



*The birth of Jesus is the 'newness' that enables us to be reborn each year*

The Son of God was born an outcast, in order to tell us that every outcast is a child of God," Francis said in his homily.

Francis said Christmas should make everyone reflect on "our injustice towards so many of our brothers and sisters" instead of pursuing "our endless desire for possessions" and ephemeral pleasures.

"God came among us in poverty and need, to tell us that in serving the poor, we will show our love for him,"

"God does not love you because you think and act the right way. He loves you, plain and simple," he said. "You may have made a complete mess of things, but the Lord continues to love you."

The only thing people need to do with God's grace is accept it and let themselves be loved by God, he said.

"To accept this grace means being ready to give thanks in return," he said. "Often we live our lives with such little gratitude. Today is the right day to draw near to the tabernacle, the creche, the manger, and to say thank you."

Receiving the gift of Jesus, believers should try to be like him by being a gift for others, the pope said. "It is the best way to change the world: we change, the church changes, history changes, once we stop trying to change others but try to change ourselves and to make of our life a gift."

"Jesus shows this to us tonight. He did not change history by pressuring anyone or by a flood of words, but by the gift of his life," he said. "He did not wait until we were good before he loved us but gave himself freely to us."