On Christmas Eve

Et hoc volvis viguum: Iuneni et infantem
nunnis involutione, et positum in praecipio.
And this shall be a sign to you: you shall find an
infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a
manger. Words taken out of 2nd. Ch. of St. Luke xvi. 23.
Now, among the many Mysteries and Marvels
included in the Gospel on the Solemnity we
are about to celebrate, not one seems to convey
more profitable instructions to us
than the words of the Angel to the shepherds.
This shall be a sign to you.

O dear God! What
a sign is this to discover to man the true Mediocrity
and Saviour of the world: an infant wrapped in
swaddling clothes and laid in a manger on
a little straw, between an ox and an ass! What
marks are these my dear friends, to make
known the greatness and Majesty of a God
made man! And yet this conduct of humble
Jesus has made a most admirable harmony
both with the whole series of His ensuing
Life, and the Divine Doctrine he was come
to teach and confirm by his admirable example. His sign did not indeed accord with the depraved part of the wise of this world, and herein are verified these words of our Saviour St. Matt. Ch. 11. V. 25: Abandon distaste, a capricious and prudent root of revolting pride; thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones. Yet, my dear friend, these mysteries were hid from the wise and the great of Israel, and revealed to poor humble Shepherds, who guided by the light of Heaven, were made to discern not only the majesty of a God concealed under the gloomy shades of Bethlehem, but moreover to discover the mysterious conformity of these humble Marks with the dignity of the Person, whose happy birth they this night proclaimed.

I propose, in the first part of this short entertainment, to propose to your pious consideration some of the principal advantages accruing to us from the humble manner in which the Son of God came into the world. His great love for us in his humble birth will be the subject of the second, and I shall conclude with a word of salutary advice concerning the accomplishment of the unbounded love of Jesus, in the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, requesting the favor of your attention.

Part 1.

The exit vobis signum. This shall be to you a sign: you shall find an Infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger. Almighty God, intending to appear on earth invested with human nature, could not descend in a condition more conformable to his greatness and more conformable to the designs of his Divine Providence, than in the manner described in my text; nor had he been born with all the magnificence and glory you can represent to yourselves were you to view...
him in a cradle more glittering and brilliant than ever was a king or an emperor. Among attended by the greatest monarchs and potentates of the earth—prostrate with their crowns and sceptres at his sacred feet. If we seriously reflect, he will not appear so great as in the poor, lowly stable and crib of Bethlehem; for a little is all worldly pomp and grandeur in the sight of divine Majesty, or to use the words of the royal Prophet, sent multitudinous unto it, as a mere nothing before him. Thus the flowers with which the dewy spring bedecks the meadows and the luscious lilies of the valley are more richly clothed according to the son of God's own word than Solomon himself in all his glory. Now is not he the Almighty God the Creator and Maker of all these precious pearls and rich jewels of the sea and land afforded? Would then the Son of God, himself in all his glory, assume the humblest abode for his own indescribable and ineffable greatness, the passing from the summit of glory to the lowest abyss of abjection, so that there should be no degree of contempt beneath him, as there was no degree of Majesty above him, possessing all things in heaven and earth, deprived of every accommodation in a stable. Thus my dear friends did the Son of the eternal Father confound the pride of our wicked enemy, crush the head of the inhuman serpent and tribulation over his insatiable malice. Happy Child in the eyes of all that are truly wise! Happy Child, that contains the divine Majesty, who blessed clothes which dry up the stains of our
One and tears! Over the heavenly Babe! How beneficial to our souls for the gaining of eternal life! See how by His infinite Spirit, on His most holy, innocent, and immaculate body, He satisfies the desire of all nations, to express myself in the words of an ancient Father Oculata in membris infantis potentia Majestatis in the limbs of an infant lies the power of Majesty. Though every action of our Blessed Saviour during his whole life is of infinite value, yet none of his bitter death and passion accepted of us so great admiration, as his astonishing humble Birth, even then he made the first offering of all the agonies he was to endure on the Cross, and accepted from the hands of His eternal Father the future bitter Chalice of His sacred Passion. Moreover, if we consider the evils he came to remedy, could he have so well delineated the extreme opposition between him and them as He did by His surprising poor and humble birth in a box and jolting stable? The consideration of this caused St. Austin to address himself to human nature in these or the like approbation of man then worst lost in counting to be like unto God, but this God has redeemed thee in becoming little like unto thee: an unfortunate degenerate thy curiosity made thee aspire to the knowledge of good and evil, and behold thy God appears in a bare and humble End, as of one invested with thy misfortune. Therefore to confound thy pride and arrogance, thou art surrounded with plenty and ease, and see thy God in extreme want of things, depressing himself of the usual commodities of human life, and engaged in toil and labour for thee from his very nativity. 

O except of love! O abode of mercy and charity towards us! What practical lessons of obedience, poverty, and humility are exhibited this night in the stable of Bethlehem! If this example has any ascendance over the human heart, how might not the example of Jesus Christ move the hearts of all mankind? The meanness of the stable confounds the pomp and grandeur of the World; the poverty of the Child gives a mortal stab to the insatiable passion after wealth and riches, the mock of the
in sufferings, however Divine love puts pride and ambition to the bliss; and his love and sufferings overwhelm the cost.
The love and delight, with shame and confusion. What vice is there that little trace of Bethlehem, does not reprove and confound it, and what vice that he does not set an accursed example of? All my dear friends, what heavenly instructions are imparted to us from the Book of Bethlehem! Enough not only to excite and animate the virtuos to a generous perseverance in the practice of their religious exercises, but even to dissolve the most ardent sinners. Friends however to those that I now address myself but to those whose love towards their brethren has caused them to renounce all the world, and to seek in the highest estimation, their love is valuable. I shall not therefore pursue necessary to express on the subject of my second part.

Part 2

Were a most tender Parent of the nearest friend we had in the world. Helped with all felicity and innocently enjoying all the lawful pleasures and happiness the earth could afford, at once reduced to the greatest extremity of poverty and want, pain and suffering, purely through our fault and bad conduct through our extravagances and offenses, how should we lament and deplor our folly! This, my dear friends, is only a step higher, in much greater a degree, as Jesus above, the low condition of man, and consequently the love of all the适度's claims our love. The son of God equal to his eternal to his eternal Father in all things, who was in the enjoyment of infinite and eternal happiness in the bosom of his Father through his excessive love for us, descended from heaven (without honour) in being an expression which beholds this extreme humiliation of the Blessecant manifestations towards us, and of the reciprocal love we ought to return him, the subject of my second part.

Part 2

Were a most tender Parent of the nearest friend we had in the world. Helped with all felicity and innocently enjoying all the lawful pleasures and happiness the earth
Let us make daily offerings of the first fruits of all our Christian and religious duties and pious employments, cheerfully accepting and punctually complying with them for the sake of our week and humble Jesus, and let us conjure him to bind our hearts to love that we may say with St. Paul Rom. 8: 38, 'What saith the Scripture? I will praise thee, O Lord.'

From the love and union of our hearts to the divine Infant Jesus? shall any flesh or negligence, any difficulties we find in the compliance with our religious duties, for the sake of him who strengthens us. Ah! my dear friends, may these be ever the sentiments and dispositions of our hearts!

May the love of Jesus ever possess our souls, so that we may always have prepared an acceptable abode for the Lamb of God when ever he is pleased to make on a visit in the holy Eucharist of which I am briefly to speak in the remaining part of my discourse.
Imagine, my dear friend, you now hear the
Divine Infant calling us from his little
Crib! Venite, Ome omen! Venite a me una
mite sum of humble cords! Come to me all of
you, learn of me because I am meek and humble
of heart. Come and learn of me to despise
the false pleasure and deceitful vanities of
the world and to walk in the path of penance
and mortification—the way of the Cross.
Learn to love me as I have loved you and
here begin to offer myself a sacrifice for you:
Venite ad me, come to me, one of so refreshers.
While I will refresh you! but also, if not
aided by the divine light, what redemption
can we expect in a poor stable from a
little helpless Infant laid in a manger
covered with straw? But when we hear the
Holy Angels sounding forth his praises
and filling the earth with their melody
with a Glorious Exclamas Deo Gloria! to
God on High, and filling the earth with their
melody, we are moved to cry out with the
wise men, Where is he that is born King
of the Jews? Bethlehem is the happy spot
of land, the stable and cradles are his Palace
and throne, here in splendour, the abode of
the only son of God in human flesh, who
invites us to come to him, and he will refresh
us with his own divine self, saying to us:
My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is
drink indeed, and by eating on you shall
live in me, ye that eat this bread shall
live forever. Oh how great is our happiness
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Virgin for the sacred fruit of her blessed womb she this night brought forth and laid in a manger. Then we will consider who it is we are about to receive into the closet of our hearts, that it is no less than the son of God, the Divine Infant, the Saviour born this night at Bethlehem, and new-born Babe, born this night at Bethlehem, and there is pleased to condescend to be born again in us. Oh to what a summit of honor and love doth our souls. Oh to what a summit of honor and love doth our souls ascend by this singular privilege of infinite bounty! Elizabeth visited by the Blessed Virgin sometime after her conception, this in an ecstasy of joy, love, and admiration exclaims: Vnde mihi, ove, unde mihi, ove, whence is this to us, how comes it to pass, that we poor mortal worms of the earth, should be so highly honoured and favoured? It is my Redeemer, through the ex cresciss of love and ardent desire, the Divine Infant has for our eternal welfare. It is to engage our affections to his sacred person. Oh! let our hearts then be for ever united to him; let them burn with ardent flames of Divine love, not only the ardent flames of Divine love, but at all times, always, with all our strength. As we assist at the holy sacrifice of the Holy Communion, or spiritually as often as we assist at the holy sacrifice of the holy Mass, so that we may be ever able to say with St. Paul, Gal. 1:20, Viva nuntiatur jam non ago, vivant vos in me, Christus.
I live, now not I: but Christ liveth in me; that we may faithfully love, serve and adore all the days of our lives, and hereafter be found worthy to behold him face to face in his glory, is my sincere wish to you all. In the Name &c.