

Preparing ourselves to Receive the Nativity Feast

In the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, One God. Amen.

Aim

† Learn about how to prepare ourselves for the coming of Jesus Christ.

Key verse

“That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith” (Ephesians 3:17)

Lesson

Our Lord Christ was born of the Virgin and became man like us so that He may be spiritually born in every human soul that opens her heart to Him and receives Him. Our Lord Jesus wore our flesh and His Spirit protects us. He was born of human flesh and we are spiritually born in Him. But how do we prepare ourselves for the coming of our Savior.

❖ Repentance

The grace of Nativity, then, dwells in us when Jesus comes to us and dwells in us “that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith” (Ephesians 3:17).

Jesus does not dwell in us if we hold fast the desires of the world, as the Lord is not born in man unless he is born anew because the soul that is born anew is the soul that can be a dwelling place for the Baby of Bethlehem.

We attained the new birth through **baptism** but we make it perfect through **true repentance**.

True repentance is the devoted life. It is in the life that always looks up to heaven. It is the life that carries out what St Peter said, “**So put away all malice and insincerity and envy and all slander. Like newborn babes, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up to salvation**” (1 Peter 2:1, 2).

Only through this new birth can we meet our Lord Jesus Christ. Nativity has no meaning unless we hear the voice of the feast in our ears saying to us, “You have to be born anew. Be clean and pure as a new babe. Train yourself, long for the milk of the Divine word, taste it and enjoy it.”

❖ Humility

The Nativity of our Lord changed all concepts. The strong is not necessarily the rich or the master as greatness lies in humility. The Lord has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted those of low degrees. So it is necessary for us to deny ourselves and follow the Son, “If any man would come after me, let him deny himself. We have to consider ourselves as nothing before God whatever our intelligence, abilities and

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positions may be. We have to feel that we are in dire need for the Divine help and humbly accept to deal with all people, even the sinners, as if they were far better than we are. We should bravely confess our sins and not to be proud of our talents as the Word of God dwells in the humble heart.

The Lord who found comfort in the womb of Virgin Mary who was meek, humble and lowly still finds comfort in the heart of a humble and lowly person who is never haughty and never arrogant.

❖ Purity

Without purity no one can see God... as how can Christ abide in a heart that is filled with bad desires and wrong emotions such as anger, lust and defilement. Jesus was born in a manger, and this indicates that He came to purify and sanctify the desires of the flesh. We have to clean our manger so that the Lord Christ may come and dwell in it.

When Nineveh repented, the animals fasted and in the manger the animals received Him. We should control our desires. Look at the Virgin who is the model of purity; such a heart is the only place that deserves Christ to dwell in. She was filled with grace. Her mind was pure. So the Lord chose her and sent His Spirit to give her Divine power for keeping her flesh, self and soul in the fear of God. She was the temple, the bride and the manger.

We have to watch our conduct and behavior especially in keeping the body pure and in abstaining from the desires of the flesh so that we may be worthy of receiving the baby of Bethlehem.

❖ Singing Hymns

The hearts which are filled with love deserve to see the Babe. The magi sacrificed and suffered. Simon the Elder waited for a very long time. The Virgin endured the pains and Joseph suffered a lot.

All waited patiently for the coming of Christ. When Jesus was born, the heavens opened and the heavenly hosts showed their happiness through their hymns and praise.

The church receives Christmas through a whole month of preparedness through hymns, worship and fasting in the month of Kiahk) (The praises of Seven and Four).

The entire world rejoices on that day as a new great event occurs in the world and in the life of the children of God.

O thirsty people, Come to the well of water. Let those who are tired rejoice and welcome the birth of the Lamb with hymns. Cast your burden on the Lord. Sing with joy. Praise His holy name forever.

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Conclusion

Nativity fasting should be accompanied by examining the self, confession, receiving the Holy Communion to take Christ in us, especially on the Feast Eve.

Study the pleasant Nativity hymns and attend the Nativity Eve Hymn of Praise.

You can put on the best clothes but your heart should be humble and show love to the poor.

On the feast day, go with your teachers to the orphanages and hospitals to visit the poor and the sick and in this way everyone will rejoice and be merry

Glory is to God, forever. Amen.