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“We are ordinary Christians who lead an ordinary life”

God is not removing you from your environment. He is not taking you away from the world, or from your condition in life, or from your noble human ambitions, or from your professional work... But he wants you to be a saint - right there! (The Forge, 362)

16 December

No matter how much we may have reflected on all this, we should always be surprised when we think of the thirty years of obscurity which made up the greater part of Jesus' life among men. He lived in obscurity, but, for us, that period is full of light. It illuminates our days and fills them with meaning, for we are ordinary Christians who lead an ordinary life, just like millions of other people all over the world.

That was the way Jesus lived for thirty years, as "the son of the carpenter" [1]. There followed three years of public life, spent among the crowds. People were surprised: "Who is this?" they asked. "Where has he learned these things?" For he was just like them: he had shared the life of ordinary people. He was "the carpenter, the son of Mary" [2]. And he was God; he was achieving the redemption of mankind and "drawing all things to himself" [3].

As with other events in his life, we should never contemplate Jesus' hidden years without feeling moved. We should realize that they are in themselves a call to shake off our selfishness and easy-going ways. (Christ is passing by, 14-15)

[1] Matt 13:55: *filius fabri*

[2] Mark 6:3: *faber, filius Mariae*

[3] John 12:32