21/12/2021

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



As I sit and write a few words to you, beloved people of God, I speak to you as a father would speak to children at the waning of a frightening storm, but, at the same time, as a fellow human being, “fearfully and wonderfully made” in the image and likeness of our Creator. Together, we have crested many waves in this prolonged viral pandemic, and we hope that calm waters are within reach. While we mourn those who are no longer with us, and give thanksgiving for the resilience and courage displayed by humanity over the last two years, we now live in a changed world, more aware than ever of our fragility and vulnerability, of our interconnectedness and interdependency. We pray for peace, but also know that the fog of chaos looms on the horizon, whether it be the next microscopic plague that we will have to race to defend against, or the ongoing catastrophes brought about by humanity’s desecration of the natural environment, or the despondency and violence generated by radical economic inequality and the commodification of human life.

Such problems and challenges seem unique to our point on the timeline of history, and yet we can look back to many such instances of great doubt and fear. The prayer for redemption and salvation is secretly hidden in the depths of every

human being, and two thousand years ago the Chosen People of Israel were articulating this supplication with their hearts and minds turned to God. They “sat in darkness and in the shadow of death”, waiting for the Messiah to be born, waiting for salvation. Israel called upon the Almighty to liberate them from the bondage of sin, and “when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law”, to fulfill His words and His promise that He had not forsaken us. The Word of God took on flesh to redeem and save the cosmos. Christ was born, so the light of Truth might dispel the darkness that held not only Israel in captivity, but all of humanity.

I write these words to you, beloved of God, to witness to you and with you that the birth of Christ was the birth of hope in our world. The promises of the past are fulfilled and truth has vanquished deception. The Nativity set our world on a new course, as the Sun of Righteousness brought light and salvation to all those Who embraced Him and His message. Together, we endure the problems of daily life and the contours of history, but in the warm and gentle embrace of Christ, we understand in a mystical way that death has been vanquished. This gives us strength and determination to walk with faith and hope on the joyful path of salvation that has been prepared for us. It is Christ that sustained us throughout this pandemic and as He guides us to better days and this particular challenge becomes a memory of the past, we must look to Him as the only Lover of Mankind and our only salvation for whatever may lie ahead.

My brothers and sisters, I encourage all of you to attend our Church services and to pray from your hearts, but most of all to prepare for and receive the Holy Eucharist, the eternal celebration of thanksgiving and joy, the mystical experience of the Resurrection and the life-transfiguring assurance of God’s love. Together let us join our voices in asking Christ, Who was born for our sake in a manger, for the healing and restoration of our world. When you light your candles, remember the cave and the star, and the Son of Man, born as an innocent Child and come to dwell amongst us. Remember that He brought hope to a world in shadow, and forget not that He was and is the fulfillment of all prophecy. Ask for God’s healing grace and let His salvific message be inscribed in your hearts. Make this Christmas even more beautiful and distinct, with Christ’s presence at the center of all your festivities.

May all the blessings, peace, joy and love that Christ freely gives to our world be with you and all your loved ones. With my paternal love and blessings, I wish you all a merry Christmas.

December 2021

The Archbishop

+ N I K I T A S of Thyateira and Great Britain

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