

## TO ALL THE RELIGIOUS, AFJM AND COMPANIONS IN MISSION

Dear Sisters, AFJM and Companions in mission,

During the visit to Ireland, one of the sisters shared about nests and Christmas; and immediately I was transported to my childhood days. I am sure all of us in Primary school were encouraged to look out for birds' nests and study the different forms and shapes as part of our formation. I remember an occasion watching a tiny bird assemble its nest from scratch... she worked patiently to build that tiny nest and created a little hollow in the centre for her eggs, then put bits of cotton to make it cosy. This temporary home to welcome her little ones was truly a work of art done with immense love, patience and commitment.



This nesting experience reminds me of the season of Advent...when we too try to build our little 'nests' to welcome Baby Jesus into our hearts, our homes, our families, our communities, our societies and our world. Let us take this opportunity to create that space for the Divine Child Jesus to dwell in our hearts.

We could ask ourselves...

- *How can I make my nest a warm place for this Child Jesus to dwell within?*
- *Who do I wish to welcome into my little family nest?*  
*Family and friends only or is there room for the stranger, the estranged person I haven't spoken to for some time?*
- *Can I expand my nest further to encompass the entire world, our world ravaged by war, those persecuted, the poor, migrants, those without meaning in life... all inside this one fragile Common Home together?*

Yes, our hearts are elastic and can expand...if we only stretch it a bit more to include all peoples irrespective of caste, creed, religion or race. I have the freedom to welcome all or to say directly or subtly that there is no room in my nest, in my heart, in my home for the Lord and his challenging ways.

- *How do I wish to include my sisters and brothers from all over the world into this space?*

Yes, another opportunity comes our way to make this Christmas more meaningful.

Together, we wish each one of you, your families and friends, the blessings of a Holy Christmas and a peace filled New Year.

Blessings,

M<sup>a</sup> Carmen Muñoz RJM, Alejandra Diaz RJM, Encarna Viarnès RJM, Núria Cuadras RJM, Shanty George RJM

Monica Joseph RJM  
Superior General