

CHRISTMAS 2016

*He made his dwelling
among us...*

(Jn. 1:1-18)

In the midst of exchanging Christmas greetings, let us also take a brief "time out" to silently ask ourselves: "What is new about Christmas for me?"

If we find it hard to answer this question, we can turn for help to the evangelist John, who in the first chapter of his Gospel dedicates eighteen verses to sharing with us the greatest story ever told, namely: that the Word that created the universe has entered human history unconditionally. While Matthew and Luke recount the story of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, John explains to us the new element concerning Christmas: "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us" (Jn. 1:14).

Pay close attention to what John says because he is revealing something extraordinary to us! He doesn't say: "The Word became Jesus," but "**the Word became flesh.**" In the Jewish culture and vocabulary, the word "flesh" means "every person."

This means that Christmas is not limited to a specific time and era. Christmas is a person's fundamental vocation. All the inhabitants of the earth are called to become Jesus.

Even unbelievers? Even those who belong to other religions? Yes. Jesus made a complete gift of himself to others, revealing in this act the God of love. To offer one's life as a gift to others: this is what is truly new about Christmas and this new element is carved into the DNA of every person born on earth.

And the divine abode? The handmade tent of a nomad—a dwelling that can be quickly erected and dismantled, making it easy to move from place to place. Its openings are flexible, readily adapting to the wind....

So this is what Christmas is all about:

*a life dedicated to others,
moved by the wind
of the Spirit!*

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