



*Paz y  
Esperanza*



## No Advent without Conflict

As we enter this year's period of Advent reflection, we asked Paz y Esperanza co-founder and former director **Alfonso Wieland** to share some thoughts with us. **He said:-**

We remember Advent as the coming of salvation personified in Jesus. Isn't that salvation so urgent for us today? As humanity we live in permanent crises, but the crises of these last three years seem much more fraught and heartfelt. When Jesus came to us as a child born in poverty, history tells us of the deep injustice in society at that time. The eyes and ears of that child learned about the pain and the joys, the complaints and the promises. They smelled the fragrance of green fields but also of lands ravaged by conflict. That is what he came for, to open an alternative path of justice and coherence

In more than 35 years of service to people trapped by various forms of violence, I have witnessed the actions that human beings are capable of in the name of gods that dominate us: distorted political power, fame, greed, physical and mental domination over women and children, idolatry of religion. But alongside this, I have seen men and women who have lives rich in empathy for the pain of others. People who shake off their various indifferences and convert to unconditional love of God and neighbour. But paradoxically in doing so, they are transformed. Advent and salvation come to them from the least expected place, from the love of those who have been trapped by injustice. Embracing the fallen gives us back another embrace full of humanity.

Today we need the salvation of Jesus to knock on our doors closed by the fear of crisis. It is not easy, for we instinctively isolate ourselves in order to save ourselves. The Advent message tells us that it is in poverty that God decided to give the most precious treasure: His only son. At times of crisis, some people's egoism pushes others out of the way as if it has its own momentum, and as a result brings untold and unnecessary suffering.

However, the foundation of our faith is supported by the cornerstone which is Christ Himself. That stone supports us in times of turbulent waters and cries out to us: We are not alone. We have Him, we have each other.



Alfonso Wieland

*Thank you for your financial support and prayers this year. Why not make a Christmas gift to support our brothers and sisters in Latin America.*

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Paz y Esperanza UK - Registered Charity no: 1186962;  
Registered Office: 185, Peckham Rye, London, SE15 3HZ

For more information: <https://pazyesperanza.org/uk>

All enquiries to: [uk-enquiry@pazyesperanza.org](mailto:uk-enquiry@pazyesperanza.org)

To unsubscribe contact: [updates@pazyesperanza.org](mailto:updates@pazyesperanza.org)