

CIRCULAR LETTER
GENERAL SUPERIOR FIC

Maastricht, December 2020



**“The People that sat in darkness have
seen a great light.”**

(Mt 4:16)

Dear Fellow Brothers and Associated Members,

**“The People that sat in darkness have seen a great light.”
(Mt 4:16)**

Through the loving mercy of our God, we are, once again, coming to the close of another year. We are in another Christmas season and the end of another year. And what a year it has been! It has been undoubtedly an extraordinary year. To the majority of people, it has been and will probably go down as the most trying moment of their lives. At the beginning of the year when we first got wind of covid-19, it sounded only like a bad rumor, then it became a reality from which nearly no one went unscathed. We went from disbelief to fear and questioning, doubting, praying, trusting and hoping and then back to the beginning of the cycle. Yet there does not appear an end to the seemingly vicious cycle. This is not the first time people are dying in the thousands but probably it is the first time to notice it. Most of us have never felt this confused and helpless before. If there ever was a time that humanity as a whole questioned the presence or even the existence of their God, it is this year in my view. Yet, no one knows exactly what is going to happen in the coming days. These are days of uncertainties indeed.

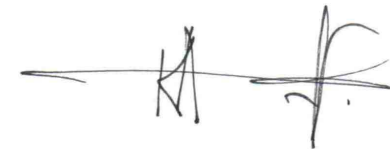
Nevertheless my brothers and friends, there is a growing enthusiasm for life. There is hope! Pope Emeritus Benedict reminds us in *Spe Salvi* that in hope we were saved. Whatever may happen next, one thing is certain to us: this virus will not have the last word. Indeed nothing within the created order has the last word. The last word remains, as always, with the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is paramount to remember those words of scripture announcing a message of great joy and hope to the people that dwelt in darkness and the shadow of death (Cf. Mt 4:16). Just like it, the shadow of death may be suffocating the remaining glimpse of hope but He who came into the world then, the Sun of justice who rose with healing in his rays is the same that seeks to enter our history now.

This Christmas must convince us of the truth that we are living in the very best of times. I am convinced of this. There has been probably no moment holier than our time! This is certainly not merely some pious wishful thinking. Salvation history reveals to us that it is always in the darkest moment that God manifests His everlasting presence among his people (*Redemptoris Mater* (25th/03/1987); *Encyclical Mystici Corporis Christi* of Pius XII, 29 June 1943). God speaks most insistently to us through his servant St Paul that his power is manifested in weakness (2Corinthians 12:9). Indeed God does not permit us to be tempted beyond our strength. This is enough reason for us to lift up our hearts, filled with hope, to our Lord who now seeks a place in our communities and in our individual hearts. It is true that we have seen lots

of tears this year but there is also a lot more to thank God for. The season of Advent is not more than a time of preparation for someone or something rather than a need of God's presence and blessings in his/her life and in the family/-community. When He came the first time among his own, some failed to receive him but to those who did, he gave them power to become children of God (John 1:12).

Receiving Christ (our Hope) at this Christmas is the key to reading properly the signs of the time and the omnipresence of God in our lives. All that is needed is to allow the Prince of peace to wipe our tears. Behold, the light comes into the world and darkness cannot overcome it (John 1:5). Blessed be the Lord our God!

My dear friends may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way (2Th. 3:16). And with this, I wish all of us and our loved ones merry Christmas and a blessed New Year.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Augustine Kubdaar', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Bro. Augustine Kubdaar