lives and consider how our conduct measures up to the high expectations the Blessed Beauty, Bahá'u'lláh, holds for us. Perhaps it is also a good time for us to meditate on the surpassing goodness of God and to call to mind His many blessings.

One way we can express our gratitude for the tender mercies of the All-Loving Creator is by placing our resources at the service of His Cause. Among these resources are our energy, intelligence, skills, and experience. By expending these personal assets in service, we show our readiness to give our all for the advancement of a Cause we know to be heaven's remedy for the multitude of ills that beset the world.

A personal resource no less important we can put at the service of God's Cause is our finances. As welcome as our other assets are, the monetary contributions we make to the National Bahá'í Fund nourish and sustain the Faith's lifeblood, empowering its work on a myriad fronts, making it possible for that vital work to proceed without impediment. About such contributions and their connection to our spiritual well-being, the beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, has explained:

Contributions to this fund constitute, in addition, a practical and effective way whereby every believer can test the measure and character of his faith, and prove in deeds the intensity of his devotion and attachment to the Cause.

Friends, at this writing, contributions to our National Fund stand at \$26.5 million— a substantial \$9.5 million short of our annual contributions goal of \$36 million. With just eight weeks remaining to the close of the fiscal year, we will need contributions of \$1.2 million every week between now and April 30 to achieve our goal.

The challenge is formidable, but we, members of the community of the Greatest Name in this blessed country, have demonstrated time and again we have the creativity, enterprise, enthusiasm, tenacity, and perseverance to surmount every obstacle in the prosecution of our mission as "spiritual descendants of the dawn-breakers." In the weeks ahead, let us show the Lord our worthiness to carry that title with an outpouring of contributions not only meeting our goal but surpassing it. We have the capacity and we have the heart—without a doubt, we can do it!

Our admiration and love for you are boundless, our confidence in you complete.

With loving appreciation,



Juana C. Conrad
Treasurer