



Latvijas Republikas Valsts prezidenta kanceleja Prezidenta preses dienests

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The Address of the State President on TV Latvia On the 24th of December, 1999

After long years of extermination from the memories and customs of the people, Christmas have returned to Latvia both as sacred holidays and as secular holidays satiated with modern rush, brightness and materialism. But now everybody has the choice, how shall I celebrate my holidays, what shall be my Christmas like.

For me Christmas is first of all the holiday of light's victory, that is the moment when in the darkest time of the year the sun resumes its victory procession as if recovering its strengths again. Christmas remind that in each of us dwells both light and darkness and they cheer us up in the fight against the darkness also in our own hearts. Also at this moment when the sun gains the victory, Christmas reminds to us how necessary it is to fight against the evil in our surroundings and society, how important it is to fight against the indifference, injustice, cynicism, selfishness, greediness, violence, brutality. These are all misery flowers, that we have to eradicate if we want to secure our descendants and ourselves normal life in a civilized society.

Christmas is also Christ's birth holiday, when Savior has come to the world. Christmas reflect the incarnation mystery, that miracle which is difficult to conceive for our minds, when the sacred becomes incarnated in the magnificent to inspire, to change it , to take it over its material level.

"In the beginning there was a Name, and the Name was at God, and the Name became flesh and lived among us". More that anything else Christmas is the holiday of love, that show God's love towards mankind and calls mankind to cultivate love in our hearts.

Traditionally Christmas is a family holiday, children get most of the attention and everybody certainly wishes to create this holiday for their children as light and happy as possible. Every single child that has come to this world is an incarnation wonder itself, child with divine sparkle in its soul, immortal spirit, that has got its kindred cover for a while. Therefore every single child is self value, every single child is unique and implacable. It has to be taken care of, protected and under normal circumstances grown ups - parents, grandparents, relatives do it. The whole society has to take over the responsibility for the orphans, whose parents either physically or mentally have died. I wish you all light and happy Christmas, to all the families who have the luck to be together over these holidays and I send my special greetings to all Latvian children.

For those who have parents I want to remind that the biggest and most precious present is parents' care and love. It is not important what kind of gifts you get, how big, how many and how expensive, the only thing that matters is that the gift has been given with kindness and love. If so, you can be grateful and happy because you have received bountiful gifts.

To those children who have neither parents nor relatives I want to remind that also every single of them is very much needed for the land and people of Latvia. Every child that has been born has its own mission of life, it has its own mission of fate. No child is needless, no child is superfluous.

In old times our nation had a lot of orphans and therefore we have sacred gifts that help orphans. There is a song about orphan's wedding. A suitor inquires an orphan before he proposes to her:

Do you have many relatives,
Are you a sister of a rich brother,
Did your father give you honor,
Did your mother make you a dowry?
And the orphan girl answers:
I have neither many relatives,
nor am I sister of a rich brother,
Neither gave me father honor,
Nor mother made dowry for me.
Father Moon gave me honor
Mother Sun made my dowry,
Morning star with evening -
Those were my brothers and sisters.

That means that for those children who have no defenders on the Earth, the Heaven forces take over the guardianship.

I wish Christmas light as a consolation to all who are ill, lonely and sad and who because of the poverty cannot celebrate the holidays the way their hearts would like to. Happiness does not depend on the material values and nobody has to be intellectually poor. Each of us possesses a lot. We possess all that once gave happiness to us, we possess all that we have loved some time. Nobody ever can take it away from us, these are our intellectual values. Moreover we have the sun and the moon, the evenings and the mornings, the sea and the sky, everything that we can see and conceive.

Christmas remind to all of us - to grownups and children: I am the child of God and I have the Divine love. No matter in which circumstances I have to live in the great world, I have the Divine love and it does not leave me for a moment.

On the holiday evening I wish you to enjoy the emotional experience that has been so nicely expressed in my favorite Christmas song:

I know a beautiful rose,
From a tiny root,
That little rose, I mean,
Has come from Jesus.
That blossomed in coolness,
From the cold winter sun,
At midnight in the darkness.

This rose is first of all Savior, that is the arrival of the Savior, like the prophet Jesse of the Old Testament had seen it in his dream. But it symbolizes also that feeling of holiness, that blooms in everybody's heart in a festive moment. These are feelings that elate and give joy and let us return in our everyday lives with new strength and recovered joy of living.

You, rose, the beautiful, the nice,
You flower the holiest,
Why do you want to bloom outside,
Bloom in my heart,

Who cultivates you in faith,

The heart has the scent of the sun and the soul gets filled up.

I wish to each of you that the Christmas miracle like a sweet rose scent blooms in your heart and accompanies you throughout the entire next year until the next holidays. Merry Christmas!