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# **Letter from the Prelate (16 December 2024)**

The Prelate of Opus Dei sends his Christmas greetings and invites us to reflect on the central message of the Jubilee that will begin soon in the Church: hope.

12/16/2024

My dear children: may Jesus watch over my daughters and sons for me!

On the upcoming 24<sup>th</sup>, the Jubilee for the whole Church will begin. The

days of Christmas speak to us of the central message that the Pope has indicated for the Jubilee Year: hope.

To human eyes, that night in Bethlehem could cause one to lose hope. Jesus was born surrounded by solitude, poverty and cold, without honors and comfort: welcomed only by the loving care of Mary and Joseph, and the greeting of some shepherds. Nevertheless, God wanted to enter human history in this way. And it is in the midst of this fragility that the promise of a hopeful future is hidden. The birth of Jesus transforms darkness into light, offers us company and consolation, and shows us where true wealth lies.

The Pope reminds us that Christian life is a journey that “calls for *moments of greater intensity* to encourage and sustain hope as the constant companion that guides our steps towards the goal of our

encounter with the Lord Jesus” (*Spes non confundit*, no. 5). The Jubilee can be one of these “moments of greater intensity,” when perhaps we experience more clearly a sure hope based on divine mercy.

At times we may encounter complicated moments in our life. But we can always turn our eyes to the Child Jesus and entrust to Him our concerns and desires. We are never alone at any moment, because Christ wants to share his peace with us – a peace that, as happened in Bethlehem, does not always mean the absence of problems, but rather the certainty of faith in God’s love for each of us. This is the foundation of our hope.

Knowing that God is the first one concerned about our happiness – both earthly and eternal – can help us to give meaning to the setbacks that arise in life. “*Omnia in bonum,*”

“everything works for the good,” Saint Josemaría used to say. Mysteriously, everything can contribute to our own good and that of others, because God’s love is stronger than evil. We can never completely eliminate difficulties, but it is possible to go through them with Jesus, sharing them with Him. “It is not by sidestepping or fleeing from suffering that we are healed, but rather by our capacity for accepting it, maturing through it and finding meaning through union with Christ, who suffered with infinite love” (Benedict XVI, *Spe Salvi*, no. 37). Let us try to help as much as possible, and above all to accompany with our prayer, the many people currently suffering the consequences of wars and natural disasters.

We can imagine that Christmas night was a time of mixed emotions for our Lady and St. Joseph: the sorrow of not being able to offer a more worthy

place to Jesus, together with the immense joy of holding Him in their arms. We can ask them that the birth of our Lord may always sustain our hope.

Your Father sends his warmest greetings for a Holy Christmas and his most affectionate blessing,

Rome, 16 December 2024

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