



# CHRIST comes first in CHRISTmas!

## Having The Mind Of The Church

The time has now come for the faithful soul to reap the fruit of the efforts she made during the penitential weeks of Advent to prepare a dwelling-place for the Son of God, Who desires to be born within her. The Wedding of the Lamb, the marriage of God and man, has come! The Spouse is the Church; the Spouse is also every faithful soul. Our Lord gives His whole self to the whole flock, and to each sheep of the flock with as much love as though He loved but that one. What garments shall we put on, to go and meet the Bridegroom? Where shall we find the pearls and jewels wherewith to deck our soul for this happy meeting? Our holy Mother the Church will tell us all this in her Liturgy. Our best plan for spending Christmas is, undoubtedly, to keep close to her, and do what she does; for she is most dear to God, and being our Mother, we ought to obey all her commands.

Now that we may pass on from this spiritual conception to the birth of Our Lord Jesus; in other words, that we may pass from Advent to Christmas, we must unceasingly keep the eyes of our soul on Him who wishes to be born within us, and in Whom the world is born to a new life. Our study and ambition should be, how best to become like Jesus, by imitating Him; for, though the imitation must needs be imperfect, yet we know from the Apostle that our heavenly Father Himself gives this as the sign of the elect — that they are made like to the image of His Son (Romans 8:29).

*(The Liturgical Life, by Dom Guéranger, Volume 2, Christmastide)*



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# JESUS

**IS THE REASON FOR THE SEASON**

## Learning from our Holy Mother the Church

Let us, first, learn from the Church the duties which human nature and each of our souls owes to the Divine Infant. During Advent, we united with the Saints of the Old Law, in praying for the

coming of the Messiah, our Redeemer; now that He is come, let us consider what is the homage we must pay Him.

The Church offers to the Infant-God, during this holy season, the tribute of her profound adoration, the enthusiasm of her exceeding joy, the return of her unbounded gratitude, and the fondness of her intense love.

To these four offerings—adoration, joy, gratitude, and love—we can add humility, charity and sorrow for sin, These must be the gifts—seven mystical gifts—that every follower of Christ should bring and place before Jesus, his Emmanuel, the Babe of Bethlehem.

### What Shall We Offer Him?

Let us imitate our Mother, and give our hearts to our Emmanuel. The Shepherds offer Him their simple gifts, the Magi bring Him their rich presents, and no one must appear before the Divine Infant without something worthy His acceptance.

Know, then, that nothing will please Him, but that which He came to seek — our love. It was for this that He came down from Heaven. Hard indeed is that heart which can say: *“He shall not have my love!”*

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## Giving Jesus Our Joy at Christmas

Whether we are good or bad; whether we have prepared for Christmas as we should have or not, Jesus still wants to see our joy at His coming. Joy is a fruit of our love.

Our Holy Mother, the Church, does not only offer to the Infant God her profound adoration. The mystery of Emmanuel, that is, of God with us, is to her a source of great joy. If you are sinner, rejoice, for He comes to rescue you from your sins and to help you change your life.

Joy! Did not the very Angels come down and urge her to it? She therefore studies to imitate the Shepherds, who ran for joy to Bethlehem (Luke 2:16), and the glad Magi, who were out of themselves with delight when, on quitting Jerusalem, the star again appeared and led them to the Cave where the Child was (Matthew 2:10). Joy at Christmas is a Christian instinct, which originated those many Carols, which, like so many other beautiful traditions of the ages of Faith, are unfortunately dying out amongst us.

Come, then, faithful Children of the Church, let us take our share in her joy! This is not the season for sighing or for weeping. For unto us a Child is born! (Isaias 9:6). He for whom we have been so long waiting is come; and He is come to dwell among us (John 1:14). Great, indeed, and long was our suspense; so much the more let us love our possessing Him. Now we must rejoice and be glad at His coming and sing round His Crib with the Angels. Heaven sends us a present of its own joy: we need joy, and forty days of Christmas are not too many for us to get it well into our hearts.

*(The Liturgical Life, by Dom Guéranger,  
Volume 2, Christmastide)*



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## Giving Jesus Gratitude at Christmas

Intimately and inseparably united with this exquisite mystic joy is the sentiment of gratitude.

Gratitude is indeed due to Him who, neither deterred by our unworthiness nor restrained by the infinite respect which becomes His sovereign Majesty, deigned to be born of His own creature, and have a stable for His birth-place.

Oh! how vehemently must he not have desired to advance the work of our salvation, to remove everything which could make us afraid of approaching him, and to encourage us, by his own example, to return, by the path of humility, to the Heaven we had strayed from by pride!

Gratefully, therefore, let us receive the precious gift — this Divine Babe, our Deliverer. He is the Only- Begotten Son of the Father, that Father Who hath so loved the world as to give His only Son (John 3:16). He, the Son, unreservedly ratifies His Father's will, and comes to offer Himself because it is His own will (Isaias 53:7). How, as the Apostle expresses it, hath not the Father with Him given us all things? (Romans 8:32).

O gift inestimable! How shall we be able to repay it by suitable gratitude, we who are so poor as not to know how to appreciate it? God alone, and the Divine Infant in His Crib, know the value of the mystery of Bethlehem, which is given to us.

*(The Liturgical Life, by Dom Guéranger, Volume 2, Christmastide)*



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## Giving Jesus Our Love at Christmas

Shall our debt, then, never be paid? Not so: we can pay it by love, which, though finite, gives itself without measure, and may grow for ever in intensity. For this reason, the Church, after she has offered her adorations and hymns and gratitude, to her Infant Savior, gives him also her tenderest Love.

She says to Him: “How beautiful art Thou, my Beloved One, and how comely! (Canticles 1:15). How sweet to me is Thy rising, O Divine Sun of Justice! How my heart glows in the warmth of Thy beams! Nay, dearest Jesus, the means Thou usest for gaining me over to Thyself are irresistible — the feebleness and humility of a Child!”

Thus do all her words end in love; and her adoration, praise, and thanksgiving, when she expresses them in her Canticles, are transformed into love.

Christians! Let us imitate our Mother, and give our hearts to our Emmanuel. The Shepherds offer Him their simple gifts, the Magi bring Him their rich presents, and no one must appear before the Divine Infant without something worthy of His acceptance.

Know, then, that nothing will please Him, but that which he came to seek — our love. It was for this that he came down from Heaven. Hard indeed is that heart which can say, “He shall not have my love!”

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# JESUS

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## Giving Jesus Sorrow For Sin

Sorrow For Sin

Sinners! Take courage! This Feast of Christmas is one of grace and mercy, on which all, both just and sinners, meet in the fellowship of the same glad Mystery. The heavenly Father has resolved to honor the Birthday of his Son, by granting pardon to all save those who obstinately refuse it. O how worthy is the Coming of our dear Emmanuel to be honored by this divine amnesty!

You are invited to start a new life! This invitation comes from the Church herself. Yes, it is she that with divine authority invites you to begin the work of your new life on this day whereon the Son of God begins the career of his human life. We will borrow the words of a great and saintly Bishop of the Middle Ages, the pious Rabanus Maurus, who, in a homily on the Nativity of our Lord, encourages sinners to come and take their place, side by side with the just, in the stable of Bethlehem.

“I beseech you, dearly beloved Brethren, that you receive with fervent hearts the words our Lord speaks to you on this most sweet Feast, on which even infidels and sinners are touched with compunction; on which the wicked man is moved to mercy, the contrite heart hopes for pardon. Yes, it is a sweet Feast, bringing true sweetness and forgiveness to all true penitents. My little children, I promise you without hesitation that every one who, on this day, shall repent from his heart, and return not to the vomit of his sins, shall obtain all whatsoever he shall ask; let him only ask with a firm faith, and not return to sinful pleasures.

*(The Liturgical Life, by Dom Guéranger,  
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## Leaving Sin Behind, Born to New Life

“On this the Day which the Lord hath made,” says St Gregory of Nyssa, “darkness decreases, light increases, and Night is driven back again. No, brethren, it is not by chance, nor by any created will, that this natural change begins on the day when He shows Himself in the brightness of His coming, which is the spiritual Life of the world. It is Nature revealing, under this symbol, a secret to them whose eye is quick enough to see it; to them, I mean, who are able to appreciate this circumstance of our Savior’s coming.

“Nature seems to me to say: ‘Know, O Man! That under the things which I show thee Mysteries lie concealed. Hast thou not seen the night, that had grown so long, suddenly checked?’ Learn hence, that the black night of Sin, which had reached its height by the accumulation of every guilty device, is this day stopped in its course.

“Yes, from this day forward its duration shall be shortened, until at length there shall be naught but Light. Look, I pray thee, on the Sun; and see how his rays are stronger, and his position higher in the heavens: learn from that how the other Light, the Light of the Gospel, is now shedding itself over the whole earth.” [Homily On the Nativity.]

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**Change Your Life!**

**Be Less Worldly and More Godly**

Pope St. Leo the Great calls us to reform our lives and thereby profit from what Christmas is all about:

“Therefore, dearly beloved brethren, let us give thanks to God the Father, through His Son, in the Holy Ghost: Who, for His great love wherewith He loved us, hath had mercy on us and, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (Ephesians 2:4, 2:5), that in Him we might be a new creature, and a new workmanship. Let us then put off the old man with his deeds (Colossians 3:9); and, having obtained a share in the Sonship of Christ, let us renounce the deeds of the flesh.

Learn, O Christian, how great thou art, who hast been made partaker of the Divine nature, (2 Peter 1:4), and fall not again by corrupt conversation into the beggarly elements above which thou art lifted. Remember Whose Body it is Whereof thou art made a member, and Who is its Head, (1 Corinthians 6:15.) Remember that it is He That hath delivered thee from the power of darkness and hath translated thee into God’s light, and God’s kingdom (Colossians 1:13)” (Pope Leo the Great, First Sermon of Christmas Day).

*(The Liturgical Life, by Dom Guéranger,  
Volume 2, Christmastide)*



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## The Forty Days of Christmas

We apply the name of Christmas to the forty days which begin with the Nativity of our Lord, December 25th, and end with the Purification of the Blessed Virgin, February 2nd. It is a period which forms a distinct portion of the Liturgical Year, as distinct, by its own special spirit, from every other, as are Advent, Lent, Easter, or Pentecost. One same Mystery is celebrated and kept in view during the whole forty days. Neither the Feasts of the Saints, which so abound during this Season; nor the time of Septuagesima, with its mournful Purple, which often begins before Christmastide is over, seem able to distract our Holy Mother the Church from the immense joy of which she received the good tidings from the Angels (Luke 2:10) on that glorious Night for which the world had been longing four thousand years. The Faithful will remember that the Liturgy commemorates this long expectation by the four penitential weeks of Advent.

The custom of celebrating the Solemnity of our Savior's Nativity by a feast or commemoration of forty days' duration is founded on the Holy Gospel itself; for it tells us that the Blessed Virgin Mary, after spending forty days in the contemplation of the Divine Fruit of her glorious Maternity, went to the Temple, there to fulfil, in most perfect humility, the ceremonies which the Law demanded of the daughters of Israel, when they became mothers. The Feast of Mary's Purification is, therefore, part of that of Jesus' Birth; and the custom of keeping this holy and glorious period of forty days as one continued Festival has every appearance of being a very ancient one, at least in the Roman Church.

*(The Liturgical Life, by Dom Guéranger,  
Volume 2, Christmastide)*



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## The Date of Our Lord's Birth

With regard to our Savior's Birth on December 25th, we have St John Chrysostom telling us, in his Homily for this Feast, that the Western Churches had, from the very commencement of Christianity, kept it on this day. He is not satisfied with merely mentioning the tradition; he undertakes to

show that it is well founded, inasmuch as the Church of Rome had every means of knowing the true day of our Savior's Birth, since the acts of the Enrolment, taken in Judea by command of Augustus, were kept in the public archives of Rome. The holy Doctor adduces a second argument, which he founds upon the Gospel of St Luke, and he reasons thus: we know from the sacred Scriptures that it must have been in the fast of the seventh month that the Priest Zachary had the vision in the Temple (Leviticus 23:24 and following verses). The seventh month (or Tisri) corresponded to the end of our September and beginning of our October. After Zachary's vision Elizabeth, his wife, conceived St John the Baptist: hence it follows that the Blessed Virgin Mary having, as the Evangelist St Luke relates, received the Angel Gabriel's visit, and conceived the Savior of the world in the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, that is to say, in March, the Birth of Jesus must have taken place in the month of December. But it was not till the fourth century that the Churches of the East began to keep the Feast of our Savior's Birth in the month of December. Up to that period they had kept it at one time on the sixth of January, thus uniting it, under the generic term of Epiphany, with the Manifestation of our Savior made to

to the Magi, and in them to the Gentiles; at another time they kept it on the 25th of the month Pachon (May 15), or on the 25th of the month Pharmuth (April 20). St John Chrysostom, in a homily which he gave in 386, tells us that the Roman custom of celebrating the Birth of our Savior on December 25th had then only been observed ten years in the Church of Antioch.



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## Rejoice and Go to Jesus to be Healed.

“Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is born in Bethlehem of Juda. What heart so stony as not to be softened at these words? What soul is not melted at this voice of her Beloved? What announcement could be sweeter? What knowledge is more more enrapturing? Was its like ever heard before? Or when did the world ever receive such tidings? Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is born in Bethlehem of Juda.

O Nativity of spotless sanctity! O birth honorable for the world, birth pleasing and welcome to men, because of the magnificence of the benefit it bestows! Birth alone without sorrow, alone without shame, free from corruption, not unlocking, but consecrating the temple of the Virgin’s womb! Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is born in Bethlehem of Juda.

Awake, you who lie in the dust awake and give praise. Behold, the Lord cometh with salvation. Jesus cannot come without salvation, For He Himself is salvation. Happy the soul who has tasted this fruit of salvation. Take courage, you who were lost: Jesus comes to seek and save that which was lost. Ye sick, return to health: Christ comes to heal the contrite of heart with the unction of His mercy. I beseech you, then, Lord, heal me, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved. Then indeed shall my soul bless the Lord, when He shall have been merciful to my iniquities, have healed my infirmities, and have filled my desire with good things. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is born in Bethlehem of Juda.

(Extract from the Sermon of St. Bernard  
on the Nativity)



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## His Name Reveals His Mission

For why is He called Jesus, but because He shall save His people from their sins? Why has He willed to be named Christ, but because He will soften the yoke of His law by the medicine of His grace? Why was the Son of God made man, but to make men the sons of God? Who shall resist His

will? If Jesus justifies, who can condemn? If Christ heals, who can wound? If the Son of God exalts, who shall cast us down?

Since *Jesus* is born, let everyone rejoice whom the consciousness of sin has condemned as deserving of eternal punishment. For the compassion of Jesus exceeds all crimes, however great their number and enormity.

Since *Christ* is born, let him rejoice who wages war with the vices that are rooted in our nature. No disorder of the soul, however spineless it may be, can withstand the medicine which Christ brings.

Since *the Son of God* is born, let him rejoice who desires great things, for a great rewarder comes. "*This is the heir*"; let us receive Him devoutly, "*and the inheritance shall be ours.*" For He Who has given us His own Son, how has He not with Him given us all things? Let no one disbelieve, let no one doubt; we have a most trustworthy testimony. "*The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us.*"

(Extract from the Sermon of St. Bernard  
on the Nativity)



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## Do Not Fail to Praise Jesus at Christmas

Remember, too, that it is in Bethlehem of Juda that Jesus is born; and be very careful lest you fail to be found there, lest He fail to be received by you.

Bethlehem is the house of bread; Juda signifies confession or praise. If, then, you replenish your soul with the food of the Divine Word, the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, and devoutly receive the Bread which came down from heaven, and which giveth life to the world; if the vessel of your body is made strong and able to hold the new wine by being refreshed and strengthened with His new and glorified flesh; if, moreover, you live by Faith, and have no need to weep because you have forgotten to eat your bread, then, indeed, you are become a Bethlehem fitted to receive Our Lord.

But see that praise be not lacking in you. In justice, you owe Him praise. Put on praise and beauty; these are the garments Christ approves of in those who serve Him. The Apostle commends them to you in a few words: *“In the heart we believe unto justice; by the mouth is made confession unto salvation.”* Let, then, justice be in the heart, the justice which is of faith. This alone has glory before God. Let confession also be in the mouth unto salvation, and you are sure to receive Him Who was born in Bethlehem of Juda, Jesus Christ the Son of God.

(Extract from the Sermon of St. Bernard  
on the Nativity)



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## No Room At The Inn for Jesus

We know that “*there was no room for them in the inn*” nor, apparently, was there much room for them in all Bethlehem. Nor later was there room for them in all Palestine. Nor, later still, does there seem to be much room for Him in all the world. Nor today is there much room for Him in the lives and hearts of most men. But I must not blame others; is there much room for Him in mine?

Still a shelter of some kind was found, though it is to be noticed that St. Luke does not mention it. If we had no more than his description to go upon, we should almost be compelled to conclude that Our Lord was born in the gutter, by the roadside; literally the birth of a pauper and an outcast.

The mention of the manger leads us to conclude that there was a shelter of some sort overhead; but not all mangers are indoors, especially in the East. Still let us accept the firm tradition, for the sake of our pitiful human nature if for nothing else; when our King first came into this world, at least He was given a stable cave in which He could be born, at least He was treated as well as our cattle, if not as well as ourselves.

*(Prince of Peace, Archbishop Alban Goodier)*



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# CHRIST comes first in CHRISTmas!

## God Loves Simple Souls!

It is not by some kind of accident that the shepherds are called to the cave. They are not to wander down the hill and along the road to Bethlehem, and to find the Child on the way. It is possible that the cave was one in which they had often taken shelter; but that was not to be their guide this night.

Another principle God would establish; not only would He show that the poor are His special choice, but He would also show that, when He willed it, He is independent of man for the spreading of His glory. He has His ministering angels, sometimes manifesting themselves to simple souls, more often doing their work in hiddenness, because the souls of men are not simple.

It is a true instinct which makes us associate angels with little children; for it is the eyes of simple children that best can see them; it is the minds of children that best can understand them, just as it is little children that seem to come nearest to grasping the reality of the Blessed Sacrament.

*(Prince of Peace, Archbishop Alban Goodier)*



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# JESUS

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## **Do Not Be Afraid!**

The shepherds “feared with a great Fear” at the sight of the Angel of the Lord who stood by them, and at the brightness of God which shone about them; as who would not? But this implies no doubt; it implies the simplicity of children.

So they were reassured; and as children they accepted the reassurance. “Fear not!” said the Angel; this is the third time we have heard the words from an angel’s lips. “Fear not, Mary!” Our Lady was told; “Fear not, Zachary!” was said to the priest; and now “Fear not!” is said to the shepherds and “all the people.”

The first operation of an angel of light is to calm the human soul and to remove from it fear and unrest. The rest of his message is full of deep meaning. He brings “tidings of great joy, which shall be to all the people.”

The message is the news of the birth of the “Savior, Who is Christ the Lord.” And they are shown how and when they shall find Him. And to this day Christmas remains the season of “great joy to all the people.”

*(Prince of Peace, Archbishop Alban Goodier)*



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## A Feast of Angels

The Fathers of the Church, when speaking of the fall of the rebel angels, tend to explain it as the refusal to adore the Incarnate God that was to be; they would not bow down before Him who was to make Himself “less than the angels.”

Hence, when the actual manifestation came, those who had been faithful could not but have rejoiced; they must have seen in that Child more than even Mary saw, for they saw His Godhead shining through His human frame, and they recognized in Him the great union of God with men.

Later our Lord was to speak of His own love for and reliance on His angels; in the entrusting to them of children, in the use He would make of them to separate the just from the unjust, in the acceptance of an angel to strengthen Him in the Garden of Gethsemane; in the knowledge that He had but to ask His Father and legions of angels would come to His support.

Christmas Day, then, is a feast of the angels as well as of men.

*(Prince of Peace, Archbishop Alban Goodier)*



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# JESUS

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## He Brings Peace—Not A Human Peace, But A Supernatural Peace

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of goodwill.” This was the angels song of praise. It has two divisions.

First, at the moment of our Lord’s great humiliation on this earth, the angels break out with their chorus of praise. St. Paul saw it in the same light:

*“He hath humbled Himself . . . therefore God hath exalted Him.”*

Then the consequences to war-worn man are recorded. Man at war with God, man at war with himself, man all restless, is at last to be given peace, if only he will have it.

Again St. Paul sees with the angels eyes: *“He is our peace,”* he says, *“Who hath made both one, and breaking down the middle wall of partition, the enmities, in His flesh, making void the law of commandments contained in decrees, that He mighty make the two in Himself into one man, making peace, and might reconcile both to God in one body on the cross, killing the enmities in Himself.”*

It was not merely the *“Pax Romana”* (The Peace of Roman Rule) at that moment reigning, that the angels announced; it was the still greater *“Peace which the world cannot give,”* which those know who possess it.

*(Prince of Peace, Archbishop Alban Goodier)*



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## Having The Mind Of The Church

Christian simplicity loves most to dwell on this visit of the shepherds to the manger. It is pictured more than any other scene; our cribs always try to represent it; our Christmas hymns, especially our oldest carols, win us over with the simple story.

And the reason is not difficult to find; for the shepherds *“coming with haste,”* without any express injunction from the angels, without any shadow of doubt in their hearts, and finding, apparently so easily, *“Mary and Joseph and the Infant”* and *“understanding of the word,”* though, what they exactly *“understood”* they probably could not have told us.

All this is eminently typical of that spirit of devotion which runs through all Christianity, which makes children *“understand”* the Blessed Sacrament, and which *“draws all things to Himself,”* the hearts of men finding in Christ our Lord the peace and the certainty which are nowhere else.

*(Prince of Peace, Archbishop Alban Goodier)*



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## Praising and Gloryfying God

The shepherds went away happy men. They had not known happiness of this kind before. They could not have wished to be anything other than just what they were; they would not have exchanged their rank with anyone; even now,

wherever they are in Heaven, one may safely say with St. Luke they are *“glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, as it had been told them”* that night.

So often in our lives there are moments which have made all the rest of life worth living, and for which we shall never cease to praise God for all eternity a conversion, a special grace through the sacraments, a special light which has made us understand, a crisis through which we have been guided, a vocation, a dedication in some peculiar way, a proof beyond possibility of doubt of our Lord’s favor, and protection, and guidance, and intense love.

We owe our Lord very much; we thank Him very little; the shepherds remind us of this duty.

*(Prince of Peace, Archbishop Alban Goodier)*



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## Having The Mind Of The Church

There were two sets of people affected by the shepherds. The first were the simple people who heard the simple story from their simple lips. *“And all they that heard wondered at these things that were told them by the shepherds.”*

There was proof enough for them in the narrative itself and in those who told it; just as little Bernadette is proof enough in herself of the Lourdes apparitions, or as a child that pours out its little heart in its First Holy Communion, is proof enough in its degree of the Blessed Sacrament. They wondered; they did not pretend to understand; they were content to revere.

And, secondly, there was Our Lady. *“But Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart.”* How did she *“ponder”* them? What were her reflections? What deepest thoughts of deepest poets could compare with Our Lady’s ponderings? She knew so much, yet so little; and the much that she knew made her lose herself in God’s infinity.

*(Prince of Peace, Archbishop Alban Goodier)*



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## Learning From Mary

*“But Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart.”* (Luke 2:19). We are more than justified in thinking that this sentence, repeated elsewhere of Our Lady by St. Luke, is intended to tell us something peculiarly characteristic of her. It seems as if they were meant to imply that

she was especially one of those souls whose great book from which they learn is the daily providence of God, the course of His dealings with them in their own lives, and in the incidents which come across them therein.

Such souls need no other lessons than those which are thus given them day after day, and they find in them most abundant instruction as to the very highest secrets and most sublime ways of God. Common life is to them a daily revelation, and their attention feeds itself on its events. Thus the Blessed Mother becomes our teacher in the method of listening to and profiting by the daily teachings of Our Lord.

And indeed we may well here remind ourselves of the immense dignity and grandeur of the life of ordinary Christians in the Catholic Church. Do we not live among the same mysteries as those in the midst of which that Blessed Mother spent her life after the Annunciation? We are daily conversant with the Presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament; whether in the Holy Mass, which is a repetition of Calvary, or in Holy Communion, or in that perpetual presence in the tabernacle, which is a continuation of the life of Bethlehem and Nazareth.

*(Prince of Peace, Archbishop Alban Goodier)*



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## Our Lady's Thoughts

What, then, were the reflections of Our Lady as she “pondered in her heart” these wonderful events which were happening about her?

We have her one and only declaration in the Magnificat, which here again she can repeat with emphasized significance. It guides us to the direction of all her thoughts, which is first of all that of the manifestation of God, and of the ways of God, illustrated by this Child that is lying in her arms.

It speaks of the power of God, which so “rules from end to end mightily and disposes all things sweetly”; the liberality of God, Who “so loved the world as to give His only Son”; the faithfulness of God, Who has waited all these years, and now, in “the fullness of time,” has “sent His only Son into the world”; the mercy of God, Who has sent His Son that men “may have life, and may have it more abundantly”; and so throughout the whole gamut of the Divine attributes.

Then she would see in the Child itself a further and a yet greater illustration of that which she had already recognized in herself. If she was lowly, so indeed was He. If she was hidden, so was He. If she was patient and obedient, and yet burnt with love of God and man, how much more did He?

(*Prince of Peace*, Archbishop Alban Goodier)



**NO CHRIST, NO CHRISTMAS  
KNOW CHRIST, KNOW CHRISTMAS**



# JESUS

**IS THE REASON FOR THE SEASON**

## Our Heavenly Physician

There are two things from which our weak human nature shrinks pain and shame. Christ came to take both from us, and this He did by accepting both in His own person when, for instance, not to mention other occasions, He was condemned to death, and to a most

shameful death, by wicked men. And, to give us fullest confidence of this deliverance, He first freed His Mother from both. This is an unheard-of wonder, yet we see here still greater miracles and still fuller glory. The Mother loses not her virginity, the Son is without stain of sin. The curse of Eve falls not on the Mother, nor is the Son subject to the universal calamity of which the Prophet speaks: *“No one is clean, not even the babe whose life upon earth is but one day.”*

Behold here an Infant without stain! Behold the Lamb without spot, the Lamb of God, Who taketh away the sins of the world! Who could better take them away than He Who knew no sin? He, indeed, can cleanse me, who has never Himself been defiled. His touch can remove the clay from my eyes, for His hand is free from the lightest dust. He can take the mote from out my eye Who has no beam in His own ; or, rather, He Who has no smallest grain of dust in His own eye can take the beam from mine.

We have now certainly seen the riches of salvation and of life.

We have seen His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father. What Father? *“And he shall be called the Son of the Most High.” “That which shall be born of thee shall be holy, and shall be called the Son of God.”*

*(Prince of Peace, Archbishop Alban Goodier)*



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