

WELCOME VISITORS!

We welcome all new visitors who worshipped with us this morning.
Please join us next door after service for coffee and fellowship.
There is material in the entrance of the church regarding ministries and events of our community. Please sign our guest book!

Receiving Holy Communion

The sacrament of Holy Communion is reserved for only baptized and/or chrismated Orthodox Christians who have properly prepared by fasting, prayer and confession. The Orthodox Church is not in sacramental communion with any other faith outside the Orthodox Christian Church. If you are not Orthodox, you are invited with everyone to receive the Antidoron (blessed bread) at the end of service. If you would like information about the Orthodox Church and becoming an Orthodox Christian, please see Father Vasileios after services.

PRAYERS FOR HEALTH

Dolly, Betty, Arlena, Sophie, Archie, Lou, Thomas, Kathy, Suzanne, Pat, Steve, Nina, Phyllis, Katheryn, Panayioti, Anna, Margaret, Sami, Ibrahim, Mary, George, Susan, Matthew, Ellen, Gary, Katina, Nelda, Nick, Elaine, Malone, Tracy, Richard, Lilly, Kimberly, Dion, Jamil, Dimitrios, Lisa, Maggie, Mindy, Joan, Nakis, Micky, Kiane, Lari, Ed, Sally, Mariana, Brian, Kaeley, Tristan, Matt, Jeff, Sophia, Angela, Jennifer, Konstandinos, Elia, Rose Marie, Bilyana, Maria, Susan, Jane, Romeo, Clara, Costa, Cindy, Philip, Trey, Barbara, Evangia, Michael, Jeffrey, Victoria, Nicole, Anastasia, Katie, Suzanne, Michael, Stella, Michael, Nicole, George, Katherine, Fr. Peter, Venton, Nick, Tatiana, Sandy, Caleb, Pete, Wendy, Lorraine, Tina, Anna, Michael, Anna, Pamela, Shawn, Anthoula, Megan, Leo, Lili, Christy, Glenn, Philip, Katelyn, Joshua, Jason, John, Julia, Nick, Maria, Carolyn, Betty, Ruth, Nicholas, Joyce, Connie, Deacon George, Ralph, Vana, Andreas, the Nun Elizabeth, Alexandra, Sonia, Sultana, Boyd

THANK YOU!

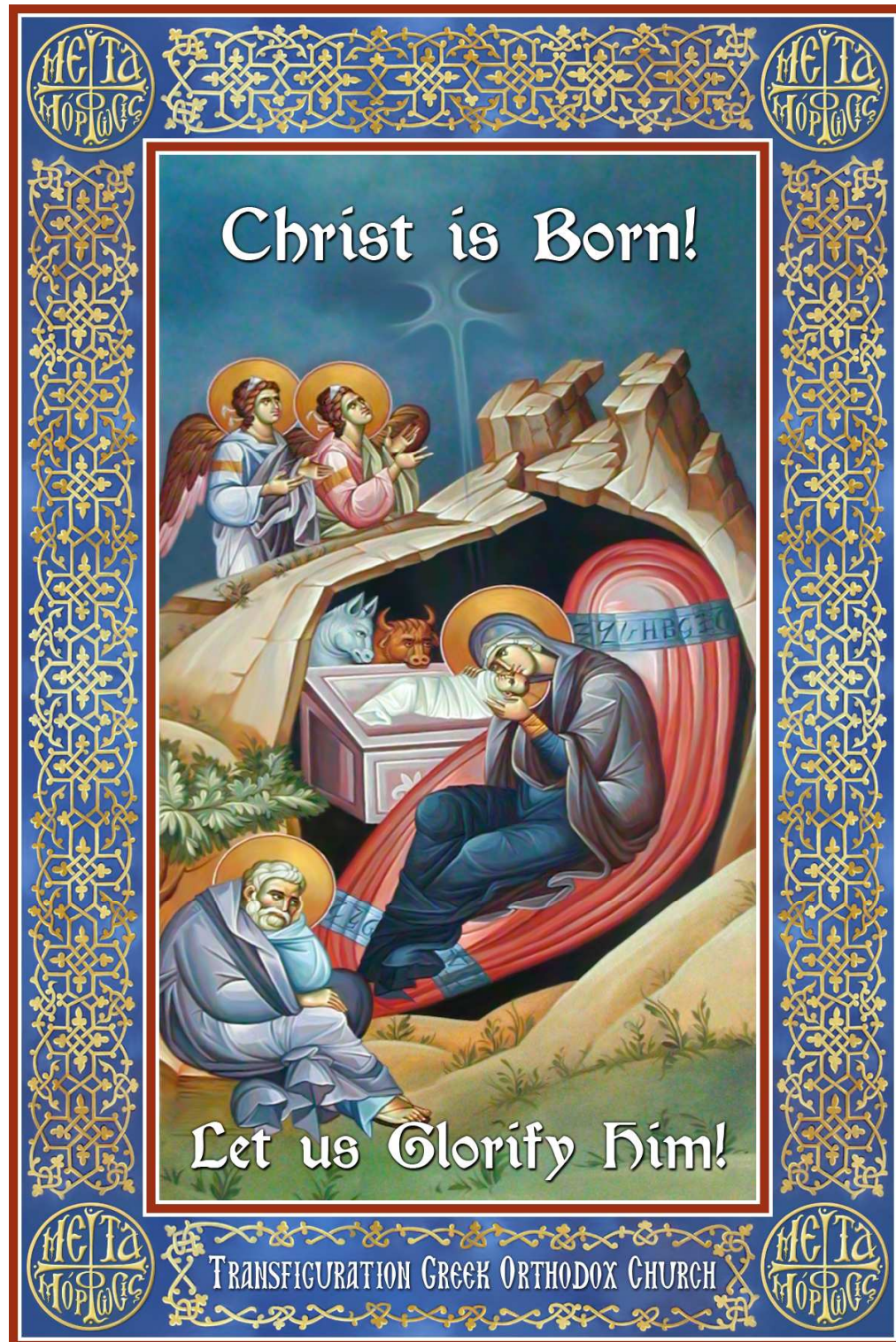
WE WISH TO THANK EVERYONE WHO HAS VOLUNTEERED SO MUCH OF THEIR VALUABLE TIME WITH TRANSFIGURATION'S MANY EVENTS IN THIS PAST YEAR, AND FOR ALL OF YOUR HELP IN MAKING THIS NATIVITY SEASON BEAUTIFUL. WE ALSO WANT TO THANK FR. VASILEIOS AND PRESBYTERS STELLA FOR EVERYTHING YOU DO FOR US, AND FOR BEING THE BLESSING THAT YOU ARE! WE ARE TRULY BLESSED TO HAVE SUCH A LOVING AND HELPING COMMUNITY!

THEOPHANY

On Sunday, January 8th, Transfiguration will be joining St. Elias for the Blessing of the Waters and Diving for the Cross at Barton Springs at 1:00pm. All youth are encouraged to join in the dive! See Fr. Vasileios if interested.

VASILOPITA AUCTION!

Our Philoptochos is planning a
live Vasilopita Auction on Sunday, January 22nd!
Please stop by the Philoptochos table for more information or to sign up to bring something to auction.
If you missed it last year, be sure to come this year.
It is a LOT OF FUN!



DECEMBER 25, 2011 - CHRISTMAS DAY

EPISTLE - GALATIANS 4: 4-7

Brethren, when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order that He might redeem those under the law, that we might receive what is our due, the adoption as sons. But because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, "Abba, Father." So that no longer art thou a slave, but a son; and if a son, also an heir of God through Christ.

Ἀδελφοί, ὅτε ἦλθεν τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ χρόνου, ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ, γενόμενον ἐκ γυναικός, γενόμενον ὑπὸ νόμον, ἵνα τοὺς ὑπὸ νόμον ἐξαγοράσῃ, ἵνα τὴν υἰοθεσίαν ἀπολάβωμεν. Ὅτι δέ ἐστε υἱοί, ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν, κρᾶζον, Ἀββᾶ, ὁ πατήρ. Ὡστε οὐκέτι εἶ δοῦλος, ἀλλ' υἱός· εἰ δὲ υἱός, καὶ κληρονόμος θεοῦ διὰ χριστοῦ.



APOKRIATIKO

Mark your calendar's now!

This year's "Meat-Fare" community dinner and dance
will be held on

Saturday, February 11th - 6:00pm
at Mt. Tabor Hall .

Thank you to AHEPA for sponsoring
this fun event for us!

This is our last opportunity to have a fun
get-together with our community before Great Lent begins.

House Blessings

Father Vasileios will begin our house blessings after the **Feast of Theophany**.

We will make an effort to schedule several house
blessings in one area or neighborhood on the same day,
to make it easier on Fr. Vasileios.

Please contact the church office at 329-6363 to discuss
scheduling your house blessing; or fill out the
house blessing form below and turn it in to the office.

EPIPHANY HOUSE BLESSING FORM

If you would like Father Vasileios to bless your home for the New Year,
please return this form to the Church Office as soon as possible.

Please indicate your preferred days of the week and time of day: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Numbers: _____

If you have any questions please call the Church Office at 329-6363.

2011 DOME ICONOGRAPHY CAMPAIGN *as of 11/11/2011*

Thank you to those who have pledged towards our
Dome Iconography.

So far we have \$291,500.00 pledged, and have received
\$138,500.00

Our goal to reach is \$330,000.00



Fr. Vasileios & Prsv. Stella Flegas

Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Ackerman
Dr. & Mrs. Jacob Angelo
Dr. & Mrs. Lou Apostolakis
Mr. & Mrs. Michalis Bakiris
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DECEMBER 25, 2011- CHRISTMAS DAY

GOSPEL - MATTHEW 2: 1 - 12

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it is written by the prophet: 'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will govern my people Israel.'"

Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star appeared; and he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." When they had heard the king they went their way; and lo the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy; and going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

Τοῦ Ἰησοῦ γεννηθέντος ἐν Βηθλεὲμ τῆς Ἰουδαίας ἐν ἡμέραις Ἡρώδου τοῦ βασιλέως, ἰδοὺ μάγοι ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν παρεγένοντο εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα λέγοντες, Ποῦ ἐστὶν ὁ τεχθεὶς βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων; εἶδομεν γὰρ αὐτοῦ τὸν ἀστέρα ἐν τῇ ἀνατολῇ καὶ ἠλθομεν προσκυνῆσαι αὐτῷ. Ἀκούσας δὲ ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἡρώδης ἐταράχθη καὶ πᾶσα Ἱεροσόλυμα μετ' αὐτοῦ, καὶ συναγαγὼν πάντας τοὺς ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ γραμματεῖς τοῦ λαοῦ ἐπυνθάνετο παρ' αὐτῶν ποῦ ὁ Χριστὸς γεννᾶται. Οἱ δὲ εἶπαν αὐτῷ, Ἐν Βηθλεὲμ τῆς Ἰουδαίας· οὕτως γὰρ γέγραπται διὰ τοῦ προφήτου· Καὶ σύ, Βηθλεὲμ γῆ Ἰούδα, οὐδαμῶς ἐλαχίστη εἶ ἐν τοῖς ἡγεμόσιν Ἰούδα· ἐκ σοῦ γὰρ ἐξελεύσεται ἡγούμενος, ὅστις ποιμανεῖ τὸν λαόν μου τὸν Ἰσραὴλ. Τότε Ἡρώδης λάθρα καλέσας τοὺς μάγους ἠκρίβωσεν παρ' αὐτῶν τὸν χρόνον τοῦ φαινομένου ἀστέρος, καὶ πέμψας αὐτοὺς εἰς Βηθλεὲμ εἶπεν, Πορευθέντες ἐξετάσατε ἀκριβῶς περὶ τοῦ παιδίου· ἐπὶ δὲ εὗρητε ἀπαγγεῖλάτε μοι, ὅπως καγὼ ἐλθὼν προσκυνήσω αὐτῷ. Οἱ δὲ ἀκούσαντες τοῦ βασιλέως ἐπορεύθησαν, καὶ ἰδοὺ ὁ ἀστὴρ ὃν εἶδον ἐν τῇ ἀνατολῇ προῆγεν αὐτοὺς ἕως ἐλθῶν ἐστάθη ἐπάνω οὗ ἦν τὸ παιδίον. Ἰδόντες δὲ τὸν ἀστέρα ἐχάρησαν χαρὰν μεγάλην σφόδρα. Καὶ ἐλθόντες εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν εἶδον τὸ παιδίον μετὰ Μαρίας τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ, καὶ πεσόντες προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ, καὶ ἀνοίξαντες τοὺς θησαυροὺς αὐτῶν προσήνεγκαν αὐτῷ δῶρα, χρυσὸν καὶ λίβανον καὶ σμύρναν. Καὶ χρηματισθέντες κατ' ὄναρ μὴ ἀνακάμψαι πρὸς Ἡρώδη, δι' ἄλλης ὁδοῦ ἀνεχώρησαν εἰς τὴν χώραν αὐτῶν.

The Nativity of Our Lord, and God, and Saviour Jesus Christ

Special Hymns for the Nativity

Nativity Hymn

“Your birth O Christ our God did shine upon the world and through the light of wisdom illumined the universe and to those who held the stars in worship did through a star learn to worship You, Worship You the Sun of Righteousness and came to know You the Light from on high. Glory to You O Lord.”

“I Génnisis sou Hristé o Theós imón, anétile to kósmo, to fos to tis gnóseos; en aftí gar i tis ástris latrévontes, ipó astéros edidáskonto; Se proskínin, ton Ilion tis dikeosínis, ke se ginóskin ex ípsous Anatólin. Kírie dóxa si.”

Nativity Antiphon Hymn

“Save us O Son of God, Who was born of the Virgin, we sing to Thee Alleluia.”

Nativity Entrance Hymn

*“Out of the womb, before the morning star, I have begotten thee.
The Lord hath sworn and will not repent.
Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.”*

Nativity Kontakion

“On this day the Virgin beareth the Transcendent in essence; to the Unapproachable, the earth doth offer a small cave; Angels join in choir with shepherds in giving glory; with a star the Magi travel upon their journey; for our sakes is born a young Child, He that existed before the ages is God.”

*I Parthénos símeron, ton Iperouíson tíkti, ke i gi to Spíleon, to aprosító prosági.
A ’ngeli, metá Piménon doxologoúsi, Mági de, metá astéros odiporoúsi;
di imás gar egenníthi pedíon néon, o pro eónon Theós.*

Trisagion Hymn

*“Those who have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ for evermore Alleluia.”
“Osis Christon evaptisthite Christon enethisathe Alleluia.”*

Megalinarion Hymn

*“All of creation rejoices in you, O all full of grace; the assembly of angels and the human race. You are a sanctified temple and a spiritual paradise, the glory from whom God was incarnate and became a child—our God, existing before all ages.
He made your womb a throne, and your body more spacious than the heavens.
All of creation rejoices in you, O full of grace. Glory to you.”*

Nativity Communion Hymn

*“The Lord has sent redemption unto His people. Alleluia.”
“Litrosin apestile Kirios to lao to lao aftu. Alleluia.”*

*Thank you to everyone who has committed to be a 2012 Steward so far!
(Updated on December 18)*

Fr. Vasileios & Prsv. Stella Flegas

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Thank you to all of our 2011 Stewards!

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FEAST DAY SERVICES FOR DECEMBER AND JANUARY

MONDAY, DECEMBER 26: SYNAXIS OF THE THEOTOKOS

ORTHROS 9:00AM; DIVINE LITURGY 10:00AM

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 27: FEAST OF ST. STEPHEN

ORTHROS 9:00AM; DIVINE LITURGY 10:00AM

THURSDAY, JANUARY 5, 2012:

FOREFEAST OF THEOPHANY OF CHRIST

MATINS 9:00AM; ROYAL HOURS 10:00AM

VESPERAL LITURGY OF ST. BASIL 6:00PM -

BLESSING OF THE WATERS

FRIDAY, JANUARY 6, 2012: HOLY THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD

ORTHROS 9:00AM; DIVINE LITURGY 10:00AM -

BLESSING OF THE WATERS

SATURDAY, JANUARY 7: SYNAXIS OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

ORTHROS 9:00AM; DIVINE LITURGY 10:00AM

TUESDAY, JANUARY 17: FEAST OF ST. ANTHONY

ORTHROS 8:30AM; DIVINE LITURGY 9:30AM

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18: FEAST OF STS. ANTHONY & CYRIL

ORTHROS 8:30AM; DIVINE LITURGY 9:30AM

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25:

FEAST OF ST. GREGORY THE THEOLOGIAN

ORTHROS 8:30AM; DIVINE LITURGY 9:30AM

MONDAY, JANUARY 30: FEAST OF THE THREE HIERARCHS

ORTHROS 8:30AM; DIVINE LITURGY 9:30AM

+ BARTHOLOMEW

By the Mercy of God

Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch
To the Plenitude of the Church
Grace, Peace and Mercy from the Savior Christ Born in Bethlehem

* * *

*“Christ is born again and the Angels sing once more:
‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among all.’”*
(Luke 2.14-15)

Beloved brothers and sisters, children in the Lord,

The angels chant these three majestic proclamations and yet the great majority of human beings, although celebrating the feast of Christmas, cannot perceive the significance of the angelic song, instead asking themselves whether God is truly glorified today or why God should even be glorified; where can one discern on earth the peace that is announced, and why should contemporary humanity live with good will?

It is because, in reality, most people do not glorify God – either in their deeds or through their words. Many of them doubt the very existence of God and God’s presence in their lives. There are also many people that attribute responsibility to God for the unfortunate occurrences in their lives. However, those who grumble against God err profoundly, since evil does not derive from Him. On the contrary, the loving incarnation of the divine Son and Word, together with the consequent events of His Crucifixion and Resurrection, reshape the human person to its former beauty, granting eternal life and the peace that surpasses all understanding, while rendering human beings co-heirs of the heavenly kingdom. This act of divine condescension, though embracing the ultimate humiliation, is in itself capable of glorifying humanity. Thus, even if many people fail to glorify God in their hearts, nevertheless glory is rendered – by all creation and all things that take place among humans – unto Him who dwells in the highest. We too, then, gratefully cry out with the Angels, “Glory to God in the highest,” for the immensity of His works and the incomprehensibility of His love for us.

Yet people also query the second angelic proclamation: “And on earth peace.” How can we speak of peace on earth when almost half of the planet finds itself either in the act of or in preparation for war? The sweet tone of the angelic proclamation regarding “peace on earth” is of course primarily a divine pledge that, if people adhere to the way indicated by the new-born Child, they will acquire internal peace and peaceful coexistence. But, alas, most people are moved and drawn by the cymbals of war, ignoring the sound of the pledge for peace on earth. We are not referring here to those who passionately support the use of weapons, but especially to those who transform gentle competition to unequal conflict, seeking the annihilation of any opposition. In this respect, war is experienced as reality among members of rival social groups and parties of all kinds – whether racial, political, partisan, financial, ideological, religious, athletic or any other kind,

(continued on next page)

*CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!
CHRIST COMES FROM HEAVEN; GO OUT TO MEET HIM!
CHRIST IS ON EARTH; BE EXALTED!
SING TO THE LORD ALL THE EARTH!
AND PRAISE HIM IN GLADNESS, O PEOPLE,
FOR HE HAS BEEN GLORIFIED.
(CHRISTMAS CANON)*

Beloved Who Worship our Lord’s Coming,

During this most holy season, we celebrate a truly wondrous and cosmic event in which the Almighty God and Creator of the universe, comes to be born in a cave, lying in a manger. In His infinite and marvelous humble grace, He unites earth to heaven, by making the first move, coming down to us. He meets us in our own condition, putting on our flesh.

The magnitude and the depth of this event, is impossible to fathom, but the message is simple and true. The holy birth in Bethlehem occurred at a specific time, but His Incarnation and its significance for mankind is timeless. The Lord of lords, and King of kings, Who upholds all governance by His word of power, became man so that each one of us might identify with Him and receive the power of His Lordship, in our own lives. What is born anew in the manger of our souls recreates our lives by His Divine Grace. In receiving Him, we receive His gifts of enduring hope, newness of life, redemption, purity, holiness, and eternal salvation.

On the night of the Nativity, the angels appeared in the glory of God and announced the birth of Christ to the shepherds. In response they said, “Let us go. . . and see this thing that has happened.” Accepting the invitation to participate in this glorious event, they came and saw the newborn Christ, and becoming amazed by what God had done for our salvation, went away by a different road, a new knowledge from their road of faith glorifying and praising Him for all that they had seen and heard (Luke 2:8-20) They were changed. They were blessed. This Christmas season, we will also accept this invitation and, we, too, will become changed, amazed at this holy and most blessed event, as it blesses and gives grace to our own lives. Presbytera Stella, little Nikoletta and I extend our most heartfelt wishes for a very Blessed and Holy Christmas Season, anticipating a beautiful Christmas celebration in Church.

With Love in the Lord,

Fr. Vasileios

CHRISTMAS 2011

*The ox knows its owner,
And the donkey its master's crib;
But ... My people do not understand.*
Isaiah 1:3

Beloved Members of the Metropolis,

Each year, during the excitement of the Christmas season, we see different variations of the Manger scene where our Lord was born. The depiction which we see in our holy icons refers to the Prophet Isaiah's words written almost three thousand years ago. In our Orthodox icons only the ox and the donkey are at the crib where our Lord was wrapped in swaddling clothes, and where the holy Theotokos, His mother, kneels beside Him. The elderly Joseph is at the bottom of the icon; for he was struck by the miracle birth.

This scene, as we know, speaks of the people of Israel over eight hundred years later, when our Lord was born as man. Today, the Nativity scene speaks to us and to our generation. For, in looking around us in our society, we see the manger scene in many places, but we do not see Christ our Savior. He is not mentioned. He is not there.

Because of this reality, all of us who are members of the Church have a great responsibility and a beautiful challenge to preserve Her teachings, in all of Her expressions. Living in a pluralistic society, as we do, we constantly encounter people who call themselves Christians yet do not accept our Lord Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world and the Second Person of the Holy and Divine Trinity.

Let us, therefore, celebrate the Nativity of our Lord, Who comes to us to lead us back to Him and to His eternal Kingdom.

May you have a most blessed and joyous Christmas, with our Lord's rich blessings abiding with you throughout the new year.



With Paternal Blessings and Love,
Metropolitan Isaiah of Denver

where the intense mindset of members is converted into militant rather than peaceful. However, this does not refute the truth proclaimed by the Angels, that – through the Nativity of Christ and the acceptance of His teachings – peace will indeed prevail on earth. Christ came bearing peace; and if His peace does not prevail in the world, then responsibility lies with those who fail to accept and embrace this peace, not with the God who grants it.

Since this is the stance of contemporary humanity in light of the peace offered by God, it is hardly surprising that good will is rare among people. The good intention of God toward humanity is assured, just as the favorable consequences of divine love are in principle apparent for all human beings and particularly tangible for all those who accept the angelic proclamations in practice. By contrast, for those who reject these proclamations and are given to exploiting and abusing others, the consequences are experienced as a crisis of stress and anxiety, as a crisis of economy and meaning, and finally as existential uncertainty.

Beloved brothers and sisters, children in the Lord,

All the proclamations of the Angels during the birth of the Lord are realities that exist and are experienced today in fullness by those who believe in Jesus Christ as the Divine-Human Savior of the world. Let us begin from this year to live Christmas in a way that pleases God, the giver of all good things, so that we might experience in our hearts the transcendent peace and the loving good will of God toward us. Let us render ourselves as loving human beings in our relationship to God and other people, becoming sharing persons rather than selfish individuals. Let us remove the masks that estrange and divide us from God and His human image, our fellow human being. And let us fulfill our destiny in the likeness of God by practicing our faith in Him. Let us, too, proclaim the angelic song to humankind, which is suffering terribly and cannot discover Peace and Good Will through its conventional ways. The only way of overcoming war and all forms of crisis, such as the financial one that plagues our world, is our Lord Jesus Christ, who assured us that His is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Therefore, we glorify God in the highest and Jesus Christ who condescended to dwell among us. And we proclaim with the Angels that Peace is accessible and truly exists on earth and within our hearts because we have been reconciled to God through His good will to assume flesh by His birth in the manger.

So let us experience the joy of the Nativity of Jesus Christ and the foretaste of all the benefits announced by the threefold proclamation of the Angels. Amen.



At the Phanar, Christmas 2011
+ Bartholomew of Constantinople
Fervent supplicant for all before God

December 25, 2011
The Nativity of Christ

*What shall we offer You, O Christ,
Who for our sakes has appeared on earth as man?
(Vespers of the Feast)*

To the Most Reverend Hierarchs, the Reverend Priests and Deacons, the Monks and Nuns, the Presidents and Members of the Parish Councils of the Greek Orthodox Communities, the Distinguished Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Day, Afternoon, and Church Schools, the Philoptochos Sisterhoods, the Youth, the Hellenic Organizations, and the entire Greek Orthodox Family in America

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

When we hear and contemplate the beautiful story of our Lord's Nativity, our hearts are filled with tremendous joy. In this marvelous event of God becoming man, He revealed His great love for us and the divine plan to restore our communion with Him. Through His Incarnation, Christ offered Himself for our total renewal and completed this gift of grace in the Cross and Resurrection. Through His birth, our Lord entered into our humanity, giving us a deeper understanding of our relationship with our Creator and offering us a greater experience of life and being. The Son of God who became human being for our sakes, the One in our midst who knows our pains and struggles, offers to each of us life and peace.

The Feast of the Nativity is a celebration of all that Christ has offered and continues to offer to us. It is also a Feast that challenges us with the question, "What shall we offer Him?" In the Holy Gospel, this question was answered by those who participate by their presence in the glorious Nativity. The Virgin Mary offered herself in obedience to God's will, conceiving and carrying Jesus in her womb and giving birth to Him (Luke 1:26-38). Joseph followed the commandment of the Lord and provided for the Theotokos and the Christ child (Matthew 1:24-25). In response to the announcement of the angels and upon seeing the infant, the shepherds offered a witness of the wonderful things they had seen and heard (Luke 2:8-20). Following the star in the East, the wise men came to Jesus offering Him their worship and their gifts (Matthew 2:1-12).

These offerings to Christ show us how we should celebrate this

great Feast and how we should offer to Him. In response to His love we are called to give ourselves completely to Christ, our heart, mind, body and soul. With the words of the Theotokos we express our obedience and our complete faith in Him saying, Let it be to me according to Your word (Luke 1:38). In seeing the magnitude of what God has done for humankind, we come to Christ in haste, just as the shepherds, and we go out into the world glorifying and praising God for all that we hear and see. As the wise men came and offered in great joy, we never cease to worship Him and to offer our gifts for His glory and always in the service of His eternal kingdom.

On this Feast of the Nativity of our Lord, may we seriously consider the question "What shall we offer Him?" In our worship and fellowship on this Feast, let us prayerfully examine our lives and seek the guidance of our Lord in our response to such a question. May you and your families have a blessed and joyful Nativity, filled with the love of God and the true life which He offers to us. And may the Incarnate God grant to all the dawning New Year 2012 filled with health and blessings.

With paternal love in Christ,

† DEMETRIOS
Archbishop of America

