

Let us never stop praying – often without words – with a faith that brings with it “a hope that does not disappoint” (cf. *Rom* 5:5). As the Pope says: “Even if the sky grows dark, a Christian doesn’t stop praying. Prayer goes hand in hand with faith.” When we fail to see the immediate fruit of our prayer, let us continue to turn to our Lord, with perseverance, secure in the love that God has for us (cf. *1 Jn* 4:16).

I especially ask you to pray for the twenty-five new deacons of the Prelature who will be ordained tomorrow in Rome.

Rome, November 18, 2022

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Message of December 15, on the Occasion of Christmas

My dear children: may Jesus watch over my daughters and sons for me!

“Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth” (*Lk* 2:14). These are the words the angels sing when announcing to the shepherds that, not far from there, Jesus has just been born in a manger. These same words have led to many popular songs that give a Christmas atmosphere each year to our streets and homes. We can join in that choir, wanting to give all the glory to God and praying for peace in the world.

Our Lord also counts on each one of us to sow peace in the world, beginning with those closest to us. “Peace is never attained once and for all, but must be built up ceaselessly. Moreover, since the human will is unsteady and wounded by sin, the achievement of peace requires a constant mastering of the passions . . . It is likewise the fruit of love, which goes beyond what justice can accomplish” (*Gaudium et spes*, no. 78).

There will be no peace in the world – in this troubled and at the same time hope-filled world – if there is no peace in people. “We have both peace and war within us” (*Furrow*, no. 852), Saint Josemaría said. Therefore, this Christmas we want the angels’ song to resonate, first of all, in our own soul. It is in the depths of our heart where we forge the attitudes

that have an impact on harmony with those around us: putting unity above differences, rejoicing in the good things of others, offering our help to those who need it, asking often for forgiveness....

Holy Mary and Saint Joseph spread peace around them and made the manger a place of welcome. Let us have recourse to their help, in order to grow in an inner peace that can spread to the whole world. I invite you to pray for Pope Francis, for his intentions, and to unite ourselves to his petition from last Christmas: "Oh Christ, born for us, teach us to walk with you along the paths of peace."

Rome, December 15, 2022

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