

NEED MAKES DEVOTION

O Abia, new distractions threaten to bear you out to sea again, Beware! Haste valiantly to reach the other level! Consider not how thy bulwarks are bereft of oars, how your shattered mast and yards are creaking in the driving gale, and how your hull without a girding-rope can scarce withstand the overmastering sea. Your canvas is no longer whole, but you still have God to call upon in distress. Though you be a blessed **State, God's Own State** and though you boast of a biblical origin, yet you wear all human frailty. Beware lest brokenness be your wealthy. Do you who were, not long ago, a pace-setter in progress, plummet abysmally into regression. But now be prepared to strive with unfettered feet into extra lunar firmament where calmness reigns. The cultural transformation of Christmas continues unabated. Its good news cannot be expressed more succinctly than this:

THE WORD BECAME FLESH AND DWELT AMONG US.

And this changes everything. God, the wholly Other, the eternal One and the Source of the created order, has become one of us. He comes to accept us as we are, that He might lead us to new light and Life. He comes as the blessed presence we need and the loving answer to our prayers. We have been visited from the beyond. The creator of all things has walked the earth as a human being so that we might know we loved by the one **from whom and through whom and to whom are all things.**

We live in a disenchanting **State**. Callipidean attitude, **richer in fine words than in fine action**; public utilities turned public inutilities; everything wearing the garb of decadence: infrastructurally, economically, and most outrageously educationally; demolition exercise without defined alternative; and the present precipitous indigenization of Civil Service and Education Sector; joblessness; meaninglessness; hopelessness and walking corruption, commend this disenchantment, is there any hope? Is re-enchantment a possibility? Christmas offers us the answer. The first Christmas was in a world no worse than Abia State – an ill-treated State – represented by the stable. Christmas is a Feast of restored creation.

Today our Saviour is born to the world that even today we need him. We need to be **saved**. Our **State** needs a savior all the more since she has become more

complex and threats to her peaceful existence have become more insidious. Let us open our hearts and receive him – God became man in Jesus Christ, the savior of the world- so that his kingdom of love and peace may become the common legacy of us all.

And you, Mary, the Virgin of expectation and fulfillment, who holds the secret of Christmas, make us able to recognize in the Child whom you hold in your arms the heralded savior, who brings hope and peace to all. With you we worship him and trustingly say: We need You , Redeemer of man, You who know the hopes and fears of our hearts. Our prayer is that you come and stay with us, this Christmas and strengthen our hope in challenging times.

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO YOU ALL.