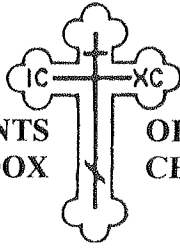


ALL SAINTS OF AMERICA
EASTERN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH



Rev. Fr. John J. Kreta, Priest-in-Charge
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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

*Make merry, O heaven and earth, as the Prophets foretold!
Celebrate in the spirit, O Angels and men!
God is born from a woman and appears in the flesh
To those who sit in darkness and shadow.
A cave and a manger welcome Him.
Shepherds announce the wonder.
Wise men from the East offer gifts in Bethlehem.
Let us from our unworthy lips offer praise like the Angels:
“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace!”
The Expectation of the Nations has come.
He has come and saved us from bondage to the Enemy.*

(first verse of the Litya from Nativity compline)

The Services of the Orthodox are not only beautiful in their form and music, but also in how they open our hearts and minds to the meaning of the feasts. They touch our very soul and move our hearts to thanksgiving to God for His great goodness. They help us to experience the great joy that God bestowed to us and wanted for us from the very beginning. They move us to Love God by experiencing the great Love that He has for us. They invite us and take us into the heavenly realm, to experience the Kingdom while we are yet still on earth.

During this Christmas and Theophany seasons, let us not miss out on this opportunity to join our voices and hearts with those in Heaven, praising our Lord, God and Savior. Let us be illumined by the feasts by attending the services. Let us contemplate God's love and Blessings. Let us recognize not just the gifts given to us by our families but those gifts given to us by God, and like the wisemen let us journey to Christ and bear the gifts of our hearts and love to Him. Let us welcome Him not only into the world but into the cave and mangers of our own souls. Like the shepherds and angels let us announce this great wonder with great power and joy to the world, That the Lord our God has come to save all of us. For this is truly what the “Reason for the Season” is all about.

With Love in the Incarnate Child our Savior,


Archpriest John Kreta

*“From this day forth, from this hour, from this very minute,
let us learn to love God above all else.”*

- St. Herman of Alaska -