

dec 23

the following is a story by mother teresa. she was a sweet lady who dedicated her life to helping the most poor and needy of india. i'm sure everyone knows about her. though there may be many differences in our theological beliefs, she is an example of what it really means to be Christ-like.

the church of our Lord has many differing doctrinal beliefs. i don't think any of us have it all completely right. as long as we agree on a few basic truths, i think the rest will all straighten itself out. one of the last prayers our Lord prayed before His sacrifice, was that we all become one as He and the Father are One.

often it takes persecution for one to lay down their petty differences and embrace their common beliefs. i wonder if God deems our differences as important as we do? all i know is this simple woman exhibited more of Christ than most of us do.

i pray we all will yield more of ourselves to Him. He alone can accomplish what we cannot. as the blessed prophet john the baptist once said. "He must increase, but i must decrease." john 3:30 and just as the baptist went before and proclaimed His coming, let that spirit fill the hearts of each of us.

-----

From Mother Teresa of Calcutta

At Christmas Christ comes to us like a little child, small and helpless, so much in need of all that love can give. Are we ready to receive Him? Before the birth of Jesus His parents asked for a simple dwelling place, but there was none. If Mary and Joseph were looking for a home for Jesus, would they choose your house and all it holds?

Today there is so much trouble in the world, and I think that much of it begins at home. The world is suffering because there is no peace in the family.

We have so many thousands of broken homes. We must make our homes centers of compassion and forgiveness, and so bring peace.

Make your house, your family, another Nazareth, where love, peace, joy, and unity reign, for love begins at home. You must start there and make your home a center of love. You must be the hope of eternal happiness to your wife, your husband, your child, to your grandfather, your grandmother, to whoever is connected to you.

The home is where the mother is. Once I found a child on the streets. I took him to our children's home and gave him a bath and some clean clothes, but he ran away. He was found again by somebody else, but he ran away a second time. After we found him, I said to the sisters, "Please follow that child and see where he goes when he runs away."

When the child ran away a third time they followed him, and there, under a tree, was his mother. She had put

stones under a small earthenware vessel and was cooking some food she had found. The sister asked the child, "Why did you run away from the home?" And the child answered, "But this is my home because this is where my mother is."

That was home. The food that was found was all right because Mother had cooked it. It was Mother who hugged the child, Mother who wanted the child – and the child had his mother. And between a wife and a husband it is the same ...

Let us pray that we shall be able to welcome Jesus at Christmas – not in the cold manger of our heart but in a heart full of love and humanity, a heart warm with love for one another.

-----

what a wonderful message from a disciple of Christ. Jesus is our home and we are headed there shortly.

our God is pure love and to become like Him, we must become love also. not just practice love; become love itself. the kind of love that can look at someone who is doing you great injury and feel sorry for them. sorry because what they are doing to their self is hurting them more than anything they may do to you.

i would ask each of you to read again of the apostle paul's description of love in 1 cor 13. that kind of love cannot come from within ourselves. it is the love that God has for us and we can only allow it to flow through us. He alone gets all the glory. He is the

author and finisher of our faith. "I am the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." rev 22:13

we now stand in His stead and bid all those reluctant to come. "and the Spirit and the bride say, "come!" and let him who hears say, "come!" and let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely." rev 22:17 our Lord is coming soon!

linda