

His Eminence
The Most Reverend
Metropolitan JOSEPH

The Right Reverend
Bishop ANTHONY



Archbishop of New York and
Metropolitan of
All North America

Diocese of Toledo and
The Midwest

ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA

Christmas Fast Message

November 2020

Beloved Clergy and Faithful of our Midwest Diocese,

Christ is in our Midst!

He is and ever shall be!

The season of preparation for the Christmas Feast clarifies our most important motivation: is Who we want or what we want first in our thoughts, plans, and actions?

Even with the coronavirus restrictions in place, media sources will constantly promote products for us to buy for others or ourselves. The getting and spending is never-ending. What we want is the mesmerizing message.

Our better choice is the Who we want, the Baby in the arms of His Mother, the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ!

But we have to look for our Savior not under a finely decorated tree in our home, nor in a wrapped box with ribbons around it. We find Him on the side of the road somewhere exposed to the elements on the wayside, out of the way. There was no room for Him in the inn, although He came from the Throne Room in Heaven.

We need to go with the wise men at night to give Him gifts like they did. We need to give Him the gift of ourselves so He can use us to reach all those who are on the wayside with Him. They are everywhere and they need our love. We find Jesus in everyone.

The Venerable Saint Bede, the Church Historian of the 7th Century, says, *“He who sits at the right hand of the Father goes without shelter at the inn [cave], that He may prepare for us many mansions in the House of His Heavenly Father. He was born, not in the house of his parents, but at the inn [cave], by the wayside, because through the mystery of the Incarnation He has become the Way, by which He guides us to our home.”*

May our Heavenly Father continue to be with us, guide us through the Christmas Fast for our salvation, and keep us all safe.

Yours in Christ,

+ Bishop Anthony

+Bishop ANTHONY

Bishop of Toledo
Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

“The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch” (Acts 11: 26)

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