



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

In 1223, just two years before his death, Saint Francis of Assisi set up a living crèche, a replica of the manger in Bethlehem at the birth of Jesus. He preached and prayed before the scene. His biographer, Thomas of Celano, says that in that moment Francis was “overwhelmed with love and filled with wonderful happiness.” His contemplation of Jesus, the Word made flesh, drew him to experience the depth of God’s love.

We live in a troubled world beset by wars, violence, injustice, broken relationships, and illness. Beyond that, we do believe and are convinced that God loves us and walks with us in Jesus, his Son. As we know, God will heal us and our broken world and bring us into the fullness of life. It is my hope that when you pray before the mystery of the Incarnate Word, as Saint Francis prayed, you will be renewed in hope and confidence and be “overwhelmed with love and filled with wonderful happiness.”

May God bless you with a renewal of faith, hope, and love as we celebrate the birth of the Lord.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

ARCHBISHOP OF CHICAGO



*Christmas 2017
Cardinal's letter to the Faithful
Archdiocese of Chicago*