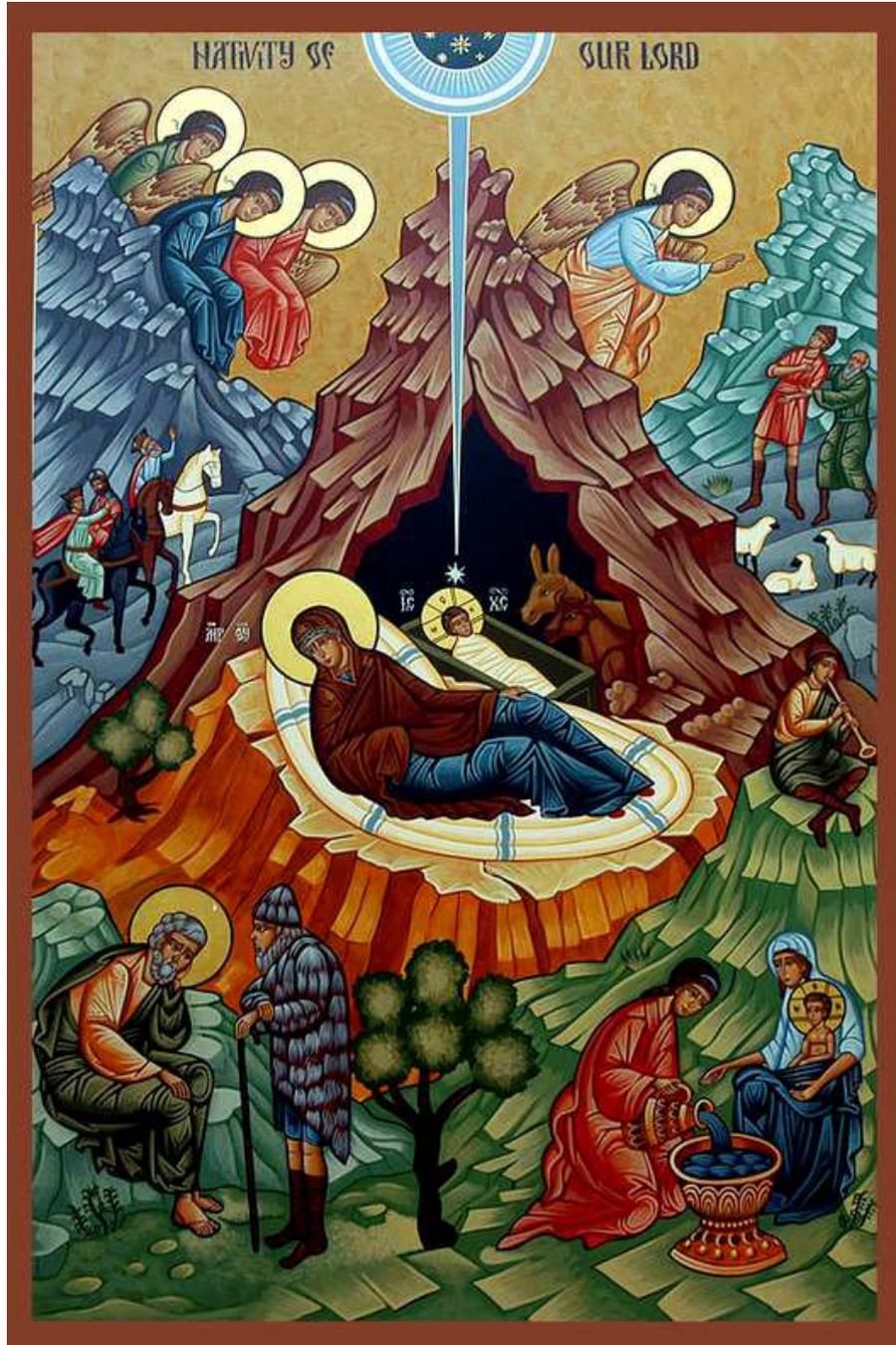


Christ is Born! Glorify Him!
المسيحُ وُلِدَ! فمجدوه!



Nativity (*Birth in the Flesh*) of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

المسيحُ وُلِدَ! فمجدوه!

Nativity (Birth in the Flesh) of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

December 25, 2020

Welcome to St. George: It is a joy to have you worshipping with us as we celebrate our Savior's Nativity (*Birth*) into the world. For those who have committed themselves to the Orthodox Faith (*through the Holy Sacraments of Baptism and Chrismation*) it also means, if prepared, the reception of Holy Communion. Preparation includes the Sacrament of Confession within the last 2 months, prayer, and fasting {no food or drink from 12pm/noon today}. If you are new, just visiting, or have any questions, please introduce yourself to Father Joe. If you are not an Orthodox Christian or not prepared, please know that you are invited to venerate the Holy Cross and receive Holy Bread at the end of Liturgy.

Live Streaming of Divine Services

St. George is open for all parishioners or visitors. If you cannot attend, please pray with us through our livestream which can be seen on our YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/SaintGeorgeOrthodoxChurchFlintMI>

If you have a smart TV, you actually have a web browser and YouTube app built in. All you have to do is start the browser app for YouTube and put the link in the address bar.

In the **Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom** {*the Golden-Mouth*},
The **Special Hymns and Scripture Readings** are on the [Bilingual sheets from Fr. Joe's Email](#).

Christmas Poinsettia Offerings

(Remembered during the Preparation of the Gifts [bread and wine] Service)

- **Jamal and Manal** Abuaita for their health and the health of children **Dr. Tamer**, **Dr. Yara**, and **Samer**, **Mariam**, **Philip** and **Janett**, **Hannan**, and their families and in loving memory of **Mary** and **Mounir**.
- **Fuad** and **Wadia** Albaba for their health and in loving memory of son **Elias**.
- **George** and **Hiam** Ishaq for their health and the health of **Nusta** and children **Nidá**, **Nidal**, and **Samer**.
- **Anwar** and **Janet** Abueita for their health and especially children **Tony**, **Chrissy**, **John**, **Jacqueline**, **Tony**, **Jenny** and grandchildren **Haleena**, **Maliahya**, **Tony**, **Michael**, **Ilyana**, and **Matthew** and in loving memory of **Peter**, **Alice**, **Nasim**, **Basim**, **Asmahan**, and **Yacoub**.

- **Hiam** Bathish for her health and the health of her **children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren** and in loving memory of husband **Emil, Naif** and **Julia** Bathish, and parents **Yacoub** and **Marie** Farah.
- **Ayman** and **Wafaa** Elias for the health of the **Hanna, Elias, Joubran, Khoshaba, and Kanaan Families** and in loving memory of children **Joselyn** and **Elias, Badia, Ibrahim, Salim, and Gaith**.
- **Najwa** Joubran for the health of the **Hanna, Elias, Joubran, Khoshaba, and Kanaan Families** and in loving memory of **Emil** Joubran, **Salem** Hanna, **Badia** Khoury, **Joselyn** and **Elias** Elias, **Ghais** Hanna, and **Hermiz** Khoshaba.
- Richard Shaheen for the health of his family especially **Joann** and **David** Merrelli and in loving memory of **Fred** and **Mamie** Shaheen and **Patricia** and **Harry** Haddad.

Thank you and may God grant you all many years!

Holy Bread Offerings

- **Khaled** and **Sally** Abuaita for the health of children **Watan, Ayham, and Majd** and in loving memory of Aunt **Mary**, Grandmother **Rahma**, and **Androlla** Abuaita.
- **Protodeacon Michael** and **Pamela** Bassett for the health of their family especially Goddaughter **Arianna** Skye Moore on the occasion of her day of baptism.
- **Hiam** Bathish for the health of her **children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren** and especially **Rudaina, Lubna, and Amer** on the occasion of their birthdays ~ *May God grant them many years--*and in loving memory of **Emil, Naif** and **Julia** Bathish and **Yacoub** and **Marie** Farah.
- **The Relationship Project** members for the health of their families and especially **Kari** Mikroudis on the occasion of her birthday – *May God grant her many years!*
- We also pray for the servants of God who have fallen asleep in the Lord: **Alex** Deligorges (+Nov. 26th), **Patricia** “Patsy” Dotson (+November 27th, mother-in-law of our office manager Kelly Dotson), **Evelyn** Lozon, (+Nov. 28th, friend of Dn. Mike), **Darla** Harris, (+November 29th, step-mother of Lee Harris), **Khalil** Kheirallah (+December 2nd, brother of Kamal), **Lois** Teunion (+December 6th), **Diane** Ghattas (+December 7th, wife of Elie), **Georgette** Abuaita (+December 8th, aunt of Janet Abueita), **Katrina** Ayyad (+December 9th, mother of Abla Abufarha), and **James** Gorr (+December 21st, father of Dr. Melissa Bathish).
- Prayers are offered for our parishioners who are ill, recovering, or in need, especially His servants: **Metropolitan Paul** and **Archbishop John** who are in captivity, **Sahar** Abdallah, **Asma** Abuaita (sister of Janett), **Sami** and **Shafiq**a Abuaitah, **Fr. Joseph** Abud, **Anwar** Abueita, **Wadia** Albaba, **Khalid** Al-Khoury, **Nabil** Andoni (brother of Vera Daoud), **Kendall** Ayoub (brother of Cam Takach), **Levi** Cooper, **Vera** Daoud, **Jimmy** David, **Evelyn** Delbridge, **Vera** Farah, **Averie** Fisher (niece of Sandy Thomas), **Mariam** Ghanim (Manal’s mother), **Phyllis** Good, **Barbara** Gress, **Carol** Haddad, **Ronald** Haddad, **Shawna** Hale, **Gracyn** Haskins (granddaughter of Mike and Nancy Silpoch), **Donald** and **JoAnn** Hawkins, **Nassem** Helal (father of Amani Helal), **Daisy** Isaac, **Nawal** and **Nimer** Iseid, **Sally** Joseph, **Michael** Khal, **Nakhleh** Khoury, **Nicola** Khoury, **George** and **Jeanette** Nassif, **Aida** Raffoul, **Deborah** Salim, **Ellis** Salim, **Nicholas** Saseen, **Elaine** Shaheen, **Michael** Silpoch, **William** Sophiea Jr, and **Paul** Takach (husband of Cam); **Essa**, **Julianna**, and newborn **Natalia** Abuaita (December 17th).
- We also pray for those who are with child: **Nawal** (John) Abud [son of Fr. Joe and Kh. Leslee], Dr. **Lindsey** [Farah] (Dr. Ryan) Brunner, **Katrina** (Gary) Gagne, and **Jenny** [Abueita] (Tony) Salsa.

Reception of Holy Communion

Please remember only ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS who have PREPARED themselves may partake of

Holy Communion. *“But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body.”* (1 Corinthians 11:28-29). If you are physically able, please remain standing during Holy Communion.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NO Fasting from today until January 4th.

December 25th — NATIVITY OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, was born of the Most Holy Virgin Mary in the city of Bethlehem during the reign of the emperor Augustus (Octavian). Caesar Augustus decreed a universal census be made throughout his Empire, which then also included Palestine. The Jews were accustomed to be counted in the city from where their family came. The Most Holy Virgin and the Righteous Joseph, since they were descended from the house and lineage of King David, had to go to Bethlehem to be counted and taxed.

In Bethlehem, they found no room at any of the city’s inns. Thus, the God-Man, the Savior of the world, was born in a cave that was used as a stable. *“I behold a strange and most glorious mystery,”* the Church sings with awe, *“Heaven, a Cave; the Virgin the Throne of the Cherubim; the Manger a room, in which Christ, the God Whom nothing can contain is laid.”* (Irmos of the 9th Ode of the Nativity Canon).

Having given birth to the divine Infant without struggle, the Most Holy Virgin *“wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger”* (Luke 2:7). In the stillness of midnight (Wisdom of Solomon 18:14-15), the proclamation of the Savior of the world’s birth was heard by three shepherds in Beit Sahour watching their flocks by night.

The origin of this feast goes back to the time of the Apostles. In the Apostolic Constitutions (Section 3, 13) it says, *“Brethren, observe the feastdays; and first of all the Birth of Christ, which you are to celebrate on the twenty-fifth day of the twelfth month.”*

The Nativity of Christ has long been counted as one of the Twelve Great Feasts. It is one of the greatest, most joyful, and wondrous events in the history of the world. The angel said to the shepherds, *“Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, Who is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: you shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. Then suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly hosts, glorifying God and saying: Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”* Those who heard these things were astonished at what the shepherds told them concerning the Child. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen” (Luke 2:10-20).

Thus the Nativity of Christ, a most profound and extraordinary event, was accompanied by the wondrous news proclaimed to the shepherds and Magi (wise men). This is the cause of universal rejoicing for all because,

Christ the Savior is Born! Glory Him! المسيحُ وُلِد! فمجدوه!

His Eminence
The Most Reverend
Metropolitan JOSEPH

The Right Reverend
Bishop ANTHONY



Archbishop of New York and
Metropolitan of
All North America

Diocese of Toledo and
The Midwest

ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA

Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
December 25, 2020

To the beloved Clergy and faithful of our Midwest Diocese,

Christ is Born! *Glorify Him!*
المسيحُ وُلِد! فمجدوه!

In our meditation on the Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ this Christmas, we see the new born Babe as the new Adam. St. Irenaeus of Lyon reminds us, *“Just as Adam had been created by the Word of God from the untilled and virgin earth, so also the Word of God created flesh for Himself from a virgin womb when the Son of God became the new Adam, so as to correct the fall into sin of the first Adam.”*

As we look into the Cave where the Baby is, we see the animals around Him. I am reminded of the love of the animals for Adam in Paradise before sin entered: *“The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field ...”* (Genesis 2:20). After Adam and Eve left Paradise and their descendants built cities and began to use animals for their pleasure and pride, the world was ruined by wickedness because man’s *“heart was only evil continually”* (Genesis 6:5). Even after the great Flood when Noah had saved the animals and God made another agreement with mankind, these animals and their generations to come would not trust human beings: *“The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth”* (Genesis 9:2). Men would rule animals by tyranny not tenderness.

Jesus welcomes the animals back by bringing back, first in this Cave in the wilderness, the Paradise lost long ago. When Jesus began to preach and teach and when He went back to the wilderness no longer as a babe but as a young man, St. Mark in his Gospel says, *“he was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered to him”* (Mark 1:13). The animals knew Jesus since He was a babe, and the Angels have always known Him since He has always been God. We hear the angels singing again, here in the wilderness walk of Christ as in the wilderness rest at His birth: *“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men ...”* (Luke 2:14).

And the Eastern Kings in their adoration of our Lord, in their gifts for Him, knew He was the *“King of kings and the Lord of lords”* (1 Timothy 6:15; Revelation 17:14; 19:16). The shepherds came to worship Him who is the anointed One, the Messiah, the Christ, the Savior, the Son of God and Son of David, whom God *“took from the sheepfolds ... to be the shepherd of Jacob His people and Israel His inheritance”* (Psalms 78:70-71). Jesus speaking of Himself said, *“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep”* (John 10:11).

Jesus was born into a rude, wilderness Cave, a place of contest with harsh weather and simple shelter. It was just the start of constant stress and rugged demands. Like David and fellow shepherds, He would endure the deprivations of comforts to comfort the sheep: *“Comfort, comfort my people, says your God”* (Isaiah 40:1) *“In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord”* (Isaiah 40:3). *“Remember, O Lord, in David’s favor, all the hardships he endured; how he swore to the Lord and vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob, ‘I will not enter my house or get into my bed; I will not give sleep to my eyes or slumber to my eyelids, until I find a place for the Lord, a dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob’”* (Psalms 132:1-5).

His earthly life was never easy and finally devastating, one stumbling walk up to Golgotha as a last step to glory. As we all face pressure and tension now with the haunting uncertainty of the virus stalking

“The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch” (Acts 11: 26)

Midwest Diocesan Chancery
5549 Ginger Tree
Toledo, OH 43623

us from behind or racing toward us, we can know that the Lord who has “*endured the Cross for us*” (Hebrews 12:2) and rose in glory will help us endure our cross, rise again in this life, and in the life to come.

From the Vespers of the Nativity, we hear,

What shall we offer Thee, O Christ, Who for our sakes has appeared on earth as a man? Every creature made by Thee offers Thee thanks: the Angels offer a hymn; the heavens, a star; the Wise Men, gifts; the shepherds, their wonder; the earth, its cave; the wilderness, a manger, and we offer Thee a Virgin Mother! O Pre-eternal God, have mercy on us!

ماذا نُقَدِّمُ لَكَ أَيُّهَا الْمَسِيحُ، لِأَنَّكَ ظَهَرْتَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ كإِنْسَانٍ مِنْ أَجْلِنَا؟ فَكُلُّ فَرْدٍ مِنَ الْمَخْلُوقَاتِ الَّتِي أُنْدَعَتْهَا يُقَدِّمُ لَكَ شُكْرًا. فَالْمَلَائِكَةُ التَّسْبِيحُ، وَالسَّمَاوَاتُ الْكَوْكَبُ، وَالْمَجُوسُ الْهَدَايَا، وَالرُّعَاةُ النَّعْجُ، وَالْأَرْضُ الْمَغَارَةُ، وَالْقَهْرُ الْمَدُودُ، وَأَمَّا نَحْنُ، فَأَمَّا بَتَوْلًا. فَيَا أَيُّهَا الإِلَهُ الَّذِي قَبْلَ الدُّهُورِ، اِرْحَمْنَا.

As we celebrate this most joyous event with our family and friends, remember the God-Man, Jesus Christ, was born for us! Strive to love one another as He has loved us (*see* John 15:12)!

May He who was born in a cave and lay in a manger for our salvation, Christ our true God, bless you always.

+ Bishop Anthony

+Bishop ANTHONY

Bishop of Toledo

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

“The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch” (Acts 11: 26)

Midwest Diocesan Chancery

5549 Ginger Tree

Toledo, OH 43623