



Orthodox Church in America
DIOCESE OF THE MIDWEST

Thursday, 25 December 2025

The Nativity of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ

№. 170

NATIVITY MESSAGE OF
THE MOST REVEREND DANIEL
ARCHBISHOP OF CHICAGO AND THE MIDWEST

To the Clergy, Monastics, Faithful and Friends of the Diocese of the Midwest

*Thy Nativity, O Christ our God,
has shone to the world the light of wisdom!
For by it, those who worshipped the stars,
were taught by a star to adore Thee, the Sun of Righteousness,
and to know Thee, the Orient from on high.
O Lord, glory to Thee!*

Beloved Sons and Daughters in Christ,

CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!

I greet you all in the joy and peace of Christ as we gather with family, friends, and our fellow believers to celebrate in the bright light and brilliance of the Nativity of Our Lord!

The liturgical texts of the Feast of the Nativity are filled with references to light and darkness. From the text of the troparion of the feast, quoted above, to the words taken from the Prophet Isaiah, *The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light* (Isaiah 9:2), and in many other scriptural and liturgical texts, we are reminded that Christ, the Light of the World, was born into this world as the Light which extinguishes all darkness, the darkness of sin and of death, and the darkness experienced in human life. Even one of the season's most popular carols reminds us of this. In *We Three Kings*, we hear the refrain, "Oh star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright, westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light." The **Perfect Light** of which we sing is Christ Himself.

Throughout these past forty days, we have been preparing ourselves to celebrate the cherished and bright feast of the **Birth in the Flesh of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ**. through its fasting discipline, its call to prayer, the exhortation to reach out in love to a needy world, and its appeal to participate more fully in the Divine Services, the Church has called us to reflect more deeply upon the relationship between darkness and light that we encounter in various spheres of human life — principally in the areas of our physical, spiritual and moral life.

During the most recent days of this year's period of preparation for the celebration of our Lord's Nativity, we have been witnesses to an increase in the powers of darkness extending around the globe. Violence,

continuing wars, the hateful and senseless taking of innocent human life, brutal social upheaval, and the attempted destruction of the moral order, among other influences and efforts, have been experienced around the world in so many different and intense ways in these past few weeks and days. However, whether by the taking of one human life, the attempt to harm or destroy a people or peoples, or a movement to destroy the moral order, these are all an exercise of darkness trying to overtake the light. This, however, is ultimately impossible. The Light - the Light of Christ - will always illumine and bring brightness, order, and peace. The Light that shone in the darkness of the night of the Savior's birth will always overcome the darkness. The Light of Christ will always shine through and overcome the darkness of this world. This is good news, the good news we now celebrate.

I invite you all to join with me in pondering and celebrating this great mystery of the Birth of Christ. Our communal celebration of the Lord's Nativity offers us the opportunity to pause and reflect upon the Mystery of the Incarnation: that God became man, took upon Himself our human flesh and human life, was Incarnate of the Virgin Mary and the Holy Spirit and **became man**. This is not only a celebration of Christ's birth, and neither is it merely a time to ponder the depths of the mystery of the Incarnation — it is much more. It is also a profound proclamation, the Good News, that *light has entered the world's deepest night*. The Birth of Christ proclaims that no darkness is too mighty or too powerful for Christ's light to penetrate it. Just as the star guided the wisemen from the East, so the light of Christ, the Perfect Light, guides every individual who is willing to seek after Him. May we, too, be guided by His Light.

May the Light of Christ shine brilliantly in your hearts and homes as you gather with family and friends to celebrate this bright and joyous feast. Be assured of my prayers for you and all your loved ones.

CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!

With love in the Incarnate Son of God,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daniel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, stylized 'D'.

DANIEL

Archbishop of Chicago and the Midwest