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# ITE MISSA EST



A Newsletter from the Missions Office/Pontifical Mission Societies in the United States  
Catholic Diocese of Columbus, Ohio

## “Babe of Bethlehem”, Bless us with your Tender Hands!

***To monthly mission donors:  
Thank you for your support!***

On behalf of His Excellency Robert J. Brennan, the Bishop of Columbus, and Very Rev. Father Andrew Small, OMI, the National Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies in the United States, I would like to thank you for your prayers, sacrifices and financial support for the missions.

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Christmas is the happiest holiday in everyone's life. A holy season set apart for everyone! On the first Christmas night, when the town of Bethlehem was sleeping the angels sang sweetly, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men of good will" (Lk 2: 14). Thousands of angels came on earth to adore the Divine Child, Jesus. On that blessed night stars were shining bright and its radiant beams were touching down. That brightest and holy night, “Babe of Bethlehem” was born, Christ King: Dawn of Salvation! The Blessed Mother and St. Joseph both were adoring Christ and were amazed by the Divine Child; He was looking at them with a beautiful smile and shining with heavenly light. They were truly honored and marveled at God's mystery! See, when Jesus was born on earth that precious night, cow, sheep, donkey, awakened. Stars and angels, accompanied baby Jesus. They all were rejoicing and adoring baby Jesus with Mary and Joseph.

As Mary and Joseph knelt before the crib, they were not two hearts but one heart with baby Jesus. The Christ Child is born for all humanity. God's ‘baby boy’ is hope for all and He is the eternal mystery. Why did Jesus come to earth? We read in the Bible: “Then God sent out His Son on a mission to us. He took birth from a woman, took



birth as a subject of the law, so as to ransom those who were subject to the law, to make us sons by adoption” (Gal 4: 4-5). The eternal mystery reveals that Jesus was born for us to make us sons and daughters of God and to give us new life - eternal life. Let us adore Him and praise Him with our lips and hearts during this Christmas

season. During this pandemic, we are surrounded by uncertainties and our normal lives being turned into different: wearing masks and keeping social distance. In all challenges, our sign of hope is Jesus Christ. Pope Francis said in his letter to Brazilian religious on August 5, 2020, “On the other hand, in the face of the challenges imposed by today's society, which is living through a change of era, we must be vigilant in order to avoid the temptation to have a worldly outlook, which prevents us from seeing God's grace as the protagonist of life and leads us to go out in search of any substitute.” He wrote, “The best antidote against temptation is to give priority to prayer in the midst of all our activities, certain that the person who keeps his gaze fixed on Jesus learns to live to serve, because he experiences what the prophet Isaiah said: ‘You are precious in my eyes ... I love you’ (Isaiah 43:4).”

We nurture balancing compassion for others with kindness and reverence during this Christmas time in a special way. Let us reflect each day and spend quiet time with the Lord in a manger, or it can be in your own room, prayer room, chapel, and the most precious place possible is before the Blessed Sacrament, where heaven comes to earth. In our daily experience of life, may we find that difficult times can offer moments of grace in a more striking way than the good times can. (continued)...

May we spare some time for little things such as to smell a flower, enjoy a bird's flight, looking up to the sky, and so forth seeing God's marvelous handy work.

Let us meditate on His birth very closely and thank God every second in our lives for His unconditional love and acceptance toward each of us! Let us adore and invoke: *Babe of Bethlehem to bless us with your tender hands*!"

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**Pope Francis' December Prayer Intention:**

We pray that our personal relationship with Jesus Christ be nourished by the Word of God and a life of prayer.

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**A Moral Story...**



**Sharing/ Biggest Lesson I Learned.**

I'm a mother of three (ages 14,12, 3) and have recently completed my college degree. The last class I had to take was Sociology, and the last project of the term was called "Smile."

The class was asked to go out and smile at three people and document their reactions. I am a very friendly person and always smile at everyone and say hello anyway, so I thought this would be a piece of cake, literally.

Soon after we were assigned the project, my husband, youngest son and I went out to fast food one cold morning. It was just our way of sharing special playtime with our son. We were standing in a line, waiting to be served, when all of a sudden everyone around us began to back away, and then even my husband did.

I did not move an inch...an overwhelming feeling of panic welled up inside of me as I turned to see why they had moved.

As I turned around I smelled a horrible "dirty body" smell, and there standing behind me were two poor homeless men. As I looked down at the short gentleman, close to me, he was "smiling." His beautiful sky blue eyes were full of God's light as he searched for acceptance.

He said, "Good day" as he counted the few coins he had been clutching. The second man fumbled with his hands as he stood behind his friend. I realized the second man was mentally challenged and the blue-eyed gentleman was his salvation. I held my tears as I stood there with them.

The young lady at the counter asked him what they wanted. He said, "Coffee is all, Miss" because that was all they could afford. (If they wanted to sit in the restaurant and warm up, they had to buy something. He just wanted to be warm).

Then I really felt it; the compulsion was so great. I almost reached out and embraced the little man with the blue eyes. That is when I noticed all eyes in the restaurant were set on me, judging my every action. I smiled and asked the young lady behind the counter to give me two more breakfast meals on a separate tray.

I then walked around the corner to the table the men had chosen as a resting spot. I put the tray on the table and laid my hand on the blue-eyed gentleman's cold hand. He looked up at me, with tears in his eyes, and said, "Thank you." I leaned over, began to pat his hand and said, "I just did not do this for you. God is here working through me to give you hope."

I started to cry as I walked away to join my husband and son. When I sat down my husband smiled at me and said, "That is why God gave you to me, Honey. To give me hope."

I returned to college, on the last evening of class, with this story in hand. I turned in "my project" and the instructor read it. Then she looked up at me and said, "Can I share this?" I slowly nodded as she got the attention of the class. She began to read and that is when I knew that we, as human beings and being part of God, share this need to heal people and to be healed.

In my own way I had touched the people at the fast food, my husband, my son, the instructor, and every soul that shared the classroom on the last night I spent as a college student.

I graduated with one of the biggest lessons I would ever learn:

***unconditional acceptance***



**Wishing all of you a Merry Christmas!**

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***Sr. Zephрина Mary Gracykutty,  
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