



ARCHPASTORAL LETTER FOR THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY 2010

Beloved Clergy, Monastics and Faithful of our God-Saved Diocese of New York and New Jersey:

Christ is Born! – Let us glorify Him!

“For unto us a child is born; unto us a son is given” (Isaiah 9: 5). These words from the Prophet Isaiah contain the true meaning of the Feast of the Nativity.

A Child is born. In appearance, He is just another of the world’s many children. In the cold of a cave in Bethlehem, He is born in a condition of extreme deprivation: poor among the poorest on the earth.

But there is more: *A Son is given unto us.* The One Who is born is “the Son” – the Son of God, of one essence with God the Father in Heaven, Who *“so loved the world that He gave His Only-Begotten Son that whoever believes in Him may not perish but have everlasting life”* (John 3:16).

What an unfathomable mystery is hidden in the humble coming of Christ! In His simplicity, the Child of Bethlehem teaches us to rediscover the real meaning of our existence. He teaches us *“to live sober, upright and godly lives in this world”* (Titus 2:12), and beckons us to become *“partakers of the divine nature”* (II Peter 1:4).

In grateful response, let us rededicate ourselves to Jesus Christ, the Son of God Who became flesh for our salvation, and live our lives worthily of God’s unspeakable gift to us that first Christmas night so long ago.

Christ is Born! – Let us glorify Him!

With love in the Infant Messiah,

+ MICHAEL

Bishop of New York and the
Diocese of New York and New Jersey