

Courtesy translation

December 08, 2022

Dear brothers and sisters,

as Holy Christmas approaches, I wish to convey to each of you my sure remembrance in prayer. I make my own the words of St. Augustine: *“What praises shall we voice, what thanks shall we give for the charity of God who so loved us that for us He by whom all time was made became Man in time. [...] That He who made man became Man”*.

This year, too, we have had to face many difficulties: having overcome the obstacles and suffering related to the pandemic, we are now facing the pain of the war, that war which always – today as yesterday - we can call in the words of Benedict XV a “useless slaughter”.

Facing the pain of so many men, near and far, let us intensify our prayer: may the meekness and tenderness we recognize in the Divine Birth become for us an example of how to face the current challenges. To the weapons of war, let us respond with the “weapons” of solidarity, prayer and Charity: let us welcome today, once again, the renewed teaching of humility coming from the birth of Jesus in a simple manger.

I entrust myself again to the Bishop of Hippo: *“Understand this lesson of surpassing humility presented by a teacher who, as yet, says no word. Once, in paradise, you were so eloquent that you named every living thing (Cf. Gn 2,19-20); for your sake, however, your Creator lay speechless and did not even call His Mother by her name”*.

Dear brothers and sisters, let us entrust our prayer for peace to the Virgin Mary, she who knew how to make herself an obedient and humble instrument of God's will.

I assure to all of you my remembrance in prayer on the Solemnity of Holy Christmas

Renato Raffaele Card. Martino