Dear brothers, dear friends of the Assumption,

Year-end celebrations provide me with the opportunity to convey to all of you my best wishes for good health and happiness. I am thinking of the Assumptionist religious spread throughout the world. Some countries are undergoing political turmoil, others are afflicted with economic crises. In every place we are called “to give reason for our hope” (I Peter 3:3).

An Assumptionist is a man of faith who does not permit himself to be overwhelmed by the harshness of the present age, but who wishes to say to the world that there is hope, a hope that allows us to move forward along a path of peace and reconciliation. We must have confidence in God, for He will not abandon us.

Among the religious, permit me to speak to our elder brothers. You have dedicated your life to the service of the Kingdom and your mission is not finished. We need you. Support us with your prayer and your friendship. I would ask you to pray especially for our foundations in Africa, in Asia and in Latin America. You can also count on my prayer for you and on my gratitude.

And to our younger religious, those in formation. Love the Assumption, love our religious family. Make it known around you; do not be afraid to call other young people to join us for “the harvest is abundant and the workers are few.” I also invite you to fidelity. Root yourselves in Christ, for he will not abandon you.

I am also thinking about the friends of the Assumption. You are part of our family and we are happy to be journeying with you. Help us to live better our commitment to God’s Kingdom. Help us to move forward with boldness so that all might discover just how much God loves them. You can also count on us to support you in your pilgrimage. We pray for you and for your families.

I have not forgotten the sisters of the Assumption family. With you we want to express our faith in the Lord, in a world that doubts. We are partners in the mission. May the Lord help you to live your own religious commitment in peace.

The Lord came on earth more than 2000 years ago, and today we are the witnesses of his presence. Christ has come; Christ is present here now. Our work in the world should make it possible for those who share with us the human condition to discover the face of a God of love.

Best wishes for a holy and happy feast of Christmas.
Be assured of my prayer and fraternal affection.