

PASTORAL LETTER 2010



NATIVITY OF OUR LORD AND GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

Reverend Clergy, Venerable Monastics and Devout Faithful of our God-protected Episcopate,
Dearly Beloved,

Christ is born! Glorify Him!

Let us lift our eyes to the heavens and see the skies open to let down the King of the universe upon earth.

Let us open our mouths in joyful song and gladness, thanking God and praising him, for in his love for us, he took the first step in reconciling us to him.

Run quickly, hand in hand, to meet him who is the source of peace, the ransom of our souls.

Is there anyone who does not rejoice today in the richest of hopes for tomorrow and forever?

Is there anyone who does not feel every tear wiped dry from eyes worn out with weeping?

Is there anyone whose footstep is not lighter, knowing that the Son of God walks with him, leading to paradise and carrying our burden?

If there is such a person, then let us tell the story – parents to children and children to friends; Christian to stranger. Let us stretch out our hands and open our hearts to those for whom Christ also came.

Let those of us who indulge in the riches of material blessings be temperate, knowing that the Christ child had a simple birth, and millions of his brothers and sisters are deprived of what we take for granted.

Let those of us who deck our homes with festive ornamentation be sure to adorn our souls with prayer, good works and righteous song; and, let us who erect the evergreen tree in the midst of our loved ones and drape it with artificial lights, reestablish the precious tree of the cross in our homes, and bask in the radiant light shining from it, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Let us who prepare special foods and eat heartily not neglect the hunger of the soul for the precious Body and Blood of the Lord, offered to us by his own hand, and which alone is nourishment for everlasting life.

Let us who don holiday apparel in festive spirit thank God for the immaculate robe of salvation at Holy Baptism by which we are made guests at the heavenly banquet.

Raise your heart with that of the Holy Virgin Mary, giving thanks to the Father for the gift of his divine Son.

Lift your mind in contemplation and thought of God's endless mercy, joining it to that of the concerned and righteous Joseph.

Join your voice to those who cannot sing aloud because of persecution and prejudice, and with the bodiless powers cry out: "Glory to God, all glory! Praise to God, all praise! Honor to God, all honor!" And let us worship him who came from the highest heaven on earth to lift us from this world to that which is to come.

Peace to all who seek His Holy Face! Amen.



**+NATHANIEL, Archbishop of Detroit
Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America**