

The Bishop of Barbados

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CHRISTMAS MESSAGE & GREETINGS FROM BISHOP MICHAEL MAXWELL (To Be Shared In All Churches On Christmas Day, December 25, 2024)

Dear Family of God,

Today, we commence the season of Christmas to celebrate that moment in history when our God came to us in human form through the birth of Mary's boy child, Jesus Christ. I pray that our hearts, at this time, are filled with the joy of the Lord as we celebrate God's glorious and gracious act of repairing the breach that existed between God and us and our relationships with each other. This separation was caused, not by God but due to the sins of the first Adam and his descendants. To repair that breach, and to restore us to a wholesome relationship with Him and one another, God came to earth that first Christmas in His Son Jesus Christ. He was born as a human being, becoming as St. Paul says, the "last Adam," revealing to us who we were created and called to be from the beginning of creation – beings to reflect God's image and likeness and to be his faithful stewards.

In coming to us in Jesus Christ at Christmas, God clearly revealed that He did not forsake us or hold our sins against us even though we often abandoned Him and the level of relationship He created us to have with each other. That first Christmas, He came out of love to save and restore us to be the best that He created us to be. This is what we celebrate at Christmas, the depth of God's love for us and His desire to restore His relationship with us by being born like one of us. He also came to be the last Adam who inaugurated the kingdom of God, renewing God's creation and calling us to share in the same, providing us the opportunity to experience peace and mutual love in our relationship with Him and His creation.

As believers in Christ, we thank God this day for being such a loving, merciful and missionary God who offered His Son to reveal all of this to us and to be the means through which our relationship with Him has been restored. We thank Him this day because in sending us Jesus Christ as the last Adam, we now seek, with the aid of His Holy Spirit, to pattern our lives after His earthly, sinless, selfless life, recognizing ourselves to be God's sons and daughters and brothers and sisters in Christ.

As we celebrate once again the Birth of the Christ Child, praising God with joyful carols and thanksgiving in our hearts, may we be inspired to live as His new creation, patterning our lives after Jesus, the last Adam. May we, like Him, reflect the image and likeness, the nature and Spirit of God within us, in the way we love our Father in heaven and one another in thought, word and deed.

On behalf of my wife Chandra, and our boys – Michael John, Christopher and Kalan, I wish you and yours, a blessed and joyful Christmas and God's continued favour and peace in the coming year 2025.

I am your friend and bishop,

Michael Barbados

+Michael Barbados.