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**Christmas Message  
Bishop Barry Wood OMI  
International Chaplain**

I greet you brother Knights from Durban, South Africa in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. In the Zulu language there is a saying “People are people through other people” In this time of Advent we are waiting in loving expectancy for the celebration of Christmas. At Christmas “the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us” (Jn. 1-14) and Jesus promises that he and the Father will make their home with us {Jn 14] Our God delights to be with us his people because he is Emmanuel God with us. He calls us his beloved sons and daughters and encourages us to seek life and the fullness of life

Fr Gerald O’Collins SJ in his book *Pause for Thought* relates the following story.

Some years ago at Christmas, a little cousin of mine was playing the role of Sleeping Beauty with her grandfather. There she was pretending to be asleep because, like the princess in the story, she had pricked her finger on the poisoned spindle. Her grandfather tiptoed over the couch where she was lying. He kissed once and then twice. But nothing happened. She did not stir. “I kissed you twice” he said to his granddaughter. Without opening her eyes, little Charlotte said: “You have to kiss me three times. I’ve pricked my finger three times on the poisoned spindle.”

We all need to be kissed into life – not just twice or three times, but many, many times. The kiss of love brings us to life, and keeps us alive. Without love we do not really live. When we receive love, we can live and grow and laugh. Love one another as I have loved you. Jn15

We have during the year pricked our fingers on various poisoned spindles. We have been exposed to and given in to various poisonous toxins. The toxins of self absorption, self gratification, selfishness and sin and we have lulled ourselves into a state of being half alive. During this time of Advent we become alive when we let go of sin and seek grace, let go of hate and seek love, let go of dissention and work for peace, putting people before profits, we learn to care and share and put greed to sleep. We reclaim our dignity as the beloved of God

As I write this message COP17 is meeting here in Durban, we all need a change of heart towards our planet, which we are destroying with our excesses, greed and our putting profit before the needs of people. God has made us stewards of his creation but humankind has fallen asleep and people are abusing and destroying his masterpiece “God saw that it was good, indeed very good.”

Do not allow what the world calls the festive season to rob us of what is offered to us in Church during this Advent season – the hope, peace, joy and unconditional love of Jesus Christ.

At Christmas it is the baby, Jesus himself, God's loving gift who kisses us and helps us live and love in wonderfully new ways. Let the Christ child kiss you this Christmas and may you become more fully human and fully alive. in Jesus Christ

I wish the brotherhood of Knights all over the world a blessed Christmas.

Shalom

+ **Barry Wood OMI**

**Christmas Message  
Brother Vic Barra  
International President**

As we approach the end of 2011, we do so being mindful of the true meaning of the spirit of this season of Advent. Especially during this time of peace and goodwill, let us endeavour as Knights to be true witnesses to this great coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As we celebrate the birth of our Saviour this Christmas, let us pray for His wisdom, guidance and strength to carry out His work next year. Wise men still seek Him!

One of the ways we can do this is by putting into action the focus areas that we as an Alliance agreed upon at our last International Council Meeting held in September in Dublin. These are summed up as:

- We should be encouraged, strengthened and supported to facilitate the evangelizing and teaching of our Holy Catholic Church
- We should engage with the youth to build a more vibrant Church
- We should actively advance and cultivate vocations to serve Christ's Church
- We should engage in purposeful pro-active, vocal, visible and prayerful action in respect of the sanctity of human life and
- We should continue to accept, embrace and welcome migrant peoples

As we move into the new year of 2012, let us all make a concerted effort to live out our Christian values as highlighted in these action areas emanating from our Council Meeting.

Cheryl and I wish you and all your loved ones a truly Blessed Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

***Vic Barra***

**Christmas Message  
Niall M. Kennedy  
Secretary General**

I wish to join with our Chaplain and President in wishing you and your families every blessing this Christmas. I pray that all of us will continue to strive to restore all things in Christ in the coming year.

*Great little One!  
whose all-embracing birth  
Lifts Earth to Heaven,  
stoops Heaven to Earth. - Richard Crashaw*

***Niall M. Kennedy***