

(English translation)

Tokyo, 17 December 1981

Allow Jesus To Be Born In Our Midst

In a few days, it will be Christmas. And before I speak with you again, the first year of our determined effort to reach holiness together will have come to a close. As you know, Christmas reminds us of an essential point of our spirituality, which is also a basic norm that characterizes our way of life. Actually, more than a point or a norm, it is a reality, a great reality that we are called to offer the world.

It is Jesus who in a certain way is born and lives among us if we love one another with a love that is ever new. In fact, to allow Jesus to be born in our midst is our first obligation, the basic reason for the Focolare's existence.

Perhaps that is why the following thought has been running through my mind lately. It is a kind of admonition: "You cannot allow yourself the luxury of becoming a saint unless *the* Saint is in your midst. Don't fool yourself into thinking that you can reach Christian perfection if the One who is perfect is not among you."

What are we to do then? I think we must try to have Jesus among us and try to keep him with us, by having a love for one another that is characterized by a spirit of service and of understanding, that wants to share the sufferings, burdens, cares, and joys of our neighbours.

A typically Christian love, that covers everything and always forgives. We should try to be sure that the Risen Lord, who promised to be with his Church until the end of time, is among us as a result of our mutual love. And then we should do God's will in each succeeding moment, as perfectly as we can, absolutely refusing to listen to our own will.

This is what we should do during these last two weeks of the year, ... which urges us to do God's will as Mary did. God's will for us is similar to God's will for her: it is first and foremost to give life to Jesus. In this way we will really become champions at unity with God and with our neighbours.

Have a blessed Christmas then; and remember that Jesus can be present among us even if we are far from one another.

Merry Christmas to all!

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