

Christmas 2023

Letter from Don Marco Bove, international chaplain

**And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,
"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased!"
(Lk2:12-14)**



Once again, we are touched by the announcement of the birth of Jesus by the angels to the shepherds on Christmas night. This announcement invites us to set out to meet the baby Jesus. It's not easy to find a newborn baby with so little information, just a sign: "a newborn baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger".

Today, we are called to seek the presence of the Lord Jesus where we least expect it: among the humble, the poor, not in a warm house or a beautiful cradle. Poverty, war, exclusion and violence drive many people to flee, carrying with them suffering and fear.

But the birth of Jesus is a promise that gives new light and hope. We are all loved by God because we are his children, and that is why we are called to live as brothers and sisters, in love and mutual acceptance. This is the gift of peace, which in Hebrew is translated as SHALOM and means much more than the absence of war. It is in fact the sum of all the messianic gifts that make our earth more habitable, our relationships truer and our hearts more open to forgiveness and communion.

Let us ask the Lord Jesus, born among us, that our Faith and Light communities may be a sign of peace and reconciliation throughout the world, capable of acceptance and forgiveness.

**May the Lord give us his peace,
so that we too may be a sign of peace for all.**

Merry Christmas !

Don Marco

