



## *Christmas 2023*

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, we also celebrate the birth of our hope. When he came among us as one like us in all things but sin, he lifted us up to new and transformed life. In fact, he opened for us the way to share in the very life of God. One of the prayers of the Mass gives us these words: "...may we come to share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity."

The struggles that we face in our personal lives and in our wounded world do not have the last word. We are meant for more. We are meant for full and eternal life. I pray that our celebration of the Lord's birth will remind us of the glory that will carry us beyond the challenges, sometimes truly significant challenges that mark our lives and our world.

We must also remember that the Lord did not just come among us once and long ago. He continues to walk with us as we walk with each other. Our celebrations of the Eucharist remind of that. And he will never abandon his people. He is now and always Emmanuel, our God with us. Our journey is his journey. And this year, having celebrated the first of two synods of the Church, we are especially aware that he accompanies us as we accompany one another.

In this holy season, I invite you to pray. Take time, create a quiet space, look on the creche, read the gospels, and allow yourself to know that he is near and that he walks with you. If you do so, I can assure you that you will know his peace. Then, take what you learn from him to your family, to your workplace, to your community, and to entire world. The gift of Jesus, the Incarnate Word of God, is not something we can hold for ourselves. We are called and destined to share it with others.

As I celebrate the Eucharist, I will remember you and pray that you will have a living sense of the Lord among us, the one who walks with us and draws us forward into the fullness of his life.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

*Stan Cardinal Cupic*  
Archbishop of Chicago