

**EWTN VIDEO MESSAGE OF HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL CHRISTOPHE PIERRE
APOSTOLIC NUNCIO TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
CHRISTMAS 2024**

My dear Brothers and Sisters,

On Christmas Eve, Pope Francis will open the Holy Door of the Papal Basilica of St. Peter, thus inaugurating the Jubilee Year 2025. During the 12 days of Christmas that follow, he will open the Holy Doors of the other three major basilicas in Rome. What is signified by the opening of these doors? The open door is a symbol of an encounter with the Lord Jesus, who is the “door” of our salvation.

In ordinary life, when we see an open door, with light coming from inside, we get a sense of welcome. An open door is an invitation to come in out of the darkness or the cold, to step across the threshold of someone’s home, to be a guest, and to find communion.

When we look around at human relationships today, too often what we see are “closed doors”. Instead of welcome and an invitation to communion, we find fear, suspicion, and hostility—and on the largest scale, war. This situation is not new in the sight of God. Ever since our first parents allowed trust in God to die in their hearts, they began to hide from God and to turn against one another.

This is why God came to save us by becoming one of us. His enfleshment in the person of Jesus opened once again the door to God’s “house”. Through Jesus, we are able to enter God’s presence, to find reconciliation and communion. But as Christians, we should not keep this gift of God’s “open door” to ourselves. If God has opened the door to us, then we must have the same “open-door policy” for others. As the Pope says in his recent encyclical on the Sacred Heart, we must make of our hearts a “guest house”. A guest house for God, so that he can enter our hearts with his grace and mercy. But also, a guest house for our fellow human beings.

It is not hard to keep an open heart to those who think the same as we do, who look like us, and who have the same resources that we do. But as Christians, we are also called to keep our hearts open to people whose politics are different from ours,

who belong to different cultures and religions, and whose poverty challenges our comfort. By doing this, we can make the world a more welcoming place.

We speak sometimes of “the miracle of Christmas”. Indeed, what happened on that first Christmas was a miracle of God’s love and mercy. Do we believe that this miracle is still possible? Let us hear what the Holy Father has to say:

“It is only by starting from the heart that our communities will succeed in uniting and reconciling differing minds and wills, so that the Spirit can guide us in unity as brothers and sisters. Reconciliation and peace are also born of the heart. The heart of Christ is ‘ecstasy’, openness, gift and encounter. In that heart, we learn to relate to one another in wholesome and happy ways, and to build up in this world God’s kingdom of love and justice. Our hearts, united with the heart of Christ, are capable of working this social miracle.”¹

This Christmas, as you encounter the Lord anew—his open door, and his open heart—may you become a part of the miracle by which God unites human beings to himself and to one another. This is the hope that we celebrate in this coming Jubilee Year. And this hope will not disappoint.

Merry Christmas!

¹ *Dilexit Nos*, 28.