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CHRISTMAS MESSAGES

**A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE
2009**

FROM THE INTERNATIONAL CHAPLAIN

At Christmas we celebrate the fact that “God’s love for us was revealed when God sent into the world his only son so that we could have life through him” (1John 4:8-9).

We are not only recalling a past event, but the fact that this past event continues to affect us today. We can have life through Jesus Christ.

At this year’s National Triennial Conference of the Knights of the Southern Cross of Australia, the Conference issued a statement that I suggest has application to all of us in the International Alliance of Catholic Knights. The theme of the Conference was “The New Evangelisation”. The Statement said “Evangelisation involves the announcement of Christ to the world by our living witness. Being better informed on issues that affect the Christian way of life throughout the nation enables us to promote the greater glory of God through our objects. Before we can evangelise the world, we as individuals and as an Order must be formed in our Faith so that what we are proclaiming is consistent with the teaching of the Church. We recognise that when we bring Christ to others we are evangelised ourselves”.

I do not claim to know the circumstances or the preoccupations of every Order belonging to IACK. In many areas of our world we are threatened by terrorists; we are concerned for refugees desperately looking for a safe haven; we have corrupt and racist governments; we have sudden and devastating natural disasters. In whatever situation we find ourselves and whatever our concerns, let us grow in love in response to God’s love for us. Our Church and our world will be better or worse depending on how we respond to and share God’s love.

I suggest that, whilst we celebrate Christmas, we take some time to reflect on its meaning. St. Francis of Assisi gave us a Christian prayer that might well serve as our Christmas prayer: “Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope. Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood

as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive ; it is in forgiving that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life”.

May the Lord be with you all this Christmas and throughout the coming year as you strive to bring His life and His light into your world.

Most Rev. Ronald A. Mulkearns
International Chaplain
International Alliance of Catholic Knights

FROM THE PRESIDENT

As another year has passed and we prepare to celebrate the coming of Christ at Christmas it gives us reason to reflect on what we have achieved both as individuals and as Knights over the past twelve months.

The event that comes readily to mind is the 23rd meeting of the International Council in New Orleans. It was there that we saw a great sharing of Knights’ ideals with our Brothers and Sisters in the Knights of Peter Claver. It was a memorable event, filled with friendship and fraternity and everyone would have returned home filled with enthusiasm regarding the future of our great Alliance.

The sharing of one week with other Catholic men from around the world makes us realise that we are all one and we are not alone when we set out to do His work.

Christmas in Australia is very much a commercial event with decorations, Christmas sales and Father Christmas in all shopping centres. On a more positive note, many branches of Knights erect Christmas cribs in shopping centres and other public places to remind people of the true meaning of Christmas. They live up to the first of our Alliance objects “To bring the message of Christ to all men”

It is with that object in mind that I ask you to remember a line of the Alliance Prayer “May we always keep before our eyes Jesus Christ our Saviour” and this is precisely what the season of advent is about as we prepare for His coming at Christmas.

May you all have a happy and Holy Christmas and God’s blessings on you all as we enter 2010.

John Starmans
President
International Alliance of Catholic Knights

FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL

I wish to add my Seasonal good wishes to those of our Chaplain and President. I take this opportunity to thank members for all the support you have given me during the year, particularly in relation to the International Council meeting in New Orleans. As our President says it was a memorable event and this was due, in no small measure, to the Knights of Peter Claver.

May the Lord Jesus truly bless you during this wonderful season as you rejoice with family and friends. May you open and cherish His gifts of peace, joy, grace, mercy, faith, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, salvation, hope and love and may you share the blessings with all those around you..

Niall M. Kennedy KCSG

Secretary General