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English - 2022

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

I congratulate you, my beloved, for the start of the New Year 2022, as well as for the glorious Nativity Feast according to the eastern "Julian" calendar. I congratulate all those in Coptic churches outside Egypt: in the USA, Canada, and South America; in Europe and the Jerusalem See in the Holy Land; in Africa and the churches in the Arabian Gulf; and Australia and all cities with Coptic churches. I congratulate all metropolitans and bishops, the priest fathers, hegumens and presbyters, all monks that serve outside their monasteries, and all monks in monasteries, and nuns in convents as all the archons, Coptic families, youth, children, and all Copts. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all.

There is great joy in the Birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Every year, we learn of many messages from the Nativity—Messages that we learn from the Child of the manger in Bethlehem, a village in Jerusalem. Messages that are introduced to us by this Birth, the Birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ, who came to begin the journey of salvation for mankind from the sin and fall of Adam and Eve in the beginning—The fall after which the world waited on Him who will save it—to this happy day, the day of the glorious Nativity. Our Lord, Jesus Christ, came by this Birth to offer many messages to our life. I would like to provide you with some of these messages that are beneficial to our life:

1- First Message: A birth means a new beginning, a new beginning full of joy and hope. When someone begins a project, education, or a family, beginnings always fill the person with joy. We express this new beginning in our morning prayers, Saying, "Let us begin a good beginning."— You begin. This past year might have had some weakness, fallings, oversights, or even sins. Let us start this new year—"begin a good beginning" offering vows and pledges to God. Let us sing with David the prophet: "Bless O Lord the pledges of my mouth" (Psalm 119:108).

2- Another message of the glorious Nativity is that light is being offered to us to live. We notice that the Birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ was at night. It was in a manger, yet the angel appeared in the darkness. And light appeared, and the angel announced to the shepherds, saying, "I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people" (Luke 2:10). Light overtook the total darkness. At that time, they sang the Nativity song: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" (Luke 2:14). There was the light, yet light also filled the manger. When Christ was born, light shone from the Child of Bethlehem—the Child of the manger, and He filled the place with light. Light refers to enlightenment in the person's life. Light refers to laboring, to seriousness, and to diligence. Therefore, we say in our morning prayers: "In Your light O Lord, we see light." [Light] that makes the person live righteously. For light rays, as we all know, are like straight lines.

This message is for righteousness that the person may live and carry out his or her daily responsibilities in a righteous state. Every day we pray and call on God, saying, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit in my inward parts" (Psalm 51). Your daily responsibilities and life appear clearly in light. They are completed in light and through a spirit of enlightenment of the heart, a spirit of wisdom, and a spirit of discernment.

3- As for the third message, it is a calling. The Nativity is a new calling. When a child is born, it is a calling to be responsible, and a message for his or her life through their life of the long age that our Lord gives. For this reason, also in our morning prayers, We pray and say the verses of St. Paul the Apostle when he said: "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you "To walk worthy of the calling with which you were called" (Ephesians 4:1). There is a calling. The Birth of Christ in this manger was a new beginning, a new light, as well as a calling to the message of salvation that was fulfilled on the cross by Christ. Therefore, each of us has a calling, responsibility, and message. God created each one for a specific purpose we ought to do as being fathers, mothers, servants, or officials, despite the type of responsibility. God created you to fulfill His desire in you. Thus, the Nativity is a new calling.

So, beloved brethren, the Nativity is a new beginning and a new light in a person's life, and a new calling for responsibility in life and work.

I echo my sincere congratulations to all of you from the Papal Residence in St. Mark's Cathedral in Abbasiyya - Cairo, Egypt. I convey all greetings from the clergy, fathers of the Holy Synod and all the priests that serve in churches in Egypt. We offer prayers and wishes on your behalf through the fathers in Coptic monasteries in Egypt. I am sending you this message, hoping that you are always well. May our Lord grant you perfect health, grant you grace, and protect you. Even though we are living during a pandemic, we trust in the Lord as David the prophet says, "The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? "The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? (Psalm 27). My sincerest congratulations to all of you, Hoping for you all goodness and happiness in this new year. To our God, all glory and honor from now and forever. Amen

Panadra II