

“Where is he that is born king?”

Humility is another good way to arrive at interior peace. He has said so: ‘Learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart: and you will find rest for your souls.’ (The Way, 607)

January 6

Where is he that is born king of the Jews?

Moved by this question, I too now contemplate Jesus “*lying in a manger,*” in a place fit only for

animals. Lord, where is your kingship, your crown, your sword, your sceptre? They are his by right, but he does not want them. He reigns wrapped in swaddling clothes. Our king is unadorned. He comes to us as a defenseless little child. Can we help but recall the words of the Apostle: *He emptied himself, taking the nature of a slave?*

Our Lord became man to teach us the Father's will. And this he is already doing as he lies there in the manger. Jesus Christ is seeking us — with a call which is a vocation to sanctity — so that we may carry out the redemption with him. Let us reflect on this first lesson of his. We are to co-redeem, by striving to triumph not over our neighbour, but over ourselves. Like Christ we need to empty ourselves, to consider ourselves as the servants of others, and so to bring them to God.

Where is the king? Could it be that Jesus wants to reign above all in men's hearts, in your heart? That is why he has become a child, for who can help loving a little baby? Where then is the king? Where is the Christ whom the Holy Spirit wants to fashion in our souls? He cannot be present in the pride that separates us from God, nor in the lack of charity which cuts us off from others. Christ cannot be there. In that loveless state man is left alone.

As you kneel at the feet of the child Jesus on the day of his Epiphany and see him a king bearing none of the outward signs of royalty, you can tell him: "Lord, take away my pride; crush my self-love, my desire to affirm myself and impose myself on others. Make the foundation of my personality my identification with you." (Christ is passing by, 31)

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