

**“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour,
who is Christ the Lord” (Lk. 2:11)**

My dear sisters

This year we celebrate Christmas in the thick of the second wave of Covid 19, which seems to be more aggressive than the initial phase. This situation has brought an inexplicable hardship for many, and changed our life pattern and our work schedule. All of us experience that life is not the same and a ‘new normal’ has set in. Amidst all these, the Infant Jesus brings hope for us. The birth of Christ takes away all our fears as we celebrate the very birth of life, which brings light into the darkened world. The light of faith keeps our hope alive and fans the flames of love for our brothers and sisters.

Against the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic, Pope Francis wrote his Apostolic Letter *Patris corde* (“With a Father’s Heart”), proclaiming a “Year of St. Joseph” from 8 December 2020-2021. In this letter he says that St. Joseph, concretely expressed his fatherhood by making an offering of himself in love “a love placed at the service of the Messiah who was growing to maturity in his home”. He points out that St. Joseph is also a father in obedience to God: with his ‘fiat’ he protects Mary and Jesus and teaches his Son to do the will of the Father. *Patris corde* highlights the creative courage of St. Joseph, which emerges especially in the way we deal with difficulties. He was able to turn a problem into a possibility by trusting in divine providence. Happiness for St. Joseph involved a true gift of self. In him, we never see frustration, his patient silence was the prelude to concrete expressions of trust.

Christmas is all about love in action as we learn from the life of St. Joseph. It is a humble contemplation of the incarnation of the Son of God who makes himself “little” in order to share our life to the full and transform it into a gift of salvation for the world. What does this pandemic tell us at this Christmas? It points to the deeper realities that haunt humans today: Contagious and invisible viruses of indifference and egotism, that numb the human spirit and which are far more lethal to humanity than those that affect the body. Let this Christmas be an occasion to disinfect our hearts with the living presence of the Loving God and open new ways to care for one another. Let us learn from St. Joseph to trust in Divine providence, to commit our lives totally for God’s purposes and serve others with love.

As we stand before the nativity scene and contemplate on the mystery of Christ’s birth, let us revive our spirits with the words of our Mother Foundress: “*Near the crib of the Saviour, we firmly propose to contribute with all our strength so that peace may reign in the Sodality. If there is peace, there is also joy. And how should we not consider ourselves blessed that our holy vocation provides us with many opportunities to demonstrate our love for the Lord*” (Letter to the Sisters of Maria Sorg, December 21, 1907).

**I wish each one of you a Joyful Christmas
and a New Year filled with the presence of the Divine Saviour!**

Sr. Selin Karikkattil
Superior General

