



INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF CATHOLIC KNIGHTS

Theme: Pilgrims of Hope and Bearers of the Gospel of Salvation

Dear Brothers in Christ,

As we celebrate once more the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh and the Prince of Peace (John 1:14; Isaiah 9:6), we bring to you all fraternal greetings of peace, joy, and renewed hope in the Lord.

The message of Christmas resounds across all ages and all lands: *“Today, in the city of David, a Saviour has been born for you; He is Christ the Lord”* (Luke 2:11). This divine announcement is the foundation of our faith and the wellspring of our mission as Catholic Knights united under the banner of the International Alliance of Catholic Knights (IACK).

In a world often darkened by conflicts, moral confusion, and human suffering, the Christmas light calls us to remember who we are — pilgrims of hope, bearers of the Gospel, and soldiers of the hierarchy, united in fidelity to the Church and in service to the world.

1. Pilgrims of Hope

The Holy Father, Pope Francis invited the Church to live this period of the Jubilee of 2025 as a journey of hope. Hope is the virtue that anchors our souls amidst uncertainty (cf. Hebrews 6:19). Like the shepherds and Magi who journeyed in faith toward the light of Bethlehem, we too are pilgrims moving through the valleys and deserts of modern life with our eyes fixed on Christ, the Star of our hope.

As pilgrims, we are not stationary or complacent. We move forward, trusting in God’s promises and striving to make His Kingdom visible through our witness of charity, justice, and peace. From the postings in the media space of what we are doing, most of our Orders, are really touching lives. Our Orders must remain living schools of Christian hope — places where faith is nurtured, the weak are strengthened, and the Gospel finds practical expression in fraternity and service.

2. Our Unity in Diversity

The International Alliance of Catholic Knights embraces kindred Orders from every corner of the world — Africa, the Americas, Europe, Asia, and Oceania. We are a tapestry of diverse cultures, traditions, and languages woven together by one baptism, one faith, and one mission in Christ (cf. Ephesians 4:4–6).

Our diversity is a reflection of the richness of God’s creation and a witness to the universality of the Church. It calls us to mutual respect, deeper understanding, and global solidarity. As Pope Francis reminds us, *“Unity does not mean uniformity; it calls for the joy of diversity reconciled by the Holy Spirit.”*

As Knights, our unity must be more than administrative; it must be spiritual — rooted in love, communion with the hierarchy of the Church, and a shared commitment to serve Christ in all people, especially the poor, the marginalized, and the forgotten.

3. Bearers of the Gospel of Salvation

Christmas is the proclamation that *“God so loved the world that He gave His only Son”* (John 3:16). As Catholic Knights, we are called to carry this same Gospel of salvation to the ends of the earth.

Our mission is not confined to ceremonial participation or charitable acts alone but extends to a profound witness of faith in the public sphere. We are to be *“the aroma of Christ”* (2 Corinthians 2:15), embodying the Gospel in word and deed — defending truth, promoting justice, upholding human dignity, and bringing light where there is darkness.

Knights of Saint Columba, UK | Knights of Columbus, USA | Knights of Saint Columbanus, Ireland | Knights of the Southern Cross, Australia | Knights of Da Gama, South Africa | Knights of the Southern Cross, New Zealand | Knights of Marshall, Ghana | Knights of Saint Mulumba, Nigeria | Knights of Peter Claver, USA | Fraternal Order of Saints Peter and Paul, Gambia | Knights of Saint Thomas the Apostle, Pakistan | Knights of Saint Thomas More, Belgium

As *soldiers of the hierarchy*, our vocation is one of disciplined service and obedience, working hand in hand with our bishops and priests for the building up of the Body of Christ. We are sentinels of faith, guardians of morality, and instruments of peace in a world in need of both courage and compassion.

Our Supreme Knights and Council members will recollect the thought provoking exhortations of Very Rev. Fr Brendan Kilcoyn and the admonitions of Cardinal Stephen Brislin in efforts to remind us of our vocation at our just ended International Council Meeting in Cape Town, South Africa.

4. Theological and Moral Reflection

The Incarnation, which we celebrate at Christmas, is the supreme act of divine solidarity. God did not remain distant from human struggle; He entered history, assumed our humanity, and sanctified it. The Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us that “*The Word became flesh so that we might know God's love*” (CCC 458).

This mystery compels us to respond morally — to make visible God's love in every human circumstance. For us, Knights, this means embodying the virtues of faith, hope, and charity in our families, parishes, and communities. It means acting justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with our God (Micah 6:8).

In a fractured and polarized world, we must be instruments of reconciliation, voices of truth, and channels of hope. Our fidelity to prayer, moral integrity, and service to the Church becomes our strongest proclamation of the Gospel.

5. A Word of Encouragement

Beloved brothers in Christ, let us not lose heart in our mission. The times may be difficult, and the challenges many, but Christ's birth assures us that God is still with us — *Emmanuel*.

Let the star of Bethlehem rekindle in us the zeal to serve, to evangelize, and to build fraternity across borders. Let us strengthen our collaboration among the kindred Orders of IACK, so that together, we may continue to be visible signs of the Church's vitality and fidelity.

As we cross into a new year, may the Holy Family of Nazareth inspire us to persevere in holiness, unity, and selfless service. Let us go forth with the conviction of St. Paul: “*Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer*” (Romans 12:12).

Conclusion and Blessing

May the peace of Christ dwell richly in your hearts and homes this Christmas. May Mary, Mother of Hope, intercede for all our kindred Orders and members and strengthen our journey as pilgrims of hope and bearers of the Gospel of salvation.

Please accept the yuletide greetings in advance to you and your wives in Europe, America, Asia, Australia, New Zealand and Africa from Sophia and me in Ghana.

With every blessing for a joyful Christmas and a grace-filled New Year. In faith and fraternity,

Sir Kt. Bro. Sir Charles L.L. Cobb, KSG

INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT