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***FAMILLE MARIANISTE***  
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Number 32

Christmas 2002

Dear Sisters and Brothers of the Marianist Family,

As Christmas draws near, we are happy to send you a message of blessing and peace!

Jesus, the Prince of Peace, became one of us,  
two thousand years ago, quietly and undramatically.

Few knew who he really was.  
Only Mary and Joseph, and the shepherds,  
poorest of the poor,  
sensed that something special was happening.

Today again, Jesus, the Prince of Peace, the Child of Bethlehem,  
takes on flesh in our world,  
a world marked by injustice, violence,  
war, terror and insecurity,  
a world dominated by greed  
for wealth, comfort and self-indulgence,  
a world of growing tensions between North and South,  
a world in pain.

Everywhere people thirst for peace,  
for serenity, respect and recognition.

As a Marianist Family, what can we do?

Wherever we are,  
Jesus calls us to be peacemakers,  
to foster communion and reconciliation,  
to shine a ray of hope for others.  
Jesus calls us to prolong his presence.  
He wants us to take the time to listen  
to the lives of others, to be close to them,  
to share their hopes, their quests,  
to offer them Mary's warmth of welcome,  
her gentleness and simplicity.

In a world always on the move,  
where only results seem to count,

our attitude need not make much noise.  
Jesus calls us to give importance  
to those who seem not to count.

Concretely, we invite you, as members of our Family,  
communities of Marianists, lay and religious,  
to a gesture of solidarity:  
the people of Africa, our human brothers and sisters,  
are threatened this year with starvation.  
Experts say that millions will soon die from hunger,  
that we are at the threshold of a great tragedy  
caused by war, poverty and drought.  
Could we not offer a Christmas gift to these brothers and sisters?  
Like Jesus, they come to us in human form,  
in silence and poverty.  
Could we transfer some of what we ourselves use  
to celebrate the birth of Jesus  
to help those so greatly in need?  
We invite you to creativity and ingenuity  
to find a way to offer some help  
to avert this disaster.

Whatever you do, we wish you Christmas joy and peace  
in the love of Jesus made flesh,  
and in the fidelity of Mary.

**Your Sisters and Brothers of the World Council of the Marianist Family**

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