



Apostolic Nunciature in Kuwait, Yemen, Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates
Apostolic Delegation to the Arabian Peninsula

Christmas Message 2016

The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us

Jn. 1:14

Christmas is a season of joy for all the Christian world. We celebrate the most important encounter between the divinity and humanity, between God and man. The word (Christ) became flesh and dwelt among us so that we can partake of His life. Now is the special time to renew in our lives this encounter so that we will be set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness.

I invite all to participate in the Christmas Eucharist because on this august sacrament of the Altar, we will realize that every celebration of the Eucharist is a moment of joy, for God who became man and was born in Bethlehem has willed to become the Bread of Life. We receive him on Christmas and his joy becomes our joy and our lives will be given a new horizon and decisive direction.

We remember in a special way the families who experience sorrow and sadness brought about by the many merciless acts of violence and injustice inflicted by those who do want to propagate death and violence for personal gain or interest. We pray for these families that they could still celebrate Christmas in a meaningful way, in faith and hope.

Let the spirit of Christmas revisit the humanity in us that we may always be able to touch the lives of other people: family, friends, the sick, the suffering, the poor.

Let us all unite together and show our unity and love to each other as we pray in front of the crib of the infant Jesus. It is always my hope that the spirit of Christmas will always inculcate in our lives all year round so that when we welcome the Baby Jesus in our hearts, we may become catalysts of peace and harmony among ourselves and goodwill among the many in this troubled world.

Have a very blessed Christmas and let me repeat the words of Pope Francis: "I pray to the Lord in order that the Light, shining on the world from the Child of Bethlehem, may always be in your hearts, in your families and communities. At Christmas, once again, Jesus draws us to Him with his divine goodness. His presence alone can give man true happiness for He is capable of rendering life ever new and beautiful" (Video message to the people of Korea, December 2015).

Archbishop Francisco Montecillo Padilla
Apostolic Nuncio to the countries in the Arabian Peninsula
25 December 2016