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## **Video: Christmas Greetings from the Prelate (2023)**

Msgr. Fernando Ocáriz wishes everyone a peaceful Christmas, praying to the Child Jesus for peace throughout the world and in our homes. "We also have to consider where the source of peace is. If we turn to the letter to the Ephesians, we immediately find that phrase of St. Paul: 'He is our peace.' Christ!"

12/23/2023

A very Merry Christmas to everyone. Like every year, it brings me great joy to be able to address you in this way, with my own voice.

Truly, there are so many reasons to thank God, pray, and make petitions. Something undoubtedly comes to mind, as always at Christmas: the proclamation of the angels, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace."

A peace that we can see is absent in many places, and our thoughts go, naturally, to the Holy Land, to Russia and Ukraine and to many other places where there are many conflicts of all kinds. And this is something we must consider very much our own, because it is very much God's, because everything is under God's protection, but then [God gives us] human freedom, human freedom... It is also in our hands, with our freedom, to

cooperate with the good, to cooperate with peace. With prayer, first of all, because we reach every place through prayer.

And we must unite ourselves to the Pope's prayer, to the prayer of the whole Church, for peace in the world, especially at Christmas.

In this time in which it is so fitting to think about peace, to live in peace, to try to transmit peace first of all in our own environment, in our families, in our workplaces, each of us in our place... May we truly be people of peace. This is characteristic of the children of God, as the beatitude says: "Blessed are the peacemakers, those who bring peace, for they shall be called children of God."

Well, faced with this reality of difficulties, of wars, we also have to consider where the source of peace is. If we turn to the letter to the

Ephesians, we immediately find that phrase of St. Paul: "He is our peace." Christ: he speaks of Christ. "He is our peace." There it is...

We must be messengers... messengers of the Lord. We must make present - despite our limitations and flaws - we must be the presence of God's love,

manifested primarily, eminently, in Jesus Christ who we see now, at Christmas, become a child. A newborn child and, on top of that, poor. There is so much poverty in the world. A poverty that we can make our own too through generosity, detachment, doing without what is superfluous. Each one in their own circumstances. In order to help others, too, as much as we can.

This brings us joy, as we have all experienced. St. Josemaría often used to say that giving oneself to others brings joy; it is a source of joy. And,

conversely, selfishness is always a source of sadness.

I also remember some words of St. Josemaría - these may not be his exact words, but the idea is this - he said, "To be happy, you don't need a comfortable life, but a heart in love." And there we have the source of love: Jesus Christ. And that is where we must seek peace. And where - deep down - peace in the world will be found; it can be found to the extent that we find Jesus Christ.

We can meditate on this with words from a psalm, Psalm 2: "The Lord has given us the world as an inheritance." Everything is ours because it is his. Everything is ours so that we take an interest, so that we strive to help, so that we feel others' joys and sorrows as very much our own, to avoid selfishness, closing ourselves off.

And we must ask the Lord for this because our strength is not enough. This must also give us serenity and joy, when we experience our limitations, because we don't propose all these wonderful things, thinking about our strength, our ideas... but rather, basing ourselves above all on the grace of God, on the strength of God, which is where we must seek the joy and security of Christmas and always.

Well, I wish you a very merry Christmas; may we know how to share it with joy, responsible for prayer for the whole world.

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