



“அவர் உங்களுக்குச்  
சொல்வதெல்லாம் செய்யுங்கள் யோவான்” 2:5

# DIOCESAN NEWS LETTER VELLORE

(FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION ONLY)

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**Dear Fathers, Brothers and Sisters**

We are in the festive mood of Christmas. Every year we celebrate Christmas but what it means Christmas for me this year? Christmas means Child of Holy Redeeming Incarnated Son To Manifest As Savior to all = **JESUS**

**Child:** every child is a gift of God and they are indeed created in the image and likeness of God (Gen 1:26) This image and likeness of God was disfigured by the Sin of the First parents. To restore this image God has taken the form of a child. And this Child was born in a Manger. All these symbolize that children are most vulnerable beings. So it is our (individual and society) duty to ensure the safety and security of every child in this world. But what we see the evils against the children are: child labour, child abuse, child killing. These are the current issues against children. What happens in Gaza (Palestine) According to UNO report the most insecure region in the world for child protection is Gaza. So also child labour and child abuse prevail all over the world. In this situation what is my Christmas?



**Holy:** the Child was born in Bethlehem is all **Holy**. It was the fact that the Child born to Mary was by the power of the Holy Spirit. The third Person of God is Holy Spirit. If so the second Person of God, Jesus is also Holy since his conception took place by the power of the Holy Spirit. So it is beyond our human perception that the Child was born in Bethlehem is all **Holy**. If this holy child was born in a Manger, the ugliest place means it is a pure gift of God to mankind that this holy child is born again and again in this unworthy society every year. The Christmas tells us that not to blame our birth where it was but to strive to become holy all through our life. Let us not be hindrance to the innocent people (Mk 9:42)

**Redeeming:** when the people of Israel was in Egyptian bondage God Yawah redeemed them from the slavery and promised them a land of honey and milk, “I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and **I have come down to deliver** them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey” (Ex 3:7-8) so, whenever there is cry of slavery and bondage God comes down to redeem. Jesus is our **Redeemer** and he had come down from the Father to redeem us from all sorts of bondages: selfishness, untruthfulness, injustice, hatred, revengeful, caste, creed and color. To redeem someone one has to pay huge money. Jesus in order to redeem us from the bondage of sin he gave his life as ransom, “...the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many” (Mt 20:28). Christmas for us is to redeem all those prisoners, child labors, children abused, and all the vulnerable persons.



**Incarnated:** incarnation means to take a form of someone or something for a particular cause. Jesus is the incarnation of God the Father in the form of a man. What is the reason for this incarnation? This is very vivid from the letter of St. Paul to the Philippians where he says, “ though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death- even death on a cross” (Phi 2:6-8). Another name for Jesus’ incarnation is ‘Emmanuel’ means “God is with us”(Mt 1:23) Christmas for us is to be humble, to be emptied, to be a slave and to be obedient by casting out all our pride, prestige, and self glory. And to realize that he is with us, he is with everyone without any barrier.

**Son:** the status of being a son is the heir of his father’s possessions and properties. Jesus is the Son of God who has all the right of his Father’s power and possessions. Jesus the Son of God became Son of Man in order to make us all the sons and daughters of his Father. That’s why in the Gospel of John we see in many occasions where Jesus says ‘I and the Father are one’. “Very truly, I tell you, the Son can do nothing on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise. The Father loves the Son and shown him all that he himself is doing; and he will show him greater works than these, so that you will be astonished”. Indeed, just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whomever he wishes.... Anyone who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent



him” (Jn 5:19-23) Christmas reminds us that Jesus the Son of God became Son of Man in order to make us all the sons and daughters of his Father. So we should be proud of being sons and daughters of God the Father through His Son Jesus. God himself witnessed the son at his baptism, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased” (Mt 3:17)

**To Manifest:** manifest means to exhibit someone’s quality, degree, status and position. Jesus is the manifestation of God’s love to mankind. “For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life”(Jn 3:16) Secondly Jesus manifest God’s mercy and forgiveness. To show God’s mercy and forgiveness he identified himself with the sinners. He stood amidst the sinners during his baptism at the river Jordan. Thirdly he himself said that “For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.” (Mt 9:13) in another place he showed mercy and forgave the sinful woman, “I tell you, her sins are forgiven; hence she has shown great love....then he said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.”(Lk 7:47-48) Christmas is the time that the Son of God is in search of us the sinners not only to manifest but also to reassure the unconditional love of God and boundless mercy and forgiveness of our sins.

**As Savior to all:** yes, Jesus’ manifestation is to save us from our iniquities. He is a Savior sent by God for Salvation to all mankind. This is the Good News and joyous news as well by God to humanity. That’s what the Angels told the shepherds when he was born, “I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.”



(Lk 2:10-11) Savior is the one who saves life others by giving his own life. The Savior is our Good Shepherd where he says, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."(Jn 10:10,11,15,17)

Now this Savior is going to be born this year. The historical Jesus was born in Bethlehem two thousands year ago. But if Jesus the Savior is to be born today let us follow the aforesaid meaning of **CHRISTMAS** and try to put them in practice.

I take this opportunity to wish you all a very

**MERRY CHRISTMAS AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR 2024**

God bless,

Yours in Christ Jesus,



**Very Rev. Msgr. I. John Robert,**

Diocesan Administrator

