



Today

a Savior has been born for you;
he is Christ the Lord.

(Luke 2:11)

Dearest Sisters and young women in formation,

Today our Advent pilgrimage – a time of pause and silence, in which to savor the “beatitude” of waiting for “greater, deeper, more delicate things...according to the divine law of germination, growth and development” – comes to an end in the heart of the night, in a region where, as St. Luke tells us, “*there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flocks*” (Lk. 2:8). Suddenly the heavens open and the darkness lights up. People of dubious reputation, forgotten, excluded and excommunicated men, receive incredible news. A “gospel” of joy is proclaimed: “Today, *in the town of David, a Savior has been born for you; he is Christ the Lord.*” Their fear vanishes when they hear that heavenly announcement because God has thought specifically of them, he is born for them! Their astonishment will later result in adoring vigil at the feet of the Child.

This is what happened and continues to happen: light conquers darkness, heaven mingles with earth. Salvation enters history and becomes part of it, because history is the place in which salvation occurs. The announcement, which is God’s Word, makes present *today* that definitive event. It reaches us in today’s historical context, in our own history, and makes us contemporaries of it. St. Leo the Great emphasized this in one of his Christmas homilies: “Beloved, our Savior is born *today*: let us rejoice!”

Yes, let us rejoice, for the Word became flesh and, in the living flesh of his life, he revealed God to us, told us about him, taught us how to live our humanity, and reconciled us with our weakness, littleness, impermanence. The “sign” that the angel points to (“an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger”: Lk 2:12) is the secret for accepting and living one’s limitations as a “place” of communion, of relationship with others and with the Other, and as a place of mercy.

The Son of God came into the world as each child comes into the world, weak and vulnerable, so that we can learn to accept our weaknesses with tender love and discover something very important: as in Bethlehem, so also with us, God loves to do great things through poverty. He places our salvation in a manger, in a stable. He is not afraid of poverty! Let us allow his mercy to transform our miserable situations! (Pope Francis).

We rejoice because the Word has pitched his tent in us. He dwells in us, uses us as his emissaries to bless others, that is, to “speak positively” of every creature, acknowledging the divine spark in each person and honoring the mystery encapsulated in every existence.

A Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year to all of you, dear ones, also on behalf of the sisters of the General Government. Best wishes to your families, to the members of the Pauline Family, to our lay collaborators, friends and benefactors... My thanks to each and every one of you for your love for your vocation, for your apostolic dedication, attentive service and constant self-offering.

With deep affection, in communion of joy and hope.

Sr. Anna Caiazza
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Superior General