

“Don’t let me go”

We should let Jesus know that we are children. And when children are tiny and innocent, what a lot of effort it takes for them to go up one step. They look as though they are wasting their time, but eventually they manage to climb up.

18 December

Now there is another step. Crawling on their hands and knees, and putting their whole body into it, they score another success one more step. Then they start again. What an

effort! There are only a few more steps to go now. But then the toddler stumbles, and whoops! down he goes. With bumps all over and in floods of tears, the poor child sets out and begins to try again. We are just like that, Jesus, when we are on our own. Please take us up in your loving arms, like a big and good Friend of the simple child. Do not leave us until we have reached the top. And then oh then! we will know how to correspond to your Merciful Love, with the daring of young children, telling you, sweet Lord, that after Mary and Joseph, there never has been nor will there ever be a mortal soul and there have been some who have been really crazy who loves you as much as I love you. (The Forge, 346)

I am praying aloud, and each of you, silently, is admitting to our Lord: "Lord, how useless I am, what a coward I have been! How many

mistakes I've made, over and over again." And we can go further and say: "It's good, Lord, you have kept me up with your hand; for, left to myself, I am capable of the most disgraceful things. Don't let me go; keep on treating me as a little child. I want to be strong and brave and manly. But you must help me. I am a clumsy creature. Take me by the hand, Lord, and make sure your Mother is also by my side to guard me. And so, *possumus*! We can; we will be able to have you as our model."

It is not presumptuous for us to say *possumus*. Jesus Christ teaches us this divine way and wants us to follow it, for he has made it human and accessible to our weakness. That is why he lowered himself so. "Here is the reason why he brought himself so low, taking the nature of a slave; he, the Lord, who as God was equal to the Father; he lowered himself in

majesty and power — but not in goodness or mercy" [1].

The goodness of God wants to make the way easy for us. Let us not reject Jesus' invitation; let's not say "no" to him, turning a deaf ear to his voice. There is no excuse, we can no longer think we aren't able. He has shown us by his example. "Therefore, I ask you with all my heart, brothers, not to let this precious example go unheeded: rather, follow him and renew your soul in the spirit" [2] (Christ is passing by, 15)

[1] St Bernard, *Sermo in die nativitatis*, 1,1-2 (PL 183,115)

[2] St Bernard, *ibid*, 1,1

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