



GRAND MAGISTERIUM – VATICAN
EQUESTRIAN ORDER OF
THE HOLY SEPULCHRE OF JERUSALEM

At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land

4_Merry Christmas!

Dear friends, Merry Christmas! I would like these wishes of mine to come to you again with Mary's narrative.

Mary:

Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the village of which King David was a native. It is a very precise geographical place in Judea, a few kilometers from Jerusalem, where, despite my advanced pregnancy, Joseph and I had gone in obedience to the decree of the Emperor of Rome to be registered, as established by the census ordered by Caesar Augustus. We had to go there because of the fact that Joseph was a descendant of the Davidic family.

In Bethlehem, however, we did not immediately find room in the family guest rooms. Instead, the lower room which sheltered the animals was indicated to us; at least, in the absence of anything else, that clean place would have sheltered us a little; I was very tired and there was no time or way to go looking elsewhere.

Here my child was born.

He was an extraordinary gift, as extraordinary is every child that comes into the world. Only those who are mothers can understand my feelings at that moment; only those who are fathers perceive in those moments the sense of the deepest affection and responsibility. Now the newborn Jesus was there, in my arms, I cuddled him, I warmed him with my body, I nourished him with my milk, while Joseph provided for us the necessities and took care of us.

In those days, several shepherds and local women came to visit us, bringing us gifts and whatever was immediately necessary for a newborn child; we saw their cordiality and they showed us that friendship that is born in such situations; for us it was like a sky opening up and our joy soon became common. I thought: heaven has truly opened upon us and upon the earth! Glory to God!

I know that now a question is coming to your mind: But who is this Jesus really? It is the question that many would have asked themselves down through the centuries.

I knew, Joseph knew, that this child was ours, but he was also a true gift from God. Only God, in fact, could act as he did at his conception. Jesus was truly the Son of God, present in that human form of a newborn child that I had given him. And in his appearance, he was just a child like so many others.

I said that he was born in Bethlehem. I must add that in Israel it was said that one day a "Messiah" would come, that is, the liberator of the people from all slavery; Rome was a dominant power; there had been various prophecies about the Messiah, such as those well-known from Isaiah and Micah; but also in the Psalms we sang of his coming and it was said that from Bethlehem, "though a small

place in Judea, perhaps the smallest, the one destined for a great mission in Israel and in the world would come".

The prophecies were well known, but no one expected their fulfillment then. Thus, when Jesus was born, he appeared to the world as an ordinary child, distinguished in nothing from the others; nevertheless, Joseph and I had great concern for him; as a mother I was happy, and Joseph was a serene father; and he was busy! We both knew very well that this child of ours had been given to us by the Most High.

Now I have told you about my part as a woman and mother. But I cannot tell you more, because God himself, or rather Jesus himself in his life would have responded to the mystery of his incarnation.

However, Joseph, even if he is a man of few words, will be able to add something more about our story... We will listen to him next....

Fernando Cardinal Filoni

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