



**Self-Ruled**  
**Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America**  
The Diocese of Los Angeles and the West

The Right Reverend Bishop JOSEPH  
*Bishop of Los Angeles and the West*

**TO BE READ FROM THE PULPIT AND PUBLISHED IN THE CHURCH BULLETIN**

**Christ is Born! Glorify Him!**

**المسيح ولد ، فمجدوه !**

**Χριστός γεννάται! Δοξάσατε!**

***“That One, Who before the very creation of the world was the Only-Begotten, Without-Compare, Simple, Incorporeal, is incarnated and descends into the world, clothed in a perishable body, so that He is visible to all. For if He was not visible, then by what manner would He teach us to keep His precepts and how would He lead us to the invisible reality? Therefore, it was for this that He became openly visible, to lead forth those of the visible world to the Invisible.” – St. Gregory the Wonderworker, On the Nativity***

My Beloved Children in Christ, the Right Reverend, Very Reverend and Reverend Fathers; Reverend Deacon; and all the faithful of the Holy Diocese of Los Angeles and the West:

As we celebrate the joyous Feast of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, I commend you to reflect upon the Gift that each of you has been given, the Kingdom of Heaven. While we live in a world full of suffering and strife, we are offered Eternal Life full of peace and harmony. As our neighbors labor for security in material possessions and earthly honors, we receive the grace of God that endures trial and time.

All we have is conditioned upon a single call from our Lord: “Take up your cross daily and follow me” (Luke 9:23). By this, our Lord means that we patiently endure the injustices and scorn of the world with the aim of depending only upon Him. Through our own true daily Christian life, we

become dead to sin, but resurrected in Him. We do not merely speak of Jesus Christ, but live with Him in every moment of our lives. In this way, we make the Nativity of our Lord apparent to all our neighbors. We make our invisible Faith visible to all through our example. When people see us practicing the faith seriously and spiritually, they are moved by our witness and they are touched by our faith. By living our Christian life truly and every day, we share our joy with all the world, and the blessings of the Incarnate Word of God become real and not just a statement. This is the best way of evangelizing America.

My beloved, I call upon each of you to examine your lives in light of our Lord Jesus Christ's Incarnation. Do you make manifest the Invisible through your visible lives? Do you bear the Fruits of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control [Gal 5:22-23])? For, if your lives do not manifest the Fruits, then your lives will only produce works of the flesh (Gal 5:18-20). If you do not live as an icon of the Incarnate Lord, then you are destined to be an example of sin and corruption.

As the Holy Spirit overshadowed the Holy Virgin and conceived within her the Eternal Logos, so allow the same Holy Spirit to enter you through your repentance and sincere tears for your sins, so that the Holy Spirit may bring forth good things through you. Let His peace, joy and love flow through you into this world, that your neighbors may see and come to know God through you.

Rejoice with the gift and the blessings of the Nativity of our Lord as a reminder of your own calling to holiness in God. Receive the imperishable gifts that can be infinitely shared without being diminished. His grace is beyond measure, and His love cannot be contained!

Your Father in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Joseph', written in a cursive style.

**+ JOSEPH**

*Bishop of Los Angeles and the West*

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