



DIOCESE OF NEW ENGLAND  
ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA  
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*The Right Reverend BENEDICT*  
*Bishop of Hartford*

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24 December 2025

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To the Clergy and Faithful of the Diocese of New England,  
Greetings in the Incarnate Lord!

“God, who in various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by his Son” (Hebrews 1.1).

In the Great Hours today we hear four of the readings by which the prophets spoke to our fathers in the faith, four of the gospel accounts of his birth, and four of the apostolic epistles that draw out for us some of what Christ’s coming in the flesh means for us.

Among those implications is that, in the flesh he shares with us, he is enthroned at the right hand of the Father. St Athanasius the Great wrote, “God became human that we might become divine” (*On the Incarnation* 54.3).

But if that becoming divine is to have an effect in us, we need to work with Christ, by carrying out the practical things he told us he wants us to do. These teachings we can find in the gospel accounts, particularly in the Beatitudes and in the story of the Great Judgment (Matthew 5.3–10 and 25.31 and following).

Let us, then, in our lives, reflect the love Christ Incarnate has for us, by carrying out his will, in the confidence that he works with us.

I greet you again with the joy and blessings of the Nativity!

With love in Christ,

+ *Benedict*