

At Christmas we celebrate the fact that “God’s love for us was revealed when God sent into the world his only Son so that we could have life through him”(1John 4:8-9).

We are not only recalling a past event, but the fact that this past event continues to affect us today. We can have life through Jesus Christ.

At this year’s National Triennial Conference of the Knights of the Southern Cross of Australia, the Conference issued a statement that I suggest has application to all of us in the International Alliance of Catholic Knights. The theme of the Conference was “The New Evangelisation”. The Statement said: “Evangelisation involves the announcement of Christ to the world by our living witness. Being better informed on issues that affect the Christian way of life throughout the nation enables us to promote the greater glory of God through our objects. Before we can evangelise the world, we as individuals and as an Order must be formed in our faith so that what we are proclaiming is consistent with the teaching of the Church. We recognise that when we bring Christ to others we are evangelised ourselves”.

I do not claim to know the circumstances or the preoccupations of every Order belonging to IACK. In many areas of our world we are threatened by terrorists; we are concerned for refugees desperately looking for a safe haven; we have corrupt and racist governments, we have sudden and devastating natural disasters. In whatever situation we find ourselves and whatever our concerns, let us grow in love in response to God’s love for us. Each one of us has a part to play in the Church and the world that nobody else can play for us. Our Church and our world will be better or worse depending on how we respond to and share God’s love.

I suggest that, whilst we celebrate Christmas, we take some time to reflect on its meaning. St Francis of Assisi gave us a Christian prayer that might well serve as our Christmas prayer: “Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope. Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in forgiving that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life”.

May the Lord be with you all this Christmas and throughout the coming year as you strive to bring His life and His light into your world.

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