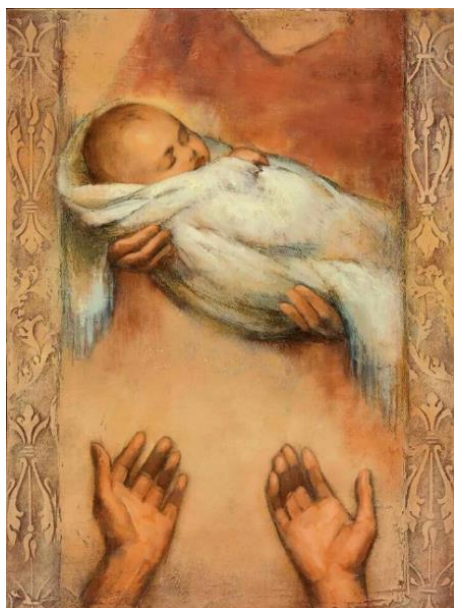


Rome, 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024



Dear Sisters, Collaborators and Friends,

As we approach the joyful season of Christmas, our hearts are filled with gratitude and joy, inspired by Pope Francis' powerful message of love in his new encyclical, "*He Loved Us*". The eternal truth - "*We love because he first loved us*" - is the foundation of our missionary calling and drives our commitment to the world.

Christmas is a reminder that the birth of Christ is the greatest expression of God's infinite love for humanity. In the child born in Bethlehem, we encounter mercy, humility, and hope. Christ comes to be with us, breaking down barriers, healing divisions, and inviting us into deeper unity with one another.

This year, as we celebrate the bicentenary of our founder Cardinal Lavignerie's birth, we are reminded of his unwavering dedication to charity (*caritas*) and his tireless work serving the poor and spreading the Gospel. His life and mission continue to inspire us to share the love of Christ with the most vulnerable, stand up for justice, and promote unity in a divided world. His legacy is a powerful reflection of Pope Francis' call to live out God's transformative love in all aspects of our mission.

We are deeply grateful to each of you - our sisters, collaborators and friends - who walk with us in love and service. Your dedication, prayers and support bring the Gospel to life in countless ways.

Pope Francis invites us to reflect on Christ's love and to live it out in our mission. In a world marked by division and suffering, we are called to be beacons of hope, instruments of reconciliation, and witnesses to the transformative power of love.

As we celebrate the birth of Christ, may his light shine brightly in your hearts, communities, and families. May his peace sustain you, his joy uplift you, and his love inspire you to be signs of hope!

With heartfelt gratitude and warm wishes for a blessed Christmas and a joyful New Year,

The sisters of the General Council  
Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa

*Angela Kapitingana, Jeanne-Arc Ouattara, Leticia Garduño, Małgorzata Popławska*