

December 2025

**All the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God. (Is 52:10)**

When they were led into exile in Babylon, the people of Israel lost everything: their land, their king, their temple and, therefore, the possibility of worshipping their God who had brought them out of Egypt in the past.

But then, the voice of a prophet made an astonishing announcement: it was time to return home. Once again, God would powerfully intervene and lead the Israelites across the desert to Jerusalem, and all the peoples of the earth would witness this miraculous event:

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Today too, alarming reports fill the news: people are losing their jobs, their health, their security and dignity; the future of young people is particularly at risk because war and poverty caused by climate change is robbing them of their homeland, peace and dignity.

This tragic scenario on a planetary scale takes our breath away and leaves us living beneath a very dark cloud. Who will save us from the destruction of everything we thought we had? There seems to be no basis for hope. Yet the prophet's announcement is for us too.

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God's word reveals his action in both our personal and collective history and invites us to open our eyes to the signs of his plan of salvation. This is already at work in so many different ways: it can be seen in the commitment of a teacher, the honesty of a business man or woman, the integrity of an administrator, the fidelity of a married couple, the embrace of a child, the tenderness of a nurse, the patience of a grandmother, the courage of those who peacefully oppose crime and the welcome of a community.

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Christmas is approaching. God's patient and merciful presence in human history is revealed once again in the disarming innocence of the child Jesus. We can bear witness to this through the choices we make which may be different from many of the current trends in society.

"In a world which may seem paralysed by materialism and selfishness and where strife and the law of the strongest and most unscrupulous prevail,

the answer is to love our neighbour. This is the medicine that can bring healing. It is like a wave of divine warmth that radiates and spreads, gradually transforming society by penetrating relationships between individuals and groups.”<sup>i</sup>

Just as at a certain moment the people of Israel set out on their journey, this is the time when we too can take a decisive step to reach out to those who need to experience a gesture of care and closeness: the young and the old, the poor and the migrants, the unemployed and the homeless, the sick and the imprisoned. We must bear witness to the gentle yet powerful presence of God's love among us.

Today, the boundaries we encounter as we share this good news with others may be geographical such as frontiers or the painful dividing lines of war, but they may also be cultural and existential. Even digital communities, which are often populated by young people, can make an effective contribution to overcoming aggression, loneliness and marginalisation.

As the Congolese poet Henri Boukoulou writes, ‘O divine hope! Behold the desperate cry of the wind wherein the first lines of the most beautiful love poem are etched. And tomorrow, there is hope!’<sup>ii</sup>

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iC. Lubich, Word of Life May '85

iiAA.VV, Anti-Apartheid African Poetry, pub 2003