

CIRCULAR LETTER
GENERAL SUPERIOR FIC

Maastricht, December 2021

Dear Fellow Brothers and Associates,



“And you will call his name Jesus, ...”

(Mt 1:21)

Every year during the advent and Christmas season Mother Church, through the liturgical readings, directs our attention to our Lord’s coming to us. We have learned and come to understand that this coming could be reflected upon in three ways: his first and second coming as well as his daily presence with us. And this promise shall be fulfilled despite the continuous spread and threat of the pandemic. Amen!!!!

His first coming is when He chose to be born of the Blessed Virgin Mary and lived in what is now called the Holy Land where He accomplished his earthly work of redemption. His second coming will be at the end of time. In the meantime, in order that we may not be lonely and helpless in this world, he makes himself available to us all the time in keeping with his word “I shall be with you until the end of time” (Mat 28:20). Thus Christ is truly with us when we live and work in peace, and when we pray and receive the sacraments, especially Holy Eucharist. This is a basic truth of our faith. However, as it is often said, familiarity breeds contempt. This element (the omnipresence of God) of our faith, like many others, needs emphasis because it seems so obvious that it can easily be taken for granted. This holy season offers us the opportunity to reflect ever more deeply on this saving mystery, the coming of God among his people.

What should capture our hearts and minds is the reason for his coming. The first part of advent draws our attention to the second coming of our Lord, a moment to be marked by the separation of the friends from the enemies of God; a moment of everlasting joy to the faithful

and everlasting shame to the wicked. The second part of advent and the Christmas octave call us to meditate on the first coming; that moment of great joy of the visible presence of God among his people.

Dear friends, just like human beings walk on two legs: left and right, so is it that our being human is characterized by the effects of “Original blessing” and “Original sin”. “God created us in His own image and likeness and blessed us” (Genesis 1: 27&28). However, the reality we live is that the effects of original sin are still with us. We face danger every minute. We have no need of reminders of the conflicts and dangers in which we are inevitably and continually engaged. We are assailed on all sides by the world, the flesh and the devil. Indeed we are all too familiar with the frequent falls. The Catechism of Trent succinctly describes our condition with some pointed questions that cannot be glossed over:

How few are there who are not compelled to experience at great cost what anger... can do in us? Who is not annoyed by these stings? Who does not feel these goads? Who does not burn with these smouldering fires? And indeed, so various are these assaults, so diversified these attacks, that it is extremely difficult not to receive some grievous wound (CCT 567).

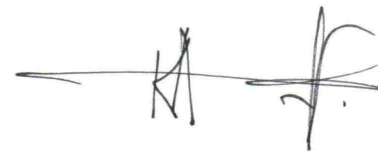
The reason for the coming of Jesus was and is to save humanity from sin. His name is Jesus because he will save his people from their sins (Cf. Mt 1:21). Jesus came and is coming to us that we may have life to its fullest (Jn 10:10). The daily coming of Jesus, and its ultimate realization of purpose therefore, should be at the forefront in our reflection on Christmas.

The culture in which we live seems so used to the idea of universal salvation that the corresponding idea of eternal loss seems often un-

thinkable. We would rather ignore such scaring ideas and focus our attention on the joys that Christmas entails. However, would that eliminate the danger?

Sin may not have been the only reason that moved God to assume human nature, it is certainly one of them. It is in considering the effects of sin on us, especially the eternal death that was our common lot, that we begin to appreciate what our Lord has done and continues to do for us. In other words, the reason for the coming of our Lord is to ensure our victory in the raging war. Christmas assures us that we are not alone in a world steeped in sin, fear, loneliness, pain and suffering, doubts and desirabilities, pandemics, sicknesses and deaths. Christmas reassures us that all will be well because He who comes, comes to save us from them all. It is only against this background that we may appreciate Christmas, the gift of God “Emmanuel” among His people. The reason for Jesus’ coming is the foundation for our thanksgiving and celebrations.

And with this, I wish all of us the blessings of Advent, Merry Christmas and a blessed Year (2022).



Bro. Augustine Kubdaar
General Superior FIC