

"Mary, Joseph and the child Jesus occupy a special place in our hearts"

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December 27

A decree of Caesar Augustus has been proclaimed, ordering the whole world to be enrolled. For this purpose, every person must go to the city of his ancestors. —Since Joseph is of the house and family of David, he goes with the Virgin Mary from Nazareth to the city called Bethlehem, in Judea (Luke 2:1-5).

And in Bethlehem is born our God: Jesus Christ! —There is no room at the inn: He is born in a stable. —And His Mother wraps Him in swaddling clothes and lays Him in a manger.

Cold. —Poverty... —I am Joseph's little servant. —How good Joseph is! —He treats me like a father. —He even forgives me if I take the Child in my arms and spend hour after hour

saying sweet and loving things to Him!...

And I kiss Him —you kiss Him too! — and I rock Him in my arms, and I sing to Him, and I call Him King, Love, my God, my Only-one, my All!... How beautiful is the Child and how short the decade! (*Holy Rosary*, 3)

At Christmas our thoughts turn to the different events and circumstances surrounding the birth of the Son of God. As we contemplate the stable in Bethlehem or the home of the holy family in Nazareth, Mary, Joseph and the child Jesus occupy a special place in our hearts. What does the simple, admirable life of the holy family tell us? What can we learn from it?

I would like particularly to comment on one of the many considerations that we might make on this theme. As we read in holy Scripture, the birth of Jesus means the beginning of

the fullness of time. It was the moment God chose to show the extent of his love for men, by giving us his own Son. And God's will is fulfilled in the simplest, most ordinary of circumstances: a woman who gives birth, a family, a home. The power of God and his splendour come to us through a human reality to which they are joined. Since that moment Christians have known that, with God's grace, they can and should sanctify everything that is good in their human lives. There is no human situation, no matter how trivial and ordinary it may seem, which cannot be a meeting place with Christ and a step forward on our journey toward the kingdom of heaven. (*Christ is Passing By*, 22, 1-2)

Do you see how necessary it is to know Jesus and lovingly observe his life? I have often gone to look for a definition or a biography of Jesus in Scripture. And I have found it

written by the Holy Spirit: "He went about doing good." Every single day of Jesus Christ's life on earth, from his birth until his death, can be summed up like that: he filled them all doing good. And in another place Scripture says, "He has done all things well," he finished everything well, he did nothing that wasn't good. (*Christ is Passing By, 16, 1*)

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