



*Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace and goodwill
toward men.
(Luke 2:14)*

CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!

Your Graces, Reverend-Fathers and beloved in Christ!

Christ was born into the world for one exclusive purpose – to redeem man’s fallen nature and to offer to man, once again, the gift of full communion with God as it was in the Garden of Eden. St. John of Damascus writes that “The Son of God became man in order that He might again grace man as He had when He had made him.” God took flesh so that He could share a bond with us, through Jesus Christ, and form a mystical union with us that knows no limits of time, place or any other restriction that our own feeble minds can conjure. God’s vantage towards us is an indestructible union and bond of love. Yet, we try in every conceivable way to undermine, disrupt and fracture that bond through our sin towards God, our fellowman and God’s Creation.

How often during the course of our everyday lives do we exclude Christ from our hearts and minds and allow corrupting thoughts and actions to direct our lives? We all run and plead for God’s Mercy and attention whenever tragedy strikes us, but when all is well in our lives, or even in our mundane daily tasks of work and life, we forget Christ and our Faith. We allow everything else to have priority in our lives – work, leisure, family squabbles, friends, politics, finances etc. Yet, when it comes to God, we do not allow Him to play a major role in our lives, and we put everything temporal before that eternal joy that only He can give us.

Dear brothers and sisters, with this Nativity of our Lord let us begin to change our ways. Let us make a purposeful effort to put a greater focus on Christ in our daily lives. Let us work on reminding ourselves that Jesus Christ has taken upon Himself our flesh, and that He understands us and desires to help us in every aspect of our lives – not only in moments of crisis. We must remember that Jesus Christ beckons us to be with Him, saying to us, “... I call you friends, for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you” (John 15:15). We have been given a beautiful gift, as Orthodox Christians, to grow close with God, so let us not squander our time and energy on what will soon be irrelevant and will fade away.

+ KYRILL
Archbishop of San Francisco and Western America

The Nativity According to the Flesh of our Lord, God and Saviour, Jesus Christ
25 December 2024 / 7 January 2025