



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States

Nativity Feast Message 2025

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

I wish you all a blessed and joyous feast of the Nativity and a peaceful and happy New Year.

In the various accounts of the Nativity, we read of several individuals who set an example in glorifying God in various ways.

First, we hear of the angel accompanied by a multitude of heavenly host praising God and saying: “*Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!*” (Luke 2:14)

They use their *speech* to glorify Him which can lead us to reflect on our own speech. Do we use our speech to glorify and praise God or do we use it in a harmful way to gossip, slander or speak negatively? The angel came and announced the joy of the newborn Child to the shepherds, setting a model for us to glorify God with our speech and in using it to bring joy unto others.

A *second* way to glorify God is given to us by our beloved Mother St. Mary. After the shepherds had visited the Child

Jesus in a manger and shared the “saying which was told them concerning this Child”, St. Mary “*kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.*” (Luke 2:19)

She kept thinking about the glorious events happening and the words spoken – she pondered, she ***thought*** about it. God also sends us many messages. If we were to keep these messages in our minds and hearts at all times and ponder the works of God in our own lives as St. Mary did, we would find that the events of life that often disturb us won’t shake us as much. Do we think and often recall His messages, His revelations and His works in our lives? What preoccupies our thoughts?

The shepherds give us a *third* model of glorification. When the angel appeared to them, they were “greatly afraid” (Luke 2:9) after which the angel directed them to the manger. Their response to this was “*Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us.*” (Luke 2:15) In other words, they were not only hearers but ***doers of the Word***. Despite the various fears we may encounter in life and the circumstances that trouble us, when we not only hear God’s messages to us but respond by acting upon them like the shepherds, we become the beneficiaries of the peace the Lord has come to bring into our hearts. When the shepherds went from hearing to doing, they glorified God and rejoiced

and we are daily given the opportunity to also glorify Him and rejoice by our deeds and actions.

A fourth model is set by the Magi who travel a great distance, exerting themselves to glorify Him with their *worship*.

This is a reminder to also glorify Him with our worship which requires a struggle and an effort on our part. Despite the fatigue on certain days, despite the troubles we may be experiencing, despite the sleeplessness at times, and despite the lack of desire on certain days, we can still offer the Lord glorification by pushing ourselves as the Magi did in order to prayerfully worship Him.

Finally, St. Joseph the carpenter is a beautiful example of a man who performed a **hidden service**. Though he is not mentioned often, St. Joseph served St. Mary and the Lord Jesus Christ faithfully. He served his family.

We learn from this wonderful saint to glorify God through our faithful service, and to pay attention to those closest to us, our own families and loved ones. St. Joseph cared for the needs of his family leading us to reflect on, and care for, the needs of our spouses, children, parents and siblings. We can then also think of the needs of our communities and churches and serve as St. Joseph faithfully did.

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Keeping these examples in mind, let us remember to glorify God with our speech, with our thoughts, with our actions, with our worship, and with our service.

Through the intercession of the Mother of God, may the Lord keep the life of our honored father, His Holiness Pope Tawadros II, Pope and Patriarch of the Church of Alexandria and the See of St. Mark, for many years and peaceful times.

Metropolitan Youssef

Bishop Basil

Bishop Gregory

Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States

