

## REJOICE FOR THE DIVINE GIFT WE ARE GIVEN

*This letter and the following one are abstracts from the recently published book of Father Matta El-Meskeen, “Love Took Flesh, Nativity Letters”<sup>1</sup>*

Dear Father,

Peace from God to your spirit, my beloved!

I would like to send you my greetings for Nativity. For the first time after his fall, man heard a voice from Heaven that comforted his heart and called him to peace and joy. Blessed is that day, for it became a day of comfort for humankind and power of joy that is always able to turn all our sorrows into hope.

The reader of the prophecies, especially those we find in the Scriptures after Isaiah, is shocked to find them full of woes, sorrows, and threats that the prophets poured one after another over all nations and peoples, “The oracle concerning... the oracle concerning... the oracle concerning...” (cf. Jer. 23). One’s heart almost stops in terror at the overabundant fearful threats from Heaven.

However, thank God Almighty who has done away with the age of wrath and woe, and opened a new era in the destiny of all nations and peoples on the day when Christ was born, “a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel” (Luke 2:32).

How beautiful Isaiah is, and how wonderful is his comforting voice, “Comfort, yes, comfort My people!” (Isa. 40:1). The psalmist cries out saying, “This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it!” (Ps. 117:24). For it is a day of salvation freely given, a day of redemption from God, a day of treaty issued by one party which is God alone. Humankind plays no part in it except by offering the pure body of the Virgin to God to use as a tabernacle to dwell in, that He might fulfill His promise with His own arm.

We are actual partakers in the new covenant, not as superintendent agents, but as receivers of a gift. How generous is this communion! How easy is our role! For the blood that was shed is our own—scarlet red and flaming. Yet, the power latent within it is divine and of an extraordinary action and efficacy. It is a body

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and blood that bears our own weakness, and alongside it, the power of our salvation.

Look up to Bethlehem and ponder. The born Babe is your own Son and Lord. He bears your nature. It is He who sanctifies and redeems it.

Today our nature has been donned with divinity, and divinity has been clothed with our nature.

Today weakness has been turned into strength, and sin has dwindled to be replaced by eternal righteousness.

Farewell!

January 7, 1969

## **Love took Flesh**

Dear Father,

Peace from God to your spirit, my beloved!

I send you Nativity greetings, gentle like a breeze in which the voice of the Fatherly love was heard in Bethlehem harmonically chanted by the angels. What a refreshing and lifegiving voice it was, that quickened the dead, despondent humanity! The voice was not a message but a body in which all the mercies of God were revealed. The body carried His compassion and forgiveness for all the sins that He had forbore for so long in patience and long-suffering beyond comprehension. Such was the baby Jesus lying in a manger which was the pledge of the Cross that took place in its due time. Such is Jesus, who was born to die for us. Love took flesh; sacrifice became a body. When the Father's love for sinners united with the Son's love for the Father, Christ was born.

Today, after the sterility of spirit that had befallen our two ancestors, humanity has become fertile. Today has been born to humanity a Son who is called an everlasting God. Today we celebrate the birth of the first-fruit of humanity, the first-born among many brethren, the head of the spiritual Church that fills Heaven. He is the sole Mediator between us and the Father, for He is our brother and the Son of God at one and the same time. He is able in all veracity, aptness, and worthiness to intercede for any guilt or weakness on our part; for He has deigned to bear all of our sin before the Father and the angels, and to accept in its stead reproach and punishment. After purifying our nature, He donned us with His pure body that we might appear in it before the Father—blameless and without blemish.

So, blessed is that day among all the days of humanity, the day on which we handed over our body to the Holy Spirit through the Virgin so that Christ could take it on our behalf, turn it into His own, and appear in it before the Father to reconcile everyone in that body to Him. Blessed are those who bear within themselves the Spirit of Christ in faith, for they will not appear anymore henceforth in their own dead, corrupt body before the Father, but will be offered Christ's body that they may appear in it, and so receive grace. Upon them, God's glory will come.

Farewell!

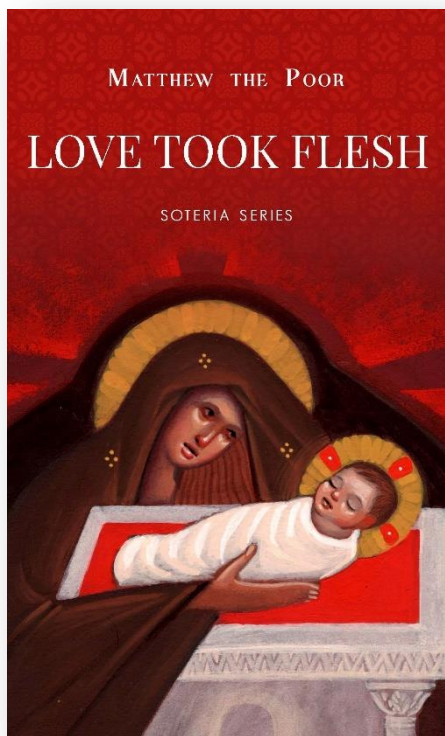
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**Matthew the Poor,**

## **Love Took Flesh: Nativity Letters**

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*Love Took Flesh*, Father Matthew's English anthology on the glorious Nativity is now available for worldwide distribution on all Amazon stores.

This latest English publication by St. Macarius Press contains spiritual letters to his disciples on how the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ was the fruit of God the Father's immense love toward humanity. Christ accepted estrangement and death for our sake to announce to everybody that "God so loved the world..."