

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We come to the end of Advent. We remember the constant cry of “*Marana tha*, come Lord Jesus” (*marana tha* literally means “Come, our Lord”). He is coming and coming soon! Enter into prayer with me to prepare for that coming.

Jesus, You have revealed Yourself to us a *Emmanuel*, God with us (see Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:23). This truth of who You are was most clearly seen when You became incarnate, when You took on human flesh. Oh! What humility that You would become like us in all things but sin. How amazing that You love us so much that You would experience *all* that we experience – human joy, tenderness, affection, intimacy and closeness, and the extent and depth of human suffering in body, mind, emotions, and soul! This incredible gift of Yourself, shows me how precious I must really be to You – that You would do all of this for *me*! Lord Jesus, help each of us to realize, to understand, that we are really precious, beloved, pleasing to You! *Marana tha*, come Lord Jesus.

Jesus, if that had been all that You did – taking on our humanity to be close to us, to walk with us – that would have been enough. In fact, that would have been more than enough to show how awesome is Your love for us. Yet You did not stop there! You chose to humble Yourself even more! I cannot fathom, cannot imagine how or why You would do this, yet You chose to take on the form of bread and wine in the Eucharist so that You could be *Emmanuel*, God with us! You so long for us to know that You are with us *here and now, today* – not just in Israel 2000 years ago – that You come to us in the Eucharist. It would be enough – in fact, *more than could be asked or imagined* – if this Presence was here for us merely to worship and adore in the Tabernacle and the Monstrance.

But that was not enough for You! How can this be?! You want to be even closer to us, and so You allow us to consume Your very Presence. And in consuming You, we become what we receive – we become one with You. You truly want to be God-with-us! You show us that You will allow Yourself to enter into us – not just in some spiritual way, but that You want union with our whole selves – which includes our bodies! O Jesus, this is too much to comprehend! This is too much to grasp!

Dear Jesus, help us to have a greater reverence and love for the incredible gift that You give us of Your very self in the Eucharist. Help us not to take advantage of Your love because You are so merciful. Help us not to take for granted Your Presence because You are so hidden and humble. Stir up in our hearts a greater Eucharistic amazement, so that we may know that You come to us each day, each moment, that You long to be present with us all the time!

*Marana tha*, come Lord Jesus.