

Republic of Greece  
**Church of the Genuine Orthodox Christians of Greece**  
The Holy Synod

To be read in Church on the  
Feast of the Nativity

Protocol No. g-2070

**NATIVITY MESSAGE 2014**  
**TO THE ENTIRE BODY OF THE CHURCH**

*“Today all things are filled with joy;  
Christ is born of the Virgin!”*

Beloved Children in the Lord:

Celebrating the “Mother of the Feasts,” as the Divine Chrysostomos aptly calls the Holy Nativity of Christ, we are gladdened and keep festival, partaking of universal joy in the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ in Bethlehem.

The Physician of souls and bodies was laid in a manger and wrapped in swaddling clothes as an Infant by our Lady, the Virgin Mother and *Theotokos*, in order that He might heal our infirmities and passions; and, clothing Himself in humility as a “garment,” He cured the first and chief of passions, pride and avarice.

Universally, His “privations” with regard to the flesh, according to the renowned St. Maximos the Confessor, became the renewal in us of the “habits” of our true nature: the Incarnation of the Divine Word became our deification, His humility became our fullness, His Passion became our dispassion, His toil became our rest, and His death became our life and redemption.

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The birth of our Lord Jesus Christ was registered by the decree of Cæsar, being reckoned a slave among slaves, in order to deliver us from the slavery of the Enemy, the passions, and sin. He “became poor,” that is, He assumed into the Hypostasis of His Divinity our own impoverished and earthen nature, our body, soul, mind, and will (all of the components of human nature), for, as St. Gregory the Theologian affirms, “that which is unassumed is unhealed; that which is united to God, this too is saved.”

In becoming poor, our Master, being rich, enriched us with the wealth of Divinity (*cf.* II Corinthians 8:9), since in truth “He Who enriches becomes poor; for He becomes poor in my flesh, that I might become rich in His Divinity” (St. Gregory the Theologian).

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The Church, as the Body of Christ, “robed in raiment of inwoven gold, adorned in divers colors” (*cf.* Psalm 44:10), as a Treasury of Grace and a Repository of inexhaustible Divine bounties, endues and enriches Her children with Divine gifts of incomparable and exceptional beauty: with

piety, knowledge of God, peace, adoption into sonship, purification, illumination, sanctification, and deification.

The Orthodox Church of Christ chants in hymns a “wealth of Theology” to Her Theanthropic Bridegroom born in the flesh, Whose good pleasure it is to enrich as many of His Members as perceive their poverty and constantly and unceasingly beseech Him for mercy, themselves showing mercy to all.

Our Savior Who is born of the Virgin, Emmanuel, loves mankind and is All-Good. He gives wealth and joy to everyone who comes to Him in simplicity of faith, as did the Shepherds who kept watch by night, and to all who bring Him an offering of gifts, as did the Magi from the East.

Faith without hesitation and without human rationalizing, faith which gives wings to the intellect and causes the spirit to ascend to heights hard to descry, draws nigh and worships the Divine Infant, and the offering of the fruits of repentance and virtue, of deeds of love for God and love for mankind, meets with gracious acceptance and calls forth indescribable Divine gifts and blessings.

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In an ugly world dominated by material and spiritual poverty and by injustice and unrelenting conflict, all that we have said is heard today as words that are either incomprehensible or wholly remote and inaccessible.

The few who enjoy material gifts become, in the main, like other Herods, yet more callous exploiters of the many, who are destitute. And alas, even these latter, whether always having been materially poor or having become poor more recently, as a result of the economic crisis that is plaguing the world, typically seethe with anger on account of their privation, going to desperate lengths to emulate the mentality of their exploiters, since they are akin to them in their passions and lusts.

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Let all of us faithful, genuine children of the Church, who have no part in this base and vicious cycle, draw near with faith and offerings to the Divine Infant upon the Sacred Altar, so that we might receive a wealth of Grace, Communion of the Divine and dread Mysteries; and, tasting an abundance of Goodness, let us have fellowship with one another, “by equality”: that is, may those who have a surplus of material goods cheerfully give to all of their poorer brothers and sisters who are deprived, in order to receive from them surplus through their prayers and spiritual boldness before God, so that equality might prevail (*cf.* II Corinthians 8:13-14). In this way, we will render more widely to those around us a witness of Truth and Love, in deeds of righteousness and mercy.

Glory to the supreme poverty of our Lord and to His infinite Condescension for our sake, that we might be enriched with eternal salvation. Amen!

Nativity of Christ 2014

**THE HOLY SYNOD**

**The Archbishop**

† KALLINIKOS of Athens

**The Members**

† AKAKIOS of Attica and Diavleia

† MAXIMOS of Thessalonica and Demetrias  
† ATHANASIOS of Larisa and Platamon  
† JUSTIN of Evripos and Euboia  
† Gerontios of Piræus and Salamis  
† CHRYSOSTOMOS of Attica and Boiotia  
† MOSES of Toronto  
† DEMETRIOS of America  
† CHRYSOSTOMOS of Etna  
† CYPRIAN of Oropos and Phyle  
† GREGORY of Christianoupolis  
† PHOTIOS of Marathon  
† SERGIOS of Portland  
† AMBROSE of Philippi  
† AMBROSE OF Methone  
† MICHAEL of Nora  
† SILVANO of Luni  
† KLEMES of Gardikion  
† THEODOSIOS of Bresthena  
† CHRISTODOULOS of Theoupolis  
† AUXENTIOS of Photike

**[signed and sealed as a *BONA FIDE COPY*]**

The First Secretary of the Holy Synod

† Photios of Marathon