



Christmas Message 2013



This year, I feel like wishing my friends a 'lucid' Christmas. It's a beautiful word which comes from the Latin 'lucidus', illuminated, well-lit. It applies well to the Christmas season with its candles and votive lamps, its colourful light bulbs, its glowing hearths and shining windows as families and friends gather late into the night. It also recalls the glory of the angels in the darkness of a field near Bethlehem, announcing the birth of him who would one day call himself 'the light of the world' (Jn 8:12). It evokes the star that guided the Magi who came from so far away to that encounter that would fill them with joy (Mt 2,10).

However, 'lucid' is also said of a person who is conscious, alert and perceptive. We cannot celebrate Christmas lucidly when we lock ourselves up in a romantic fantasy bubble that blinds itself to the reality that surrounds us. A lucid Christmas does not close its eyes to the desperate poverty of so many people in our world. A lucid Christmas does not forget a neighbour's depressing loneliness nor a cousin's emotional pain. It does not hide from youth's concerns about the future and old age's regrets about the past.

To celebrate Christmas with lucidity means reaching out to others, especially the unloved and the forgotten. It means opening your heart and wallet to share your small wealth with those who have even less. It means carrying in mind and in prayer the victims of natural storms - hurricanes and earthquakes - and human storms - wars and terrorism - that afflict so many parts of our global village. It means refusing to get carried away by the extravagance of a consumerism that only sees in this time of year an opportunity to max out the cash registers.

Yes, I long for a lucid Christmas, enlightened by the Father who said 'Let there be light' (Gen 1.3); by the Son, 'the morning star come to visit us' (Lk 1.78); and by the Spirit dwelling in us as "tongues of fire" (Acts 2:3). May our own lucidity, purified by the grace that comes from above, allow our world to shine a bit with this kingdom of justice, peace and joy (Rom 14:17) that the child of the manger came to inaugurate among us. To each and every one, I wish a LUCID CHRISTMAS !

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