

Christ is Born!

CHRISTMAS 2018



Beloved Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

As I write this letter to you, Christians throughout the world are preparing to not only celebrate Christmas but have Christ the Savior truly be born within their souls. The Fathers of the Church call us to open our hearts and contemplate this wondrous mystery that has changed the course of this world.

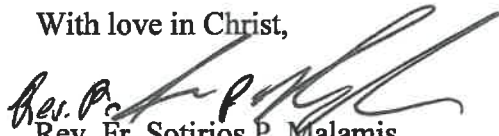
What was the purpose of Christ's birth? All of the Patristic teachings turn to one phrase composed by St. Athanasios the Great: "The Word was made flesh in order that we might be made gods." Christ did not come into the world to introduce new teachings; He came to bring us Divine life, which is the life of God. He came to make us participants of His grace. St. Athanasios also says, "For the Son of God became man so that we might become God."

Before the birth of Christ, the world was living in the darkness of faithlessness and worshipping idols. The consequences for people who distanced themselves from God were becoming unbearable. This is when God knew it was the time to act and He sent His only-begotten Son. One of the prayers of our Church gracefully describes this: "Because of Your compassionate mercy and love, You could not bear to see mankind oppressed by the Devil. And you came and saved us" (From the Sacrament of Baptism). God the invisible becomes visible through the incarnation of Jesus Christ to save us and grant us remission of our sins. There is only one word that can describe this great and strange wonder: love. "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). The only way we can respond to this love of our Lord is to also express love to Him and to our fellow brothers and sisters.

We are awaiting the great feast of Christmas while our Lord is waiting for us to respond to Him by loving Him. "We love Him because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19). Let us open our hearts and lives to Him. I pray this Christmas is the dawning of a new beginning for us living a life pleasing to Him while He blesses abundantly with His Grace.

Wishing you a Merry and Blessed Christmas, and a spiritually fruitful New Year 2019!

With love in Christ,


Rev. Fr. Sotirios P. Malamis
Parish Priest

P.S. Enclosed please find: a) Schedule of Divine Services for Christmas/Epiphany; b) Epiphany Home Blessings Form; and, c) Your Christmas offering envelope.

Let Us Celebrate His Birth!