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Manifestations of Christ

by

Rev. Paul J. Sheen, Ph. D., D. D., LL. D., Agrégé en
Philosophie, University of Louvain, Belgium,
Catholic University of America.

Thirteen addresses delivered in the Catholic Hour,
sponsored by the National Council of Catholic
Men with the co-operation of the National
Broadcasting Company and its Asso-
ciated Stations.

(On Sundays from December 27 to March 27, 1932)

- I. Mother and Babe.
- II. The Thrill of Monotony.
- III. The Right of Sanctuary.
- IV. The Only Thing That Matters.
- V. The Freedom of Authority.
- VI. The World's Greatest Need.
- VII. The Divine Sense of Humor.
- VIII. The Curse of Broadmindedness.
- IX. Religion Without Dogma.
- X. Pilate and Patriotism.
- XI. The Church and the Times.
- XII. The Crucifixion.
- XIII. The Eternity of Easter.



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1141 Massachusetts Avenue
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Bishop of Fort Wayne

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AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

These sermons originally delivered over the Catholic Hour sought to illumine souls concerning Christ and His Church. Now they are set down in printed form in order that they may continue that same apostolic mission. The ear has heard, and now the eye can see. It remains for the heart and soul to embrace.

The author will not feel that his work has enjoyed any success, even though its reception be great or its praise high, unless at least a single soul who may have chanced to read it, is lifted up to a better living of that life which is Divine, a better understanding of that Truth which is the Word, and a deeper love of that Love which is the Spirit of God. In a world that is constantly looking for new faiths, new religions, and new creeds, there can be nothing more new or novel than to begin to practise and live the Truths of Christianity.

FULTON J. SHEEN.

DEDICATED TO THE

Cherished Virgin Mary, Mother of Jesus,
Holy Gateway through which God came to men,
In Prayerful supplication and petition that
Loving souls seeking Love may find thee: the
Door through which men pass back again to God.

MOTHER AND BABE

(Address delivered by Rev. Dr. Fulton J. Sheen in the Catholic Hour, December 27, 1931.)

This is Christmas, the season when eyes and hearts are drawn in memory and in love to a Babe who was born in a cave under the floor of the world, and who, by that act, shook the world to its very foundations. It is the season of the stupendous mystery of Omnipotence wrapped in swaddling bands and laid in a manger. Divinity is always where you would least expect to find it. No one in the world would ever have thought of looking for God in the form of a babe. No one in the world would ever have suspected that He who threw the great fiery ball of the sun in the heavens, would one day be warmed by the breath of oxen. No one in the world would ever have suspected that hands which could tumble planets and worlds into space, would be one day smaller than the huge heads of cattle. No one in the world would ever have suspected that He who could make the stars as His canopy would one day be covered by the roof of a stable. And yet such are the ways of God. In order to confound the power of the world He comes in the weakness of a child and in order to set at naught its pride makes His bed in straw. The world He made as His home and yet the world received Him not, and thus Christmas is the story of a God who was homeless at home.

But while we pay this primary act of adoration to the God who brought heaven to earth, there is danger that some of us may forget just how the Child came into the world; in fact, certain modern forms of Christianity speak of the Babe, but never a word

about the Mother of the Babe. The Babe of Bethlehem did not fall from the heavens into a bed of straw, but came into this world through the great portals of the flesh. Sons are inseparable from mothers, and mothers inseparable from sons. You cannot go to a statue of a mother holding a babe, and cut away the mother, leaving the babe suspended in mid-air, neither can you cleave away the Mother from the Babe of Bethlehem. He is not suspended mid-air in history, but like all other babes, came into the world by and through His Mother. While we adore the Child, then, should we not venerate His Mother, and while we kneel to Jesus, should we not at least clasp the hand of Mary for giving us such a Saviour? There is a grave danger that, lest in celebrating a Christmas without the Mother, we may soon reach a point where we will celebrate Christmas without the Babe. And what an absurdity that would be, for just as there can never be a Christmas without a Christ, so there can never be a Christ without a Mary.

May I, therefore, ask you to go with me and pull aside the curtains of the past, and under the light of Revelation discover the role and interpret the part that Mary played in the great Drama of Redemption?

Almighty God never launches a great work without exceeding preparation. The two greatest works of God are the Creation of the first man, Adam, and the Incarnation of the Son of God, the new Adam, Jesus Christ. But neither of these was accomplished without characteristic divine preparation.

God did not make the masterpiece of creation, which was man, on the very first day, but deferred it until He had labored for six days in ornamenting

the universe. From no material thing, but only by the fiat of His Will, Omnipotence moved and said to Nothingness, "Be" and lo and behold, spheres fell into their orbits, passing one another in beautiful harmony without ever a hitch or a halt. Then came the living things: the herbs bearing fruit as unconscious tribute to their Maker; the trees, with their leafy arms outstretched all day in prayer, and the flowers opening the chalice of their perfumes to their Creator. With the labor that was never exhausting, God then made the sensitive creatures to roam about, either in the watery palaces of the depths, or on wings, to fly through trackless space, or else as unwinged to roam the fields in search of their repast and natural happiness. But all of this beauty, which has inspired the song of poets and the tracings of artists, was not in the Divine Mind sufficiently beautiful for the creature whom God would make to be the lord and master of the universe. He would do one thing more: He would set apart, as a choice garden, a small portion of His creation, beautify it with four rivers flowing through lands rich with gold and onyx, permit to roam in it the beasts of the field as domestics of that garden in order to make it a paradise of the most intense happiness and pleasure that was possible on earth. When finally that Eden was made beautiful, as only God knows how to make things beautiful, He launched the masterpiece of His creation: the first man, and in that paradise of pleasure was celebrated the first nuptials of humanity—the union of flesh and flesh of the first man and woman: Adam and Eve.

Now if God so prepared for His first great work, which was man, by making the paradise of Creation, it was even more fitting that before sending His Son

to redeem the world, He should prepare for Him a paradise of the Incarnation. And for four thousand years He prepared it by symbols and prophecies. In the language of types He prepared human minds for some understanding of what this new paradise would be. The burning bush of Moses inundated with the glory of God, and conserving, in the midst of its flames, the freshness of its verdure and the perfume of its flowers, was a symbol of a new paradise conserving in the honor of its maternity the very perfume of virginity. The rod of Aaron flourishing in the solitude of the Temple, while isolated from the world by silence and retreat, was a symbol of that paradise which in a place of retirement and isolation from the world would engender the very flower of the human race. The arch of alliance where the Tables of the Law were conserved was a symbol of the new paradise in which the Law in the Person of Christ would take up His very residence.

That paradise was prepared for, not only by symbols, but also by prophecies. Even in that dread day when an angel with a flaming sword was stationed in the first garden in creation, a prophecy was made that the serpent would not eventually conquer, but that a woman would crush its head. Later on Isaias and Jeremias hailed that holy paradise as one which should encircle a Man.

But prophets and symbols were a too distant preparation. God would labor still more on His Paradise. He would make a Paradise not overrun with weeds and thistles, but blooming with every flower of virtue; a Paradise at whose portals sin had never knocked, nor against whose gates infidelity would never dare to storm; a Paradise from which would flow not four rivers through lands rich with gold

and onyx, but four oceans of grace to the four corners of the world; a Paradise destined to bring forth the Tree of Life, and therefore full of life and grace itself; a Paradise in which was to be tabernacled Purity itself, and therefore one immaculately pure; a Paradise so beautiful and sublime that the Heavenly Father would not have to blush in sending His Son into it, and that Paradise of the Incarnation to be gardenered by the Adam new, that flesh-girt Paradise in which there was to be celebrated the nuptials, not of man and woman, but of humanity and divinity, is our own Beloved Mary, Mother of Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

And thus, as we gather about the crib of Bethlehem, we somehow feel that we are in the presence of a new Paradise of Beauty and Love and Innocence, and that the name of that Paradise is Mary. God labored for six days and produced Eden for the first Adam; now He labored anew, and produced the new Eden, Mary, for the new Adam, Christ. And if we could have been there in that stable on the first Christmas night, we might have seen that Paradise of the Incarnation, but we should not be able to recollect whether her face was beautiful or not, nor should we be able to recall any of her features, for what would have impressed us, and made us forget all else, would have been the lovely sinless soul that shone through her eyes like two celestial suns, that spoke in her mouth which only breathed in prayer, and that was heard in her voice, which was like the hushed song of the angels. If we could have stood at the gates to that Paradise we should have less peered at it, than into it, for what would have impressed us, would not have been any external qualities, though these would have been ravishing, but rather the

qualities of her soul—her simplicity, innocence, humility, and above all, her purity—and so completely would all these have taken possession of our soul, as so much divine music, that our first thought would have been, “Oh! so beautiful,” and our second thought would have been, “Oh! what hateful creatures we are.”

Tell me why should not that Paradise of the Incarnation be spotless and pure? Why should she not be immaculate and stainless? Just suppose that you could have pre-existed your own mother, in much the same way that an artist pre-exists his painting. Furthermore, suppose that you had an infinite power to make your mother anything that you pleased, just as a great artist like Raphael has the power of realizing his artistic ideals. Supposing you had this double power, what kind of mother would you have made for yourself?

Would you have made her of such a type that would make you blush because of her unwomanly and unmotherlike actions? Would you have in any way stained and soiled her with the selfishness that would make her unattractive not only to you, but to your fellow man? Would you have made her exteriorly and interiorly of such a character as to make you ashamed of her, or would you have made her, so far as human beauty goes, the most beautiful woman in the world; and so far as beauty of soul goes, one who would radiate every virtue, every manner of kindness and charity and loveliness; one who by the purity of her life and her mind and her heart would be an inspiration not only to you, but even to your fellow man, so that all would look up to her as the very incarnation of what is best in motherhood? Now, if you who are an imperfect being and who

have not the delicate conception of all that is fine in life, would have made the loveliest of mothers, do you think that Our Blessed Lord who not only pre-existed His own Mother, but who had an infinite power to make her just what He chose, would, in virtue of all the infinite delicacy of His Spirit, make her any less pure and loving and beautiful than you would have made your own mother? If you who hate selfishness, would have made her selfless, and who hate ugliness would have made her beautiful, do you not think that the Son of God who hates sin would make His own Mother sinless, and who hates moral ugliness, would have made her immaculately beautiful?

I plead, therefore, for a Christmas in which the Babe is not an Orphan, but a Child of Mary; I plead for a religion which breathes respect for motherhood, and vibrates with a love for that Mother, above all mothers, who brought Our Saviour into the world. If there is any man or woman looking for a test as to what constitutes the divine religion on this earth, let him apply the same test he would to the judgment of a man. If you ever want to know the real qualities of a man, judge him not by his attitude to the world of commerce, his outlook on business, his kindness and his genteel manners, but judge him rather by his attitude to his own mother. If you want to know the quality of a religion, judge it exactly the same way, that is, not by the way it seeks to please men, but rather by the attitude that it has to the Mother of Our Blessed Lord. If you find a religion which never speaks of that Woman who gave us Our Redeemer; which, in its liturgy and its devotions, is silent about the most beautiful of women; which, in its history has even broken her

images and statues, then there certainly must be something wanting to the truth of that religion, and let me say, even to its humanity.

Our Blessed Lord could hardly be expected to look with favor on those who forgot His Mother, who nourished Him as a Babe, carried Him into Egypt, caressed Him as a Child, and stood at the bedside of the cross when, with almost His last breath, He tenderly called her "Mother". Really, one of the great inconsistencies of the modern world is its sentimental and almost commercial attachment to "Mother's Day," and its complete forgetfulness of the Mother of Mothers, the Mother of our Lord, and the Mother of men, without whom all motherhood is without a Christian ideal. I can understand why a man should love his mother, but I cannot understand why a man who calls himself a Christian and a follower of Christ should not have a very deep and intense love for Christ's Mother. I repeat, therefore, that a quick test for the divinity of any religion is its outlook on the Mother of Christ. And if you want to know just how intense and deep and loyal our love is to that sweet Mother, then place your hands over our hearts.

Christmas takes on a new meaning when the Mother is seen with the Babe. In fact, the heavens and the earth seem almost to exchange places. Years and years ago, aye, centuries ago, we used to think of heaven as "way up there." Then one day the God of the heavens came to this earth, and that hour when she held the Babe in her arms, it became true to say that with her we now "look down" to heaven.

In these days when Mother is separated from Child, which is birth control, and a husband is sep-

arated from his wife, which is divorce, we plead for the return of the Ideal Mother and we address her:

With our forlorn and cheerless condition, Sweet Queen, we pray thee, give us patience and endurance. When our spirit is exalted or depressed, when it loses its balance, when it is restless or wayward, when it is sick of what it has and hankers after what it has not, when our mortal frame trembles under the shadow of the tempter, we shall call on thee, and ask thee to bring us back to ourselves, for thou art the cool breath of the immaculate, the fragrance of the rose of Sharon—thou art the Paradise of the Incarnation—thou art the Mother of Our Saviour—thou art Our Queen—Our Mother—Our Immaculate Mother—and we love thee!

THE THRILL OF MONOTONY

(Address delivered by Rev. Dr. Fulton J. Sheen in the Catholic Hour, January 3, 1932.)

As another New Year rolls round in the cycle of time, one wonders how many are depressed with the monotony of years. It is an undeniable fact that the world hates the mere fact of repetition just as much as it loves the shock of the new. The modern man hates the monotony of the same wife, and to escape it seeks refuge in divorce. He dislikes exceedingly living according to the morality of the Ten Commandments, and to escape its monotony he develops new morals and prefaces to morals. He dislikes also the monotony of a life that is consecrated to a single purpose, and a final end, and to escape it, often with his own hands, shuffles off his mortal coil. This positive distaste of repetition so characteristic of our day alone explains the constant demand for new thrills, new excitements, new psychologies, new religions, new morals, new gods, new everything to arouse the already jaded sensibilities, and the soul weighed down with the world *ennui*.

If one asks just why monotony is so distasteful to our age, one is met with this answer: "Everything that is full of life loves change, for the characteristic of life is movement toward a new goal, and urges toward new pleasures. Being essentially directed to novelty, life can never rest in the tediousness of repetition."

This argument has never appealed to thinking men as thoroughly sound. I believe that just the contrary is true, and instead of saying that those who are full of life hate monotony we should say

that those who are full of life find a positive thrill in monotony. To prove this point one can appeal to those who are essentially full of life and who, therefore, enjoy the thrill of monotony, namely, a child, God, and His Incarnate Son: Our Blessed Saviour.

First of all, the child. If you place a child upon your knees and bounce it up and down three or four times, the child, full of the passion of life, will cry out, "Do it again." If you tell a child a delightful fairy story, the child will never say, "Oh, that is an old one. I heard Uncle Ray tell that last week," but he will say, "Tell me again." If you are very clever and can blow smoke through your eyes, or even through your ears, the child is never content with just the one trick of magic, but will say, "Do it again." You may build houses of cards, and then tear them down, and feel that you have exhausted your repertoire when you have done it once, but the child is not so easily depressed with repetition, and with joyous appeal will sing out, "Do it again." Simply because the child is full of life, he wants to see things unchanged and to be repeated over and over again, for to his brimming enthusiasm there is inseparably linked the wondrous thrill of monotony. And what is true of the child is true of God, or better perhaps, what is true first of God is true of the child and God—both love repetition.

When on that first great day of creation God saw the first rose unfold its red petaled chalice in tribute to Him, He did not feel that it would be a dull, drab world if roses went on producing roses till the crack of doom, so He did not ask that a rose should be turned into a stone. When He saw the first tree before Him with its great arms outstretched to the heavens as if in supplication, He did not feel that it

would be a monotonous world if trees went on reproducing trees until Gabriel sounded his golden trumpet, and so He commanded that every tree and every plant should reproduce itself according to its kind; for repetition is the sign of glowing and throbbing life. When He heard the first shrill notes of the canary, He did not think that the world would be dull and tiresome if canaries went on reproducing canaries and their song even to our own sad days, so He did not ask that a canary be changed into a buttercup.

Because God is full of life, He enjoys the thrill that comes with sameness, and so I can imagine Almighty God with something of the joy and exuberance that belongs to a child, saying every morning to the sun, "Do it again," and every evening saying to the moon and stars, "Do it again," and every spring-time saying to the daisies, "Do it again," and every winter saying to the snowflakes chiseled by some great heavenly smith, "Do it again," and every minute saying to the mountain streams, as great silver ribbons, "Do it again," and every time a child is born into the world, to the eternal confusion of Birth Control, giving a divine curtain call and asking for a Divine Encore in order that the heart of a God might once more ring out in the heart of a babe.

It was only natural, then, that when God sent His Beloved Son onto this earth that He should teach the lesson that God taught at creation, namely, the gospel of the thrill of monotony. There was ever a beautiful monotony in the story of His life; thirty years obeying—not one year; three years teaching—not one year; three hours redeeming—not one hour. And as He lived He taught, and all His garnered wisdom could be summed up in the words, "Do it

again." There was the monotony of sacrifice—"Take up your cross daily, and follow Me;" the monotony of kindness—"If one strike thee on thy right cheek, turn to him also the other;" the monotony of mercy—"How often should we forgive? Till seven times? Aye, till seventy times seven times;" the monotony of birth—"Nicodemus, unless a man be born again, . . . he can not enter into the kingdom of God;" the monotony of sacrificial thoughtfulness—"Do this in commemoration of Me;" the monotony of prayer—"And He prayed the third time;" the monotony of miracles, for St. John tells us that if he recorded all the miracles Our Blessed Lord had worked, the world would not be large enough to contain the books thereof. There was only one time in His life that He ever cursed a thing, and that was the day He saw the barren fig tree which was not producing its fruit in due season, and therefore was not enjoying the thrill of the monotonous.

But why, it may be asked, is there a thrill in monotony? There is necessarily bound to be a thrill in working toward any goal or fixed purpose, and therein is the final reason for the romance of repetition. There, too, is the line of division between genuine Christianity and modern paganism. The Christian finds a thrill in repetition because he has a fixed goal; the modern pagan finds repetition monotonous because he has never decided for himself the purpose of living. Instead of passing the test, the modern mind changes the test, instead of working toward an ideal, it changes the ideal; instead of tending repetitiously toward a fixed point, the modern mind changes its point of view, and calls it progress. It is no wonder life is dull, when one has not decided the purpose of life; it is no marvel that existence is

drab, if one has never discussed the reason for existence. How dull, for example, golf would be if there were never a green; how monotonous a theatre, if there were never a last curtain; how monotonous would be a sea voyage, if there were never a port, or a journey, if there were never a destination. How insipid poems would be if there were never a last line, and heaven only knows how tiresome sermons would be, if there were never a last word; and so it is with life. Since the modern mind has never decided the goal of life, nor the purpose of living, nor the reason of existing, but like a weather-cock changes with every wind of doctrine and suggestion, it is necessarily bound to find life dull, drab and monotonous.

Contrast this goalless existence with the Christian point of view in which a man has an ultimate end and purpose in life. Do you think, for example, that Dubois, who labored for seven years to make the cast for the statue of Jeanne d'Arc, found his artistic life dull and monotonous? Each day's work, repetitious though it was, brought to him the thrill of seeing the goal of the finished masterpiece come closer and closer. Do you think that the musicians or the scholars who practice and study for days upon days find their work monotonous? To them each repeated moment is just a preparation or a step toward the goal of either a thrilling recital, or a great intellectual discourse. Once admit a purpose in life, and each and every act which tends toward that point, bears the unmistakable stamp of joyfulness and cheer. The Christian has his fixed goal, namely, to make his life more and more Christ-like. His own nature is like a block of marble, and his will is the chisel. He looks out upon his model, Christ,

and, with the sharp points of his mortifying chisel, cuts away from his nature huge chunks of cold selfishness, and then by finer and more delicate touches makes the great model appear forthwith, until finally only the brush of a hand is needed to give it its polished finish. There is no man living who has this Christian ideal who believes that repeated acts of faith, hope and charity, prudence, justice, fortitude and love, are tainted with what the modern mind would call monotony. Each new conquest of self is a new thrill, for each repeated act brings closer and closer that love we fall just short of in all love, eternal union with Our Lord and Saviour.

Sometimes, of course, it is not easy to see just how much progress we are making toward our goal, but though we never see the progress, we never lose sight of the goal. Then we are very much like the tapestry workers, who work not from the front of the tapestry, but from the rear, keeping ever before their eyes the little model to be realized. They go on drawing thread after thread in a monotonous but thrilling way, never destined to see their completed work until the last thread has been drawn, and the tapestry is turned about to show them how well and how truly they have labored.

My life is but a weaving
Between my God and me.
I may but choose the colors,
He worketh skillfully.
Full oft He chooses sorrow,
And I, in foolish pride,
Forget He sees the upper,
And I the under, side.

The Christian, therefore, is always bound to have a great advantage over the modern pagan, simply because he knows where he is going, whereas the modern pagan knows not. The pagan must always be a pessimist, for he must always feel that this life is too short to give a man a chance, and the Christian will always be the optimist, for he knows that this life is long enough to give a man a chance for eternity. That is why the Christian can be joyful. That's why the pagan is sad and depressed.

Picture a child with a ball, and suppose that he is told that it is the only ball he will ever have to play with. The natural psychological reaction of the child will be to be fearful of playing too much with it, or bouncing it too often, or even pricking it full of pin holes, because he will never have another ball. But suppose that the child is told that perhaps next month, perhaps next week, perhaps even in five minutes, he will be given another ball, which will never wear out, which will always give joy, and with which he will never tire of playing. The natural reaction of the child will be to take the first ball a little less seriously, and to begin playing with it joyously and happily, not even caring if someone does prick it full of pin holes, because he is very soon going to have another ball which will endure forever.

The child with one ball is the modern pagan who has only one ball in the sense that he has one sphere, one world, one life, one earth. He cannot enjoy the earth as much as he would like because he must always be fearful of the earth being taken away from him. He can never even tolerate that any suffering or pain should ever come to his little ball, the earth, for it is the only ball that he will ever have to play with. The Christian, on the other hand, is the one

who believes that some day, perhaps even tomorrow, he will have another ball, another world, another sphere, another life. And so he can play with this earth, enjoy its monotony and even be resigned to its pin-pricks, for he knows that very soon he is going to have the other ball, which is the other life that shall never wear out nor become tiresome, because its life is the life of the Eternal God, the beginning and the end of all that is.

When, therefore, seized and suffused through and through with the Christian ideal of making Christ shine out in your life, and when in the routine of Christian living you have begun your morning with a prayer and asked the Father's blessing on all your goings and comings; and when you have broken your fast with the Eucharistic Lord at the altar, and knelt in adoration before the uplifted Host and the glowing chalice, and when you have sanctified the day by offering each deed in union with the Master, and sanctified each trial by linking it with the cross, and repressed unkind words and unjust criticisms out of love for Him who prayed for His enemies on the cross, and, when the day is done, you again kneel in thanksgiving and in humble gratitude to the Father of Light, and when after having done this day after day, week after week, and year after year in a constant effort to make your life more Christ-like, and you wonder just what other thing needs to be done to bring you just a step closer to the goal of everlasting peace and happiness, then remember the lesson of the thrill of monotony: "Do it again."

THE RIGHT OF SANCTUARY

(Address delivered by Rev. Dr. Fulton J. Sheen in the Catholic Hour, January 10, 1932.)

In these days it is almost impossible to call our souls our own, for the psycho-analytic mood has seized us like a pestilential fever. Every sin and failure of a soul, every crime and secret passion of a heart, every unholy falling from a holy purpose is broadcast to a world only too ready to find a justification of its own wrongs in hearing the wrongs of others.

In the face of this condition, the world needs an institution something like that which flourished in the Middle Ages, namely, the Right of Sanctuary. This right was based upon the inviolability attached to sacred things. A fugitive guilty of felony was considered immune from prosecution by law, provided he entered the sanctuary of a church. The principle behind this right was that any criminal who entered the sanctuary had equivalently cast his lot with God, and therefore was immune, for a certain period of time, from the searchings of men.

The world today needs just some such haven of rest where we might be alone with ourselves and our God, and not have our sins published to the world; some place of shelter from the curious eyes of those who would not bind up our wounds, but delight in our anguish; some solitary harbor where we might escape those who ask us to reveal, but who never stop to heal; some sanctuary where our sins would not be told to the world, nor allowed to fester unseen within our heart. And the world has such a sanctuary which respects the inviolability of the human

person, wherein a soul may cast its lot not upon inquiring men but upon a forgiving God, and that is the Sacrament of Penance, which, by figure of speech, is referred to familiarly as Confession.

What does confession demand? It demands two things: a confessor and a penitent, and only God could find both. First of all, it demands a confessor; a man who will look kindly on the denying Peters, speak words of forgiveness to penitent Magdalenes, breathe words of comradeship to betraying Judases; a man with intensity of love for his work, and with universality of love for his penitents; a man signed with the sign and sealed with the seal of Christ; one who has a heart of fire for charity and a heart of bronze for chastity; a man with discretion, that is, with a mind strange to curiosity, vanity and fear; and finally, a man with a heart like an immense well into which sins, like stones, may be dropped, but a well so deep that no sound comes back from those depths to an ear which might be bent to hear.

But immediately I hear it said: "But why should I confess my sins to a man; for the priest is a man? Why should I not tell them directly to God? Why should a confessor stand between my God and me?"

Is it asking too much that you confess yourself to someone who has been constituted a delegate of divine justice and divine mercy? Is it asking too much that God should send out ambassadors to deal with those who have broken off relations with Him? At the present time, for example, diplomatic relations are broken off between Russia and America. America, therefore, never deals through direct diplomatic channels with the Soviet Government.

If she has any dealings with the Soviets, it is through a third party. Is it not just, therefore, that since man by sin has broken off diplomatic relations with God, that he, therefore, should deal with God through the intermediary of His ambassadors? Why should we admit this to be just in one case, in the case of human government, and deny it to be just in the case of divine government?—And, as a matter of fact, does not God deal with our fellow men through ambassadors in other walks of life? The source of all law is God, and the presidents and kings and parliaments throughout the world, in the administration of law, are really acting in His name. God has even given to heads of governments the power of taking away life. If, therefore, some men share God's justice by punishing, why should not others share God's mercy by forgiveness? It is the very order of life that we should have the doctor for our body, the teacher for our mind, the president for our government—why, then, should we not have confessors for our souls?

Confession demands not only a confessor, but also a penitent, and here too the wisdom of God is supremely revealed. The penitent must be created by God as the confessor was created by God. Making a penitent means taking a man in his pride, and the icy silence which envelops the avenues of his soul, and saying to him: "You shall come, and kneel at the feet of a man who, in his human estate, may be no better than you are, but who is nevertheless an ambassador of Christ, and to that man you shall reveal that which you hide from your friends and relatives, that which makes you blush when alone, that which you lock in the storehouse of your memory; and, as you confess these secrets on bended

knees, you shall say to that man: 'Father, forgive me, for I have sinned.' "

Hard though it is, this narration of sins by a penitent answers a need of the human heart. How often history reveals that a guilty man, pressed by conscience alone, and driven on by some mysterious influence stronger even than conservation of life, will make him refuse the immunity which silence promises, and force him to avow the very sin which will bring the punishment he sought to avoid. In moments when man has feared neither witnesses nor tortures, he has cried out: "Yes, it is I! I did it." There is something even in the most hardened criminal at times which makes him give himself up to justice, by an avowal of his guilt in order that he might have peace of mind.

Just as a foreign substance like a piece of glass which is taken into the body is gradually thrown off by the body; and just as a poison taken into the stomach irritates it until the stomach finally throws it off, so, too, the heart of man, irritated and weary by the poison of sin, seeks the catharsis of spirit by which it too may pour its wrong and the poison of its sins into the ear of a friend.

And even those who have no great crimes upon their souls, but are weighted down by a heart which seems not right with God, crave some confidant to whom they can unpack their hearts with words. In joy and in sorrow, every heart needs some one who will suspend his own preoccupations to listen to its own, and who will drop all his cares to take in the burden of its own. The most unfortunate mortals are those who shed their tears in silence because there is no one to wipe them away. How many men and women there are in the world who, through sin, have

felt themselves alone, cast off from everyone, and who in their inmost heart have felt the need of some sanctuary into which they might retire for consolation and direction! Our cities are full of souls who are constantly crying out, "What can I do?" and to these and the millions who are yearning for some one who will understand and pardon as Christ understood and pardoned the Penitent Thief, the confessional is the answer.

If the world had never known the Sacrament of Penance, and some one proposed instituting it, there would be a universal cry go up from all men saying that "humanity is too proud" and hence there will never be penitents. "Humanity is too indiscreet" and hence there will never be confessors. But the fact—here I speak as a priest—that the world comes to our feet, children of seven years and their elders of seventy, hearts of sixteen years, hearts of sixty years; the fact that there comes the mother with her daughter, the father with his son, the precious desires of youth with the chagrins of old age, the innocent souls who never lost baptismal grace, and the great prodigals who lost it and found again the fountains of mercy, and the fact that all these tell us that which the ear of a spouse does not hear, nor the ear of a brother know, nor the ear of a friend suspect, proves and proclaims to the world that there are penitents because there are confessors, and there are confessors because there are penitents, and there are both because Jesus Christ is God.

There is no institution in the world so effectively working for social reform as the Church through the confessional, and this for the double reason that the confessional gets at the intention

which inspires the act, and reforms the group by reforming the individual which makes it up.

The Church, in the confessional, after the manner of her Divine Founder, proceeds on the principle that if it is wrong to do a certain thing, it is wrong to think about that thing. She does not wait until the desire or the intention passes into act; rather she goes into the very confines of a conscience and lays her finger on the desire to sin and brands it as a sin, even though the desire is never realized. Mindful of the words of Our Blessed Lord she does not wait until a man actually commits adultery, but she holds that any man commits adultery even if he lusteth after a woman in his own heart. She demands that the defaulting cashier confess his intention to steal money, even though he finds it impossible to do so. She holds, as against modern morality, that it is too late to legislate when the act has been done; it is too late to pass a law when you have to call a policeman; it is too late to really heal when you have to establish fact-finding commissions. The facts of crime, drunkenness, and social evils are merely the putting into action of base thoughts, intentions and desires, and the Church in insisting that every illicit motive and every evil desire be confessed, is getting at the hidden springs and roots of action, and in keeping them clean she keeps actions clean; by making man pure on the inside, she makes man pure on the outside, and by making him right with God, she makes him right with his fellow man.

The Church in the confessional is, furthermore, the only institution in the world today that reforms society by reforming the individual who makes it up. Modern social reform begins with the group and

ends with the individual; the Church in the confessional begins with the individual and ends with the group. Modern morality talks about crime, which is a group problem; the Church in the confessional talks to the criminal, who is the individual problem. Modern morality talks in the abstract about the problem of drunkenness; the Church in the confessional talks in the concrete to the drunkard and asks him not to psycho-analyze his mental state for sublimation, but to reveal his moral state for purgation. And of these two methods, the confessional is the only really effective one, for just as the only way to make a family good and happy is to make each individual in the family happy, so, too, the only way to make society peaceful is to make each individual citizen peaceful, and this cannot be done except by making each conscience right with its God. Modern morality is in a tower shouting to rebellious soldiers below; the Church, through her officers, is mingling with the soldiers individually, bidding each one to submit to law which is, in the last analysis, the ordinance of God. Thus it is that by making individual adjustments, and by treating each conscience singly, and judging it not by the way it makes for worldly success, but by the way it is ordered to God, the confessional purifies each individual stream and river that runs into the great social ocean, and if that ocean today does not seem clean and bright, it is only because there are some streams that have not been made clean at their source by the distilling and refining pardon of God's great Sacrament of Mercy.

If, therefore, our Government and our social reformers are really sincere about the betterment of society, they must begin to recognize the importance of intention and the importance of the indi-

vidual; they must more and more see that we cannot allow citizens to think badly and expect them to act rightly, nor can we expect a commission to legislate morality for a nation, without, in some way, seeing that each individual in the nation is himself moral and righteous with his God. We will not be made a moral nation by permitting our educators to tell us there is no such thing as sin, nor shall we be made a righteous nation by permitting reformers to emphasize sin to the point of morbidity. There is only one way to have the fact of sin, and not to have the fact of its overemphasis which is morbidity, and that is through the confessional which tells a man that he is a sinner, but also tells him that he can, by God's pardon and grace, become a saint.

There is a fable about a man being locked in a little box, and when the box was opened it was found that he had the heart of a giant. That box is the confessional box, and the heart of the priest is the heart of a giant, and from the heart of that giant there come the consoling words of Christ: "Come to me, all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you." And the penitents who hear those words then begin to understand the tremendous paradox of God's pardon—if we had never sinned, we never could call Christ "Saviour."

THE ONLY THING THAT MATTERS

(Address delivered by Rev. Dr. Fulton J. Sheen in the Catholic Hour, January 17, 1932.)

The utterly disillusioned man, uprooted from the past and disinherited by tradition, is wandering about the modern Babylon, and like a man who knows not where he is going, pictures to himself a thousand destinations. He seeks refuge in a humanistic outlook, and takes pride in the progress of civilization, and yet down in his heart knows that he is confusing comfort with civilization, and change with progress. He needs an infusion of new blood; he needs the cross, fertilization with eternity, and to help him discover himself, we here set down the Catholic philosophy of life in which are indicated the stepping-stones to those great peaks. The steps are threefold, one following the other in logical fashion: first, silence; secondly, reflection; and thirdly, primacy of the spiritual.

Silence:

One of the really great needs of our own day is silence. Modern life seems to thrive on a fondness for noise, and by noise I mean not only the staccato barbarism of jazz, or the bleating and moaning of saxophone orchestras, but also, and principally, the desire for that which distracts: love of amusements, constant goings and comings, excitements, and thrills, and movement for the mere sake of movement. What is the reason of this fondness for noise? It is not due to any inherent love of that which is loud, for people generally prefer that which is soft and refined. Rather the reason is to be found in the great desire on the part of human beings to do the

impossible, namely to escape from themselves. They do not like to be with themselves, because they are not pleased with themselves; they do not like to be alone with their conscience, because their conscience reproves and carries on an unbearable repartee. They do not like to be quiet, because the footsteps of the Hound of Heaven can be heard in silence, but cannot be heard in the din of excitement; they do not like to be silent, because God's voice is like a whisper and it cannot be heard in the tumult of the city streets. These are some of the reasons why the modern world loves noise, and they are all resolvable to this: they drown God's voice and stupefy conscience. The result is that very few people ever know themselves. In fact, they know everyone else better than they know themselves. That is why so few ever see their own faults.

In order to remedy this condition, what is needed is less amusing and more musing; a silence; a going apart into the desert of our souls to rest a while; a solitariness from men and an aloneness with God; a quiet which permits the soul to be sensitive to the whispers of God; a requiem or a rest from modern maxims and the excuse of new philosophies and the excitements which appeal to the body and disturb the soul; a privacy inspired by the example of Him Who, least of all mankind, needed a preparation of silence for a life of activity and yet had the greatest of them all; a tranquillity inspired by Him Who in the midst of a busy life spent whole nights on mountain tops in prayer.

In order to attain this requiem and silence it is not necessary to travel to the quiet of the oriental skies, for silence is not dependent upon a place, but upon a state of mind. It is not based on where we

are but what we are thinking about. It is being alone, so far as the world is concerned, even though one is in the very midst of it—an activity by which every faculty of the heart and mind and soul is bent inward, awaiting the voice of God.

Reflection:

Silence constitutes the environment of the second effect of entering into ourselves, namely, reflection. In moments of silence, men begin to seek God. The soul begins to part company with animal desires, and begins at least a blundering search for the hiding place of that haunting presence which seems to speak to them from every burning bush. The embryonic instinct for heaven now cries out for its object, and as the vague sense of unexplained powers conditions it, reflection begins, and reflection means asking oneself the question, "Why am I here?" and finding the answer in the words of the penny catechism: "to know, love and serve God on this earth, and be happy with Him forever in the next."

Suppose I stopped a clerk, a banker, a merchant, a messenger-boy, on the way to work tomorrow morning, and suppose I put to each the question, "Whither are you going?" He would answer, "To my labor." "But, why do you labor?" "I labor to earn a reward." "But suppose I told you that a very wealthy man had died and left an immense fortune to all who labor; would you be interested in knowing the conditions upon which that fortune might be yours?"

There is not one who would refuse. And yet, Almighty God has Himself promised a heavenly reward to all men who labor. Why are they not interested in learning something of its conditions? Why are they not concerned in discovering the ways and

means to its possession? If we are concerned with an earthly reward, why should we not be concerned with a heavenly reward? If we are concerned with a temporal livelihood, why should we not be concerned with an Eternal Life? What, after all, is the use of amassing wealth, if God is going to require our soul? Our shrouds will have no pockets. Was not this the point in the parable of the man who filled his barns? He added store to store, building to building, and in our own language, dollar to dollar, and then said to his soul, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thy rest; eat, drink, make good cheer." But God said to him, "Thou fool, this night do they require thy soul of thee: and whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God." Reflection on such a parable convinces the soul that the great idea, after all, is not the question which is so often asked by the modern world on the occasion of a death, "What did he leave behind?" but rather, "What did he take with him?" For it is only good works that follow.

The answer to the question of destiny is that I have been made to know, love and serve God for all eternity. Just as there are heavenly bodies which can complete their orbits only after the lapse of ages, and which then reappear with unflinching precision at the point from which they started, as if to present themselves once more to Him who sent them on their way, so, too, each soul that is sent into this world from that great white throne of God, to run its course over a brief span of years, is destined to reappear once again before Him who sent it on its way, freighted with virtues and loaded with the

precious cargo of merits to receive the crown He made for us the day of our birth.

Primacy of the Spiritual:

After silence, and the reflection that God is the end of all and the only peace and rest for souls, there comes the sudden and certain recognition of the primacy of the spiritual, which is the essence of the true Christian life. The primacy of the spiritual means that there is nothing in the world that really matters except the salvation of our soul, and that in its salvation the spiritual must reign over the temporal, the soul over the body, grace over nature, and God over the world. Religion means this or it means nothing. This was the great emphasis of Our Lord Himself, and it therefore cannot be any less the emphasis of anything Christian. Had we been on the mountainside of Capharnaum some twenty centuries ago, mingled with the shepherd and fisherman audience of Galilee; had we felt the upland breath of that autumn evening on whose wings the great Teacher's accents rose and died away; had we marked the eyes of Jesus, invited by the note of a bird's whirling overhead, or caught by the beauty of a distant lily floating in the Lake of Galilee, or as He pointed to the pastures brilliant with gold amaryllis, and heard the praise of the flowers that toil not; had we seen Him point to the green grass which carpets the mountainside, and heard Him draw from all the other beauties of nature lessons that Heaven tells, we should have learned that the very stars above our heads were less mysteries than the creatures below, and we should have been ashamed of our want of trust and providence in Him who made us.

One great and tremendous thought would disengage itself from His sermon on that occasion,

namely, the supremacy of the world of the spirit: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth: where the rust and moth consume, and where thieves break through, and steal. But lay up to yourselves treasures in heaven. . . Behold the birds of the air, . . . consider the ravens. . . . for they neither sow, nor do they reap, nor gather into barns: and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not you of much more value than they? And which of you, by taking thought, can add to his stature, one cubit? If then ye be not able to do so much as the least thing, why are you solicitous for the rest? . . . And for raiment why are you solicitous? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they labor not, neither do they spin. But I say to you, that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these. And if the grass of the field which is today and tomorrow is cast into the oven, God doth so clothe: how much more you, Oh, ye of little faith! Be not solicitous therefore, saying: 'What shall we eat, and what shall we drink, or wherewith shall we be clothed?' And be not lifted up on high. . . . For after all these things do the heathens seek. For your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you."

The Church is the only institution in the world today which is emphasizing the spiritual above all things else. That is why she scandalizes the world. That is why the pagans hate her. And despite the hate she reasserts that nothing matters in life but the salvation of a soul. That is why she builds her schools in order that children may never grow up without hearing the name of God, and bowing their knees to their Lord and Saviour. That is why she

has marriage laws and insists that the faith of the Catholic party and the children born of the marriage be safeguarded; that is why she holds that if a state would command a violation of the law of God, the individual must die rather than disobey His Creator.

Consonant with this ideal, the Church holds that a tiny child who knows the existence of God and believes in the Trinity, knows far more, and is better entitled to a University degree, than professors scattered throughout the length and breadth of this land who do not know that beyond time is the Timeless, and beyond space is the Spaceless, the Infinite Lord and Master of the Universe.

The Church believes, furthermore, that a holy hour spent before the Blessed Sacrament does more good for the well-being of the world than whole days spent in talking about progress to the utter oblivion of the fact that the only true progress consists in the diminution of the traces of original sin; she believes that a penitent returning to God is of far more consequence than the cancellation of war debts; that an increase of sanctifying grace in a soul is of far more value than the increase of international credit; that a group of cloistered nuns in prayer are more effective in preserving world peace than a group of world politicians discussing peace to the forgetfulness of the Prince of Peace; that all the beauties of nature do not compare in the smallest degree with the beauty of a soul in the state of grace; that the profoundest of scientific discoveries is as naught compared with the superior intellectual intuitions of a child at its first Communion; that the success of world policy based on Christian principles of justice would be a great force for the salvation of millions of men; that it really does not matter very

much whether children ever confuse Aristides with Aristotle, but it does matter if they confuse Buddha with Christ; that the fact that millions listen to a preacher over the radio is of no importance whatever compared with the visit of one soul to hear the sweet whisperings of Jesus from the tabernacle; that poverty is not the greatest curse; that physical infirmity is not the greatest ill; that the loss of a member of a family is not so serious as the loss of faith; that all the kingdoms of earth are as the least grain in the balance compared to a kingdom of a human heart where Mary is Queen and Christ is King.

Is this excessive? Is this a loss of a sense of proportion? Is this foolishness? If it is, it is the foolishness of Our Lord: "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul."

Every devotion to a heavenly ideal must seem foolish to a world whose ideals are of the earth earthly. To some minds it must have seemed foolish for Our Lord on the Mount of Temptation to have repulsed Satan, when Satan, in a wild orgy of triumphant pride revealed in all their fugitive splendor the great procession of the kingdoms of earth, and promised them to the Lord if only falling down He would adore him.

The foolishness of the Divine Founder has been the foolishness of the Divine Church. She, too, is set high on the mountain top of the world. To that mountain, as to the Mount of Temptation, the spectres of False Progress, New Freedom and Worldly Success come to her, and in vision remind her of all the sects which would join her communion, all the individuals which would join her ranks, and of all the opposition, and persecution of the world

that would cease if only falling down she would adore worldly success, be a little less interested in the spiritual education of the young, a little less emphatic about the sanctity of marriage, and a little less concerned with the salvation of souls.

With the quickness of a lightning flash the Church, conscious of fellowship with her Divine Master, echoes back the words of her Master, the charter cry of spiritual freedom: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His Justice."

And as the spectre of Error and Worldly Success makes its way down the mountain top, it finds at its base all the little kingdoms of passing theories and ephemeral faiths prostrate in sickening adoration before it, and in contrast to the great kingdom set high upon the mountain, the spectre of Worldly Success, like the spectre of Satan, begins to realize and understand that the greatness of the world never tempts the great—but only the small!

THE FREEDOM OF AUTHORITY

(Address delivered by Rev. Dr. Fulton J. Sheen in the Catholic Hour, January 24, 1932.)

Stevenson once said that not on bread alone doth man live, but principally on catchwords. High-sounding phrases often go rattling by like express trains, carrying the burden of those who are unable to think for themselves. Among these phrases or catchwords there is none in the field of religion which has greater modern appeal than the one: "The modern man wants a religion of the spirit, and not a religion of authority." Years ago its popular expression was that "we must be free from the slavery of Rome." Today it is more direct: "No Catholic can be free because he is bound down by law and authority."

In order to clarify the teachings of the Church concerning authority, law and freedom, we shall here develop the two following propositions: First, obedience to highest law and authority constitute freedom; second, the obedience to the law and authority of the Church is thrilling and romantic.

Our Blessed Lord once said that the Truth would make us free. By this He meant that only by obedience to the highest law and authority do we become free. To take an example from the realm of arts. If an artist in a fever of broad-mindedness and a desire to be free, chooses to paint a giraffe with a short neck, he will soon discover that he will not be free to paint a giraffe at all. If in a feverish love for the new art of self-expression which obeys no law, he decides to paint a zebra without stripes, and a leopard without spots, and a triangle with four

sides, he will soon discover that he is not free at all to paint even zebras, leopards or triangles. It is only obedience to law and authority and the inherent nature of things that we ever become free.

Another example in the field of science: Imagine a railroad steam engine endowed with consciousness, so that it is able to read, to think, to speak. And supposing that one day it picked up with its pilot one of the modern books on the morality of self-expression, such as one of Mr. Bertrand Russell's, in which he rebels against obedience to traditional moral laws, and the authority of Christian teaching. And suppose, with its great single cyclops eye, it reads the pages of this liberal thinker, and becomes so impressed with his fine sophistic idioms that it whistles to itself: "Mr. Russell is right. What do the engineers who designed me, and imposed their laws upon me know about my inner impulses? Why should I even obey the authority of an engineer who is constantly limiting my steam pressure to one hundred pounds a square inch, when I have the vital Freudian urge to make it one hundred and fifty pounds? And, furthermore, why should I submit myself to the authority of railroad officials who, fifty years ago, laid the tracks upon which I should run? Why should I take this curve, that straightaway, this bridge, simply because they decided over two score years ago that I should? Why should I not be permitted to choose my own directions, and to make my own tracks? From now on, I am going to be self-expressive!"

Well, suppose the steam engine did become self-expressive. It would soon learn two things: first, in refusing to obey the laws concerning steam pressure, it would discover it was no longer free to be a steam

engine, because in asserting its pressure beyond the normal, it would burst its entrails; secondly, by refusing to keep on the track it would no longer be free to run. And if the steam engine did jump the track, and burst its boilers, it would not hurt the engineer who designed the track; it would hurt only the engine itself. And so, too, if a man disobeys God's laws, and dashes his head against them, as against an eternal rock, the rock does not suffer—it is only the head of the man that suffers.

Finally, it is only by obedience to the laws of Christ and His Church that we ever become free. If there is any vision or mental picture to be had at all of the condition of the world a few centuries ago and now, it might be the vision of a great rocky island in the very center of a stormy and raging sea. Previously to the break-up of Christian unity three centuries ago, this island may be represented as surrounded by a great stone wall against which the waves spent their fury, but never broke it down. Inside the wall were thousands and thousands of the children of God playing games, singing songs, and enjoying life, to the utter oblivion of the great devouring sea outside. With the dawning of the day of False Freedom, there came to the island a group of men who argued with the children in some such language as this: "Why have you permitted the Church of Rome to surround you with all her laws and dogmas? Can you not see that she has surrounded you all about, and has not permitted you to think for yourself or to be free and captains of your own fate? Tear down the walls, break down the barriers, throw off the obstacles, and begin to live your own life, and learn to be free." And so the children tore down the walls; and one day I

went back and I saw all the children huddled together in the center of the island, afraid to move, afraid to play, afraid to sing, afraid to dance, afraid to be gay, afraid of falling into the sea.

We who, by the Grace of God, have been blessed with the protection of the Church's law and authority, can never quite understand why anyone can ever think that obedience to that law and authority is enslaving. On the contrary, to us it is positively romantic. It is easy to fall into the excesses of the modern world, to talk about progress, new thought, new religion, just as it easy to fall off a log.

It is easy to be an atheist, and to say the world does not require a God, just as it is easy to be a pantheist, and say that the world is God; but it is thrilling to walk between those two abysses and hold that God is in the world, but not of it—and such is the Incarnation. It would be extremely easy to fall into the extreme of the Stoics, and say that pain is the law of life, or to fall into the equally stupid extreme of saying pleasure is the law of life, but it is romantic to escape the pitfalls and hold that pain is the prelude to life—and such is the lesson of Easter.

It would be easy to say with Gandhi that life should be a fast, just as it would be easy to say with the pagan that it should be a feast, but it is thrilling to avoid both extremes, and hold that the fast should precede the feast. Every heresy in the history of the Church has been either a truth exaggerated to an excess, or diminished to a defect. It is easy to fall into any of these extremes, and to lose one's intellectual balance. The thrill is in keeping it.

In other words, the Church is not so much to be compared with Niagara Falls, as it is to be compared with a great and tremendous rock weighing ten thousand tons, which is poised on another rock by the delicate balance of no more than six inches of a base. Niagara is a falls simply because it cannot help falling; it is the easiest thing to do; it is simply letting things go. But that great rock which is pitched at an angle no bigger than one's hand has a thousand angles at which it will fall, but there is only one on which it will stand, and it is that which makes it a far more serious thing than the falling and churning of all of Niagara's waters. And so with the Church. All through her history she has been like that great rock, poised on the very brink of an abyss, and it is that which has made her romantic; for danger is the root and foundation of all romance in drama.

Why do children like to play robber, walk picket fences, tramp into thick woods, play along banks of deep rivers, throw stones at vicious dogs, listen to blood-curdling ghost stories, walk on roofs? Is it not because each and every child has deep-rooted in his heart as the foundation for his manhood, and as the very condition for his enjoying life, the love of danger and the thrill of being near it, and yet never falling completely into it?

Why has every person an instinctive desire to witness a storm at sea, providing he could be sure of reaching port? Is it not because there is romance in escaping danger? We who ride in Peter's bark witness such a storm, and know we will reach port. For twenty centuries the bark of Peter has been riding the seas, and for twenty centuries we who have

been on board know the romance of the seas and its dangers, but also the romance of a port. Sometimes that bark has come within a hair's breadth of dashing against the rock of saying that Christ was man and not God, and then again it has suddenly had to swerve to avoid crashing into the opposite rock and saying that Christ is God but not man. At other moments in her voyage, Peter's bark has come within a razor's edge of being stranded on the sands of humanism and saying that man does everything, and God does nothing. And then, by an equally dexterous move, she saves herself from the sandbars of declaring with the oriental mystics that God does everything and man does nothing. It would have been extremely easy for Peter and his successors to have sunk their ship in the depths of determinism in the last century, just as it would have been easy for it to have capsized in the shallow waters of sentimentalism in the Twentieth Century. But it is wonderfully thrilling to have avoided both. It would have been very easy for the bark of Peter to have been lost in the fogs of modernism in our own day, just as it would have been easy for it to have lost its course in the mists of Freudian sexology. But to have avoided both of these snares, not by mere chance, but by intelligent direction, is thrilling. If one small blunder concerning the doctrine of original sin were made in her twenty centuries of charting the course of men to God, huge blunders would have been made in human happiness. A mistranslation of a single word one thousand years ago, might have smashed all the statues of Europe. A false move in the Council of the Vatican might have impoverished reason. By one single slip, the Church might have stopped all the

dances, withered all the Christmas trees, and broken all the Easter eggs.

But the Church has avoided all these pitfalls and all these errors, and as the bark of Peter, with sails flying high, cuts the waters of the sea, she looks before and aft. Behind her she can see the shrivelled hulks of a thousand heresies and mental fashions that were dashed to pieces against the rocks of time; she can see ten thousand shallow basins into which she might have plunged, and ten thousand rivers of sentimentalism in which she might have been drowned. Now the bark of Peter is in the open, with the sea calm and clear, but there are shouts about her ears. Every now and then she stops to gather up shipwrecked children from the sinking rafts of sinking faiths, then onward she speeds, and the future will be just as thrilling as the past. Always in danger, always escaping it; always threatened, always conquering; always enjoying the romance of avoiding extremes, the bark is destined to go on through all the storms and tempests of the world, until one day it checks pace at the hid battlements of eternity, and there as the children disembark from the ship of Peter, they will understand why it avoided the snares and pitfalls—because as Peter stood at the helm of his bark, there rested on his hands the invisible, eternal hands of Christ, who steers the sun and moon and stars in their courses.

THE WORLD'S GREATEST NEED

(Address delivered by Rev. Dr. Fulton J. Sheen in the Catholic Hour, January 31, 1932.)

There is a famine abroad on the earth, a famine not of bread, for we have had too much of that and our luxury has made us forget God; a famine not of gold, for the glitter of so much of that has blinded us to the meaning of the twinkle of the stars; but a famine of a more serious kind, and one which threatens nearly every country in the world—the famine of really great men. In other words, the world today is suffering from a terrible nemesis of mediocrity. We are dying of ordinariness; we are perishing from our pettiness. The world's greatest need is great men, some one who will understand that there is no greater conquest than victory over oneself; some one who will realize that real worth is achieved, not so much by activity, as by silence; some one who will seek first the Kingdom of God and His justice, and put into actual practice the law that it is only by dying to the life of the body that we ever live to the life of the spirit; some one who will brave the taunts of a Good Friday to win the joy of an Easter Sunday; who will, like a lightning-flash, burn away the bonds of feeble interest which tie down our energies to the world; who, with a fearless voice, like John the Baptist, will arouse our enfeebled nature out of the sleek dream of unheroic repose; who will gain victories, not by stepping down from the Cross and compromising with the world, but who will suffer in order to conquer the world. In a word, what we need are saints, for saints are the truly great men.

Now, we cannot all become saints, in the strict-

est sense of the term, but we can all become saints to a certain degree, and I am going to try to explain in simple psychological terms how saints are made. I assume without further ado that the grace of God is the one thing necessary, and that God will give that grace to those who do His will. I am concerned merely with the natural elements of sanctity, or the psychological steps which lead to the state of sainthood, and these are three: a sense of emptiness, a knowledge, and an exchange.

First of all, I say that they are made by an experience of the emptiness of the world, and its absolute incapacity to give peace and happiness to the human heart. Consult your own experience. When you were children you looked forward to Christmas Day, and in anticipation you imagined all the joys that would be yours with the possession of your toys, the sight of the lighted tree, and the unlimited taste of fruits and candies. When finally Christmas Day did come, and you had played with the toys (and it was not long until you were "played out"), and you had tasted the sweet meats and blown out the last candle on the tree, you then crept into your bed, and said in your own little heart of hearts that somehow or other, it did not come up to your expectations. It did not, for nothing does. That experience of childhood has been repeated a thousand times since. Men look forward to the possession of power; they finally get it, and still they are unhappy. Men crave wealth, they have a hundred times more than they need, and still they want more; and their wanting it makes them unhappy. Even the loss of the least of it robs them of joy, as the plucking of a single hair from a head that is full of it, gives pain. Nothing ever comes up to our expectations!

Well, why is it? The reason is that in looking forward to the things of this world, we use our imagination, which, as a faculty of the soul is spiritual, and therefore capable of imagining infinite things. I can imagine, for example, a mountain of gold, but I have never seen one. I can imagine a castle on the Hudson that has a thousand times a thousand rooms, each wall blazing with diamonds and emeralds, but I have never seen that castle, and perhaps never shall.

Now, the pleasure of the future, the joys which I hope to obtain, the power which I desire to wield, the wealth which I desire to possess,—all of these, as long as they are not actually in my possession, become endowed with the infinity which belongs to the imagination. They, in a certain sense, become spiritualized and idealized, and hence take on something of the blessedness and infinity of my imagination. But when finally these imaginings or expectations are realized, they are material, they are local, definite, concrete, finite, cribbed, confined. In the mind they were ideal, and hence almost unbounded; in reality, they are concrete, and therefore very limited. Hence there arises a tremendous disparity between the infinite imagination I had of these things and the finite realization. When the things actually do come, they come with a sense of loss. We feel that in their becoming actual or real, they lose something of the beauty with which we had imaginatively endowed them. A sense of emptiness or void then comes over the soul. We feel that we have been cheated out of something, for the realization of our imagination is like trying to fill a valley with a pea; a terrible sense of emptiness creeps over the soul, and this sense of void is really a call from God. In

very simple terms, it means that we cannot expect happiness here below. It means that we are made for an infinite happiness, otherwise we never could have imagined it. But it also means that we can never obtain it here below, for otherwise we should never have this terrible feeling of loss, and disappointment, and emptiness.

Two escapes are possible from this feeling of emptiness and dissatisfaction of the world, or better still, from the voice of God. One is to drown the call of God by seeking new pleasures, new stimuli, new excitements. Some souls use the remedy and go on chasing butterflies and golden pots at the end of the rainbow, and throw themselves into pleasures that satisfy a very small part of themselves, and never their whole being. Others let loose the reins of duty upon the flanks of the steeds of passion, and gallop on down the avenues of pleasures, always being made more hungry by that which satisfies, until at last despair drives them to suicide and double death.

Saintly souls, on the other hand, when they feel this sense of uneasiness in their soul, conclude that happiness is not to be found on this earth, that they were made for God, and that the only unhappiness in life is the unhappiness that comes from a failure to tend towards Him. At this point begins the second stage of the development of great men, namely, a knowledge (and by knowledge I mean an understanding) of Our Lord and Saviour. Let me here again appeal to your personal experience. You may have heard a great deal about a certain person, about his mannerisms, his severity, his rigorous life. You only know about him, but you do not know him. With this meager knowledge, you frankly avow that you do not care for him. After spending five minutes in

his company, your whole feeling has completely changed. Knowledge changed your whole outlook on him, and converted hate into the beginning of love. In much the same way that the prejudice of Nathaniel against Our Blessed Lord was changed by just two sentences from Our Lord's lips, which swept away prejudice, so it is with the soul of a great man before Our Lord. At a distance, He seems to be a crowned King, and the crown is not gold but thorns; He seems to be wearing the garment of a fool, and therefore He is to be spurned; he seems to be holding a reed in His hand, and therefore is only a mock King. But it is only *seems*, for the more we get to know Him, the less we find we can get along without Him. On closer view, we see that He is a King, but not of this world; that the scars are not relics of defeat, but the scars of love in the battle of Calvary. That which we mistook for hardness was devotion to truth; that which we believed to be severity we see was devotion to love,—and so the process goes on, until we find that in comparison to His beauty, all other beauty is pain, and in comparison to His love, all earthly love is but tawdry and vain.

At this point begins the third stage of sainthood, namely, exchange. There is a wrong impression abroad in the world to the effect that following Our Lord means giving up the world, abandoning friends, surrendering wealth, and losing all that life holds dear. If we fear that in having Him we must have naught else besides, we have not begun to understand Christ.

Such is not really the case. Sanctity is not a question of relinquishing or abandoning or giving up something for Christ: it is question of exchange.

Our Lord never said it was wrong to love the world; He said only that it was a loss, for "what exchange shall a man give for his soul?" Exchange is founded on the fact that there are two classes of goods: first, things that we can get along without; secondly, things we cannot get along without. I can very well get along without a dime, but I cannot get along without the bread which it will buy, and so I exchange one for the other. So, too, in the spiritual world, I soon learn that there are many things that I can get along without, and as I grow in acquaintance with Christ, I find that I can get along without sin, but I cannot get along without His peace of conscience, and so I exchange one for the other. Later on, as I get to know Him better, I find that I can get along without an innocent pleasure, but I cannot get along without the pleasure of daily communion with Him, and so I exchange the one for the other. I find by a still deeper acquaintance that I can get along without the world's goods, but not without the wealth of Christ's grace, and so I exchange one for the other, and that is the vow of poverty. I find that I can get along very well without the pleasures of the flesh, but I cannot get along without the pleasures of Christ's spirit, and I exchange the one for the other, and that is the vow of chastity. I find that I can get along very well without my own will, but I cannot get along without His, and so I exchange the one for the other, and that is the vow of obedience. Thus the saint goes on exchanging one thing for another. And thus it is that in making himself poor, he becomes rich, and in making himself a slave, he becomes free. The gravitation of the earth grows weaker, and the gravitation of the stars grows stronger, until finally, when there is nothing left to exchange, like Paul he

cries out: "For to me. . . to die is gain," for by that last exchange his gain is Christ in everlasting life.

Sanctity, then, is not giving up the world. It is exchanging the world. It is a continuation of that sublime transaction of the Incarnation in which Christ said to man: "You give me your humanity, I will give you My Divinity. You give Me your time, I will give you My Eternity. You give Me your bonds, I will give you My freedom. You give Me your death, I will give you My life. You give Me your nothingness, I will give you My all." And the consoling thought throughout this whole transforming process is that it does not require much time to make us saints: it requires only much love.

And now, in exchange for telling you how saints are made, kindly give me your prayers, that I may practice what I preach.

THE DIVINE SENSE OF HUMOR

(Address delivered by Rev. Dr. Fulton J. Sheen in the Catholic Hour, February 7, 1932.)

A remark not to be taken too lightly is one to the effect that the modern world is taking itself too seriously. Whether there be only five senses or fifty-seven senses, one of the most precious of them all is the one the modern world is rapidly losing, namely, the sense of humor. There are many evidences to justify the statement that the world is losing its sense of humor. Note, first of all, the changed attitude toward laughter. It was not so long ago that laughter was as free as the air, and as spontaneous as a sneeze, being the natural product of human fellowship, and the joyous effervescence of friend meeting friend. Now it is put on a commercial basis, and the business of making people laugh has become one of the serious enterprises of our country; in fact, so serious has it become that we are now obliged to pay about two dollars for an evening of it in a theatre.

Gold, too, is taken so seriously today that some men pursue it as if it were the "be all and the end all here" and as if shrouds had pockets and coffins had coffers. If it is lost, some feel that life is no longer worth living, as if life consisted in what we *had* rather than in who we *are*. Another evidence is the seriousness with which the modern world embraces every new fad and fancy in the intellectual order, simply because it is new. The only real explanation for the craze over every new psychology that lost its soul, then its consciousness, and now has lost its mind, and the only real explanation for the equally absurd theory that everything wrong in life

is traceable to a sex libido, is that the modern world has lost its sense of humor. If these absurd theories about God being a creature of Space-Time, and religion being, as one philosopher puts it, "a projection into the roaring loom of time of a unified complex of psychical values," were advanced fifty years ago, people would have laughed them out of existence. The only reason the modern world holds them is that it has lost its appreciation of what is funny, it has lost its sense of humor.

It might be interesting to inquire into the history of the sense of humor, and this is best studied in relationship to this visible world of ours. In order that we might more clearly grasp its history, we ask ourselves three questions: When did humor come into the world? When did the world lose its sense of humor? How did it regain it?

The Origin of the Divine Sense of Humor.

There never was a brush touched to canvas, nor a chisel to marble, nor a dome thrown against the vault of heaven's blue, but that a great idea preceded it, for all art is the expression of the ideal through the real. The architect, for example, who conceived the Cathedral of Notre Dame, had an idea of that Cathedral in his mind before a single stone of it was put upon stone. Had he lived to see his work completed, he would have seen in that stone tribute to the Blessed Mother, the realization, the consecration, or the petrification of his idea.

Now Creation is an art—the Divine Art of the Divine Artist. Everything that exists in this world, every stone, every diamond, every plant, every tree, every animal, every bird, every man, every child was made according to a divine idea existing in the mind

of God from all eternity. God, too, had His "models" or "patterns" and these were the "archetypal ideas" or things which were identical with His very Being. When, therefore, the Divine Fiat spoke to nothingness, and planets and worlds tumbled from God's finger-tips, and the great procession of life moved on, everything which existed either in the most distant planet, or on our tiny earth, was a realization, or a materialization, or an incarnation of His ideas.

Almighty God willed that just as any great painting should make us think of the artist, and every great monument should remind us of the architect who designed it, and every painting recall the painter and every machine the inventor, so, too, everything in this world should, in some way, remind us of Him. In other words, God made the world with a *Divine Sense of Humor*.

But what has this to do with a Divine Sense of Humor? Do we not say that a person has a sense of humor if he can "see through things," and do we not say that a person lacks a sense of humor if he cannot "see through things?" But God made the world according to such a plan that we were constantly to be "seeing through things" to Him, the Power, the Wisdom, the Beauty and the Source of all that is. In other words, the material was to be a revelation of the spiritual, the human the revelation of the divine, the fleeting and the passing the revelation of the Eternal. The universe, according to His original plan, was transparent, like a window pane, and in those days a mountain was not just a mountain; a mountain was the revelation of the power of God; a sunset was not just a sunset; a sunset was the revelation of the beauty of God; a snow-flake was not just a snow-flake; a snow-flake was the revelation

of the purity of God. Everything told us something about God, for by the visible things of the world is the power and wisdom of the invisible God made manifest. According to this plan, every man was a poet, for a poet is one who is endowed with this sense of the invisible, the power of seeing God through things, and such is the essence of humor.

The Loss of the Sense of Humor.

Such was God's plan of Creation, or rather its great drama, perfect in detail without flaw or blemish. But the drama, with each line exquisitely sketched by God, was given to man to act and to play, and man made a botch of the masterpiece. That one thing which destroyed man's plan in Creation, though not God's plan, was sin, and sin is seriousness. Sin is an act by which man refuses to use creatures as a stepping-stone to God, or as a means to an end, and insists on using them as ends in themselves. As a man loses his sense of humor when he cannot see through a point, so, too, he loses his sense of humor in its entirety when he ceases to see things in revelations, or symbols, or reminders of God, and begins to regard them seriously as ends in themselves. The day sin came into the world, the world lost its transparency, and became opaque, like a curtain. A veil was drawn between the Artist and His artistry, between the Architect and the architecture, between the Creator and the creation. The sense of the invisible was lost. In his mental short-sightedness, man lost the power "to see God through things:" then a mountain was just a mountain; a sunset was just a sunset; a snow-flake was just a snow-flake. Poetry passed out of the world, and prose came in—prose, which is a matter-of-fact-ness

of style—and men settled down to that terrible seriousness in life which must always characterize those who cannot see beyond the veil.

Rebirth of the Sense of Humor.

This seriousness pervaded the world for full forty centuries. Then one night there rang out over the stillness of an evening breeze the cry of the heart of a God in the voice of a child. And when the Babe grew in grace and wisdom, He went into the public lanes and market places, and began to teach a new doctrine to men—the doctrine of the Divine Sense of Humor. Everything He said, everything He did could be summed up in these words: *Nothing in this world is to be taken seriously, nothing*—except the salvation of a soul. “For what doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul.” The world, and the things that are in it, will one day, like an Arab’s tent, be folded away. There is nothing that endures but God.

And so, as He went about preaching, He taught the lesson of the Divine Sense of Humor and never took anything seriously except His soul. He saw the fishermen gathering in their nets, but He did not take them seriously. To Him they were fishers of men. The pearl was not to be taken seriously, for thanks to the Divine Sense of Humor, the pearl was the worth of faith and grace. The quickness of the lightning-flash from east to west was not just a physical phenomenon to be taken seriously. To Him it was the revelation of the quickness of judgment. A wedding garment was not to be taken seriously—though June brides do take it seriously—a wedding garment was a revelation of charity. And so on, all through His life. Every material thing He viewed

as a tell-tale of some great eternal lesson. Every trivial incident was a symbol of God's working among men. The fishes of the sea, the birds of the air that reap not nor sow, the lilies of the field arrayed in garments more glorious than Solomon's, camels and eyes of needles, gardens and husbandmen, thorns and thistles, bread and serpents, sheep and goats, wheat and chaff, hen and chickens, and all other parables of His ministry—all these seemingly insignificant things of ordinary life were to Him as transparent as the very air, and each and everyone of them contained within itself a wonderful lesson about the goodness of God, but only those who had a Divine Sense of Humor and who could see through things as He did, could read the lesson. The serious can never speak in parables, but only those with a sense of the invisible.

Such is the history of the Divine Sense of Humor, and now that we know what it is, we may ask who are they who understand and possess it, and here the answer must be that those who possess it in its fulness are saints.

I do not mean canonized saints, but rather that great army of staunch and solid Christians to whom everything and every incident speaks a story of God's love. A saint can be defined as one who has a Divine Sense of Humor, for a saint never takes this world seriously as the lasting city. To him the world is like a scaffolding up through which souls climb to the Kingdom of Heaven, and when the last soul shall have climbed up through it, then it shall be torn down and burned with a fervent fire, not because it is base, but simply because it has done its work—it has brought souls back again to God. A saint is one who looks out upon this world as a nursery to the

Father's heavenly mansion and a stepping-stone to the Kingdom of Heaven. A saint is one to whom everything in the world is a sacrament. In the strict sense of the term, there are only seven sacraments, but in the broad sense of the term everything in the world is a sacrament, for everything in the world can be used as a means of special sanctification. A saint is one who never complains about the particular duty of his state in life, for he knows full well that "all the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players." Why, then, should he who plays the part of a king glory in his tinsel crown and tin sword, and believe that he is better than some one else who plays the part of a peasant? For when the curtain goes down they are all men. So, too, why should anyone, who in this world happens to enjoy either the accident of honor or wealth, believe he is better than some one else who may possess neither gold nor worldly learning? Why should he glory in his tinsel crown and tin sword, and believe that he is better than some one else who plays a less important role in the great drama of life? For when the curtain goes down on the last day, and we respond to the curtain call of judgment, we shall not be asked what part we played, but how well we played the part that was assigned to us.

A saint, then, is one who has learned to spiritualize and sacramentalize and ennoble everything in the world, and make of it a prayer. No occupation is too base for such spiritualization, nor is any suffering too hard for such ennobling. It is only those who have not this highly developed sense that let the opportunities of daily life pass by without either making of them a prayer, or taking from them a divine lesson. Centuries ago in the streets of Florence there

stood a beautiful piece of Carrara marble that had been cut and hacked and ruined by some cheap artist. Other mediocre artists passed it by, and bemoaned that it should have been so ruined. One day, (so a story runs), Michael Angelo passed it by, asked that it be brought to his studio, there applied his chisel, his genius and his inspiration, and drew out of it the immortal statue of David. The lesson contained herein is that there is nothing so base or low that it cannot be reconquered, that there is no duty, however menial, that cannot be retrieved for sanctity, and that there is nothing that is cast down that cannot be lifted up.

Down in the gutter of a city street was a drop of water, soiled, dirty and stagnant. Away up in the heavens a gentle sunbeam saw it, leaped out of its azure sky down to the drop, kissed it, thrilled it through and through with new strange life and hope, and lifted it up higher and higher and higher, beyond the clouds, and one day left it as a flake of immaculate snow on a mountain top. And so our own lives—humdrum, routine, tiresome lives of a workaday world—can be ennobled, spiritualized and sacramentalized, providing we bring to them the inspiration of Someone who saw apostolic zeal in salt; provided we infuse their carbon blackness with the electric flame of love which will make them glow with the brilliance of a diamond; provided we bring to them the inspiration of the great Captain, who carried five wounds in the forefront of battle and thrills them with the fixed flash of that instant and intolerable enlightenment, the lightning made eternal as the Light.

And when we have done this, then perhaps we shall understand why He who came to this earth to

teach us the Divine Sense of Humor showed us everything that was lovely and beautiful in His character—except one thing. He showed us His power; He showed us His wisdom; He showed us His melting kindness; He showed us His sorrow; He showed us His tears; He showed us His forgiveness; He showed us His power over nature; He showed us His knowledge of human hearts; but there was one thing that He did not show; there was one thing He saved for those who do not take this world too seriously; there was one thing He saved for Paradise; there was one thing He saved for those who, like poets and saints, have a Divine Sense of Humor; there was one thing He saved for heaven that will make heaven heaven, and that was—His smile!

THE CURSE OF BROADMINDEDNESS

(Address delivered by Rev. Dr. Fulton J. Sheen in the Catholic Hour, February 14, 1932.)

"The Catholic Church is intolerant!" That simple thought, like a yellow-fever sign, is supposed to be the one solid reason to frighten away anyone who might be contemplating knocking at the portals for entrance, begging a crumb of the Bread of Life. When proof for this statement is asked, it is retorted that the Church is intolerant because of its self-complacency and smug satisfaction as the unique interpreter of the thoughts of Christ. Its narrow-mindedness is revealed in its unwillingness to cooperate effectively with other Christian bodies which are working for the union of churches. Within the last ten years, two great world conferences on religion have been held, in which every great religion except the Catholic participated. The Catholic Church was invited to attend to discuss the two important subjects of doctrine and ministry, but she refused.

That is not all! Even in our own country she has refused to lend a helping hand in the federating of churches, a federation which decided that it was better to throw dogmatic differences into the background in order to serve better the religious needs of America. The other churches will give her a royal welcome, but she will not come. She will not cooperate! She will not conform! And she will not conform because she is too narrow-minded and intolerant. Christ would not have acted that way!

Such is, practically everyone will admit, a fair statement of the attitude the modern world bears toward the Church. The charge of intolerance is

not new. It was once directed against Our Blessed Lord Himself.

Immediately after His betrayal, Our Blessed Lord was summoned before a religious body for the first Church conference of Christian times, held, not in the city of Lausanne or Stockholm, but in Jerusalem. The meeting was presided over by Annas, primate and head of one of the most aggressive families of the patriarchate, a man wise with the de-luding wisdom of three score and ten years, a man wise in a country where age and wisdom were sy-nonymous. Five of his sons in succession wore the sacred ephod of blue and purple and scarlet, symbols of family power. As head of his own house, Annas had charge of family revenues, and from a non-bib-lical source we learn that part of the family fortune was invested in trades connected with the Temple. The stalls for the sale of bird and beast and material for sacrifice were known as the booths of the sons of Annas. One expects a high tone when a priest goes into business; but Annas was a Sadducee, and since he did not believe in a future life, he made the most of life while he had it. There was always one incident he remembered about his Temple business, and that was the day Our Lord flung tables down its front steps, as if they were lumber, and with cords banished the money-handlers like rubbish before the wind.

That incident flashed before his mind now, when he saw standing before him the Wood-worker of Nazareth. The eyes of Jesus and Annas met, and the first world conference on religion opened. Annas, ironically feigning surprise at the sight of the Pri-soner whom multitudes followed the week before, opened the meeting by asking Jesus to make plain

two important religious matters, the two that were discussed later on in Lausanne and Geneva and Stockholm, namely, the question of His doctrine and the question of His ministry. Our Lord was asked by a religious man, a religious leader, a religious authority, a representative of the common faith of a nation, to enter into discussion, to sit down to a conference on the all-important questions of religion, ministry and discipline, and He refused. And the world's first church conference was a failure!

He refused in words which left no doubt in the mind of Annas that the doctrine which He preached was the one which He would now uphold in religious conference, namely, His Divinity. With words cut like the facets of a diamond, with sentences as uncompromising as a two-edged sword, He answered Annas: "I have spoken openly to the world. . . and in secret I have spoken nothing. Why askest thou Me? Ask them who have heard what I spoke unto them: behold they know what things I have said."

In so many words Jesus said to Annas: "You imply by your questioning that I am not divine; that I am just the same as the other rabbis going up and down the countryside; that I am another one of Israel's prophets, and at the most, only a man. I know that you would welcome Me to your heart if I would say that I am only human. But no! I have spoken openly to the world. I have declared My divinity. I say unto you, I have exercised the right of divinity, for I have forgiven sins; I have left My body and blood for posterity, and rather than deny its reality, I have lost those who followed Me, who were scandalized at My words. It was only last night that I told Philip that the Father and I were One, and that I will ask My Father to send the Spirit of

Truth to the Church I have founded on Peter, a Church which shall endure to the end of time.

“Ask those who have heard Me; they will tell you what things I have said. I have no other doctrine than that which I declared when I drove your dove-hucksters out of the Temple, and declared it to be My Father’s House; that which I have preached, that which angels declared at My birth, that which I revealed on Thabor, that which I now declare before you, namely, My divinity. And if this is your first principle, namely, I am not divine, I am just human like yourself, then there is nothing in common between us. So, ‘Why askest thou Me to discuss doctrine and ministry with you?’ ”

Some brute standing nearby, feeling himself the humiliation of the high priest at such an uncompromising response, struck Our Blessed Lord across the face with a mailed fist, drawing out of Him two things: blood, and a soft answer: “If I have spoken evil, give testimony of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou Me?” That soldier of the court of Annas has gone down in history as the representative of that group who feel an intense hatred against Divinity, but who never clothe it in intellectual language, but in violence alone.

All that happens in the life of Christ happens in the life of the Church. Here in the courtroom of Annas I find the reason for the Catholic Church’s attitude in refusing to take part in movements for federation such as those inspired by present world conferences on religion. Happy the Church is that there should be a desire for the union of Christendom, but she cannot take part in any such conference. In so many words the Church says to those who invite her: “Why askest thou me about my doc-

trine and my ministry? Ask them that have heard me. I have spoken openly through the centuries, declaring myself the Spouse of Christ, founded on the Rock of Peter. Ask those who have heard me. Centuries before prophets of modern religions arose, I spoke my divinity at Nicea and Constantinople. I spoke it in the Cathedrals of the Middle Ages; I speak it today in every pulpit and church throughout the world. I know that you will welcome me to your conferences if I say that I am not divine; I know ritualists throughout the world feel the need of my ceremonials, and would grasp my hand if I would but relinquish my claim to be divine. I know a recent writer has argued that the great organization of the Church could be the framework for the union of all Christendom, if I would give up my claims to be the Truth; I know the church doors of the world would rejoice to see me pass in. I know your welcome would be sincere. I know you desire the union of Christendom—but I cannot! Why do you ask me? If your first principle is that I am not divine, but just a human organization like your own, that I am a human institution like all other human institutions founded by erring men and erring women; if your first principle is that I am human, **not divine**, then there is no common ground for conference. I must refuse.”

Call this intolerance, yes! That is just what it is—the intolerance of Divinity. It is the claim to uniqueness that brought the blow of the soldier; it is the claim to uniqueness that brings the blow of the world’s disapproval. It is well to remember that there was one thing in the life of Christ that brought His death, and that was the intolerance of His claim to be divine. He was tolerant about where He slept

and what He ate; He was tolerant about shortcomings in His fish-smelling Apostles; He was tolerant of those who nailed Him to the Cross; but He was absolutely intolerant about His statement that those who believe not in Him shall be condemned. There was not much tolerance about His statement that anyone who would prefer his own father or mother to Him was not worthy of being His disciple. There was not much tolerance of the world's opinion in giving His blessing to those whom the world would hate and revile. Tolerance to His mind was not always good, nor was intolerance always evil.

There is no other subject on which the average mind is so much confused as the subject of tolerance and intolerance. Tolerance is always supposed to be desirable because taken to be synonymous with broadmindedness. Intolerance is always supposed to be undesirable, because taken to be synonymous with narrow-mindedness. This is not true, for tolerance and intolerance apply to two different things. Intolerance applies only to principles, never to persons. Tolerance applies only to persons, never to principles. We must be tolerant to persons because they are human; we must be intolerant about principles because they are divine. We must be tolerant to the erring, because ignorance may have led them astray; but we must be intolerant to the error, because truth is not our making but God's. Hence, the Church in her history, due to reparation made, has always welcomed the heretic back into the treasury of her souls, but never his heresy into the treasury of her wisdom.

The Church, like Our Blessed Lord, advocates charity to all persons who disagree with her by word or by violence. Even those who, in the strictest sense of the term, are bigots, are to be treated with the

utmost kindness. They really do not hate the Church; they hate only what they mistakenly believe to be the Church. If I believed all the lies that are told about the Church, if I gave credence to all the foul stories told about her priesthood and the Papacy, if I had been brought up on lies about her teachings and her sacraments, I should probably hate the Church a thousand times more than they do.

Keeping the distinction well in mind between persons and principles, cast a hurried glance over the general religious conditions of our country. America, it is commonly said, is suffering from intolerance. While there is much want of charity to our fellow citizens, I believe it is truer to say that America is not suffering so much from intolerance as it is suffering from a false kind of tolerance: the tolerance of right and wrong, truth and error, virtue and vice, Christ and chaos! The man, in our country, who can make up his mind and hold to certain truths with all the fervor of his soul, is called narrow-minded, whereas the man who cannot make up his mind is called broad-minded. And now this false broad-mindedness, or tolerance of truth and error, has carried many minds so far that they say one religion is just as good as another, or that because one contradicts another, therefore, there is no such thing as religion. This is just like concluding that because, in the days of Columbus, some said the world was round, and others said it was flat, therefore there is no world at all. Open-mindedness is all right to a certain extent, but if the mind is open all around. . . Well?

Certainly it should be reasonably expected that religion should have its authoritative spokesmen, just as well as science. If you had wounded the palm

of your hand, you would not call in a florist; if you broke the spring of your watch, you would not ask an artisan well expert to repair it; if your child had swallowed a nickel, you would not call in a collector of internal revenue; if you wished to determine the authenticity of an alleged Rembrandt, you would not summon a house painter. If you insist that only a plumber should mend your pipes, and not an organ tuner; if you demand a doctor shall take care of your body, and not a musician, then why should not we demand that a man who tells about God and religion at least should say his prayers?

The remedy for this broadmindedness is intolerance, not intolerance of persons, for of them we must be tolerant regardless of the views they may hold, but intolerance of principles. A bridge builder of the enemy, and he who is broad-minded on the bridge; the gardener must be intolerant about the weeds of his garden; the property owner must be intolerant about his claims to property; the soldier must be intolerant about his country, as against that of the enemy, and he who is broadminded on the battlefield is a coward and a traitor. The doctor must be intolerant about disease in his patients, as the professor must be intolerant about error in his pupils. So, too, the Church, founded on the Intolerance of Divinity, must be equally intolerant about the truths commissioned to her. There are to be no one fisted battles, no half-drawn swords, no divided loves, no equalizing Christ and Buddha in a broad sweep of sophomoric tolerance or broadmindedness, for as Our Blessed Lord has put it: "He that is not with Me, is against Me."

There is only one answer to the problem of the constituents of water, namely, two atoms of hydro-

gen and one of oxygen. There is only one answer to the question of what is the capital of the United States. There is only one true answer to the problem of two times two. Suppose that certain mathematicians in various parts of this country taught diverse kinds of multiplication tables. One taught that two times two equaled five, another two times two equalled six, another two times two equaled seven and one fourth, another two times two equaled nine and four-fifths. Then suppose that some one decided it would be better to be broad-minded, and to work together and sacrifice their particular solutions for the sake of harmony. The result would be a Federation of Mathematicians, compromising, possibly, on the pooled solution that two times two equaled five and seven-eighths. Outside this federation is another group which holds that two times two equals four. They refuse to enter the federation unless the mathematicians agree to accept this as the true and unique solution. The broadminded group in conference taunt them, saying: "You are too intolerant and narrow-minded. You smack of the dead past. They believed that in the Dark Ages."

Now this is precisely the attitude of the Church on the subject of the world conference on religion. She holds that just as truth is one in geography, in chemistry and in mathematics, so too, there is one truth in religion, and if we are intolerant about the truth that two times two equals four, then we should be intolerant also about those principles on which are hinged the only really important thing in the world, namely, the salvation of our immortal soul. If the assumption is that there is no Divinity, no oneness of truth, but only opinion, probability and compromise, then the Church must refrain from

participation. Any conference on religion, therefore, which starts from the assumption that there is no such thing as truth, and that contrary and contradictory sects may be united in a federation of broad mindedness, must never expect the Church to join or cooperate.

As we grew from childhood to adolescence, the one thing that probably did most to wreck our faith in Santa Claus—I know it did mine—was to find a Santa Claus in every department store window. If there were only one Santa Claus, and he was at the North Pole, how could there be one in every shop window and at every street corner? That same mentality which led us to seek truth in unity should lead us to identically the same conclusion in religious matters.

The world may charge the Church with intolerance, for the world is right! The Church is intolerant, intolerant about truth, intolerant about principles, intolerant about divinity, just as Our Blessed Lord was intolerant about His Divinity. The other religions may change their principles, and they do change them, because their principles are man-made. Religion is not a sum of beliefs that we would like, but the sum of beliefs God has given. The world may disagree with the Church, but the world knows very definitely with what it is disagreeing. In the future, as in the past, the Church will be intolerant about the sanctity of marriage, for what God has joined together no man shall put asunder; she will be intolerant about her creed, and ready to die for it, for she fears not those who kill the body, but rather those who have the power of casting both body and soul into hell. She will be intolerant about her infallibility, for, "Behold," says Christ, "I am

with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." And while she is intolerant even to blood in adhering to the truths given her by her Divine Founder, she will be tolerant to those who say she is intolerant, for the same Divine Founder has taught her to say: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

There are only two positions to take concerning truth, and both of them had their hearing centuries ago in the courtroom of Solomon, where two women claimed a babe. A babe is like truth: it is one; it is organic; it cannot be divided. The real mother of the babe would accept no compromise. She was intolerant about her claim. She must have the whole babe, or nothing. . . . the intolerance of motherhood. But the false mother was tolerant. She was willing to compromise. She was willing to divide the babe,—and the babe would have died of broad-mindedness!

RELIGION WITHOUT DOGMAS

(Address delivered by Rev. Dr. Fulton J. Sheen in the Catholic Hour, February 21, 1932.)

The modern man wants a religion without dogmas. Religion, he says, must be free from dogmas which have fettered and hampered thinking for centuries. Religious experience, individual needs, mystic imagination—all these must take the place of outworn creeds. The Catholic Church, in developing dogmas and piling belief on belief, has made itself too complex, has departed from the beautiful simplicity of the Sermon on the Mount. Our Blessed Lord, it is further argued, never intended that there should be any iron-clad dogmas, nor that His religion should become overgrown with them.

The only way to determine whether Our Blessed Lord intended that His religion should have dogmas, or that it should be a matter of vague religious experience, is to go back to His very life, and particularly to the end of it, when He was on trial in a certain courtroom the night before His death. The presiding official in that court was Caiphas, a low type in a high place, the type that finds in religion not a conviction, but a career. At the central point of the inner circumference of a semi-circle he sat—president of the court; at right and left were seated his colleagues. At each end was a clerk, the one to record votes for his acquittal, the other to record votes for his conviction. Some of the members that night were sure to have been only half awake, but Caiphas was thoroughly alert.

No charge of condemnation could be brought

against Our Lord as long as contradictory statements were made. As soon as one said anything against Him, Sacred Scripture tells us, another contradicted, and a great tumult broke out. One can imagine the charges: one said, "He calls Himself a King," and another contradicted, "No, He does not say that; He only allows others to call Him a King." Another shouted out, "No, as soon as they wanted to proclaim Him a King, He fled away." Some said that He had cured them, but others testified that disease broke out after the cure, and therefore His cure was done by magic. Some said that Jesus and His Apostles did not offer sacrifice in the Temple, while others replied that it was not so. Some tried to prove that Christ and His followers did not celebrate the Passover, but witnesses who were in the Cenacle and had helped to prepare it the day before denied this. One of the Evangelists records in detail the charge: "This Man said, 'I will destroy this Temple made with hands, and within three days I will make another not made with hands.'" But another contradicted him, saying: "No, He did not say that: He said that He would build a new Temple." And so the disputes went on. The contradictions caused great commotion. Nothing that was said could give any color of justice to the sentence of death. When order was restored, Caiphas, infuriated by the way matters were going, rose up from the divan and came forward to the very edge of the dais. If witnesses had failed to condemn, Christ Himself must furnish the grounds for condemnation. So, turning to the Prisoner, the false-hearted judge addressed Him: "Answerest Thou nothing to the things which these witness against Thee?" But Jesus held His peace.

These silences of Jesus were weighty with mag-

netic eloquence. He did not speak, but looked about Him, with His great calm eyes, at the troubled and convulsed faces of His assassins, and for all eternity judged those phantom judges. In a flash every one of them was weighed and condemned by that look which went straight to their souls. The cheeks of the old man became red with anger at the silence.

“Well, if He will not speak, then He must be forced to speak and voice His own destruction.” Caiphas again rose from the seat at the head of the assembly, and with all the authority that could be crowded into words, asked a question that really mattered; a question that did not center about human affairs; a question that called for an answer, as no other question ever asked since the beginning of time called for an answer; a question that required not one of those vacuous, meaningless answers of timid politicians, but an answer clear-cut like chiseled marble, and the question rang out through the assembly: “I adjure Thee by the living God, that Thou tell us if Thou be the Christ, the Son of God.” Priests and rabbis, Scribes and Pharisees, learned men of Israel, knew what the question meant. “Art Thou the God foretold by prophets, who should come to this world as God, the Saviour?” Everyone sprang to his feet, clawing fingers stretching out towards Him.

Jesus hesitated a moment before dazzling those bleared eyes with the splendor of His formidable secret. A terrible, ominous silence settled over the hall that was made the more intense by its contrast with the sound of the distant crowing of a cock. Then came the answer: “Thou hast said it: I am. Nevertheless I say to you hereafter you shall see the

Son of Man sitting on the right hand of the power of God, and coming in the clouds of heaven.”

He had given a categorical, straight-forward answer about His Divinity; He defined Himself; He enunciated a truth, a cold truth, an authoritative principle. *He enunciated a dogma!*

A gleam of satisfaction lighted up the face of Caiphas. He almost sighed a sigh of relief. At last! At last, he had triumphed. His breast was heaving high with the joy of victory. In the shrill voice of an old man, he shouted out: “He hath blasphemed; what further need have we of witnesses?” Drawing out a small knife from under his girdle, and pretending a shocked horror which he did not feel, he rent his priestly garments, tore them top to bottom, letting the torn pieces hang like glorious symbols of a victorious battle. Then member after member of the Sanhedrin rent their garments, and the cloaked ghosts felt themselves relieved of an immense weight. “Behold, now you have heard the blasphemy, what think you?” And all the noisy kennel bayed out their answer: “He is guilty of death.” Guilty of death? Yes! He was too dogmatic.

Now let us suppose that, in answer to that question of Caiphas about His Divinity and His divine Sonship, Our Blessed Lord had said: “Far be it from Me, Caiphas, to impose any dogmas concerning my Divinity either upon you or upon posterity. I do not wish to cramp your spiritual freedom by harnessing you with the dogma that I am the Son of God. Religion must be free from dogmas, and the religious experience of each individual must decide whether I am God, or just a mere man.” If, I say, He had made such a statement, do you think He would have been condemned by Caiphas? If He had been

what the modern world calls broad-minded, do you think Caiphas would ever have delivered Him over to Pilate? If He had been less dogmatic, do you think He ever would have been condemned? If He had not been so dogmatic about His Divinity, He never would have seen the Cross.

Before the unbelieving world rends its garments in holy horror of dogmas, let it pause for a moment to hear the reasoned answer of the Church to the charge of dogmatism. First of all, in direct contradiction of many a modern preachment, the Church holds that it is impossible to have a religion without dogmas. To say that one must have a religion without dogmas is to assert a dogma, and a dogma that needs tremendously more justification than any dogma of the Church. What is a dogma? A dogma is an idea, and in this sense a man without dogmas may be said to be a man without an idea. Dogmas there must be as long as there is sound thinking.

History, mathematics, geography, and science all have their dogmas, their abstract principles, and their ideas. That the World War ended on Armistice Day, 1918, is a dogma of history; that Albany is the capital of the State of New York is a dogma of geography; that the sum of the angles of a triangle is equal to two right-angles is a dogma of geometry; that water is made up of two atoms of hydrogen and one of oxygen is a dogma of science. These are luminous truths, sound ideas in various fields of knowledge. Now truths like these in the religious field are called dogmas in the strict sense of the term. That there are three Persons in One God, that Christ is the Son of God, that faith is a gift, that grace is a participation in the Nature of God,

that the Church is the continuation of the Incarnation—these are dogmas of religion.

Now to ask that religion be free from dogmas is like asking a body to be freed from its backbone, or art to be freed from shapes and proportions, or literature to be freed from grammar. I know there are thousands of minds weak enough to succumb to the succulent abstraction of the sweet catchword, "I believe in religion, but not in theology," but it is only a catchword. Such a mind might just as well say, "I believe in chemicals, but not in chemistry," or, "I believe in health, but not in all the medical dogmas about digestion, vitamins, and assimilation." It is all as vain and as senseless as saying: "I want to be really scientific, but let us do away with laboratories and technique."

The only difference between the dogmas of religion and the dogmas of science is that the latter are grounded upon the authority of fallible men, while the dogmas of the Church are grounded upon the authority of God revealing. The religious problem is not whether religion shall be free from dogmas or not, because by the mere fact that a man thinks he creates dogmas. The real problem is which dogmas are we going to accept, those of hearsay, private wish, and the latest catchword of the day, or the funded intelligence of an august line of philosophers, saints and mystics. For the life of me, I cannot see why anyone should accept the authority of the Book of Darwin, and not accept the authority of the Book of Isaiah, nor how anyone can accept the authority of the latest sex theory emanating from Vienna, and not accept the authority of twenty centuries of Christian tradition; nor how anyone can

accept the authority of H. G. Wells and not accept the authority of Jesus Christ.

The modern man must decide for himself whether he is going to have a religion with thought, or a religion without it. He already knows that thoughtless politics lead to the ruin of society, and he may begin to suspect that thoughtless religion ends in confusion worse confounded. The problem is simple. The modern man has two maps before him: one the map of sentimental religion, the other the map of dogmatic religion. The first is very simple. It has been constructed only in the last few years by a topographer who has just gone into the business of map-making, and is extremely adverse to explicit directions. He believes that each man should find his own way and not have his liberty taken away by dogmatic directions. The other map is much more complicated, and full of dogmatic detail. It has been made by topographers that have been over every inch of the road for centuries, and know each detour and each pitfall. It has explicit directions and dogmas such as, "Do not take this road; it is rocky," or, "Follow this road; although rough and rocky at first, it leads to a smooth road on a mountain top." The simple map is very easy to read, but those who are guided by it are generally lost in a swamp of mushy sentimentalism. The other map takes a little more scrutiny, but it is more simple in the end, for it takes you up through the rocky road of the world's scorn to the everlasting hills, where is seated the Original Map-Maker, the Only One who ever has associated rest with learning: "Learn of Me, and find rest for your souls."

It is the very nature of man to generate children of his brain in the shape of thoughts, and as

he piles up thought on thought, truth on truth, doctrine on doctrine, conviction on conviction, and dogma on dogma, in a very coherent and orderly fashion, so as to produce a system complex as a body, and yet one and harmonious, he becomes more and more human; he becomes more and more man. When, however, in response to false cries for progress, he lops off dogmas, breaks with the memory of his forefathers, denies intellectual parentage, pleads for a religion without dogmas, substitutes mistiness for mystery, mistakes sentiment for sediment, he is sinking back slowly, surely and inevitably into the senselessness of stones and into the irresponsible unconsciousness of weeds. Grass is broad-minded. Cabbages have heads, but they have no dogmas.

PILATE AND PATRIOTISM

(Address delivered by Rev. Dr. Fulton J. Sheen in the Catholic Hour, February 28, 1932.)

One issue which will always hold interest is the conflict between Church and State. If one were to set down in some order the objections against the Church on the part of the modern State, they might resolve themselves into these three: first, the Church is perverting the nation by its parochial school system, which embodies a different educational policy than the public school, and by her marriage legislation which admits of no divorce—now the generally accepted thing in society; secondly, the Church refuses to give tribute to America, inasmuch as her heart is across the sea, recognizing the Vicar of Christ supreme in matters spiritual, and also because her heart is too much interested in the next world, and not sufficiently devoted to this one; thirdly, the Church looks upon herself as a sort of king in the sense that she claims to be the unique Church of Christ, and refuses absolutely to accept the democratic principle that one religion is just as good as another. Such are, I believe, the three principal complaints and charges against the Church today, and to those who urge them I would remind that they are exactly the same charges that were directed against Our Blessed Lord Himself in His trial before Pilate.

Since the year 26, Pontius Pilate had been procurator in the name of Tiberius Caesar. Little was known of him before that time. He had been in Judea only a few years, but long enough to draw upon himself the bitterest hate of those over whom

he ruled. Some time before the trial, Pilate had come from Caesarea to Jerusalem to take up winter quarters, bringing with him not only effigies of Caesar on the army banners, but even images of Roman eagles, which he introduced in the temple, without the knowledge of the Jewish people, when the city was asleep. They asked Pilate to remove them, but he would not for fear of injuring Caesar. For five days and nights they stormed about him, and on the sixth day he erected a judgment seat in the open city behind which he concealed his soldiers. The moment they repeated their request Pilate told them they would all be killed if they did not leave off disturbing him. But they threw themselves on the ground and laid their necks bare and said they would rather taste death than transgress the wisdom of their fathers. Pilate, deeply affected, ordered the images removed.

The Jews hated Pilate. They did not forget this incident, nor the time when he introduced votive tablets to the Emperor in Herod's palace in Jerusalem, nor when he confiscated the money of the temple to provide luxurious baths such as he had in Rome, and put down a revolt against his authority with naked swords and enjoyed his ablutions and Jewish money in comparative peace.

That Friday, at dawn, Pontius Pilate, wrapped in toga, still sleepy and yawning, was waiting for a mob in Herod's palace, very ill disposed towards the trouble-makers who forced him to rise at such an early hour. The crowd of accusers and the rough populace finally came to the front of his palace, but they stopped outside. Why? Because before Pilate's judgment seat, on the paved

stones of the Lithostratos, was painted a long white line, marking the boundaries beyond which no Jew could pass without becoming defiled. If they entered the house of a pagan, they were contaminated, and could not eat the Passover. So Caiphas, Annas and the other accusers stopped at the line. The hypocrites! They were not afraid of innocent blood, but they were afraid of a white line.

Pilate went to that line and asked abruptly: "What accusation bring you against this Man?" The Jews knew very well they could not win Pilate's favor if they charged the Christ with attacks upon the religion of their fathers. They were, therefore, ready to lie. Those who are bent upon evil look upon an accessory infamy as of little consequence. Pilate, they knew, could be conquered only by appealing to his loyalty to Rome and to the Emperor. They would give a political coloring to the accusation. If they told him what they told Annas and Caiphas, that Christ was a false Messiah, Pilate would smile, yea, sneer; but if they said He was a seditious inciter of revolt, that He was stirring up the people against the government, that He was unpatriotic, that He was inimical to the best interests of their country, Pilate could do no less than put Him to death. In other words, the charge of blasphemy is abandoned as soon as they enter the praetorium, and the charge of sedition is taken up. The judgment against Our Lord shifts now from religious grounds, where it had been laid before Annas and Caiphas, to patriotic grounds before Pilate. Note the irony of it all!

These same people who had risen against Pilate's authority, who hated him as a Roman, as a symbol

of foreign domination and their own slavery, who hated him still more as Pontius Pilate, as plotter against their religion, and thief of their money—these very people now drown their hate, protest their loyalty to Caesar, their affection for his security, their readiness to accept no Caesar but him because they had found a new hate, a new enemy,—Christ Jesus Our Lord.

And up against the marble balustrade of Pilate's judgment seat, the charges rolled, and they were three:

We have found this man perverting our nation,
He has forbidden us to give tribute to Caesar,
He says He is Christ, the King. (Luke, 23-2)

The same charges brought against the Church today! Every word was a lie! He was not perverting the nation; He was bringing balm to wounded hearts and healing to palsied limbs; He was making of that unhappy and degraded people a blessed kingdom of saints. "I am come that you may have life, and may have it more abundantly." . . . "Come to Me, all you that labor, and are burdened, and I will refresh you." He was not refusing to give tribute to Caesar. Had not the Scribes and the Pharisees already been convinced this was not true when they asked: "Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar?" and heard in answer the divine reply: "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God, the things that are God's." He was not attempting to make Himself King, for one day when the people would have taken Him by force and made Him King, He fled away into the mountain alone.

In this trial before Pilate there is unfolded the whole history of the Church in relation to the world.

The charges brought against Our Lord—all false—are the same charges brought against the Church today. And what is particularly striking about them all is that patriotism is made the cloak for them all. There is nothing so sublime that can not be prostituted, and even the noble virtue of patriotism may have its prostitutors. Old Samuel Johnson once truly said that "patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel," and how true, for just as many sins are committed in its name as in the name of liberty.

As the accusers of Our Blessed Lord covered themselves with the assumed virtue of patriotism, so do the enemies of the Church, and their charges are just as untrue and unwarranted as the charges directed against Our Blessed Lord Himself. First, the Church is not perverting the nation. If our nation has any ideal at all, it certainly has the ideal of *stability*, which means that it must resolve to survive and to march steadily onward in the vanguard of civilization. Now I ask you, what forces are best suited to give to our government this very desirable *stability*? Will the forces of birth-control, which limits the number of our citizens by refusing to bring into the world the very units of democratic social life, make for its stability? Will the loose divorce laws of our country, which break up families, the very core of national life, make for its endurance? Will the loose morality, which believes that anything is right, providing one is not caught, make for a strong and disciplined and stable nation? These are the forces which are decaying and breaking down our national life. But the only single force in America today which opposes these destructive elements is the spiritual force of the Church. By

what logic, then, can the Church be said to be perverting the nation? If in centuries to come there are eyes to look upon the flag and there are lungs to breathe the air of freedom and there are hearts to respond to America's anthem, it will be because there is a divine power operating in American life, teaching that marriage is a sacred thing and that the children of today are the citizens of tomorrow. Break up husband and wife, and you break the family; break the family, you break the children; break them, and you wreck a nation. That is just what the Church is trying to avert, and in doing so, instead of perverting the nation, the Church is making it stable enough to endure, that in centuries to come it may draw down upon itself the blessings of a pleased and Almighty Father.

Secondly, the Church is not refusing to give full tribute to America, and because her spiritual head is in Rome it no more follows that he loves his country less than does any citizen of this land whose mother is in the green isle of Ireland. The Church and the State belong to two distinct spheres, and there may be, therefore, a true and loyal allegiance to both, for we are to "render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." As a matter of fact, only those who love the spiritual can ever love the natural. Full and loving service of the Church of Christ no more conflicts with the love of nation than the love of the soul is at variance with the love of the body. The loves, paradoxical though they may seem, merge into unity, thanks to the charity of our Sovereign Head who loved his own country even to the point of weeping over its capital city, and shedding the salt

tears of the first Christian patriot. He who reserved the first fruits of His message for the lost sheep of Israel was the same One whose flame of charity embraced the whole world, and whose life was surrendered on the gibbet of a cross for the redemption of all peoples, for all climes and all times.

St. Francis of Assisi loved his own country to the passionate degree that on dying, he asked to be carried to a hill to see and bless for the last time his beloved countryside; and yet, that love of nationalism no way prevented that soul of his from embracing not only man, but the beasts and birds, not only the fires and the forests, but above all, the spiritual father of Christendom, who gave him the right to found an order which today lights the torches of its charity at the fiery heart of that same poor man of Assisi. St. Paul, too, loved his own country, was proud of being of the race of Abraham, a Hebrew and a son of a Hebrew, but the love for his own people in no way conflicted with those wider interests where there are no distinctions between Jew and Greek, barbarian and freeman, but only the consuming love to be dissolved and to be with Christ.

And what is true of Francis and Paul is true of each loyal son of the Church. We Catholics will give way to no one in the depth of our allegiance to America, and in our allegiance to America we will give way to no one in our allegiance to Christ.

Finally, it is not true that the Church is calling herself a King, and is flying in the face of the democratic principle of equality. What is the foundation of equality? Do those doctrines which hold that one-fifth of the population of this country, the Catholic population, is unpatriotic, make

for true patriotism of equality? Will the jingoism of the superiority of the Nordic over the Latin make for true equality? Will the mere lip worship of the brotherhood of man or the singing of a common anthem reduce men to unity? The fact is, men do not naturally love men. Beauty is a stronger attraction than the mere cry of equality and fraternity. Where find, then, the real force behind equality? There is only one foundation for equality, and that is the Catholic doctrine that all men have been redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus Christ, that all men have been called to share His life, and that President and citizen, poor and rich, the mighty and the lowly, have been thought so much worth while that Christ would have died for the least of them; that the beggar in the Bowery and the man in the gilded apartment are equal in the eyes of God. And in order to impress this unity on her people, the Church preaches the doctrine of the Eucharist, in which every communicant partakes of the same bread in order that they might have the same Life, for eating the one Bread, they are the one Body. The Church thus gives to humanity a new beauty and a new reason for loving all men. There is no power in the world making for equality amongst men, so capable of drawing them together into holy bonds of peace and love, so destined to melt all differences of race and blood as the Communion rail of the Catholic Church, for there equality is based upon common purity of heart in Christ Jesus Our Lord.

The three charges have found popular expression in words uttered not so long ago by the so called philosopher, Bertrand Russell, who said that a grave danger faces America, for in one hun-

dred and fifty years it will be Catholic. I am not so sure that in one hundred and fifty years America will be Catholic, but if it is to be Catholic, it will have to do two more things than it is doing now; it will have to begin to think, and it will have to begin to pray.

Just suppose that that prophecy of Bertrand Russell's did come true. Suppose that everyone in America were Catholic. Suppose that every citizen tomorrow morning knelt down and said his prayers to God. Suppose that as each citizen went to work—the doctor to his patient, the judge to his bench, the lawyer to his court, the clerk to his office, the employee to his employer,—each and everyone of them was convinced that some day they would have to render an account for even the least actions of their daily life, although unseen by men. Suppose that all the children went to a school where they heard the name of God, and drank in sweet stories about His Mother and the Saints. Suppose that the students who went to universities learned not vague theories about sex, but the beauty of chastity, bringing the reward of the vision of God. Suppose that all the divorce courts of our land closed, and that about once every month every man, woman and child would kneel at the Communion rail and receive into his very soul the very God who died on the Cross for them. Do you think that would be a menace to American life? If that is a menace, then peace is a menace, then justice is a menace, then charity is a menace, then Christ is a curse!

May all such un-Christian sentiments and every inhuman sentiment pass from our midst, and as days roll into weeks, and weeks into years, may

one lesson more and more become deeply embedded in the consciousness of our national life, and that lesson is the message of this discourse: that Catholics will never love America because she is great, but America will be great because Catholics love her.

THE CHURCH AND THE TIMES

(Address delivered by Rev. Dr. Fulton J. Sheen in the Catholic Hour, March 6, 1932.)

One of the catchwords which keeps unthinking minds from Truth and Life is the phrase: "The Church is behind the times." The "acids of modernity" are supposed to have eaten away traditional morality, and yet the Church clings on to the same beliefs and practices held centuries ago. Not only that, but if we are to believe her critics, the Church never does the worldly thing. The worldly thing to do today, according to the modern mind, is to accept divorce and birth-control as progressive and forward looking practices, and yet the Church refuses to compromise, even in the slightest, her centuries-old teaching, that she might harmonize the better with the demands of the twentieth century.

Thousands of people, it is said, would join the Church tomorrow if she would only relax her moral discipline, or readjust her idea of God to suit the new astro-physics, or recognize divorce as the Christian sects have done. But the Church remains adamant: the world asks for one thing, the Church gives it another. "If she will not change, then she shall die," is the pronouncement of modern prophets.

As modern as this charge is, let us turn back the scroll of history to see just how ancient it is, and we shall discover that Herod condemned Our Blessed Lord on exactly the same ground that the world today condemns the Church.

Herod was that type which might be characterized as a splendid animal. Descended as he was from Herod the Great, who murdered his own wife and

slaughtered the children of Bethlehem, the younger Herod combined gross sensuality with an artistic temperament, which manifested itself in his fine taste for buildings. These he was always careful to dedicate to the Emperor. As Governor of Galilee, living at Tiberias on the shore of the sea, he often came up to Jerusalem for the great feasts of the Jews, stopping at the house of his half-brother, Phillip. There he seduced his brother's wife, Herodias, and her young daughter, Salome, and drove his own wife, daughter of Aretas, King of Arabia, from his own house.

Sinful life always palls, after its brief hour, and Herod was obliged to seek new thrills for his already jaded life. News came to him that down along the banks of the Jordan, amid the tamarisks and green trees lining its banks, there was a strange and eloquent man who lived on wild locusts, who was clothed in camel's skin, and whose name was John the Baptist.

Not because he was interested in John's doctrine, but because, as for so many in our day, religion was interesting only as an emotional outlet, Herod summoned the saint, and bade him come unto him. John accepted. The court was delighted. They were eager to hear his rugged eloquence, and just for a moment to feel their wearied and wasted systems awakened to new life by the strange and novel sensation of a sermon in the house of Gold.

At the appointed hour, the man whom Our Lord had called "the greatest man of woman born" stepped into the temporary pulpit erected for him in the courtroom. From the worldly point of view, the proper thing for John to have done on such an occasion, would have been to flatter the vices and the

excesses of the king. The unworldly and impolitic thing would have been to condemn the adulterous life of Herod. John, keen on pleasing God rather than man, stretched out his hand to the throne, pointed directly to the one sitting there, and thundered: "It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife." That was not the worldly thing to do. Before he was aware, chains were about his wrists and iron bars before his eyes. How differently many a modern preacher would have acted!

The birthday of Herodias soon approached, and lest silence, should throw Herod back on his conscience and perhaps on salvation, he planned a mighty banquet. Everything that could satisfy a tongue was served. Bronzed slaves ministered to the appetite with all the delicacies of the fishery, the fields and the vineyards. The tetrarch Herod became full of wine. He gave a signal and great purple curtains at the end of the banquet hall parted, disclosing the sparingly clad form of Salome, daughter of Herodias and Phillip, her lawful husband. Accompanied by slow, voluptuous music, the girl danced with the wild abandon of her passionate theme. Herod, his eyes sealed upon her, became maddened more with the dance than with the wine. Before the curtain had time to drop, the tetrarch, giddy with extreme pleasure, sent for the girl, bidding her tell him what love-token she would have, swearing to her that if it be half his kingdom, it should be hers. The child, well-schooled by her mother, answered: "Give me here in a dish the head of John the Baptist."

Before the music had completely ceased, a guardsman was seen crossing the threshold, bearing aloft on a silver charger the head of John.

The vision of that decapitated head haunted Herod. One day he heard talk of the miracles of Our Blessed Lord, and he remarked to one of his courtiers: "This is John the Baptist; he has risen from the dead." From that time on, he kept close watch over Our Lord. One day a Pharisee came to Our Lord and said to Him: "Depart, and get thee hence, for Herod hath a mind to kill thee." Our Lord answered by calling Herod a "fox". Weeks and months passed, and in Jerusalem, before the murderer of John and the son of the murderer of the Babes of Bethlehem, stood the One Whom John had announced, the grown Babe of Bethlehem, now the Man of Nazareth. And Herod was glad. Glad at such a moment? Yes! St. Luke, describing the scene, tells us that he was "very glad" for he hoped to see some miracle done by Him.

Herod greeted Our Lord as he would have accosted a performer who might enter his court to while away the tedium of an hour. He received the Son of God as a sensational wonder-man, who might amuse a jaded, profligate court by a startling trick of magic, or a marvel of jugglery. He wanted the sensational and the new to gratify his curiosity. It was his nerves, not his soul, that wanted a thrill. After all, according to Herod, was not the world given for enjoyment of every fleeting moment, was not the human being born into the world to have a good time, to rob monotony of its victory?

Herod questioned Our Lord, and we can well imagine what his questions were: "How did you escape the massacre instituted by my father at Bethlehem? and why did you call me a fox? and what was the meaning of your triumphal entry into Jerusalem last Sunday?"

To all the questions Our Lord gave only the answer of His withering silence. He who spoke to sinful Magdalene, to the woman taken in adultery, to little children, to deceitful Annas, to mean Caiphas, to weak Pilate, now refused to utter a single word to the one man who could save Him from crucifixion.

From a worldly point of view, Our Lord did the foolish thing, just as John before Him did the foolish thing. What would you think of a man in court who might clear himself of the charges against him by a word, a show of power, and yet who refused to do so? Here is Our Lord going to the Cross and to death, simply because He will not do the worldly thing. Herod wanted one thing; Christ gave him another. Herod wanted a trick, something to relieve the intolerable monotony of his sensuous life. He wanted fireworks, and He Who claimed to be the Light of the World offered him Light instead, the white flame without flicker of a Divine Personality in the lantern of His Sacred Humanity. That was foolishness! The folly of Omnipotence! And so Herod robed Him in the garment of a fool!

And from that day to this, the Church has been robed in the garment of a fool because she never does the worldly thing. Her saints are fools because they plunge after poverty while other men dig after gold; her saints crucify their bodies, as other men pamper them, they dare "to swing the earth a trinket at their wrist," while others prostrate themselves before it. Her devout nuns are fools who leave the lights and glammers of the world for the shades and shadows of the Cross, where saints are made. Her priests are fools, because they practice celibacy in a world which has gone mad about sex. The Vicar

and Pontiff is a fool for refusing to relax the doctrine of Christ concerning the sanctity of marriage, when every Christian sect under the sun has relaxed it. Yes, the Church is a fool, and all her faithful members are fools, but they are fools only from the world's point of view, not from God's point of view. For with the foolish things of the world hath God chosen to confound the wise, and with the weak things of the world, to confound the strong.

The Church must always bear the taunt of being unmodern and unworldly, as Our Lord had to bear it before Herod. And the Divine Master warned us that it would be the mark of the Divinity of the Church. "I have taken you out of the world, . . . therefore the world will hate you. . . . If I had left you in the world, the world would love its own. . . . Remember, it hath hated Me before you." In other words, if you ever want to discover Divine religion on the face of the earth, look for the Church that does not get along with the world. The religion that gets on with the world and is accepted by the world is worldly; the religion that does not get on with the world is other-worldly, which is another way of saying that it is Divine.

But because the Church is other-worldly, and seeks first the Kingdom of God and His justice, it must not be thought that it is out of touch with the world. The Church is not behind the times; it is beyond the times. It is not modern; it is ultra modern. It is not a slave to the fashions of the twentieth century, for it must keep its head to serve the thirtieth century. The Church is very modern if modern means serving the times in which we live, but it is not modern if it means believing that whatever is modern is true. The Church is modern if

modern means that her members should change their hats with the seasons, and even with the styles, but it is not modern if it means that every time a man changes his hat, he should also change his head, or in an applied sense, that the Church should change its idea of God every time psychology puts on a new shirt, or physics a new coat.

It is modern if modern means incorporating the new found wisdom of the present into the patrimony of the centuries, but it is not modern if it means sneering at the past as one might sneer at a lady's age. It is modern if modern means a passionate desire to know the truth, but it is not modern if it means that truth changes with the calendar, and that what is true on Friday is false on Saturday. The Church is modern if modern means progress toward a fixed ideal, but she is not modern if it means changing the ideal instead of attaining it.

The Church is like an old school-master; the schoolmaster of the centuries, and as such it has seen so many students pass before it, cultivate the same poses and fall into the same errors, that it merely smiles at those who believe that they have discovered a new truth, for in the Church's superior wisdom and experience, it knows that many a so-called new truth is but the new label for an old error. Experience has taught it that the modernism of 1932 is not the modernism of 1942, and that what one generation believes to be true, the next will believe to be false; and that the surest way to be a widow in the next age is to marry the spirit of this one. Today the Church is accused of being behind the times, because it does not go mad about Freud. I dare say that in fifty years from now if one of the teachers in any of our great universities mounted his rostrum

and talked Freud, he would be considered just as antiquated and behind the times as a politician who today might mount a soap-box at the corner of Forty-second and Broadway, and open a campaign for William McKinley as President.

It is about time that the modern world gave up expecting the Church to die, because she is "behind the times." Really, she is behind the scenes, and knows just when the curtain will fall on each new fad and fancy. If an announcement had been made a thousand times about a death, and the funeral never took place, men would soon begin to take the funeral as a joke. And so it is with the Church. She is always supposed to be behind the times, and yet it is she who lives beyond the times. At least a hundred men in every century since her birth, have tolled the bells for her funeral, but the corpse has never appeared. They are always buying coffins for her, and use the coffins themselves. They are always assisting at her apparently last breath, and yet she moves amid their dust. They are always digging her grave, and it is a grave into which the diggers fall. The taunt that she is behind the times and out of touch with the world will never bother her, for she knows that it is easy to be in the swim, in the sense of being up to the times, for even a dead body can float down stream. It takes a live body to resist the current. It is easy to say we should change our morality to suit the so-called new ideas about sex, just as it was easy to say a few centuries ago that one should be a Calvinist. It is always easy to let the world have its way; the difficult thing and the noble thing is to keep God's way. It is easy to fall; there are a thousand angles at which a thing will fall, but there is only one at which it will stand, and

that is the angle at which the Church is poised between heaven and earth, and from the angle she has sung a requiem over all the prophets of the past who ever said she was dying, and she will continue to chant requiems over all the prophets of the future, for the story of her life is the story of John in the courtroom of Herod.

Salome danced, and as she danced she kept pace with the time, to be the earthly symbol of all those who change to keep up with the times. As she danced, two men lost their heads, Herod lost his head figuratively, for he believed that a man should change with the times, and that it was lawful to live with another man's wife. John lost his head literally, for he believed that a man should not change with the times, and that it was not lawful to live with the wife of another. The Church believes that John was right, and Herod wrong, and being a saint, which is the foolishness which purchases eternity, means losing one's head John's way rather than Herod's.

THE CRUCIFIXION

(Address delivered by Rev. Dr. Fulton J. Sheen in the Catholic Hour, March 13, 1932.)

Four judges sat in judgment against the Lord and Saviour of the world, and they condemned Him to death on contradictory charges. He was accused of being too dogmatic before Caiphas, because He enunciated the doctrine of His Divinity; He was accused of being too undogmatic before Annas, because He refused to make any additional pronouncements concerning His doctrine and His ministry; He was accused of being too worldly before Pilate because He was perverting the nation; He was accused of being too unworldly before Herod, because He refused to do the worldly thing, and perform a trick of magic to gain His release. Too dogmatic, too undogmatic! Too worldly, too unworldly! Men could not agree on why He should die, but they did agree that He should die. Where find a fitting punishment for one condemned on contradictory charges? The only fitting death for one condemned on contradictory charges is not scourging, nor stoning, but the crucifixion, for on the Cross one bar is at variance or contradiction with another.

And so the King went to His death—for a bed, a Cross; for a pillow, a crown of thorns; and lest His hands and feet should slip out, they tucked them in with nails. A King is hanging from a peg,—aye, more than a King—Truth, Justice, Mercy, God.

And the three great civilizations of the world saw Him hang, and suffer, and die, for He was crucified in the language of Hebrew, Latin and Greek, in the civilizations of Jerusalem, Rome and Athens, in the

name of religion, law and morality, in the name of the good, the true and the beautiful. Jerusalem was the city of religion, and it condemned the One who brought it religion; Latin Rome was the city of law, and it condemned the Lawmaker; Athens was the city of morality, and it condemned the Sinless. Representatives of each of these civilizations passed beneath the banner of the Cross, and hurled the challenge each in their own language: "Come down from the Cross and we will believe." What happened in those terrible moments of hate was not something that would pass into history, like the battle of Marathon; what was happening was the first scene in an abiding drama, the curtain of which will not ring down until the crack of doom. It is now the Mystic Christ, or the Church, which is hanging on the Cross, and today just as twenty centuries ago, she is being crucified in the modern civilization of Jerusalem, Rome, and Athens, in the name of modern religion, modern law, and modern morality.

Modern irreligion marches beneath the Cross, looks up to the Church crucified thereon by an unbelieving world, and who is there who has not heard it say at least a thousand times: "Come down from your belief in infallibility. Come down from your belief in the primacy of Peter. Come down from your attachment to the Divinity of Christ. Come down from your devotion to the Virgin Mary and the Saints. Come down from your belief that you are the one, true, unique spouse, the Church of Christ. Can you not see that there are other crosses on Calvary besides your own? Come down and we will believe!"

And next, modern law, modern in the sense that it has broken with Christian tradition, takes its

stand beneath the Cross, and who is there who is not already familiar with its taunts and pleadings: "Come down from your belief in the law of eternal justice. Come down from your belief in hell. Come down from your belief that the laws of Christ are more sound than the laws of the State. Come down from your belief in the law of mortification, for who is there in the pagan world who wants your penance and your suffering? Look to the sorry end it has brought you now. Come down from your Cross, and we will believe!"

And finally, the third of the enduring civilizations, the teachers of modern morality, advances beneath the same Cross, and who is there living in this great era of carnality who has not heard its taunts a thousand times as it sneers at the Church: "Come down from your belief in the sanctity of marriage. Come down from your belief in virginity and celibacy. Come down from your age-long opposition to divorce. Come down from your opposition to sex, when all the world is agog with sex. Come down from your opposition to birth-control. Can you not see that the acids of modernity have eaten away your age-old morality? Come down from the Cross, and we believe!"

But the Church does not come down, though ten thousand times ten thousand tongues are loud in their pleading, and it does not come down, because Christ did not come down. It is easy to step down from great heights when the world scorns, but it is the sign of a martyr to die for an ideal. It is easy to come down and follow the world, but it is nobler to remain suspended and draw the world to oneself. It is human to come down, but it is divine to hang there.

But will there never be a reconciliation between the world and the Church? Must the one always be hanging on the Cross in apparent defeat, and the other walking the earth in apparent victory? Ah, there is the possibility of a reconciliation, and it resides in the words of forgiveness pronounced the first time by Our Blessed Lord on the Cross, and now repeated for the thousandth time by the Church on its Cross.

And what were those words? They were words of a prayer—words that fell in a voice calm and low, heard above the shaking of dice, the moans of dying thieves, the sobs of a Magdalene, and the sighs of a Mary—a prayer heard in heaven and earth—a prayer that went out from Calvary's hills and reechoes to our own ears today: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Forgive whom? Forgive those who crucify in the name of modern religion, modern law and modern morality, in the language of Hebrew and Latin and Greek? Forgive them? Why? Because they know what they do? No, because they know not what they do! It is only the ignorance of what is involved in their great crime which brings them within the pale of the mercy of the One on the Cross, and the forgiveness of the heavenly Father. It is solely and uniquely because they know not what they do that there is a possibility of forgiveness. There is not redemption for the fallen angels, simply because they knew what they were doing. But we do not always know what we are doing. If we did, and still did it, we would never be saved. It is not wisdom that saves! It is ignorance!

Will Annas be forgiven because he knew the Talmud from beginning to end? Will Caiphas be for-

given because he knew the details of the law of the Sanhedrin? Will Pilate be forgiven because he knew Roman law? Will Herod be forgiven because he knew how to be a tetrach? Will the followers of modern religion, modern law and modern morality, be forgiven because of what they know? They know something about Einstein's theory and the necessity of a cosmical religion; they know the latest book of the month, and the new morals which have supplanted Christianity; they know all the spurious arguments in favor of birth-control; they know the new psychological theory emanating from Vienna in which the soul is reduced to sex; they know the movement of world politics; they know the world, its ways, its sin, its crime, its fiction;—they know all these things and they are proud of what they know, and yet not a single one of them will be saved because of what he knows. They will come within the fold of Divine forgiveness only on condition that they learn to know that they do not know everything. If their learning is going to make them proud of rejecting Christ and the moral laws; if it is going to make them dispense with redemption as a pagan myth, conscience as an illusion, God as an idea;—then they will never be happy, then they will never be saved. Why, they would be damned if it were not for their ignorance of the terrible thing they are doing when they leave God and Christ out of their lives. It is not wisdom that saves—it is ignorance!

Will the executioners be saved because they knew what they did when they unfurled Our Blessed Lord like a wounded eagle upon the banner of salvation? Will the bigots who say all manner of evil things against the Church, her priests, her doctrine, her faithful; will the leaders of Bolshevism who attempt

to root out religion from the hearts of people as if it were an opiate; will those who spread venomous lies about the Vicar of Christ, our gloriously reigning Pius XI,—will all those whose love for modern religion, modern law and modern morality, which can find no other expression or outlet except in cries of hate and bitterness—will all those who persecute the Church and thus nail Christ anew to the Cross be saved because they know what they are doing? It is only because they are ignorant of what the Church really is, that they are brought within hearing of the cry of the Cross. If Saul knew what he was doing in persecuting the Church of Damascus, when Christ called out to him from the heavens, he would never have become Paul. So, too, if modern Sauls knew what they were doing in persecuting the Church, and knowing what they did, even with the heavens rent and Christ telling them they were persecuting Him, they would be cast into hell. It is not wisdom that saves—it is ignorance!

Every true follower of Christ knows he must be hated by the world. "I have taken you out of the world," said Our Blessed Lord, "therefore, the world will hate you. If I had left you in the world, the world would have loved you. Remember it hath hated Me before you; the servant is not above his Master." We must be hated even as Christ Himself was hated. We must be abused as Christ Himself was abused. We must be prepared to be told a thousand times over that we are ignorant because we do not know that modern psychology has disproven a soul; that we are benighted fools because we do not know that higher Biblical criticism has destroyed the authenticity of Scripture; that we are narrow-minded because we do not accept the unmoral inter-

pretations of God's laws; that we are a race of darkened minds because we do not know that evolution has proven original sin to be a myth; that we are ignorant because we do not know that science has dispensed with Providence, with God, and with Christ.

Yes, we are ignorant! Ignorant of the false wisdom of the world; ignorant of the wisdom of the age; ignorant of all that false wisdom which would blind us to the lightening truths of the Eternal Sun; ignorant of modern pagan ways. Oh, Holy Father in Heaven, we thank Thee we are ignorant—ignorant of those things which keep us from Thee! It is not the wisdom of the world that saves—it is ignorance!

Hence, there is not a loyal Catholic heart in the world, kneeling at the foot of the Cross, that is ignorant of the reason of all forgiveness, and from such a heart comes the plaintive prayer:

“Oh, Jesus, I do not want to know the world; I do not want to know the pride of the world which crowns Thy head with thorns; I do not want to know how nails of selfishness are driven, nor how the spear of bitterness is launched; I do not want to know how snowflakes are hammered, nor who turns about the Arcturus; I do not want to know the length of this great universe and its expanse in light years; I do not want to know the breadth of the earth as it dances about the chariot of the sun; I do not want to know the heights of the stars as they glitter about the day's dead sanctities; I do not want to know the depth of the

sea, nor the secrets of its palace. I am willing to be ignorant of all these things. I want to know only one thing, and that is—the breadth and length and depth and height of Thy redeeming love on the Cross, Sweet Saviour of Men. I want, dear Jesus, to be ignorant of everything in this world—everything—but You! And then, by the strangest of strange paradoxes, I shall be wise.”

THE ETERNITY OF EASTER

(Address delivered by Rev. Dr. Fulton J. Sheen in the Catholic Hour, March 27, 1932.)

My Easter wish is that your soul may be flooded with the peace and joy which comes from the victory of the Risen Christ, who bears now and forevermore not wounds, but scars as pledges of love and forgiveness.

The birth of Our Saviour was announced to a Virgin, but in order that we poor sinners might have hope, the Resurrection was first announced to a sinner. On the first Easter morning, Mary Magdalen went to the sepulchre expecting to find her Master there. All things else might have been a failure, but at least in His grave could be followed the object of her love. Nothing else might have been left for her: the voice, the manners, the living presence, the strong tender words, the works of charity—all these she thought were passed. But there was one thing left and that was the mangled form lying in a grave. This she would honor and as once before she broke the alabaster box and poured out ointment on His feet, so now she would break her heart and pour it out in tears upon His grave. She was not looking forward, but only to the past. In the words of St. John: early in the morning when it was yet dark, she came unto the sepulchre and stood weeping, and as she looked into the sepulchre she saw two Angels in white, sitting one at the head and one at the foot where the body of Christ had been laid. They sayeth to her: "Wo-

man, why weepest thou?" She sayeth to them: "Be cause they have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid Him."

When she had thus spoken she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and she knew not that it was Jesus.

Jesus said to her: "Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?" She, thinking it was the gardener, sayeth to Him: "Sir, if thou hast taken Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away." And Jesus said to her: "Mary." She turning, sayeth to Him: "Rabboni." And as she cast herself at His feet, she saw the two livid marks of nails. But before they could be embraced, Jesus said to her: "Do not touch Me for I am not yet ascended to My Father. But go to My Brethren, and say to them: I ascend to My Father and to your Father, to My God and to your God."

To Mary, the supreme object of faith could be touched by fingers; she could only think of Rabboni whose feet could be clasped; her soul was dominated by time; she was content with an unfinished work; and the words of Our Blessed Saviour to her revealed the truth that He was no longer to be seen under the form of time and in the world of sensations, but only by the soul and in the world of eternity. So the first lesson of Easter morn, the lesson that Mary failed to comprehend, in the words of St. Paul, was "if you be risen with Christ seek the things that are above where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God: mind the things that are above, not the things that are upon the earth."

This great truth needs to be stressed strongly on

this new Easter Day when men no longer speak of eternity, but only of time; when they are more concerned about citizenship in the Kingdom of this world than citizenship in the Kingdom of Heaven; when their interests center more around passing questions of science, politics, economics, wealth and power, instead of around the Risen Christ who sitteth eternally at the right hand of God. Some of our modern minds have so departed from the Gospel of the Resurrection and its emphasis on eternity as to make the time element of physics the very fabric of the universe. Sacred Scripture tells us that a moment will come when there will be no more time. The unsacred scripture of our day tells us that time is the very essence of things.

In order that we might know that the real peace and happiness is not in time but in eternity with the Risen Christ and the glory of His Father and the love of His Holy Spirit, I propose to show first of all, that time stands in the way of real happiness, and secondly, that only inasmuch as we succeed in rising above time in this world, do we ever begin to be happy.

Time is the one thing that makes real pleasure impossible. By its very nature it forbids us to have many pleasures together under the penalty of having none of them at all. By the mere fact that I exist in time, it is impossible for me to combine the pleasures of marching with the Old Guard of Napoleon, and at the same time advancing under the Flying Eagles of Caesar. By the mere fact that I live in time, I cannot enjoy simultaneously the winter sports of the Alps and the limpid waters of the Riviera. Time makes it impossible for me to be

stirred by the oratory of a Demosthenes, and at the same time to listen to the melodious accents of the great Bossuet. Time does not permit me to combine the prudence that comes with age, and the buoyancy that belongs to youth. It is the one thing which prevents me from gathering around the same festive table with Aristotle, Socrates, and Thomas Aquinas in order to learn the secrets of the great minds in solving the riddles of a universe. If it were not for time, Dante and Shakespeare could have sipped tea together, and Homer even now might tell us his stories in English. It is all very nice and lovely to enjoy the mechanical perfections of this age of luxury, but there are moments when I would like to enjoy the calm and peace of the Middle Ages, but time will not permit it. If I live in the twentieth century, I must sacrifice the pleasures of the thirteenth century, and if I enjoy the Athenian Age of Pericles, I must be denied the Florentine Age of Dante.

All things are good, and yet none can be enjoyed except in their season, and the enjoyment must always be tinged with the regret that time will demand their surrender. Time gives me things, but it also takes them away. When it does give, it gives but singly, and thus life becomes but just one fool thing after another.

This thought suggests the suspicion that if time makes the combination of pleasures impossible, then if I could ever transcend time, I might in some way increase my happiness, and this I find to be true, for every conscious desire to prolong a pleasure is a desire to make it an enduring "now." Like cats before the fire, we want to prolong the pleasure in-

definitely; we want it to be permanent and not successive.

Go back in the storehouse of your memory, and you will find ample proof that it is always in those moments when you are least conscious of the passing of time that you most thoroughly enjoy yourself. How often it happens, for example, when listening to an absorbing conversation or the thrilling experiences of a much travelled man, that the hours pass by so quickly we are hardly conscious of them. We say, "the time passes like every thing." What is true of a delightful conversation is also true of aesthetic pleasures. I dare say that very few would ever notice the passing of time while listening to an orchestra translate the beauty of one of Beethoven's overtures. In just the proportion that it pleases and thrills, it makes us unconscious of how long we were absorbed by its melodies. The contrary fact illustrates the same truth. The more we notice time, the less we are being interested. If our friends keep looking at their watches while we tell a story, we can be very sure that they are being bored by the story. A man who keeps his eye on the clock is not the man who is interested in his work. The more we notice the passing of time, the less is our pleasure, and the less we notice the passing of time, the greater is our pleasure.

These psychological facts of experience testify that not only is time the obstacle of enjoyment, but escape from it is the essential of happiness. Suppose we could enlarge upon our experience in such a way as to imagine ourselves completely outside of time and succession, in a world where there would never be a "before" nor an "after" but only a "now."

Suppose we could go out to another existence, where the great pleasures of history would not be denied us because of their historical incompatibility, but all would be unified in a beautiful hierarchial order, like a pyramid in that all would minister to the very unity of our personality. Suppose I say that I could reach a point of timelessness where all the enjoyments and beauties and happiness of time could be reduced to those three fundamental unities which constitute the perfection of my being, namely, Life and Truth and Love, for into these three all pleasures can be resolved.

Suppose first of all, that I could reduce to a single focal point all the pleasures of life, so that in that "now" which never looks before or after, I could enjoy the life that seems to be in the sea when its restless bosom is dimpled with calm, as well as the urge of life that seems to be in all the hill encircling brooks that loiter to the sea; the life which provokes the dumb dead sod to tell its thoughts in violets; the life which pulsates through a spring time blossom as the swinging cradle for the fruit; the life of the flowers as they open the chalice of their perfume to the sun; the life of the birds as the great heralds of song and messengers of joy; the life of all the children that run shouting to their mothers' arms; the life of all the parents who beget a life like unto their own; the life of the mind that on the wings of invisible thought strikes out to the battlements of eternity, to the life whence all living comes.

Suppose that in addition to concentrating all the life of the universe in a single point, I could also concentrate in another focal point all the Truths of

the world, so that I could know the Truth the astronomer seeks as he looks up through his telescope; and the Truth the biologist seeks as he looks down through his microscopes; the Truth about the heavens, and who shut up the sea with doors when it did burst forth as issuing out of a womb; the Truth about the hiding place of darkness and the treasure house of hail, and the cave of the winds; the truth about the common things; why fire, like a spirit mounts to the heavens heavenly, and why gold, like clay, falls to earth earthly; the Truth the philosopher seeks as he tears apart with his mind the very wheels of the universe; the Truth the theologian seeks as he uses Revelation to ravel the secrets of God which far surpass those that John heard as he leaned his head upon the breast of the Master.

Suppose that over and above all these pleasures of life and truth, there can be unified in another focal point all the pleasures and beauties of love, that have contributed to the happiness of the universe: the love of the patriot for his country; the love of the soldier for his cause; the love of the scientist for his discovery; the love that seems to be in the flowers as they open their petals to embrace the sun; the love that seems to be in the trees as they outstretch their leafy arms as if to contain the sky; the love of the earth at whose breast all creation drinks the milk of life; the love of mothers, who swing open the great portals of life that a child may see the light of day; the love of friend for friend, to whom one could unpack his heart with his troubles; the love of spouse for spouse; the love of husband and wife; and even the love of angel for angel, and angel for God, with a fire and a heat sufficient

to enkindle the hearts of ten thousand times ten thousand worlds.

Suppose that all the pleasures of the world could be brought to these three focal points of life and truth and love, just as the rays of the sun are brought to unity in the sun; and suppose that all the successive pleasures of time could be enjoyed at one and the same "now"; and suppose that these points of unity on which our hearts and minds and souls would be directed, would not merely be three abstractions, but that the focal point in which all the pleasures of life were concentrated would be a life personal enough to be a Father, and that that focal point of Truth in which all the pleasures of truth were concentrated would not merely be an abstract truth, but a Truth personal enough to be a Word or a Son, and that that focal point of love in which all the pleasures of love were concentrated was not merely an abstract love, but a love personal enough to be a Holy Spirit; and suppose that once elevated to that supreme height, happiness would be so freed from limitations that it would include those three as One, not in succession, but with a permanence, not as in time, but as in the timeless—then we would have eternity—then we would have God, then we would have happiness, and that would be heaven.

But will the pleasures of that eternity with the Risen Christ and that enjoyment of Life and Truth and Love which is the Trinity, be in any way comparable to the pleasures of time? Is there any one on this earth who will tell me about heaven? Certainly, there are three faculties to which one might appeal, namely, to what one has seen, to what one has heard, and to what one can imagine. Will heav-

en surpass all the pleasures of the eye, and the ear, and the imagination? First of all, will it be as beautiful as some of the things that can be seen? I have seen the Villa d'Este of Rome, with its long lanes of ilox and laurel, and its great avenues of cypress trees, all full of what might be called the vivacity of quiet and living silence; I have seen a sunset on the Mediterranean when two clouds came down like pillars to form a brilliant red tabernacle for the sun, glowing like a golden host; I have seen the towers and the minarets of Constantinople from the harbor pierce through the mist which hung over them like a silken veil; I have seen the chateau country of France and her Gothic Cathedrals aspiring heavenwards like prayers; I have seen the beauties of the castles of the Rhine, and the combination of such vision almost made me think of the door-keeper of the Temple of Diana who used to cry out to those who entered: "Take heed to your eye," and so I wonder if the things of eternity will be as beautiful as the combined beauty of all the things which I have seen.

I have not only seen the beauties of nature but I have also heard of others that I have not seen: I have heard of the beauties of the hanging gardens of Babylon, of the pomp and dignity of the palaces of the Doges, of the brilliance and glitter of the Roman Forum as its foundations rocked with the tramp of Rome's resistless legions; I have heard of the splendor of the Temple of Jerusalem as it shone like a jewel of the morning sun; I have heard of the beauties of the garden of paradise, where four-fold rivers flowed through lands rich with gold and onyx, a garden made beautiful as only

God knows how to make a beautiful garden; I have heard of countless other beauties and joys of nature which tongue cannot describe, nor touch of brush convey, and I wonder if all the joys and pleasures of heaven will be as great as the combined beauty of all the things of which I have heard.

Beyond what I have heard and seen, there are things which I can imagine: I can imagine a world in which there never would be pain, nor disease, nor death; I can imagine a world wherein every man would live in a castle, and in that commonwealth of castles there would be a due order of justice without complaint or anxiety; I can imagine a world in which the winter would never come, and in which the flowers would never fade, and the sun would never set; I can imagine a world in which there would always be peace, a peace and a quiet without idleness, a profound knowledge of things without research, a constant enjoyment without satiety; I can imagine a world which would eliminate all the evils and diseases and worries of life, and combine all its best joys and happiness, and I wonder if all the happiness of heaven would be like the happiness on earth which I can imagine.

Will eternity be anything like what I have seen, or what I have heard, or what I can imagine? No, eternity will be nothing like anything I have seen, heard or imagined. Listen to the voice of God: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to know those things which God hath prepared for those who love Him."

If the timeless so much surpasses time that there can be found no parallel for it, then I begin to understand the great mystery of the shape of the hu-

man heart. The human heart is not shaped like a valentine heart, perfect and regular in contour; it is slightly irregular in shape as if a small piece of it were missing out of its side. That missing part may very well symbolize a piece that a spear tore out of the universal heart of Humanity on the Cross, but it probably symbolizes something more. It may very well mean that when God created each human heart, He kept a small sample of it in heaven, and sent the rest of it into the world of time, where it would each day learn the lesson that it could never be really happy, that it could never be really wholly in love, that it could never be really whole-hearted until it rested with the Risen Christ in an eternal Easter, until it went back again to the timeless to recover the sample which God had kept for it for all eternity.

CARDINAL HAYES STATES AIMS OF THE CATHOLIC RADIO HOUR

(Extract from his address at the inaugural program in the Studio of the National Broadcasting Company, New York City, March 2, 1930).

Our congratulations and our gratitude are extended to the National Council of Catholic Men and its officials, and to all who, by their financial support, have made it possible to use this offer of the National Broadcasting Company. The heavy expense of managing and financing a weekly program, its musical numbers, its speakers, the subsequent answering of inquiries, must be met. That responsibility rests upon the National Council of Catholic Men

This radio hour is for all the people of the United States. To our fellow-citizens, in this word of dedication, we wish to express a cordial greeting and, indeed, congratulations. For this radio hour is one of service to America, which certainly will listen in interestedly, and even sympathetically, I am sure, to the voice of the ancient Church with its historic background of all the centuries of the Christian era, and with its own notable contribution to the discovery, exploration, foundation and growth of our glorious country. . . .

Thus to voice before a vast public the Catholic Church is no light task. Our prayers will be with those who have that task in hand. We feel certain that it will have both the good will and the good wishes of the great majority of our country-men. Surely, there is no true lover of our Country who does not eagerly hope for a less worldly, a less material, and a more spiritual standard among our people.

With good will, with kindness and with Christ-like sympathy for all, this work is inaugurated. So may it continue. So may it be fulfilled. This work of dedication voices, therefore, the hope that this radio hour may serve to make known, to explain with the charity of Christ, our faith, which we love even as we love Christ Himself. May it serve to make better understood that faith as it really is—a light revealing the pathway to heaven: a strength, and a power divine through Christ: pardoning our sins, elevating, consecrating our common every-day duties and joys, bringing not only justice but gladness and peace to our searching and questioning hearts.

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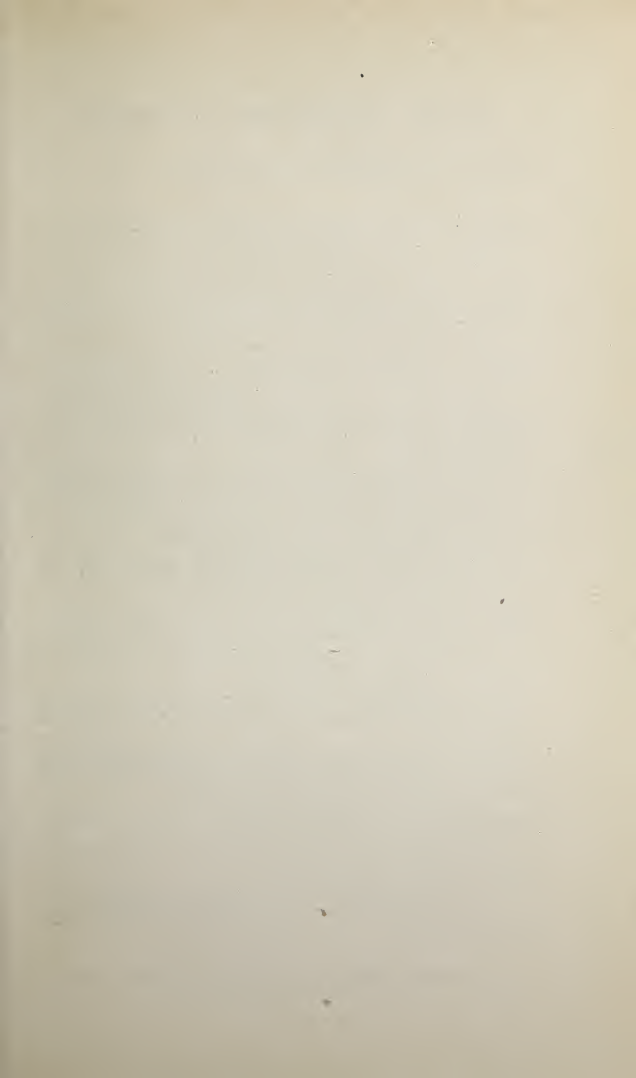
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