



# SYRO-MALABAR CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF MISSISSAUGA

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For the Glory of God

Prot. N. 136/ 2021  
November 25, 2021

## Circular

***“Fear not; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord” (Luke 2:10-11).***

**“Fear not”.** This was the first gift sent from heaven to men when Jesus Christ was born. It was not similar to the tranquillizing message given to people like Abraham, Isaac, Gideon, Daniel, or Zacharias. But to the shepherds of Bethlehem, the angel came with a new power and significance. It is inspiring to note that the phrase **“Fear not”** is found around 170 times in the Bible. We all know that it has great significance in Christmas story.

The birth of Jesus Christ is the answer to the fears of the world. We must admit that 2021 as 2020 has been a fearful year which isolated us from each other by Corona Virus and its various variants like Omicron. But we should recall that the numerous issues of the pandemic did not surpass God’s power and love. Paul writes **“For God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind” (2 Timothy 1:7).** This virus, just like other viruses, will eventually run its course and we will have a normal state of life. As we see the days of 2021 decrease and the hope for 2022 increase, let’s confidently believe **“This too shall pass”**, and let the phrase **“Fear not”** echo in our ears. Let’s rejoice at the **good news of great joy for all the people that the Saviour is born this day in the city of David.** As Pope Francis says **“let the Christmas season provide reason for hope amid the difficulties and fears of the coronavirus pandemic”.**

The salvation history reminds the fact that fear captured human minds as sin entered in their hearts (Cf. Gen 3:8-10). Adam and Eve who are supposed to be with God, enjoying his lovely presence, fled away from him in fear and trembling. However, God the Father didn’t disregard, on the contrary, he consoled: **“Do not fear, for I am with you, do not be afraid, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand” (Is 41:10).** Jesus is the sign of God’s steadfast love, **“Look, the virgin is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel” (Is 7:14).** We understand that this Immanuel prophecy is fulfilled at the birth of Jesus (Lk 2:10-11). Within that glory was the love of God; and all that it might disclose must come from him who so loved the world that he had sent his beloved Son to be born, to suffer, and to die for men. There must, indeed, be awe in coming near to God, in realizing how near he comes to us to fill our hearts with joy instead of fear.

The words “Fear not” which the angel spoke were just anticipations of the words with which Jesus himself has made us familiar. As J. G. Greenhough, a theologian and prolific writer rightly states” Christ came to speak the word, ‘Fear not’. We hear from his own lips continually— “Fear not.” He meets us at every turn of life with that cheery invocation. He went through his ministry day by day repeating it. It was the watchword of his mission. The disciples heard it every time they were troubled, cast down, and afraid. When they fell at his feet trembling, he lifted them up with the words “Fear not!” When their ship was sinking in the storm, they heard the cry “Fear not!” When they shivered at the thought of all the foes and dangers which awaited them, there came reassurance with the voice, “Fear not, little flock.” When he was leaving them, one of his last words was: “Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

As the angels had left them, the shepherds went with haste in that cold night and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. They accepted him and worshipped him; having shared the good news with many they returned, glorifying, and praising God for all they had heard and seen (cf. Lk 2:16-20). So also, the wise men from East could find Jesus and receive the blessings. The same good news was conveyed to king Herod who did not care to come out of his cozy comforts to receive him; on the contrary, when he heard this, “he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him” (Mt 2:3). Our joy or fear depends on the acceptance or rejection of the good news of the birth of the Saviour who is the source of peace and joy.

Let’s turn to Jesus and prepare our hearts during this season of Annunciation to receive him most worthily and enjoy his blessings.

Yours sincerely in Jesus the Saviour,



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Bishop of Mississauga

**NB. Please read this Circular on December 05, 2021, in all our parishes and missions.**

