

“Christ tells you and me that he needs us”

Christmas devotion.--I don't smile when I see you making cardboard mountains around the crib and placing simple clay figures near the manger.--You have never seemed more a man to me than now, when you seem to be a child. (The Way, 557)

January 3

Every time Christmas comes around, I love to look at representations of the child Jesus. Statues and pictures

which show a God who lowered himself remind me that God is calling us. The Almighty wants us to know that he is defenseless, that he needs men's help. From the cradle at Bethlehem, Christ tells you and me that he needs us. He urges us to live a christian life to the full — a life of self-sacrifice, work and joy.

We will never have genuine joy if we do not really try to imitate Jesus. Like him we must be humble. I repeat: do you see where God's greatness is hidden? In a manger, in swaddling clothes, in a stable. The redemptive power of our lives can only work through humility. We must stop thinking about ourselves and feel the responsibility to help others.

It can sometimes happen that even well-intentioned people create personal problems — really serious worries — which have no objective basis whatsoever. These problems

arise in persons whose lack of self-knowledge leads to pride and a desire to be the centre of attention, to be favoured by everyone. They want to appear always in a good light, to be personally secure. They are not content simply to do good and disappear. And so, many who could enjoy a wonderful peace of soul and great happiness become, through pride and presumption, unhappy and unfruitful.

Christ was humble of heart.
Throughout his life he looked for no special consideration or privilege.
(Christ is passing by, 18)