



EPARCHY  
OF ST. MARON  
CANADA

***Twenty third letter of His Excellency  
Bishop Paul-Marwan Tabet  
To the Maronite Community of Canada  
Christmas 2024***

*To all Monsignors, Priests and Brothers, Nuns and Sisters, Deacons,  
To all people consecrated and committed to the life of the Church and the Society,  
To all Parents, Children, Young Men and Young Women,  
To all Parish Communities,  
Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

On this holy night of Christmas, we unite in joy to celebrate the ultimate mystery of our faith: the birth of Jesus Christ, Savior of mankind. The story of the Nativity, as told in the Gospel, invites us to delve deeply into the meaning of this divine event. Christmas reminds us of God's closeness to humanity, made tangible through the birth of the Child in the manger.

Today, as we reflect on this event, we share three important spiritual thoughts, inviting each of us, during this season and throughout the coming year, to illuminate our lives forward:

**1. The Nativity is a Gift for All: God's Unconditional Love**

One of the most profound aspects of the Nativity is the universality of the angel's message to the shepherds: *"I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people"* (Luke 2:10). Christmas reminds us that God's love knows no bounds, and that the child Jesus is a gift for all humanity, regardless of our social status, culture, or condition. The shepherds, simple workers in the fields, were the first to hear of the birth of the Savior, showing that God does not distinguish between the great and the humble in the eyes of the world. This unconditional love of God calls us to open our hearts to all whom we meet, welcoming them with mercy and compassion. Christmas is a call to share the same love we have freely received, becoming witnesses to Christ's love, starting with those around us who need it most. Through love, we truly bear witness to God's presence in our lives and in our world.

**2. The Nativity is a Message to a World in Search of Reconciliation: A Call to Peace**

The words of the angels to the shepherds still echo in our minds: *"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests"* (Luke 2:14). Christmas is a declaration of true peace, a peace that does not come from humans but from God Himself, through the coming of Christ, the Prince of Peace. This peace is not merely the absence of war but the reconciliation of

hearts with God and with others. In a world torn by conflict, division, and injustice, Christmas urges us to be peacemakers. Christ was born to reconcile humanity with the Father, and He calls us to carry this message of reconciliation. This requires healing broken relationships, boundless forgiveness, and a genuine commitment to work for a more just and compassionate world. Indeed, Christmas calls us to spread this peace in our families and communities, becoming its active witnesses.

### 3. **The Nativity is a Foundation and a Message of Hope for All: The Joy of Good News**

One of the first truths revealed by the birth of Jesus is that God chose to be fully present among His people. The Gospel of Matthew recalls the prophetic word of Isaiah: "*The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call Him Immanuel, which means 'God with us'*" (Matthew 1:23). This name, "Emmanuel", is a promise of "closeness". Therefore, Christmas appears as a message of joy, light, and hope for all. This joy, rooted in the marvelous truth of God's love, is not dependent on external circumstances but is manifested in the coming of His Son into the world. Through the announcement of the Nativity, God offers us hope for a better future, possible reconciliation, and a life transformed by His love. Christmas is a call to share this hope with those who need it, to maintain trust in the future, and to have faith in the promise of peace and salvation that Christ offers us. This is what His Holiness Pope Francis calls us to in the coming year with the announcement of the Jubilee titled "Pilgrims of Hope".

Dear brothers and sisters, Christmas is not just a commemoration of a past event, but a continuous call to renew our lives in Christ. As we welcome the child Jesus into our hearts, this occasion urges us to embrace three lessons: unconditional love, peace, and the joy of hope. May every light on this Christmas be a sign of God's love shining in our lives, guiding us to witness to God's righteousness to all we meet.

On this holy feast, I bless you all, especially those going through trials and difficulties. May the light of Jesus' birth shine upon your lives, and may His peace fill your hearts and homes.

**The Savior is born... Halleluiah! MERRY CHRISTMAS!**

  
+Paul-Marwan Tabet  
Maronite Bishop of Canada