

ADVENT-CHRISTMAS



“Open wide your door to the One who comes. Open your soul, throw open the depths of your heart to see the riches of simplicity, the treasures of peace, the sweetness of grace. Open your heart and run to meet the Sun of eternal light that illuminates all men.”

ST. AMBROSE OF MILAN

ADORER NEWS

Advent 40 Hours Devotion - and Beyond: A beautiful way to mark the beginning of Advent is by spending extra time with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. While this particular devotion runs through December 1-3, the Adoration Chapel is open to receive you at any time afterwards. If you've been away from visiting Jesus in the Real Presence, now is a good time to recommit to a regular hour. The best gift we could give Him is our time, for this is the personal treasure that we *so easily* give away to worldly distractions. May we use this holy season of Advent and Christmas to give ourselves to Christ in loving generosity.

OLV CHAPEL ID Cards: Please remember to carry your OLV ID card with you to Adoration. We have a number of new adorers who don't yet know everyone and who take their Eucharistic guardianship seriously. If you have lost or misplaced your card, contact one of the Chapel Committee for a replacement.

CHRISTMAS Adoration: Major holidays are typically difficult days for us to ensure that Jesus is not left alone in the Adoration Chapel. As Christmas Day falls on a Wednesday this year, we expect there to be a number of substitute requests made by our regularly scheduled adorers. We will be posting a sign-up sheet in the coming weeks to help us determine a schedule that is fair to adorers and to Our Lord. If you can make time to be with Him on His birthday, please do sign up. What a precious gift to give Him on that day!



*Wishing all our adorers a most blessed and holy Advent and Christmas.
May the Eucharistic Christ bless you and your family in a special way!*
-The OLV Adoration Chapel Management Committee

He Rests in Us

THE infant Christ is the whole Christ. Christ is not more God, more man, on the Cross than He was in His mother's womb. His first tear, His first smile, His first breath, His first pulsation in the womb of his Mother, could have redeemed the world.

In fact, Christ chose the life of growth and work and suffering, and the death on the Cross we know; but by His own choice all this was to depend on a human being giving herself to Him in His infancy, giving her own humanity to the actual making of that infant's humanity and giving Him her life in which to rest.

During Advent Christ rested in Mary – still, silent, helpless, utterly dependent. The Creator trusted Himself to His creature. This was a foreshadowing of what the Incarnation would mean for us; for in us, too, Christ rests as He rested in Mary. From the moment when the Christ-life was conceived in us, our life is intended for one thing, the expression of His love, His love for God and the world.

But there is another aspect of Christ's Advent. While He remained hidden in Mary, His rest was a tremendous activity; He was making her into Himself, making Himself from her. From her eyes He was making the eyes that would weep over Jerusalem, that would shine upon the wildflowers, that would close in death and open on the morning of the Resurrection. From her hands He was making the hands that would heal and raise the dead and be nailed to the Cross. From her heart He was making the heart that would redeem the world.

The same thing occurs when, allowing the infant Christ to rest in us, we wait patiently on His own timing of His growth in us, and give Him just what He asks, the extremely simple things that are ourselves – our hands and feet, our eyes and ears, our work, our thoughts, our love. Not only does He grow in us, but we are formed in Him.



-Caryll Houselander. *Wood of the Cradle, Wood of the Cross.*

HANDING YOURSELF OVER

The Christian way is different: harder, and easier. Christ says, “Give me All. I don’t want so much of your time and so much of your money and so much of your work: I want you. I have not come to torment your natural self, but to kill it. No half measures are any good, I don’t want to cut off a branch here and a branch there, I want to have the whole tree down. I don’t want to drill the tooth or crown it, or stop it, but to have it out. Hand over the whole natural self, all the desires which you think innocent as well as the ones you think wicked – the whole outfit. I will give you a new self instead. In fact, I will give you Myself: My own will shall become yours.”

Both harder and easier than what we are all trying to do. You have noticed, I expect, that Christ Himself sometimes describes the Christian way as very hard, sometimes as very easy. He says, “Take up your Cross” -in other words, it is like going to be beaten to death in a concentration camp. Next minute he says, “My yoke is easy and My burden light.” He means both. And one can just see why both are true.

The terrible thing, the almost impossible thing, is to hand over your whole self – all your wishes and precautions – to Christ. But it is far easier than what we are all trying to do instead. For what we are trying to do is to remain what we call “ourselves”, to keep personal happiness as our great aim in life, and yet at the same time be “good”. We are all trying to let our mind and heart go their own way – centered on money or pleasure or ambition - and hoping, in spite of this, to behave honestly and chastely and humbly. And that is exactly what Christ warned us you could not do. As He said, a thistle cannot produce figs. If I am a field that contains nothing but grass seed, I cannot produce wheat. Cutting the grass may keep it short: but I shall still produce grass and no wheat. If I want to produce wheat, the change must go deeper than the surface. I must be ploughed up and re-sown.

That is why the real problem of the Christian life comes where people do not usually look for it. It comes the very moment you wake up each morning. All your wishes and hopes for the day rush at you



like wild animals. And the first job each morning consists simply in shoving them all back; in listening to that other voice, taking the other point of view, letting that other larger, stronger, quieter life come flowing in. And so on, all day. Standing back from all your natural fussings and frettings; coming in out of the wind.

We can only do it for moments at first. But from those moments the new sort of life will be spreading through our system: because now we are letting Him work at the right part of us. It is the difference between paint, which is merely laid on the surface, and a dye or stain which soaks right through. He never talked vague, idealistic gas. When He said "Be ye perfect", He meant it. He meant that we must go in for the full treatment. It is hard; but the sort of compromise we are all hankering after is harder - in fact it is impossible. It may be hard for an egg to turn into a bird: it would be a jolly sight harder for it to learn to fly while remaining an egg. We are like eggs at present. And you cannot go on indefinitely being just an ordinary, decent egg. We must be hatched or go bad.

-C.S. Lewis. *Mere Christianity*.



*The great majority of people will go on observing
forms that cannot be explained;
they will keep Christmas Day
with Christmas gifts and Christmas benedictions;
they will continue to do it;
and some day suddenly wake up and discover why.*

G.K. CHESTERTON

WHAT JESUS WANTS FROM US



Let us contemplate Jesus lying on a rough pallet of straw in the manger. When we see Him looking at us, let us ask ourselves what it is He requires of us. In fact, He wants many things from us. First of all, He wants us to weep for our sins and to promise never to fall again as long as we have the assistance of His grace, for which we should pray continually. For this He has become man and has

entered into the world. For this He will work miracles, preach His doctrine, and shed His Precious Blood on the Cross.

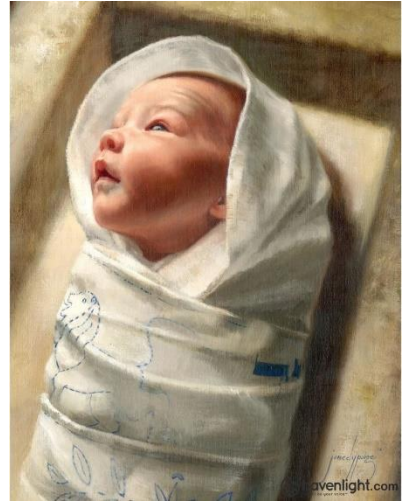
All this He will do to redeem is from sin and to win heaven for us. If we return to the path of sin, we destroy the divine work of redemption in as far as it applies to ourselves. We make Christ's passion, death, and resurrection useless in our case. We brush aside the chain of favors with which His love has girdled us – the Gospel, the Sacraments, and the Church, our good mother who is always at our side to instruct and direct us, to rescue us from peril, and to distribute to us the gifts of her divine Founder. When we sin, we commit an act of base ingratitude to Jesus and accomplish our own eternal ruin.

The Infant Jesus longs for us to give our hearts to Him. Since He has given us His own, why should we be unwilling to give ours to Him? Who or what can we love if we do not love Jesus? Nothing else is capable of giving us peace of soul and resignation in suffering. Jesus alone can bestow these gifts on us as long as we love and follow Him and abandon ourselves to His holy will.

“Unless you turn and become like little children,” the Infant Jesus says to us, “you will not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven” (Mt 18:2). He wishes us to be humble, simple, and innocent like children. As we grow older, unfortunately, many of us become proud, complicated, and vain. We lose the straightforward candor of childhood. Worldly pretentiousness cannot possibly appeal to Jesus since He, who is truly great, chose to become a tiny Infant. He wishes us to renounce the self-important airs and the intricate methods which we employ to conceal the truth, to disguise our lack of virtue, and to assume the appearances of learning and of authority, regardless of the fact that the highest achievement of which we are capable is to be humble, the most necessary knowledge of all is to know Jesus Crucified, and the best kind of authority is the ability to control our passions and to subject ourselves to the will of God. It is in this sense that we must become little children before God and before man. Then Jesus Christ will love us and grant us His favors.

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There is one last thing which the Infant Jesus requires of us. Nobody else can know what it is, but we know well what He wants. There is bound to be some resolution which we have formed many times in the past but have never properly fulfilled because it cost us too much. Let us not refuse Jesus this sacrifice, for He has loved us so much and sacrificed Himself entirely for us. As a result of this meditation, let us at last put this resolution into effect with generosity and firmness.



-Antonio Cardinal Bacci. *Meditations for Each Day.*

”THE very Son of God, older than the ages, the invisible, the incomprehensible, the incorporeal, the beginning of beginning, the light of light, the fountain of life and immortality, the image of the archetype, the immovable seal, the perfect likeness, the definition and word of the Father: he it is who comes to his own image and takes our nature for the good of our nature, and unites himself to an intelligent soul for the good of my soul, to purify like by like. He takes to himself all that is human, except for sin... He who makes rich is made poor; he takes on the poverty of my flesh, that I may gain the riches of his divinity. He who is full is made empty; he is emptied for a brief space of his glory, that I may share in his fullness.”



St. Gregory Nazianzen. *On the Incarnation.*



“What has happened to me has been the very reverse of what appears to be the experience of most of my friends. Instead of dwindling to a point, Santa Claus

has grown larger and larger in my mind and fills almost the whole of it. It happened in this way. As a child I was faced with a phenomenon requiring explanation. I hung up at the end of my bed an empty stocking, which in the morning became a full stocking. I had done nothing to produce the things that filled it. I had not worked for them, or made them or helped to make them. I had not even been good – far from it. And the explanation was that a certain being whom people called Santa Claus was benevolently disposed toward me ... What we believed was that a certain benevolent agency did give us those toys for nothing. And, as I say, I believe it still. I have merely extended the idea.

Then I only wondered who put the toys in the stocking. Now I wonder who put the stocking by the bed, and the bed in the room, and the room in the house, and the house on the planet, and the great planet in the void. Once I only thanked Santa for a few dolls and crackers. Now, I thank him for stars and street faces, and wine and the great sea. Once I thought it delightful and astonishing to find a present so big that it only went halfway into the stocking. Now I am delighted and astonished every morning to find a present so big that it takes two stockings to hold it, and then leaves a great deal outside. It is the large and preposterous present of myself, as to the origin of which I can offer no suggestion except that Santa Claus gave it to me in a fit of particularly good will.”

-G. K. Chesterton.