



December, 1997

Dear Fellow Employees:

Have you ever thought of how many billions of times the Christmas Story has been told since the first Christmas. We all know it by heart. And very likely, at one time or other we take it for granted, having become accustomed to our yearly Christmas routines.

I remember way back in first grade our religion books consisted of the Baltimore Catechism and a book called Bible History from which we would read and discuss many fascinating stories. I remember that it was there that I was first told the Bible is more than a history, it is a living book. Its words are as real and meaningful to us today, as they were when the Book was written. And so I ask you this Christmas to take some time to reflect on that story and its meaning for you, the people we serve, and CFCS. And I would like to share with you part of my own reflection.

As the story goes, Jesus was born in a manger. There was no room in the inn. In essence, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, were on the road, were homeless, hungry and needed shelter from the elements. Sound familiar for our time? I believe there is some significance in that Jesus was laid in a manger after His birth. A manger is a trough that contains animal feed in barns, and pens and stables. In fact manger is the French word "to eat" and what person of Italian descent hasn't heard an Italian grandma say "mange" before a big meal.

So I think the Baby Jesus, in being born in a manger is telling us then as he did more clearly in His adult life, that He is the Bread for the world and He will feed all our needs. And He also told us in His adult life that we should follow him and do as He did.

And so at Christmas time I think we should all consider how we as individuals, and we as an Agency can be Mangers, welcoming the Baby Jesus into our hearts and lives and feeding Him through the thousands of our brothers and sisters we are privileged to meet and serve each year.

On behalf of our Bishop, Frank Rodimer, our Board, and myself, I thank you for all your hard work; I wish you a very Blessed Christmas and ask that you accept the enclosed token of our appreciation.

Sincerely,

Joe Duffy
Joseph F. Duffy