

WHY DON'T WE REJOICE?

(Letter 23 of Father Matthew the Poor's Letters)

Let's take this journey with Father Matta in his meditation on the Nativity. Enjoy! NB: All quotations are taken from the NKJV, if not otherwise mentioned.

Dear Father. May the peace of God which surpasses all understanding be with your beloved soul and may His peace abound to be a fruitful tree which flowers in springtime, having received by the warmth of the Holy Spirit the ability to bear the fruit of grace and offer nourishment for every living soul. May God bless him who plants and him who waters, and glorify the skillful hand that allows our nature to share God's own divine nature.

The time has come. "Let your servant depart in peace" (Luke 2:31). Simeon the Elder rejoices because Christ has been born in a place for beasts. The low point is lifted up to God's Heaven of Heavens; the crooked ways have been made straight by the mere touch of the Spirit; the obstacles have been removed in the silence of the night; and the daylight of salvation has shined upon the way, paving it upon the arid land of despondent hearts.

Why then should we not rejoice? Why should the angels not exult? Peace has just been planted in the very core of the earth. The joy of the Spirit has suddenly sprung forth amidst the thorns of sorrows. Those who do not wish to believe what is written, let them come to us to believe what is seen. Let them place the finger of doubt on the wound of sin; let them feel the pulses of grace instead of the stirrings of sin and hear God's heart beating beneath the sound of their own amazement.

After all that, those who do not wish to believe, let them take a look around, for the very stones are about to cry out, a cry that would deafen the ears... Today, there has emerged from the silence of the Church a voice crying that the time has come for the travail of childbirth. Christ is about to be formed in the hearts of many. A whole nation may be born in one day (cf. Is 66:8). Instead of the silence of fourteen centuries, the barren will cry out through the mouths of countless children. The light of the Holy Spirit will dawn and be poured out

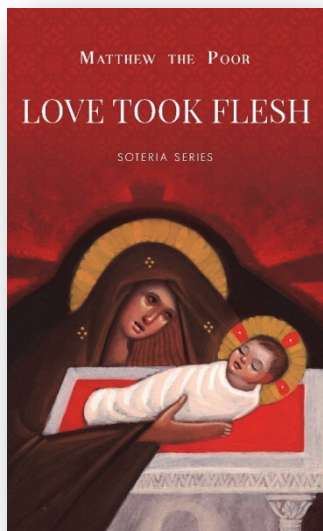
profusely on every oppressed or crushed person, in place of the darkness that guilty hands have embraced throughout countless generations. Faith will cover the earth in readiness for the One who is to come, that Christ may find His heart's desire.

Trim your lamp, O wise people! (cf. Matt 25:1-13). Let the light of your poverty and contrition shine so that everyone in the house may know that we look forward to a better city whose foundations are built by God (cf. Heb 11:10). Let your eyes always look upwards to where the happy end lies and where your portion is being prepared for you. Do not become entangled in the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather be filled with peace through prayer and spiritual work.

Resort to find shelter in God's wings in evil times; He will carry you away. Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything, let your prayers be known to God, who seals with His faithful promises every work done sincerely in His name.

Peace, Peace, Peace!

(1967)



Love Took Flesh, Father Matthew's English anthology on the glorious Nativity is now available for worldwide distribution on all Amazon stores.

This latest English publication by St. Macarius Press contains spiritual letters to his disciples on how the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ was the fruit of God the Father's immense love toward humanity. Christ accepted estrangement and death for our sake to announce to everybody that "God so loved the world..."

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