



Abp Marek Zalewski

***Christmas Message of Archbishop Marek Zalewski  
Pontifical Non-Resident Representative for Vietnam***

Dear Brother Bishops,  
Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Many times, in the course of history, God spoke and his Word was effective and liberating. He spoke, and the world was made. He spoke, and, man and woman were created. He spoke, and he created his Chosen People. He spoke his definitive Word, Jesus, and He came and was born as a child. He came to save us. We remember this divine event every year on Christmas Day: the Word took flesh and stayed with us!

When Baby Jesus first came into the world about two thousand years ago, His arrival was in fulfilment of the promises of God the Father. According to our Christian interpretation, for many years, God's chosen people had been unstable, the whole humanity was living without knowing the true God. Sometimes they were faithful to God, other times, they turned away from the grace of God and greatly offended Him. This proved that the Old Covenant of the Law, that required all kinds of animal sacrifices for the remission of sins, was imperfect. God wanted to do something much better, something that He had been promising for centuries.

To fulfil His promise, God sent into the world the Redeemer, the One who showed us the merciful face of the Almighty God! By the grace of God the Father and the power of the Holy Spirit, through Jesus, we were delivered from the condition of slavery. Through the atoning sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, we were restored in the eyes of God as a Holy People.

The birth of Jesus is a reminder that God has not forgotten us, it is a reminder of how much God loves us. It is an 'aide-mémoire' to help us to remember that God has reached down to us so we, in turn, may reach up to Him with praises and glory in thanksgiving for our salvation. Indeed, we have not been forsaken by God. As the Bible says: He humbled himself, he took our human nature to be with us!

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Now, that the Covid-19 situation is improving, we are invited back to our churches, parishes and communities, especially for the Eucharistic celebrations. Our beloved Holy Father, Pope Francis reminds us that "individual prayer could not replace meeting and prayer in the community, both for the laity and for the clergy", it cannot replace online transmission of the Holy Mass. Furthermore, he asked bishops, priests and religious men and women "to look for courageous ways to provide their pastoral service, testifying to their paternal and tender proximity to the people".

Let us pray to Jesus, who came into this world as a child, to be with us and to show us His Father. Let us pray to Him that we have the courage and the wisdom to profess always our faith, during this time of the pandemic: in our families, in our workplace, wherever we are, in a convinced, convincing and loving manner, as St. Stephen did.

I wish you a holy Christmas and a blessed New Year!

Singapore, December 2020

Marek Zalewski

+Marek Zalewski, PR

