



Missionarii Sancti Joannis Baptistae

Vox clamantis in deserto, parate viam Domini

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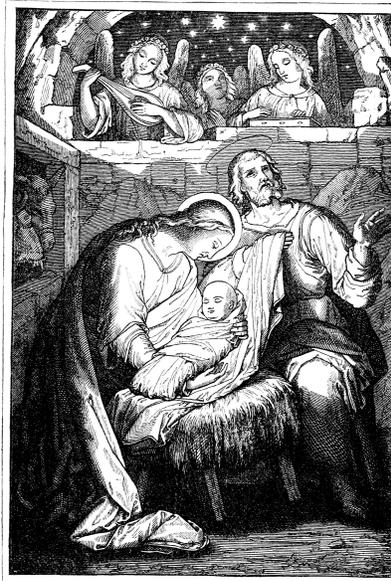
Where There is No Love — Put Love!



ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS exclaims: “Where there is no love, put love and you will draw out love.” This is an easy way to see what God is doing at Christmas. He looked down upon the world and found it without love. Its inhabitants were selfish and self-seeking, at war within and without. Thus, He sent down Love. Love became incarnate in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, and everywhere she went, she brought this Incarnate Love. St. John the Baptist received this love and leapt for joy in his mother’s womb. Filled with the Holy Ghost, his parents, Elizabeth and Zechariah, likewise rejoiced and prophesied. St. Joseph, too, was filled with love such that we could say they were mortally wounded, one and all, by the Love of God (and never recovered). They wanted nothing more than to return love for love, even to the point of sacrificing their very lives. In this way, God drew out love from what had become a love-less world. No wonder St. John of the Cross poetically exclaimed: “My sweet and tender Jesus, if Thy Love can slay—it is today.”

This love became visible in our fallen world at midnight on Christmas, in complete fulfillment of the Scriptures, even as to the exact hour of the night. Love allowed Himself to be confined to our human nature, bound in swaddling bands, and placed in a manger in a cave-like stable in the cold of night. This says something about true love, Divine Love: it is self-sacrificing, self-emptying. It pours itself out for the loved one. Listen again to another poetic expression of St. John. “When the time had come for Him to be born, He went forth like the Bridegroom from His bridal chamber, embracing His bride (i.e., our human nature), holding her in His arms, Whom the

gracious Mother laid in a manger among some animals that were there at the time. Men sang songs and angels melodies celebrating the marriage of Two such as these (i.e., divine and human nature in the one Person of the Son). But God there in the manger cried and moaned; and these tears were jewels the bride brought to the wedding. The Mother gazed in sheer wonder on such an exchange: in God, man’s weeping, and in man, gladness, to the one and the other things usually so strange” (Ballad 9: The Birth). What an exchange! What a reversal!



After teaching His disciples the Our Father, Jesus, the Incarnate Word, tells them a parable about a man knocking on his neighbor’s door at midnight on behalf a friend who had just arrived on a journey. This friend is the Divine Friend, the very same Bethlehem Babe Who arrives at midnight on a journey. St. Luke makes it very clear where that journey is heading: to Jerusalem, where He will make His exodus from this world by way of Calvary.

When He leapt down from His throne, Love re-entered the world, preached Truth, filled man with grace, cast out demons (the next scene in St. Luke’s Gospel after the parable about the man knocking at midnight), dispelled diseases, and raised the dead. He has wed our poor human nature, symbolized by the constraining bands of the swaddling clothes. But what does Love receive in return? Later He would be constrained by the nails of the Cross, and then by the clothing of bread and wine in the Eucharist on our altars and in our Tabernacles, even until the end of time. This is Love, immolating Himself entirely for the loved one. It makes the journey to Calvary. This is God’s gift of Love to us so that we can love in return. “Where there is no love, put love ...”



Novena for Christmas

December 16

O SHEPHERD that rulest Israel, Thou that ledest Joseph like a sheep, come to guide and comfort us. *Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be...*

December 17

O WISDOM that comest out of the Mouth of the Most High, that reachest from one end to another, and orderest all things mightily and sweetly, come to teach us the way of prudence! *Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be...*

December 18

O ADONAI, and Ruler of the House of Israel, Who didst appear unto Moses in the burning bush, and gavest him the law in Sinai, come to redeem us with an outstretched arm! *Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory...*

December 19

O ROOT of Jesse, which standest for an ensign of the people, at Whom the kings shall shut their mouths, Whom the Gentiles shall seek, come to deliver us, do not tarry. *Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be...*

December 20

O KEY of David, and Sceptre of the House of Israel, that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth, come to liberate the prisoner from the prison, and them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death. *Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be...*

December 21

O DAYSPRING, Brightness of the everlasting light, Sun of justice, come to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death! *Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be...*

December 22

O KING of the Gentiles, yea, and desire thereof! O Cornerstone, that makest of two one, come to save man, whom Thou hast made out of the dust of the earth! *Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be...*

December 23

O EMMANUEL, our King and our Law-Giver, Longing of the Gentiles, yea, and salvation thereof, come to save us, O Lord our God! *Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be...*

December 24

O THOU that sittest upon the cherubim, God of hosts, come, show Thy face, and we shall be saved. *Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be...*

Here, finally, is the true meaning of Christmas! It is true Love's complete self-gift: sacrificial love that urges us to love in return. To open our doors to love, to invite Love into our lives, to let it transform us, too. But we must do our part. We have to rise from our self-love and open the door (which sin and lack of faith keeps closed), giving our poor paltry pieces of bread to St. Joseph who is knocking on behalf of Our Lord.

Peer into the manger and see a little boy with arms outstretched, longing to enter our hearts and our homes. He is knocking. Lift your eyes to the Crucified One hanging above the altar. Here we see that same sweet little boy found in the crib, tears in his eyes, arms outstretched, asking only that we open the door to Him, cradle Him in our arms, and love Him in return. Is there really any difference between the love sought in the cradle (made of wood) and that pled for on the holy wood of the Cross? Only the size of the man changes; the same plea is clearly intoned from the day of His birth to the day of His death: LOVE ME. "Where there is no love, put love *and* you will draw out love." ❧

Sacred Heart of Jesus: Glowing Furnace of Charity

WE HAVE EXPANDED the patio area below Our Lady keeping watch from the roof of the church. Here we are placing a cast iron statue, obtained from Europe, of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. He will be lit up at night so that those driving down Amsterdam Road will always be able to see Him with His arms open wide and His loving Heart exposed! ❧

Come to the Stable—Come to the Grotto

THE MISSIONARIES OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST and the parishioners of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish have been begging our Lady to come to us and take her proper place in our future grotto. Thanks to your continued support, we are preparing the way for Our Lady by designing the candle racks, devotional statues, a Marian mosaic, structural arches, and domes. Frivolous lawsuits cannot prevent the inevitable arrival of the Mother of God. Please continue to help us in giving honor to the highest honor of our race. Then, in the fullness of time, the Queen will take her throne and we can all come to the grotto. ❧

Our gift to our benefactors is this: daily prayer and the offering of Holy Mass for them all on Christmas Day through its Octave.

Please consider contributing to this work, making checks to:

The Missionaries of St. John the Baptist or just MSJB

May God reward you!

The Missionaries of Saint John the Baptist (www.msjb.info)

