22/12/2018

Pastoral Message for the Nativity of our Lord of H.E. Metropolitan Silouan of Byblos, Botris and dependencies



ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE OF BYBLOS, BOTRIS AND DEPENDENCIES (MOUNT LEBANON)

Broumana (Lebanon), Nativity 2018

Pastoral Message for the Nativity of our Lord of H.E. Metropolitan Silouan of Byblos, Botris and dependencies

---

“Where the Christ was to be born?” (Matthew 2: 4)

While we celebrate the feast of the Incarnation of our Lord, I feel ashamed for not being able to find in me an answer to the question: “Where the Christ was to be born?” (Matthew 2: 4), however, I found it and I find it in your love and in your apostolic service, a service carried out with dedication, self-denial and sacrifice.

I found it and I find it in the faces bathed by the tears of abandonment, of loneliness, of need, especially in a distant land, but who stand firm in goodness, in truth and in prayer.
I found it and I also find it in a community and a parish that does not live by itself, but extends itself to others in a service whose colors are formed by synergy, solidarity and caring for others.
I found it and I find it in servants and ministers, who are only aware of their poverty of God and see the abundance of grace that the Lord pours out in their service.
I found it and I find it reflected in the bodies of the monks and their praying souls, reproducing the first fruits of the hymn of the angels at Christmas, and whose gaze makes misery and bitterness flee from the hearts of many, so that they may in return acquire divine peace and grace.
I found it and I find it in the faithful of a church who live with humility their repentance and their discipleship of the Gospel, and in a witness of love that does not seek its own.
I found it and I find it in those who bear such witness: being poor, yet grateful; being in sorrow, yet hopeful; bearing the pain of the absence or departure of a loved one, yet keeping their presence and memory alive; being rich, yet not exalting oneself; having joy and let others partake in it.
I found it and I find it in the prayer of those who seek prayer and try to find its beginning from the hands of the One who can give it; or in the hope poured out on behalf of those who do not approach the little grotto (in Bethlehem) or the great grotto in our temples (the Church); or in the love that offers itself despite not being able to do much, but persists till the end, until the impossible becomes possible.
I found it and I find it in the praise for all these “gifts” which I offer to you, to us who are bound by our fatherhood and brotherhood in Christ, so that your hearts may obtain comfort, as well as the hearts of the faithful who seek the Child born in Bethlehem and trying to go in His footsteps, so that joy may dwell in them forever.

Merry Christmas!