What is the spirit of Christmas?

Christmas is a season of lights, gifts, goodwill, and cheer. Christmas is a time to share life with another.

This is what God has done, shared divine life with us and the whole of creation in a simple yet profound way: the birth of a baby.

This life is the light that guides us and gives us hope; this life is not bought or earned since it is a gift that anyone can welcome; this life is for our own sake and wellness; this life is the source of overwhelming and everlasting joy.

When we look at the nativity scene, we see all this taking place: light from a star, gifts from strangers, goodwill from angels, cheer from shepherds, and new life in a baby born.

So, when you think of Christmas, please picture the nativity and everything happening around and in it. The nativity is the portrait of the Christmas miracle. Against so many challenges and uncertainty, the impossible took place: God was born in the flesh to save us from death and heal us from our sins.

Therefore, we can say that the spirit of Christmas is that good happens despite the bad; light shines no matter how dark the night is; and even a small life can overcome what seems dead. This means that our lives are never too bad, dark, or dead to receive new life and be loved.

That is the spirit and miracle of Christmas: to believe, trust, and hope.

Today, we are invited to joyfully remember and celebrate Christmas for what it is and means.

But celebrating is not simply gathering and singing for a day or a season as we today do as wonderful, beautiful, and inspiring as it may be, but having the spirit of Christmas in our lives every day.

How do we do that? If we lived by Jesus’s teachings every day, it would be like Christmas every day. If we, like him, were meek and mild and loved each woman, man, and child; if we practice compassion and kindness; if we read our Bible and pray, and keep the family of faith, then every day would find us in the spirit of Christmas believing, trusting, and with hope.

Let us do just that as we keep the music in our hearts.

A Prayer By Joanna Fuchs.

Dear Lord Jesus, as we celebrate Your birth,  
let us remember that You are the true reason for Christmas.  
Let every sparkling light remind us how You illuminate our lives,  
a shining beacon to guide us in our thoughts and actions each day,  
and how You light us from within in the knowledge of Your love and truth.

Let the Christmas trees, standing straight, tall, unbowed,  
remind us of Your uprightness, Your goodness, Your perfection,  
and Your refusal to bow to worldly temptations,  
no matter how great the challenge or trouble.

Lord, as we feast on Christmas treats,  
let us remember that You are the sole provider  
of everything worth having, that all good things come from You.  
And as we enjoy our gifts, let us never forget  
that You are the greatest gift of all—our wonderful Savior,  
Counselor, Giver of an eternal life whose wonders we cannot imagine.

So as we delight in Christmas, the happiest and brightest of holidays,  
let us remember there would be no Christmas without You, Lord,  
and let us our hearts be filled with joy, and love  
and thankfulness this Christmas and all the ones to come.

In Jesus’ name we pray, Amen.