

## Christ Is Born!

"...And the Whole of Creation Rejoices"

"For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." (Luke 2:11-12)



Dear Parishioners,

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

The liturgical cycle of the church brings the faithful once again to celebrate the birth, in the flesh, of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! The succession of worship services and prayers takes place on an hourly, daily, weekly and yearly cycle. This reality is displayed in the prayer and worship books of the church. The theological reason for this is to express the truth that God, **Christ the Savior**, is constantly working in our lives to bring about our salvation. "You left nothing undone until you had led us up to heaven and granted us Your Kingdom, which is to come." (The Prayer of the Anaphora, St. John Chrysostom.)

From year to year, dynamics change in the homes of families who celebrate Christmas. Maybe a loved one fell asleep in the Lord, a child moved away for college and/or for work, someone got married, or the reality of caring for aging parents. Whatever the circumstances may be, it is good for one to be like the shepherds who were guided by the angels to the Nativity. Giving attention and honoring the birth of Christ, gives a person the chance to leave from the anxieties and pressures created by the situations mentioned above. Like the shepherds leaving their flock and running to the baby Christ, we must leave the cares of the world by glorifying and worshipping the new born Savior. By doing so, there is a great potential for each of our lives to be transformed.

The name Christ is a special name that was given only at the moment that the divine Word, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, took on flesh from the Virgin Mother. "For when the Word became flesh, then it was, we say, that He was called Christ Jesus. For since He was anointed with the oil of gladness which was the Holy Spirit." (St. Cyril of Alexandria) Thus expressed from this quote, Jesus is the Christ because He was anointed by God the Father through the Holy Spirit to complete a mission, to die on the cross and to resurrect from the dead for the salvation of humankind.

Each Greek Orthodox Christian has been anointed when they were baptized to be a co-inheritor with Christ. Thus, each person baptized and chrismated is *anointed* with a *purpose* and a *mission* because they bear the name **CHRISTian!**

As we celebrate Christmas this year, may we ask ourselves certain questions: Do I believe that Jesus is Christ and God? Am I fulfilling my anointed mission from God as a Christian? Do I proclaim the gospel in my home and to my children? Do I pray with my family? Do I worship in the body of Christ, which is the Church? Do I think of my service to others before myself? Can I find the charity within me with what God has entrusted, to help build up His church and to serve the less fortunate and vulnerable?

May the Christ child be our Savior and anoint you and your family with the Christmas gift of His tender, warm and **loving mercy!** May God's grace *ignite your soul with the zeal* to live by His teachings and commandments! Wishing your Christmas and New Year to be filled with blessings, as you build great memories with your family!

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Rev. John K. Lardas  
Protopresbyter

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