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By  
J. R. Keane, O.S.M.





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Rev. J. R. Keane, O.S.M.

Director of the Perpetual Novena of Our Sorrowful Mother

Three addresses delivered in the nationwide Catholic Hour  
produced by the National Council of Catholic Men, in  
cooperation with the National Broadcasting Company.

(On Sundays from June 25 to July 9, 1939)

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## MARY YESTERDAY

Address delivered on June 25, 1939

In the fall of the year 1922 I had the good fortune to spend a few days in Paris. It was my first glimpse of Europe. The novelty of French life, the thrilling visits to places associated intimately with Marie Antoinette, Napoleon Bonaparte, and the French Revolution were deeply impressive. The thing about Paris, however, which fairly burned itself into my bewildered eyes was the bitter anti-clericalism and fierce hatred of religion visible everywhere. Neither before nor since have I seen its like. On the beautiful Parisian boulevards, down the teeming streets converging into the internationally famous Etoile, the butt of every rude, indecent jest was the black-robed priest and the harmless nun. Openly they spat upon them; openly hurled blasphemies at the Cross of Christ dominating the pinnacles of those pitifully deserted churches. I was in the famous Red Belt of Paris! After attending Holy Mass one morning in the Church of the Madeleine, I made the acquaintance of a young Irish priest who was stationed at that historic church. Because I was an American seminarian on my way to Rome, the *soggarth* invited me to the rectory to share his meagre continental breakfast. And there, over our coffee cups, I learned of the deplorable plight of the Catholic Church in 1922. The whole thing seemed hopeless. The majority of the Parisian people were either sworn Reds or deeply sympathetic pinks. The Eldest Daughter of the Church appeared lost to the Church; it seemed only a matter of time before the industrial hammer and sickle would replace the

Cross of the Savior in every home and every heart in France.

That was only 17 years ago. And what is the situation today? There is fast taking form the greatest mass revival of Catholicism that Catholic France has ever known! In that same Red Belt—the industrial suburbs of Paris—where 20 years ago no man could openly profess Catholicism, now nearly 200 new Catholic churches are either completed or are in process of construction. The very sailors of the French Navy are organized Apostles of Jesus Christ on the high seas; in the Paris Stock Exchange operators are now adjusting the business of their day to meet the requirements of Christian ethics. All over France, up from its social catacombs is rising the Church of Jesus Christ to light the fire of a new social order. Nor can anything stop that fire! It is sweeping over France, will sweep over the entire world before the next generation has fully grown.

What caused this unbelievable change? Yesterday the winding sheet of Christian civilization was in the weaving; today the swaddling clothes of a new Christian social order are being cut and trimmed and sewed by ever-growing millions of grim, happy, zealous hands. This change, my friends, is being effected by the most powerful, the most sure-to-succeed social movement in all history—Catholic Action. There never was a movement like it; may never be another again. Not since the Holy Ghost descended upon the Apostles in the Cenacle at Jerusalem has the world witnessed such a cataclysmic reversal and reconstruction of her whole social system.

What is true of France today, is true—in a greater or less degree—of every country in the world. In Belgium and Holland we have perhaps the

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most highly developed Catholic Action in the world. The changes which the Christian Workers have *already* effected there are truly incredible. They read like a fairy tale. 17 years ago countless farmers in Belgium were penniless; they had lost their homes, their farms; their condition was similar to that of our sharecroppers in the South; they were reduced to a poverty even below that of the bread-line. Today 900,000 Belgium Catholic farmers again own their own lands; are out of debt; are living a secure Catholic life. The monetary system of Belgium could collapse tomorrow and it wouldn't affect the Belgium farmer in the least. Catholic Action has helped him to attain security.

Right now let me impress upon the minds of my listeners two important facts: 1) Many probably don't know what Catholic Action is—but it is neither social action, nor political action, nor purely individual spiritual action, but apostolic action. 2) It is, in my opinion, the most significant movement in the world today that is actually producing social and material results. As yet there is no formal Catholic Action in the United States, and it is probably for this reason that the American Press hasn't featured this vital story.

Now, you are probably asking, what has all this to do with the title of this talk, which is "The Blessed Virgin Mary Yesterday". Infinitely more than we can ever hope to tell you in three short Sunday broadcasts—but we shall at least sketch it out on the next two Sundays. The "yesterday" of the Catholic Church embraces over 1,900 years now. What position had the Virgin Mary in that Church of yesterday? Was she dogmatically important? Or was she just a beautiful theatrical prop on

the scene of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ? Can we know, love, and serve Jesus Christ, to the utter exclusion of His Holy Mother? Are the cold, hard facts of our daily lives and our salvation necessarily associated with her, or is she just a sort of spiritual dessert that can be passed up without any serious disturbances to the metabolism of our supernatural life?

The history of the Catholic Church is just one continuous story of the protection and help which Mary gave to that grand spiritual edifice. In the Church of the Catacombs, the first Christians turned to the Mother of God as to the shield of their faith. Even to this day can be seen the pictures of the most Holy Virgin which that classical age of heroic faith painted in those subterranean chambers. From that aurora of ecclesiastical history down to the 13th century, 107 heresies threatened the life of the Church. Mary had such a predominant part in dispelling each of those heresies that the Church in its liturgy applies to her these words: "You alone have conquered all heresies." When the Albigensian heresy struck at meridional Europe, it was Dominic Guzman—with the sword of Mary's rosary—who destroyed it. From the dawn of the fifth century, when 200 Bishops hastened to Ephesus to invoke Mary in the condemnation of Nestorius, down to the 19th century when the heresy of Materialism fell before her apparitions at Lourdes—find me one major heresy in whose destruction Mary did not play the leading role. A complete, all-time history of the heresies of the Catholic Church is also an exhaustive history of Our Lady Help of Christians.

Another source from which we can get an accurate picture of the Church of yesterday is the



biographies of her canonized Saints. In the lives of these heroic men and women we have officially approved models of the perfect Christian life. Search for one Saint who reached his goal without Mary's aid, and you will search in vain. From the earliest Fathers of the Church down to the most recent canonizations of our late Holy Father, Pope Pius XI, Mary was in each instance the Queen of all Saints. To her they looked with an imperfect spark of that love and confidence with which the Divine Babe of Bethlehem looked to His sweet Madonna.

Using only the official pronouncements of the 261 Popes since St. Peter, a very comprehensive history of the Church might be written. The frequency and consistency with which these great Pontiffs, in all ages, invoked the protection and help of the Virgin Mother of God upon all Christendom is truly amazing. It may be that diligent research would uncover one Vicar of Christ who never publicly invoked the Queen of Heaven, but I doubt it.

A very interesting angle from which to study Mary's importance in the Church of yesterday is that of the origin of her countless Feast Days. The Feast of Our Lady of Victory was instituted by Pope Pius V in thanksgiving to God for the miraculous victory at Lepanto over the Turkish armada in 1571. Pope Innocent XI created the Confraternity of Our Lady Help of Christians in commemoration of the victory of the Christian forces under the valorous John Sobieski at Vienna in 1683. To this day there hangs from the ceiling of the Holy House of Loretto the flag under which Sobieski and his army marched to victory at Vienna. The Feast of the Holy Name of Mary was given to the Universal Church by Pope Benedict XI in memory of Sobieski's

conquest. The feast of Our Lady Help of Christians is celebrated on May 24, the day on which Pope Pius VII—through Mary's intercession—was released from the prison of Napoleon I. It was in thanksgiving to Mary that the Pope instituted this feast. In 1679 the Church approved of the Feast of the Patronage of Mary, created in memory of the victories of the Christians over the Moors in Spain. Almost every town and diocese in the old world has its own proper Marian feast, each of them commemorative of some event in history when Mary singularly protected the town or the diocese.

Each century of the history of the Catholic Church records apparitions and appearances of our Blessed Mother on this earth. Many of these visions, it is true, are legendary. But even the legends demonstrate the vitality of devotion to Mary that has always informed the Catholic heart. There are, however, many authentic Marian apparitions that have been carefully examined and officially approved by the Catholic Church. No sane person, for example, would question Mary's appearance to St. Bernadette at Lourdes. The almost continuous flow of subsequent miraculous cures effected on the spot of that apparition is alone scientifically conclusive. Nor could any Catholic doubt those heavenly visits directly related by canonized saints. Would you question St. Francis of Assisi and his account of the various apparitions which the Queen of Heaven made to him? Agnostics laughed loudly when Pius IX defined the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, but a few years later Mary came down to this earth and echoed the great Pontiff's declaration when she said: "I am the Immaculate Conception." Those *bona fide* apparitions are God's unqualified

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sanction of the eminent position which His Holy Mother has always held in the theory and practice of Catholicism.

How about the sanctuaries, altars, pictures, way-side chapels to Mary that have covered Europe throughout the centuries? They are so innumerable that no complete account of them will ever be written. In Rome alone are more monuments to Mary than have ever been raised in the whole world to any other woman. Nor can you find in all Europe one square mile where an image of Mary didn't for centuries smile in benediction upon the people. Have you ever heard of Our Lady of Glastonbury, Our Lady of Walsingham, Our Lady of Windsor, Our Lady of Eton, Our Lady of Oxford? No. Yet the day was—in Britain's yesterday—when the glory and magnificence of English shrines to Mary were the goal and amazement of every foreign traveller.

God willed that Mary was necessary at Bethlehem; He effectively associated her with Christ on Calvary; she mothered the infant Church of the Apostles; she crushed the head of every heresy that to date has threatened the Mystical Body of her Son; she has covered with her protecting blue mantle every weak, wayward soul that has faltered along the sorrowful way of this mortal life. She is so inextricably woven into the fabric of the Incarnational dogma that any attempt to dissociate her from Christ and His Church is pure, unadulterated heresy. The Church of yesterday is an exhaustless, eloquent testimony that Mary is the criterion of orthodoxy and that devotion to her is the infallible mark of eternal predestination.

## MARY TODAY

Address delivered on July 2, 1939

The astounding wealth of characterization in the thirty-six or thirty-seven plays of William Shakespeare contains no more intriguing figure than that malcontent, Jaques, in the genuinely dramatic comedy "As You Like It". Nor in all literature can we find a more thought-provoking picture than those first two lines of his pungent satire in the second act:

"All the world's a stage,

And all the men and women merely players."

Opening to an empty house thousands of years ago, that theatre has never closed; has never been dark; has played a continuous twenty-four hours each day ever since. Adam and Eve were the curtain-raisers in the sunshine and happiness of their garden of paradise. The second number on the bill was the great, all-time tragedy of that relentless repertoire—Adam and Eve tumbling from original innocence, and dragging down with them every actor to set foot on that stage since. Thousands of years later the audience hushed to hear angels sing; to watch the Madonna and her Divine Child in the starlight at Bethlehem. Then came the howling mob in the streets of Jerusalem; the maniacal scourging in Pilate's courtyard; the last flutter of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, high on the Cross, that first Good Friday.

What's playing at the world theatre today? Well, one act is now disappearing into the wings, and the prologue of an entirely new show is coming on the stage. The act which just went off stage was a long

one; it had been playing for the last 500 years. Philosophers called it "rugged individualism". In it we witnessed a caricature of humanity; men became selfish, self-centered, desocialized, not at all interested in the joys or sorrows of their fellow men. The new show changes everything; a sense of community and fellowship now awakens in the minds of the players; man begins to outgrow his frigid individualism. In fact this will for community is becoming too strong; already we see the baneful possibilities of an exaggerated worship of the community. Look at those totalitarian states in their regimented goose step up there on the stage. That kind of community is degrading. It destroys personality; and free personality is the presupposition of all true community.

What is the answer? Is there no sane medium between that starving isolation of individualism which society has played since the first days of the Renaissance, and this new act, the unhealthy community against which individual personality has to struggle for self-preservation? Yes, there is a medium. Christianity. The Church stands before us today as the one great Power which makes possible a perfect community in which members are genuine personalities. Don't be too hasty to dismiss—as unimportant—this diagnosis of the exit of rugged individualism, and the entrance of community. It is the basic thesis of the encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno" which Pope Pius XI gave to the world eight years ago. Any attempt to reconstruct the social order must recognize this fundamental reality.

In my personal opinion, Christianity is today on the eve of the greatest revival in its history. Most emphatically do I believe that the next generations will think and feel, produce and speak, out of

the fulness of Catholic life. And this tremendous change will be effected by Catholic Action. Already the sound of that mighty wind of the Pentecost of Catholic Action is audible in the distance. To our generation is the diluted joy of setting the stage for that great day.

In his encyclical "The Promotion of True Religious Unity", promulgated on January 6th, 1928, the Pope of Catholic Action, Pius XI, has these words:

"In behalf of which lofty intention (i.e. to call back all wanderers to the unity of the Church) We invoke, and We ask that you invoke the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Divine Grace, conqueror of all heresies and Help of Christians, that soon may dawn that longed-for day when all will hear the voice of her Divine Son. . . ."

Here is a beautiful, authoritative, accurate picture of Mary's place in Catholic Action today. Contrary to that "old-faithful" bromide that Catholics honor Mary too much, the Catholics of today cannot possibly honor the Mother of God enough. Though they should honor her more and more each day, at the end of life they will know that they have failed to honor her with the honor which is her due; for the measure of honor which is due to Mary is the honor that was rendered her by God, when He became her Son. Catholic Action will succeed to the extent to which it steeps itself in that most orthodox tradition of the ages of faith, devotion to the Immaculate Mother of God.

Let Catholics of today, in preparing for their lay apostolate, consider these facts from their text-

book of Catholic Action, the New Testament. The shepherds and the Magi were the first propagandists, the first apostles of Christ; the former among the Jews, the latter among the Gentiles. That they preached these beginnings of the Gospel, we know from the Bible itself, in which St. Luke wrote: "And all that heard, wondered; and at those things that were told them by the shepherds" (Luke II, 18). Since our Divine Savior was then a Baby, it is not an exaggeration to say that many of the things which the shepherds and Wise Men heard came from the lips of Mary, the teacher of the first evangelists of Jesus. During His life here on earth, Christ spent thirty years alone with Mary; only three years with the Apostles. It is sound reasoning, I should say, to suppose that Mary's co-redemptive function was just that much more important than the Apostolate of Peter and his band. The first miracle of the spiritual order performed by Christ was the sanctification of His Precursor, St. John the Baptist, in the womb of his mother, St. Elizabeth. It was at the sound of Mary's voice that that miracle was performed. "And it came to pass, that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the infant leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost" (Luke I, 41). The first miracle in the physical order was the changing of water into wine at the marriage feast in Cana of Galilee. It was Mary, we know, who asked for that miracle. Was she motivated solely by her sympathy for the embarrassed bride? No. She was moved by a far greater charity: to reveal her Son to those men who were destined to reveal Him to the world. St. John closes his account of that miracle with these significant words: "And his disciples believed in

him" (John II, 11). This maternal and apostolic solicitude of Mary continued during the whole period of the public life of Jesus, and was especially demonstrated on the stage of that lethal drama, which crowned the work of Redemption. On Calvary the Mother was beside the Son; the co-redemptress beside the Redeemer. It was she, certainly, who encouraged those few straggling souls to climb the hill of Golgotha, and there stand close spectators of the saving work of the cross. After the Ascension of Christ into heaven, why did the Holy Virgin remain on earth? Because her mission here was not yet finished. She had to assist, comfort, advise the Apostles, who were to continue the work of her Divine Son. And it is here that appears, in all its brilliant light, the apostolic action of Mary, the true Queen of Apostles. In that admirable conclave of the Cenacle, over which spiritually presided the Mother of the Redeemer, we find not only the Apostles, but also the representatives of the laity, of both sexes. Scriptural texts fully authorize this statement. They were the faithful who had not been called to hierarchical offices; the simple laity who united themselves with the Apostles to help them in their arduous task; they were the glorious precursors of Catholic Action. There in the Cenacle, we see the infant Church even as it is today: priests and laity; hierarchical apostolate and lay apostolate; and the whole gathered under the maternal mantle of Mary, equally the teacher and protectress of the Apostles and their auxiliaries. Mary's function, always maternal, is twofold. As Mother of Christ, she desires only His glory; as Mother of Christians, she seeks only the salvation of souls. And what is Catholic Action? These same two effects: the glory of



Christ and the salvation of souls. It is necessary that today's associates of Catholic Action honor and invoke Mary more often, and with greater understanding, as the Queen of Apostles.

Perhaps the most startling dogma in the entire field of Mariology is the one which teaches that Mary is the Mediatrix of all graces. By that we mean that every grace which is given to men since the moment of Mary's Assumption into Heaven, every blessing and gift which helps us on the way to God, comes to us—even though unsought and unacknowledged—through the ever-watchful, all-solicitous intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It means, to use the words of the 8th century St. Germanus: "O holy virgin, no one is saved except through thee; no one is delivered from evils except through thee; there is no one on whom grace is bestowed save through thee." This Marian doctrine has particular significance today. During the past thirty years the question of Our Lady's Mediation has been coming more and more into prominence. Since the great World War, the literature on the subject has become still more abundant, due, we believe, to the influence of that towering figure of the War, Cardinal Mercier. During those evil days the Cardinal turned his thoughts continually to Our Sorrowful Mother, and gradually became an enthusiast for the dogmatic definition of her Universal Mediation. Under his inspiration, commissions of theologians studied the question in Belgium, in Spain, and in Rome. He was instrumental in obtaining, in 1921, the privilege of celebrating the Feast of Mary Mediatrix of all Graces for the dioceses of Belgium. The celebration is fixed for the 31st day of May. During his last journey to Rome, Cardinal

Mercier's thoughts and conversation were centered wishes realized, but on January 23, 1926, he had the consolation of seeing the Mass of her Universal Mediation celebrated at his bedside—in Brussels—just before the end. It is physically impossible that Catholic Action, or any other spiritual work, succeed without the help of Divine Grace; and if Mary is the channel of all graces, it follows that Catholic Action cannot succeed without her.

In the world scene of today there is great need for devotion to Our Sorrowful Mother; greater need, perhaps, than at any previous period in history. on the measures necessary to hasten the definition, from which he hoped for marvellous results in the Church and in the world. He did not live to see his Why? Because so many millions of God's creatures are oppressed, are in sorrow themselves. Who will bring these children of God back to the peace and happiness of universal Christian brotherhood? You and I must do it with Catholic Action. We must heal their wounds, share their sorrows, dry their tears. Upon the ruins of ruthless individualism we must build a new Christian community, in which every citizen—black or white, rich or poor, weak or strong—is a priceless soul purchased by the Precious Blood of our Incarnate Savior. And under whose standard can we best do this work? Through whose eyes can we best teach these oppressed millions to look up from the depths of their sorrows? Who can best take them by the hand, and lead them—tired and weary—to the God of all justice and love? That same Sorrowful Mother who suffered even more than they; that Mother of the Man of Sorrows and Mother of sorrowing men—who understands and

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knows the language of their sorrowing hearts. Then  
will all the world see, even as Alice Meynell saw :

“None can be like Him, none;  
Not she who bore Him. Yet, I saw the whole  
Eternal, infinite Christ within the one  
Small mirror of her soul.”

## MARY TOMORROW

Address delivered July 9, 1939

In my previous talks I have referred to the movement of the Young Christian Workers of Belgium and France, known as Jocism. It is interesting to note that Pope Pius XI referred to Jocism as ideal Catholic Action. In fact, that great Pontiff was so deeply impressed by the work of those provocative champions of Jesus Christ that he publicly thanked God for the grace of life within this hour. Nor across the ages of history can one find a more enchanting spectacle than this movement of the "Young Christian Workers" of Western Europe. Over and over again have the Jocists and the Grail demonstrated that truth is still stranger than fiction. Even the jaded cynic must thrill to their vibrant motto, that one staggering word—"CONQUEST"—blazing across their banners. Youngsters just out of high school, these tremendously earnest apostles of Christ have set about the task of transforming society, of building a new world; and the strange thing about it all is that they are actually succeeding. Their "conquest" is well on the road to realization.

One conspicuous characteristic of the Jocist is the absolute artlessness with which he seems to comprehend the doctrine of the Mystical Body. It would astound even a theologian to hear these boys and girls—mere children—enthusiastically discussing their incorporation with Christ. Of course, this is as it should be. Catholic Action is really unintelligible except in terms of that dogma. The lay apostolate of Belgium, Holland, and France, is such an unbeliev-

able success simply because it has suddenly come to realize the dazzling and awful reality of our mystical union with Christ. Neither Catholic Action nor the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ are modern inventions; both are rooted deep in the ancient traditional teaching of the Church; but it remained for our socially unbalanced age to renew and develop them. The beneficent, all-healing fire of Catholic Action will begin to sweep over America only when we Catholics come to feel our close, real union with Christ, and our consequent union with each other. Then will the Divine Life of our Savior extend Itself to, and flow through, every soul that wills to adhere to Him. Then will there be harmony among all nations; justice and mercy among all peoples; and over the face of the earth will reign a universal community of Christian peace in which Christ is King, and Mary is Queen.

Devotion to Our Blessed Mother will be a far more universal and dynamic thing tomorrow than it is today. This belief is based upon the presumption that tomorrow will see an unprecedented renewal of devotion to the Mystical Body of Christ; and since Mary is Mother of the Mystical Christ—just as she is Mother of the Physical Christ—devotion to her must necessarily increase proportionately. At this point let us impress upon our listeners the fact that the foundation stone upon which all devotion to Mary rests is the Divine Maternity. That is our Lady's central privilege from which all others are derived. Her breath-taking proximity to Divine Sanctity demands those wondrous prerogatives. Not to give them to her would be evidently indecent, would be a gross sin of sacrilege against Christ Himself. Her dignity is *because of Christ*, not in

opposition to Him. In paying honor to the Blessed Virgin no Catholic dreams of according her divine worship such as he gives to the infinite Creator, and underlying any exuberance of his language or posture is the implicit denial to her of any such divine worship. He knows well that however holy she is, and whatever gifts she has received from her Maker, she is but a human being like himself; and he would rightly regard as heresy and idolatry the deliberate giving to her of the honor which is due to God alone. Mary is not Mother of the Divinity (which is eternal and uncreated), but she *is* the Mother of God, precisely because that *one Person* born of her, is indivisible. It is inconceivable that she be Mother of the Man-Christ, and not Mother of the God-Christ, simply because the two are inseparable; the Man-Christ and the God-Christ are the one, same, indivisible Person. She either is, or is not, Mother of that one Person—the God-Man, Jesus Christ. Now, that Divine Son issued from her not only as the individual Christ, but also as the Savior, Who—as such—was destined to be the Head of the Mystical Body. Therefore Mary is the Mother of the Mystical Body, the Mother of the whole Christ; and tomorrow, when the Mystical Body of Jesus comes into its own, again all generations will call her blessed.

Now, here is something which all of us must get straight. Devotion to Mary, the Mother of God, is not just feeling, or emotion, or sentiment, or a harmless play toy for children. It is not a beautiful, restful garden set up for the relaxation of those few hours of leisure which weary humanity can snatch from the bitter struggle of its daily life. It is not a social avocation for women's sewing circles, a busi-

ness about which laborers and wage-earners and Titans of industry need not be concerned. Mary is a beautiful creature. Her beauty has staggered the imagination of every truly great artistic mind in this world's history. But she is infinitely more than that. She has more to do with solving the problems of our empty pocketbooks, our hungry children, our financial slavery, our unemployment, than have all the statesmen and high-priced sociologists in this world put together. Right under the noses of each and everyone of us is an infallible, sure-fire cure for every ill that ails humanity. The remedy cannot be wrong; cannot fail. God Himself came down from heaven and gave it to us. Yet, what are we doing about it? The trouble with us is that we haven't the courage. We are not heroic enough. On the one hand we know that a supernatural sociology is necessary; on the other hand we are afraid to begin—where Catholic Action must always begin—with the reform of our own consciences. We hesitate to carry out into the great mass of society the one Thing by which it could be leavened; instead we keep the Supernatural Life which is ours locked within the casket of our own individual souls. That Mary is absolutely essential to Christ's plans for His Mystical Body, we know in our secret hearts; yet to our vastly different human society of today we are timidly reluctant to present such a radical and startling solution. Poor, timorous, cautious Catholics! Was there ever a less promising picture than the Madonna and the lowly stable at Bethlehem pitted against the imperial Roman Empire? Yet Rome is dead, and Christ lives on.

To say that Mary is the Mother of the Mystical Body is just another way of saying that she is the

Mother of both Christ and Christians. Her universal motherhood of men is an intimate corollary of the Incarnation; her physical motherhood of the Redeemer equivalent to a spiritual motherhood of the redeemed. She who is mother of the Vine is necessarily mother of the branches. Again let me say that this is not a figure, but a fact. Nor is it a pious inaccuracy born of the guileless faith of Catholic peasants. It is a cold, scientifically dogmatic fact, just as consequent upon the Incarnation as death is upon human life. In the solemn moment of His Crucifixion, Jesus Christ Himself announced this doctrine to the world, when He said to St. John: "Behold Thy Mother"; and in that same hour—in union with God—Mary surrendered to death, for the salvation of mankind, that Victim Who was her own Son. Now the point I should like to make is this. By divine revelation we know that Mary is as truly the Mother of our supernatural life as our earthly mothers are of our physical life. Therefore she will exercise toward humanity at least those same offices which an earthly mother exercises toward her infants. She will guard, protect, and foster them; shield them from all dangers; comfort them in their sorrows; surround them with the unfathomable tenderness of a mother's love. But—this very day the world is full of men and women living in sub-human conditions; millions are unemployed; millions are not properly fed or decently clad; countless thousands of sick cannot afford routine medical or hospital aid. Are these unjust sufferings no concern of Mary? Is she indifferent to today's great social sins? No. She would have cured them long ago, if the inviolable (and perverse) free will of her children had not stood in her way. Next to that of Jesus



Himself there is no human heart more solicitous or more anxious about it all. That's why we plead with the world to go back to Christ by the sure and safe way of His Mother and ours.

I find it impossible to agree with those blues singers who predict that the immediate future of Christianity is dark. Five years ago I saw it that way, but not today. Everything now points to a religious reawakening. The powerful rising tide of Catholic Action in Western Europe; the optimistic outlook for Catholic Action in every non-totalitarian state in the world; the interest and reverence with which all the world received the election of Cardinal Pacelli to the Papacy; in the United States the recent and almost unprecedented wave of devotion to our Blessed Mother; the evident hunger with which the entire mental world is searching for the absolute; the utter abhorrence with which unchristian ideologies are received in almost every court of the people in the world—these augur a brilliant Christian future. In that great Utopia of tomorrow Mary will be the Mother of all men and the Christian will be sovereign and free. No longer will the individual live for himself. In every human face will he see his brother in Christ and his deepest longing will be to do unto others even as Christ did unto him. Peoples totally different in race, country, and historical antecedents will share the same life and destiny of Christ's Mystical Body. Then will women again be placed on that pedestal to which association with Mary raised them long, long ago. In his fiancee the Christian man will see the ideal of true womanhood—God's masterpiece of femininity—and he will not dare to sully that sweet image by any unholy act. The cold, sensuous, selfish idea of marriage will dis-

appear from the face of the earth. Instead—a man and woman, united in the holy Sacrament of Matrimony, will join hands with God and share His creative power in producing theirs and God's children. Then—even as in Bethlehem—the Madonna and her Child will again be enthroned before men; nor will any husband or wife make an instrument of hell that wondrous creative power which God so generously gave to them. Upon the model of the Holy Family of Nazareth will that first unit of society, the family, be fashioned; and over each Christian fireplace the Madonna of Bethlehem will reign as queen.

The Christian community of tomorrow will especially differ from that of the Middle Ages in that patriotism will run in industrial instead of in military channels. The inherent value of labor, and the consequent dignity of the laborer, will be the standard of worth. And just as “the medieval conception of the Virgin . . . . . supplied the ennobling element in a strange amalgamation of licentious and military feeling, which was formed around women in the age of chivalry”, so in the crudely industrial age of tomorrow Mary's ministry will be to give to society that peculiarly feminine touch which must level and balance every vigorous civilization.

Notable, too, in a true Christian society will be the attitude of the people towards theology and the liturgy. Children of the living God will intuitively comprehend those same liturgical forms which today's individualistic society must painfully scrutinize under a purely rationalistic microscope. The people will display such a simple and profound understanding of the imagery and action of the liturgy that the cultured man will be ridiculously

puzzled. From tomorrow's reconstruction, too, will rise a new Christian art. When man is liberated from the ignoble fetters of individualism, highly skilled craftsmen will be able to express with force and precision those truths which the whole community feels very deeply. For art is something beyond the capacity of individual creation. Then, also, will appear those feasts and festivals of Mary which have long since disappeared from the life and consciousness of our people. Instead of the sinful and synthetic night club we shall see the spontaneous jollity and lively merrymaking of countless Marian holidays. Each town and hamlet will have its own patron saint, its own feasts, its own customs and traditions; yet all will be closely united in that one great community which knows no racial or geographical lines, and over which Christ will reign as King, and Mary as Queen.

Will these utopian days ever come for America? I think so. Within the next fifteen years, two great Marian Centenaries will take place; one national, the other world-wide. In 1946 we will celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of that decree of the Sixth Provincial Council of Baltimore in which the Virgin Mary Immaculate was constituted Patroness of the Church in the United States. In 1954 the universal Church will solemnly commemorate the centenary of the dogmatic definition of Mary's Immaculate Conception.

We have fourteen years in which to work; fourteen years in which to exercise our Marian Apostolate. The easiest, the most orthodox, the surest way to Christ is through her. Then, even as the English vessels—sailing past Broadstairs in the Middle Ages—struck their topsails in honor of our

Lady of Bradstowe, so every sailor and passenger approaching the harbor of New York will stand at attention and pledge allegiance to the Immaculate Queen enthroned within that land of the brave and the free. "O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petition; but in thy mercy, hear and answer me. Amen."

## CARDINAL HAYES STATES AIMS OF THE CATHOLIC 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. . . .

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 countrymen. 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 word 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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