

楊鳴章主教  
天主教香港教區主教



**Most Reverend Michael Yeung**  
**Bishop of Hong Kong**

**Christmas message and greeting from our bishop**  
**For a child is born to us, a son is given to us**  
**(Isaiah 9:5)**

**Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,**

Christmas is a celebration of life and family. The greatest gift God has given us is His own life, in the form of His son, who accepted a human body and was born into a family.

In the mystery of the Incarnation is revealed how the Almighty Creator came into our midst like a lonely helpless person, knocking on the door of Mary and Joseph.

Luckily He was accepted, and so Christ Jesus had a home. But was He accepted, or were Mary and Joseph first accepted by God?

The Christmas cards that we receive, no matter where they come from, by post or via the internet, often give one an illusion of peace and quiet—as if the baby does not cry, the first-time teenage mother does not fret or fuss and the righteous Joseph just stands calmly by.

The reality is somewhat different. As indeed is often the case, it is only through shared difficulties and tests that true joy is born and manifested—fruit of the family which is the field and garden of joy.

Everyone wants to be loved and accepted. Inclusive and affirmative family relationships give us love and a sense of belonging. To everyone, the family is the cradle of life and love, the place of birth and growth. People's ability to keep their promises and fulfil their responsibilities comes mainly from family life education.

The family is the first school of life or, in the words of Vatican II, “a kind of school of deeper humanity” (Pastoral Constitution of the Church [Gaudium et Spes] #52), for it is there that we learn, through practice, what truth is and the value of life and home, as well as the importance of love and justice.

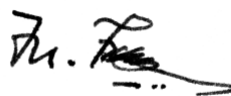
I know what a great challenge it is for our younger generation, especially in today's Hong Kong, to establish a family and I would like to pay tribute to those who, having taken up the challenge with courage and generosity, welcome with grateful hearts the Lord into their homes as their treasured guest.

In the words of Pope Francis: “A family’s living space could turn into a domestic Church, a setting for the Eucharist, the presence of Christ seated at its table” (Joy of Love [Amoris Laetitia] #15).

Life has its ups and downs but a family that is built on a foundation that is as solid as rock can face the difficulties and tests of life with sustained hope and confidence.

I wish every family to be built on the love of Christ and that, after the joyful festivities are over and even amidst the din of life’s struggles and worries, we can all still see the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph standing by our side and protecting us always.

A Blessed Christmas to all, young and old! May your homes be filled with every blessing! And may true joy and peace which only the Lord can give remain with you and your loved ones!

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Bishop of Hong Kong

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