

His Eminence Archbishop Nikitas of Thyateira and Great Britain issues Christmas Message



His Eminence Archbishop Nikitas of Thyateira and Great Britain has released his Christmas Message. Read the full text below:

There is a beautiful and traditional carol that begins with the words “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” and it expresses the pain and challenges of the nation of Israel, as the people waited and pleaded for God to send the Messiah and redeem them from the tyranny of slavery. Their cries for freedom were not for their liberty from human slavery; rather, their prayers were for their redemption from sin and their captivity to evil. When the fullness of time had come, God sent His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to save us all from sin. His loving act was not one for the nation of Israel alone. It was an act for the whole world, all people, every aspect of creation.

Each year, as a Church, we gather to celebrate this unique moment in

time. We recall the prophecies of old and how they were fulfilled with the birth of an innocent child. We look to the tradition of iconography, as we contemplate this great and amazing mystery. We look, too, to the great hymnological tradition of our Church which educates us about the salvific event. The hymns tell the earth and the heavens to rejoice, and we are invited to join in the celebration. It is an invitation to all people, saintly people and sinners alike, to spiritually travel to the city of Bethlehem and seek out the innocent newborn Christ, Who is the fulfilment of the great prophecy of Isaiah, who wrote: "for unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; And the government shall be upon his shoulder. And his name will be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." It is this Christ who is born for the salvation of the world. And while he was born at a special moment in time, He must be born in the hearts of all people and not be bound by time, space, and place. He is to fill the vacuum of emptiness and transfigure the suffering soul into an oasis of peace.

Although the actual celebration of Christmas, the Feast of the Nativity of the Lord, comes but once a year, the meaning and message of the holiday should be lived each and every day by all people. Christmas is the time of giving and sharing with those in need. It is the season when the spirit of reconciliation fills the air and the hearts of humanity, as well. This is the time when the ways of old are put to the side and we look at the world and other people in a different manner. Christmas is the day of a new beginning when the Sun of Righteousness dispels the darkness of the past and hope is given to us because Christ is born.

As we look to the Feast and the blessings of Christmas, let us recall the love God has for His world. Let all celebrate the feast with joy and happiness, by being in Church, exchanging the traditional greetings with others, and remembering those who suffer. May all have a most blessed and MERRY CHRISTMAS.

With paternal blessings and love,

London, December 2019

Archbishop of Thyateira
and Great Britain Nikitas