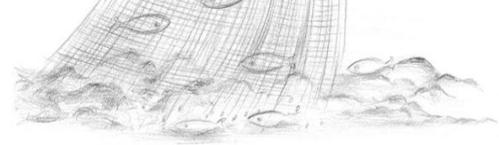




# Journey of Enrichment

2011 - Year of Shared Spirituality

"Put out into deep water,  
and let down the nets for a catch." Luke 5,4



## ***Making Christ Present in the World***

***'The WORD became flesh and lived among us' (John 1:14)***

This reflection comes to you as Advent begins. It asks the question: *How do we make Jesus present in our world? In what we do and in who we are?*

Our invitation to reflect on the call to incarnate Christ in the world comes at a time when our world struggles with so many difficulties. As we welcome the season of Advent, let's reflect that: "God is with us".

### **THE STORY OF THE PRINCE**

"A prince lived in a grand palace, dressed in princely regalia. He wished to play with the ordinary children of the neighborhood. However, when he came close to them, the children shied away and would not go near him.

Inspired the prince took off his princely regalia wore torn shabby clothes and smeared his face with black soot. He became like the rest of the children. This way he entered their game unnoticed. Being like them, he was accepted and welcome. Disguised he played the game with them effectively. Eventually he showed them a better way of playing.

The children were successful and very happy. Their life was now transformed. As a result they made the prince their captain: A mission which he could not have accomplished if he had continued in his princely status."

**What touches you about this story?**

**How is this story relevant to your life?**

We too are called to make the fullness of life, the reality of God, present in humanity. We are called to **be with** people, to experience their hopes, aspirations, joys: their anxieties; anguish, suffering and pain and encourage them to seek healing and meaning in life. It is in our **being with** the people of God, experiencing the reality of their lives, walking with them on the journey to hope, healing and meaning, that we incarnate the Gospel in the world.

*For all of us, whether religious or mission partners, the call  
**to be with** the people of God is through our faith and  
our commitment to the spirit and mission of the Charism.*

**Let's listen with St John Eudes and St. Mary Euphrasia:**

*A love that transforms life and restores hope and meaning*

In his missionary work in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, St. John Eudes spoke of the importance of co-operating with Jesus in the task of completing the mystery of the Incarnation in us. He encountered much misery: many women were marginalized by poverty, violence, sexual abuse, imprisonment, and

trapped in prostitution. Imbued with zeal and a passionate love for Christ and for people, John Eudes founded the Order of Our Lady of Charity of Refuge, to welcome women and make it possible for them to turn their lives round. He tells us:

*'Welcome all those who come, not with a sad face and a grouchy disposition or with an austere attitude, but graciously and with open arms. Welcome all sorts of people without making any distinction... and always with the utmost discretion.'*

*(Robert de Pas, C.M.C. 2001 Life to Me Is Christ: St. John Eudes and his message: page 25)*

St. Mary Euphrasia, foundress of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, understood that the capacity to love those we serve is the best way to bring them to fullness of life; it is a transformative love. She wrote:

*These dear children were yours before you ever knew them...*

*Like a fond mother who loves her children without limits, love our girls...love them whatever their natural defects... love with a sympathy inspired by faith'*

*(Conferences Chapter 4)*

*Needless to say, above all, have charity for yourselves, that is a burning zeal to make progress in the spiritual life, without which you could not have real charity or zeal for souls, whom you must nourish by the overflow of love in your own heart. Oh be generous!*

*(Conferences Chapter 63)*

#### **For Reflection and Sharing:**

**How do we respond to the challenge of giving of ourselves so that others  
may come to know life in its fullness?**

**What is our attitude, our relationship to all those around us?**

**Do we meet all people in the spirit of Christ?**

The writer Margaret Silf suggests that:

*The **WORD** that inspires us is the **WORD** who created us and the **WORD** that empowers us to become ourselves a **word** for others. (DAYSPRINGS, page 162)*

#### **Prayer Together:**

May the Spirit of Love touch our hearts this Advent,  
May the Spirit of Hope enrich our hearts,  
May the Spirit of Courage urge us to reach out to our world,  
May the Spirit of Strength be with us as we walk with those we encounter  
who are in pain and distress,  
May the Spirit of Wonder inspire us to be our true selves.  
May the Blessing of Transforming love guide our every step!  
It is the Christ in us that we give to the world! Amen!

**Suggested Reading:** *Lectionary Proper to the Congregation of Jesus and Mary, 1989, Chap. 14*  
*St. Mary Euphrasia's Conferences, Chap. 4 & 63*  
*Margaret Silf, Daysprings: Daily Readings for a life with God, London: Darton,*  
*Longman & Todd, 1999.*