



Rome. December 8, 2018



*“Rejoice in Jerusalem and be  
glad because of her.  
Rejoice with her in her joy,  
all who mourn over her,  
that you may be nursed and  
satisfied by her consolation.”  
(Is 66.10)*

### *Greetings of a Holy Christmas and a Happy New Year*

To the Rogationists  
To the Rogate Family

Dear brothers and sisters,

I would like to formulate the wishes of a Holy Christmas this year with the words of the liturgy of the Fourth Sunday of Advent, which invite us to joy because the consolation of the Lord is near.

The evangelists who told us about the birth of Jesus have repeatedly emphasized exultation and joy. The angel who appears to Zechariah, announcing the birth of John, tells him: "You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth" (Lk 1:14). Elizabeth, who welcomes Mary into her home, informs her of the exultation of the child she bears: "Behold, as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy" (Lk 1, 44). This joy that John the Baptist bears appears in its fullness with the birth of Jesus, as the angels announce to the shepherds: "Do not be afraid, behold, I announce to you a great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ, the Lord" (Lk 2: 10-11). Even the Magi, who came from the East, "Upon seeing the star, they were overwhelmed with joy" (Mt 2:10).

Today, while we at times in a multitude of difficulties, the announcement of joy and the invitation to joy may seem inappropriate, but this is not what Pope Francis thinks. On March 19 this year, there he addressed to us the Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate*, rejoice and exult, with two synonyms that intend to reinforce the invitation to joy, the invitation to exultation.

