



PERMANENT CONFERENCE OF UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX BISHOPS
BEYOND THE BORDERS OF UKRAINE

To the Venerable and Christ-loving clergy and laity of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Europe, South America, the United States of America and in Ukraine

May the Grace of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ, the Love of God the Father and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all!

Dear and beloved brothers and sisters in the Lord!

Christ is Born! Let us glorify Him!

Humanity is the Masterpiece of God's Creation. Humanity was meant to live eternally in communion and pure love with God in the Holy Trinity and to be stewards of all the rest of the Creation. Humanity was given the incredible gift of free will in order to image the will of God – and in particular His unfailing Love - to all the Creation. Man and woman experienced the beauty and bounty of eternal life in Paradise and then they abused the gift of free will under the temptation to know ALL that their Creator knew. What a failure, what a distortion of the image, what consumption with ego. Humanity would now know the death that was never intended for it. Humanity was banished from Paradise and would have to prove itself over the millennia to be faithful to its Creator. Teachers, Prophets and Rulers were sent repeatedly to assist in this effort, promising the coming of the Messiah, the One who would lead it to salvation. And alas, the Creator, to prove His unending and unbending Love for His Masterpiece, sends His Only-Begotten Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to be Incarnate – to become one of us uniting Humanity and Divinity – to bring His Masterpiece home – returned again to the possibility of eternal life, once and for all time.

And so, CHRIST IS BORN – “GOD IS WITH US, understand all ye nations and submit yourselves for God is with us”. (Isaiah 8:9) Submitting ourselves...so foreign in today’s very secularized world, something so out of line with our devotion to ourselves and all our desires that have little or nothing to do with the “God with us”. Let us make conscious decisions to turn back from our insatiable self-satisfaction. We pray before the Eucharist that we comprehend the fact that “no human sin is bad enough to overcome our Lord’s Love for us”. Let us live in that reality today! Let us allow ourselves to be embraced with His All-Encompassing Love so all that distracts us might be converted into that, which makes us whole. Let us open our hearts, minds and souls to the Christ Child Who seeks a place to lay His Head. Let us open ourselves to the reality of “God with us” and for us. For this were we created. This is our true reality!

The Christ Child – the Son of God Incarnate...Lifting our humanity up to His Divinity...Love defined, and Love fulfilled...May your homes and lives be filled with this Love throughout this Holy Nativity Season and the New Year! May this Love flow from you into the lives of all around you, inspiring their thoughts and deeds – lifting them up to His Divinity. This is the image of God...

May the Grace of the Christ Child – our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Love of God the Father and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you always. We assure you of our prayers daily.

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

+ ANTONY – Metropolitan

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA, South America and Diaspora

+ JEREMIAH – Archbishop

Ukrainian Orthodox Eparchy of South America

+ DANIEL – Archbishop

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA and Diaspora

+ ILARION – Bishop

Locum Tenens of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada

+ ANDRIY – Bishop

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada