

His Eminence  
The Most Reverend  
Metropolitan JOSEPH



Archbishop of New York and  
Metropolitan of  
All North America

**ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE**  
OF NORTH AMERICA

Pastoral Message for the Feast of the Theophany of our Lord Jesus Christ  
January 6, 2016

*“When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan, worship of the Trinity wast made manifest; for the voice of the Father bore witness to Thee, calling Thee His beloved Son. And the Spirit in the form of a dove confirmed the truth of His word. O Christ our God, Who hath appeared and enlightened the world, glory to Thee”.*  
*(The Apolytikion of the Feast of the Theophany of our Lord Jesus Christ)*

We greet you with love and joy on this holy Feast of the Theophany of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ. The Apolytikion of the feast which is quoted above transmits to us the essence of this feast. Our Lord and God Jesus Christ deigns to be baptized at the hands of John the Baptist, not because he is in need of cleansing of sin, for He is without sin, but so that He might reveal to us His true identity and at the same time, honor and affirm the new life that comes through baptism. In this feast we see the Holy Trinity, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, manifested to us in dramatic fashion. The voice of the Father expresses His pleasure with His Son, and the Holy Spirit descends upon the Son in the form of a dove which is also significant because the dove is a symbol of peace.

Our Lord reveals His true identity to us for the first time as He begins His earthly ministry, and immediately departs for a period of fasting into the wilderness where He utterly defeats the feeble efforts of Satan to tempt Him into sinfulness.

As our Lord Jesus Christ descends into the water, and rises from it, let us also rise up into a new and brilliant life in Jesus Christ. Wishing you all a most blessed New Year, I remain

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name 'Joseph'.

+Joseph  
Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of All North America

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