

**Incarnation is God's Absolute Love & Gift to Humanity:** GK Chesterton rightly said, *Whatever else is true of man, man is not what he was meant to be.* God's dream for us is completely different from ours. God created us by his love, in love, to love and for love. God created us to be good. He did not intend human beings to be evil. God did not create human beings to be an agent of death, destruction and darkness in the world. God's dream for us seems to be destroyed by non-other than ourselves. Human nature got tainted with sin and it resulted in all our sufferings. And yet, God did not give up on humans.

St. Augustin summarized the content of Christmas and said *the Son of God became the Son of man so that the sons of men could become the sons of God.* So great is God's love for us that He became one of us, so that we in turn might become one with Him. God willed the Incarnation as a free gift for the perfection of the human person and all of creation, not simply as a response to sin. In the incarnation, God emptied Himself, taking on the human form so that He might regain the lost paradise for all of us.

The Christmas love, this gift of God's love to us, comes wrapped in silence. Jesus was not born in the splendour of the day but in the silence of the night. God is a great lover of silence. Silence is the great revelation: it reveals God to us; it also reveals us to ourselves. Usually when we look for God, we look the other way, towards the sky. Incarnation is God's movement downward. Incarnation is God coming down, love coming down from heaven to create love. In order to find and encounter God, we need to look within ourselves as we are created in the image and likeness of his Son. Christmas celebrates God's entry into our world as the break of a new day, a light shining in the darkness. Christmas challenges us to recognize and receive Jesus as our light. Like Jesus, we are then to be light amid darkness, rays of hope amid despair. Celebrating this love at Christmas should inspire and induce us to live the Gospel.

Alexander Pope, a British poet said, *What does it profit me if Jesus is born in thousands of cribs all over the world and he is not born in my heart?* We need to give Jesus the gift of ourselves and he needs to be born in our hearts. The joy of Christmas is not for a day or a season. It is an eternal joy, a joy that no one can take from us because it is the joy of Jesus Christ himself made present in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who dwells within us. Let us take God's love from the manger and share it with the people at home, with people in your offices and with the people in the world.

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