



Archdiocese of Philadelphia
Office of the Cardinal
222 North 17th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103-1299

December 25, 2009

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

May the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you!

The words of the Prophet Isaiah resound at the Vigil of Christmas, “For Zion’s sake I will not be silent, for Jerusalem’s sake I will not be quiet” (Isaiah 62:1). The Church proclaims with renewed joy and vigor the birth of her Savior, the dawn of our salvation. With profound conviction, the Church announces to the men and women of our age the light and hope which can be found only in this Child who was born so humbly in a stable.

This celebration of the birth of the Lord places before us the opportunity to recognize with ever deeper faith the mystery of the Father’s love fully revealed in the gift of His Son and the call to love God and neighbor in response to this gift. In the face of our weaknesses and sinfulness, it is Christ who gives us hope by making known the mercy of God and who calls us to show that mercy to others. Amidst war and the economic uncertainties faced by our nation, it is Christ who strengthens us to face these challenges with courage so as to shed light upon the darkness which so often marks our world.

I ask the Lord Jesus to deepen your faith that it may bear fruit in charity and hope, renewing your desire to live ever more fully the mystery which we celebrate.

Sincerely in Christ,

+Justin Card. Rigali

Cardinal Justin Rigali
Archbishop of Philadelphia

[Please communicate this letter in an appropriate manner to the faithful on the weekend of December 19-20, 2009]