



## CHRISTMAS 2020

*What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. (John 1:4-5)*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

When we pray the Nicene Creed we profess, “I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.”

These familiar words echo the prologue of John’s Gospel, which is read at Christmas. John proclaims, “What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” (John 1:4-5) I draw your attention to the Creed and John’s Gospel to emphasize the profundity of describing God as Light and Life. Out of the infinite ways to describe Christ, light and life are given to us as preeminent and essential descriptions.

The key to understanding this is the celebration of the Incarnation. The Son of God did not become man to prove a point, become rich, powerful and popular, or punish the wicked. It is all too easy to look at the life of Christ in these terms because of our human tendencies to want to be rich, famous or powerful. In doing so, the Gospels become a biography among many other great people who did great things.

However, that is not why God became man; He became man to save us from the darkness of sin and the punishment of death. When we profess this truth, we allow Christ to reorient our lives. No longer is He just another great person to listen to or admire; He becomes the Light and Life of our lives.

Whatever you have faced this year, from the joyous occasions to suffering and sadness, I pray that you will entrust them to Christ at Christmas. May the Light and Life you receive be the gifts you share with your family and loved ones this year. I trust in God. I trust in His Word. Merry Christmas!

With a heart full of gratitude for your faithfulness, I am,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

*+Jerome E. Listecki*

Most Reverend Jerome E. Listecki  
Archbishop of Milwaukee