A Discourse on Christmas Day

Ecc evangeline votis quadrum magnum...
quia hodie natus est Votis Salvator.

Behold I bring to tidings of great joy.... Because this day is born to you a Saviour; Luke 2:10-11.

If the Prophets my Dear Friends, were ever impatient on any occasion; it was on the expectation of this happy news, this miraculous Birth, which brought into the World the Messiah so long wished for and sigh'd after. The Prophet Isaiah declared that he would never cease from his importunities, prophesying that Jerusalem should not cease, till the first One should appear, the Saviour should appear, who should shine as a burning Lamp and enlighten the whole World. They sometimes express their ardent desires of this coming in their addressing themselves to the Heavens. Drop down dew ye Heavens from above, and let the clouds rain the just. At other times to the Earth. Let the earth they may be opened and Earth. Let forth a Saviour. At other times again they invoke his own omnipotent hand to
break through the Heavens and come down to their relief: O that then would He send the Heavens say they and would or some down.

Great Prophets your lips are heard, your tears at last prove successful; your earnest demands are granted: the calamities of mankind and your mournful lamentation have so far prevailed which were to proceed the happy arrival of your long expected Messiah. The royal sceptre is made over to a stranger from the sons of Juda, as Jacob had foretold. Daniel’s seventy years are now expired; the mysteries which were now aspired by the mysterious weeks are now espoused, the Virgin, whom Isaiah told King Ahas, should be fruitful and bear a Son, has verified his prediction, he is this born in a stable at Bethlehem and laid in a manger; and to the whole the joyful news. Grace here gave voice to Him; magnum. But my Dear Friend, such a complication of circumstances occurs in this day’s solemnity, that it is difficult to determine where to begin or what to say, each one being a prologue which furnishes sufficient subject for several discourses, and to include all in one would create nothing but confusion. Therefore, laying aside all the more visible and obvious circumstances of our dear Redeemer’s birth, of which you are not ignorant, passing over, I say, in silence, the painful journey of His Blessed Mother to Bethlehem, her affecting rejection when arrived there, the still more stupendous condescension of our Saviour to be born in a stable; this revealing himself first to the poor and obser the shepherds, inviting them to adore him, and inspiring them to become his first Evangelists, leaving I say these astonishing circumstances to your pious meditations: I shall content myself with present to dwell on the chief reason why this only Son of God was thus day born. Now by considering the unhappy state of mankind caused by the sin of our common parents, Adam and Eve, the blessings we receive by the holy Birth of our Saviours, requesting your pious attention.
No condition can be well imagined more deplorable than to owe an immense sum, the payment of which is exacted under pain of perpetual imprisonment, in debtors' dungeons, and to be subjected to the means of paying even one halfpenny of the said sum. No condition more miserable than to remain under the sentence of being scourged 400 times, and withstanding thousands of years for crimes committed without the power to make satisfaction for the least offence. This and worse than this was the unhappy condition of unfortunate man, ever since the fall of our first Parent. This sin on that account, as Austin calls it, is great beyond measure by reason of the misery of that irreparable pain as the same Holy Father styles it, with which it involved his whole posterity, all the snares of Heaven upon unrepentant man ever since the World's creation were but chastenments of his first rebellion: and yet had they been infinitely more they could never have restored him to his Mother's favor. All the sacrifices ever offered— all the rushes the World ever offered—as the Faith of Abraham, the patience of Job, the meekness of Moses, the penance of David could not make satisfaction for the least sin. No man could be perfect to that degree, says St. Ambrose, as to make satisfaction for the sinfulness of the soul, and the reason generally given by the Holy Fathers is the greatness of God and the wretchedness of man. On the one hand, there was an infinite Majesty offended, on the other, a vile creature the offender, the offender was Lord and Master, absolute and supreme proprietor of all that had a being in Heaven and on Earth; the criminal had nothing he could call his own; nothing but what God already belonged to his offended Maker on various titles: on the one side all power, all greatness, independence, eternity, and Majesty; on the other, nothing but dependence, weakness and base dependence. This raises our sin and rebellion to such a degree of enormity that the angelical Doctor, St. Thomas, called it in some measure infinite. Occasum contra Deum commissum quadrat infinitatem, a sin committed against God has a certain infinity, because the Majesty offended is infinitely great, infinitely good.
infinitely amiable, and man the offender infinitely inferior to him in all these divine attributes, which raises the guilt beyond the reach of human comprehension.

This, my Dear Friend, was the unfortunate state of mankind for above 6000 years, involved in an immense debt of guilt of an infinite nature, and at the same time destitute of the means of making the least satisfaction for what was justly due. No finite creature could repair our loss, nothing short of making Jesus, God's satisfaction for the sinner's cause—more miserable, or a cause more desperate?

Under such distressing circumstances, what hope remained for us but to be cast into prison for eternity? But behold and admire, my dear Friend, the mercy and bounty of our God in providing a remedy for our evils. The eternal Word the second person of the blessed Trinity offers himself in sacrifice for the sins of men. A sacrifice of infinite value against which no exception could be made, because conformable to the most rigorous rules of justice, and more than equal to our guilt, for this end the fulness of time being come appointed by the Almighty for the accomplishment of this great work of mercy. He was born of the Virgin Mary in helpless infancy; yet true God and true Man. This is the mystery; this is the mercy the Church commemorates at the present time, and this we are all invited with love and gratitude humbly to adore. Ought we not to exclaim in the words of the Prophet Jeremy: Obstatuente Christo super hoc, qui astonished Oye heavens at this. Man has offended God, and this same God comes to satisfy for the crime committed against him. Man, by pride, had affected to be like unto the most high. God that he might not perish for his insolence, submits to the greatest humiliations and becomes the lowest among the lowest. Man had abandoned his God and made himself a slave to the Devil; his God descended from his throne of glory and was born in a manger, to rescue him from the propostion of the power of death and
restore him to liberty. Doth not the humility of our God herein appear to us more wonderful than his power, the humblest power he manifested in creating the world out of nothing, and filling heaven with angels and the earth with men and an immense variety of creatures, was not as astonishing as the inefable humiliations he underwent in man's redemption. Here, my dear friends, let us contemplate the eternal Word, the omnipotent Son of God become an infant for our sake. Let us admire the wonderful invention of the divine mercy and the exaltation of his love for us. The immense Word of the Almighty Father has reduced himself to the state of a lowly child. Why? St. Paul tells us in a few but very expressive words: 

pecators salus facere, to save sinners, his declared enemies, who have often contemned his benediction, abused his graces, scoffed at his glory, blasphemed his Majesty for the salvation of such undeserving creatures, he this day, miraculously born in a stable and laid in a manger, pecators salus facere, to save his treacherous servants, his rebellious creatures from eternal perdition and to exalt them to eternal everlasting glory. This is the end for which he assumed our human nature and there are the blessings we have received by his happy birth. Contemn plaeting them, my dear friends, the prodigy of God's mercy and goodness, sending his infinite tenderness and compassion for his infinite tenderness and compassion for us, and the great things he has done for our salvation. Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation? Have we not great reason to hope salvation?
Mystery of Love

My Dear Friend.

My Divine Redeemer requires of us a more solid proof of our love than some transient emotions of our hearts. He came not only to satisfy for and cancel the debts which we owed to the divine justice, but also to teach us not only for our offences, but also to teach us not only by word of mouth, but example, the victory which through His merits will conduct us to eternal life; and it is by the constant practice of those that is the true and only test of our love for Him.

Let us then prepare our souls and turn towards Bethlehem, let us enter the humble stable where the Lord of infinite glory chose for His abode.

Learn of me, says he to us who have embraced evangelical poverty to labor and esteem your state; and to you, my...
Learn of me obedience, because I who am the King of Kings have submitted myself to the singleness and conduct of a tender Virgin.

Learn of me to love your neighbour, since I who am the true God of the true God have made myself man for your sake.

Lastly, learn of me a true and real contempt of the perishable goods of this world, since I who am the wisdom of God have despised and rejected them as false and counterfeit to teach you by my example to acquire those that are true and everlasting.

Such, my dear friends, are the divine lessons our new-born Saviour gives us from his example. Let us entreat him to imprint them so deeply in our hearts that they may always appear in our conduct. Let us earnestly invite him, whose word we dare not dissemble, to be spiritually born in our hearts, let us humbly beseech him to prepare our souls...
by his Holy grace for his reception; to
thank, all morose, affections to fill
us with his Holy Spirit and Spirit reign
in all our affections, thoughts, and actions,
that as by his nativity he is become all
ours so we may be altogether his, in so much
that we may be always able to say with the
Apostle Rom. C. 8. Who shall separate us from
the love of God? Animated by the example
of our blessed Redeemer who underwent too
many humiliations and sufferings during
the many years of his mortal life for the
love of us; and strengthened by frequently
and devoutly receiving under the Eucharistic
veils, we shall be enabled to bear with
patience and resignation all the evils of
this life for the love of him, and hereafter
come to the happy enjoyment of him
in his heavenly kingdom. which sincerely wish you
a happiness to crown out measure, and
bountiful God grant us all. In the
Name of, 