



December 2009

Glory to the Newborn King

May the joy and wonder of Christ's birth
fill your heart with Peace and Love this Christmas,

The Vocation Office Br. Jack & Fr. Ferd



It is Christmas!

My dear Brothers, it is Christmas! We have been blessed with a gift, an excellent gift that pours forth from the love of the Father for humanity, namely, "His blessed and glorious Son who is born to us" (IIILF 11). This Good News we have received as a gift, and which we ought not to appropriate to ourselves, obliges us to restore as center focus "The Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (2 Cel 15); and our Brother Francis did live Christmas as a gift that must be restored as center focus. It will, in turn, transform your lives as it transformed Francis', thus making him a living Gospel (cf. BGG 5).

Be nourished by the Gospel, so that your quenched thirst may morph into a message – as was the case with the Samaritan woman (cf. LSR 17). Go about the world as a fraternity and in fraternity, yet in minority and from the logic of the gift with Gospel clarity and boldness, in communion with the Church, proclaiming Jesus, who is the Gospel of the Father to all humanity, the manifestation of God's love, our brother, and the Savior of humanity.

- Br. José Rodríguez Carballo, ofm Minister Général

The celebration of the 8th centenary of the founding of the Order of the Lesser Brothers began with an urgent appeal to be refounded, that is, a call to return to the essential, to the basic principles of our charism, and to the roots of our spirituality.

At the same time, we are called to recognize, read, and interpret, in light of the Gospel, the signs of the times, for they are like "flashes of

Merry Christmas
and a Blessed New Year
Chúc Mung Giang Sinh
Feliz Navidad y Prospero
Año Nuevo

Go out happy, joy-filled and praising God. May this season be for you a time of peace and joy. In the quiet prayers we offer, in the silent harmony of hearts, in the love we give and gather. Peace is born anew. May it bless your Christmas with gentle joy.

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light in the dark night of our lives and of our people, lighthouses that generate hope” (LgP 6), and pleas which the Spirit makes to us and which ask for a response” (BGG 14). Hence, the urgent call to be “reborn” (Jn 3:3) resounds strongly in our hearts not to domesticate the prophetic words of the Gospel or to suit them to a comfortable way of life (LgP 2), but “to nourish from within, our fragmented and unequal world that is hungry for meaning with the liberating offer of the Gospel just as Francis and Clare of Assisi did in their time” (LgP 2); we are called to be evident signs of life for a world that is thirsty for a “new heaven and earth” (Is 65, 17; Ap 21, 1 [LgP 2]).

This same call to conversion continues to hound us today, urging us to usher a new era and awaken a new vision of life that is founded on justice, love, and peace aside all obstacles and worries in order to serve, love, and honor the Lord God with pure minds and hearts (cf. Rnb 22, 26). This seems to be the greatest challenge during this time of activism, even if it is apostolic. The latter, in fact, can at times come across as an escape to struggle in vain to fill a void in our existence only God can fill.

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