



International Community of the Divine Savior

General Committee

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Ox and donkey at the manger (c. 1140);

Image field from the wooden ceiling in St. Martin, Zillis (Switzerland)

Christmas - a new beginning ...

*Thoughts about Christmas and the
Holy Evening.*

Christ was born in the stable - this is an important symbol that we like to overlook. An eminent psychoanalyst said that we should always remember that we are only the stable in which God is born. We are therefore not the palace, not the newly built and beautifully furnished house, not the comfortable living room. Each of us associates different experiences and feelings with the stable. A woman, for

example, told us that as a child she always went straight from school to the stable. There she felt at home. The smell of the stable gave her a feeling of home and security. There are animals in the stable that are just there. There is life, there is always birth, but there is also death, there are also worries. In the barn is everyday life with its ups and downs. The children feel a closeness to the animals. The animals let themselves be stroked, let something happen to them. They are more patient than humans. They listen to what the children tell them. And in the barn there is always even warmth. Even in cold weather, the animals warm the barn with their body temperature.

The barn is not polished. There is dung and garbage mixed with straw and hay. The barn is cleaned again and again. But the dung always accumulates anew. The dung serves as fertilizer for the fields. This is a picture for our inner being. Also our heart is not pure and clean, not germ-free. Many of garbage has accumulated there. Everything that we have repressed lies hidden under the surface and rots away. One has repressed his aggression. Beneath the surface of decency and friendliness lurks an icy cold, and through the smiling facade aggressive arrows are shot out. The other has suppressed his needs. But they do not give rest. They lie around inside him and are constantly being stirred up again when the spouse or children freely live out this need. A third one passes over the injuries of his childhood. He does not want to look at them. But the wounds cannot be closed. They continue to work under the plaster so that the pus penetrates through the bandage. It is precisely where all the "dung" lies in us that God wants to be born in us. He comes to bring us healing.

We cannot offer God a clean and for us comfortable room, but only the dirty stable of our heart. He meets us as we really are. We cannot hide anything, we cannot beautify anything. This is embarrassing for us. But it frees us from the delusion that we have deserve the birth of god. God wants to be born in us because he loves us, not because we have to show him something .

The stable is filled with light through the birth of Jesus, with a warm and mild light that does not mercilessly illuminate everything, but leaves it as it is. In the proximity of the divine child everything is allowed to be in us, there even the dirty and discarded, the trampled and despised loses its unsightliness. In the mild light of Christ we may contemplate everything. Through Christ, it receives a new prestige and is transformed by his love. This is the consoling image of the stable, that everything in us is transformed by Christ coming into the darkness and chaos of our hearts. Indeed, it is precisely that which is not chemically pure that gives the divine child security and a home. It makes his bed soft and comfortable. That which is too perfect has an alienating effect in the proximity of a child. The child wants a soft bed and not a completely germ-free linen. Therefore we may trust that we may be just as we are, with all our stains and humps, a home for Christ, the stable in which he is born for us and for this world.

Let us think about, let us allow it, and rejoice in this new beginning. May you have a Merry and Blessed Christmas - and a new beginning.

The members of the General Committee of the ICDS



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