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NATIVITY EPISTLE

of the Archbishop of Chicago and Mid-America

Once Mary, bearing in Her womb an Offspring conceived without seed, was registered in Bethlehem with the elder Joseph, as being of the seed of David. And while they were there, the days were accomplished that She should be delivered. There was no room for them in the inn, but the cave showed itself to be a beauteous palace for the Queen, and Christ is born to raise up the image that fell of old! (Troparion of the Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ)

Most years we celebrate the Nativity of our Lord with great fanfare and triumph. This is fitting and good, as it is one of the great feasts of the Holy Church, and one for which we prepare with Lent.

The Nativity of our Lord, however, was very humble and quiet. The King of Glory was born in a cave and laid in a manger. The surroundings were very poor, quite the opposite of the materialistic celebrations the world engages at this time of the year.

And the killing of the 14,000 Innocents adds a tinge of sadness to the great feast.

This year our celebration of Nativity will perhaps be more true to that first Nativity. Due to the coronavirus our celebrations will be quieter, less triumphant; and those who lost family members or friends will experience sadness in the midst of our joy.

However, this does not negate our celebration. Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) wrote that the feast of Nativity is an exhibition of God's love for mankind.

May the feast of the Nativity of our Lord be for all of you a great triumph of love! May it be an awakening in our hearts of what is most important. May it be an example to those around us of our love for God, and His love for us.

I cordially greet our clergy and faithful with the great and joyful feast of the Nativity of Christ.

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

+ Archbishop Peter

Peter, Archbishop of Chicago & Mid-America

The Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ 2020/2021

