

Franciscan Daughters of Mary

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Christmas 2008

Dear Friends in Christ,

May Our Lord Jesus Christ grant you His peace this Christmas Season!

God in His mercy, from the beginning of time had chosen that His Son, the second Person of the Blessed Trinity should be born of a poor young Virgin, betrothed (not yet wed) to a man who was not the biological father of her Child. Mary, living in the Middle East, knew that this could mean death by stoning if she was found out. And yet God sought out her permission *first* before His plan for our redemption could begin. What courage the Blessed Virgin Mary had in accepting God's invitation! She didn't know what would happen to her or how all of this would take place (Lk 1:34), but she, "believed what was spoken to (her) by the Lord would be fulfilled" (Lk 1:45). She put all of her trust in the Lord.

In today's society, poor, young, unmarried women who are found pregnant are often encouraged to abort their children, mostly by the child's own biological father. And they are told that it is "good" for them. How blind we are that we cannot see the dignity we possess through the grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our Lord loves us so much that He wanted to come to earth the same way we did, thereby sanctifying the entire human experience. From the moment of His conception, Jesus - like us - was a one-celled Individual, with His own genetic code, separate from that of His Mother. Then He became an Embryo, then a Fetus, and finally a Newborn Infant. At each stage He maintained His identity as the God made Man (Lk 1:43). He was born in to poverty, amidst the animals and the outcasts - to speak to us of the dignity we have in being human, even if the "quality of life" is not what most people would deem desirable.

Through your participation in our life-saving and life-affirming work, you help us to share with women the truth that they are special to God, that their children are a special gift from the Lord; they also learn of the inherent dignity of their motherhood, of what true love is and how to be sure someone really loves them for the person they are and not because of what they may receive from them. You help us to affirm their choices of life by assisting us in providing their basic needs and the material needs they have for their children.

Thank you *all* for your prayers and generosity. We are very grateful to all of our "Prayer Warriors", for all of you who give of your time volunteering at the Mission, for all who donate baby items, food and all of the material goods for the people we serve, for all who provide monetary gifts so that we are able to maintain our ministry and supplement our food and baby supplies, for all of our "Angels" who provide for the needs of the sisters. We love you all very much! We pray for you and your intentions each day. And our gift to you this Christmas is a Spiritual Bouquet - eight days of prayer for the Christmas Octave, which includes Holy Hour, Eucharist, Rosary, Divine Mercy Chaplet and all of the sister's prayers and good works offered up in thanksgiving for the way you love Jesus through your generosity toward us.

May the love of the Christ Child penetrate deeply in to your hearts this Christmas and bring you in to perfect union with the Author of all human life. And may the Holy Trinity bless you abundantly.

In the Love of the Christ Child,