

McPhillips, ~~Frank~~ ^{Francis} J.
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REV. FRANK J. McPHILLIPS

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ONE NEEDS THE OTHER

Three lectures delivered on the Catholic Hour by Reverend Frank J. McPhillips, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Delivered on the program from July 17, 1949 to July 31, 1949. The Catholic Hour is produced by the National Council of Catholic Men in cooperation with the National Broadcasting Company.

BY
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"AUTHORITY"

Talk Given on July 17, 1949

Some years ago, a radio program dramatized an invasion of our country by creatures from another planet, and to many listeners who had not heard the prologue, it brought consternation and panic. Their reaction to fear was immediate, and those affected were individually concerned with their own safety. Today we are oppressed with the fear of war and may be inclined to think that if this threat were suddenly lifted, then we would find ourselves living all at once in a world of peace, but this is unfortunately, not true. Suppose it would be announced tonight, that by some miracle, the leaders of the East and the West had reached a perfect agreement, based on Christian principles, and had already begun to work together in harmony to bring the Freedoms to every person in the world. Such an announcement would be received with tumultuous joy, but would it bring immediate peace to us as individuals? The chief cause for unrest in the world today is the refusal of nations to accept the authority of God, with its con-

sequent moral responsibility. Likewise, the unhappiness that plagues the lives of so many families and individuals is due to their refusal to accept the laws of God, and the denial of the responsibility of exercising authority that He has placed in particular persons. The craving of every human heart is for peace, and there can be no tranquility in our lives as long as there is the threat of war; but this very antagonism between nations is caused by the wrong thinking of men, and it is faulty thinking that destroys the peace of the individual as well. No one is thinking wisely or correctly, whether he be statesman or private person, who thinks of the result of a plan or an action only in the light of its immediate result. Correct thinking demands that both time and eternity be brought into account, and God's will as well as my own desires be considered. There is a great deal of wrong thinking in the matter of exercising authority because men refuse to look upon it as a moral responsibility under God, and this applies to the

home and the classroom as well as to authority in high places.

One of the questions that is asked in the catechism is this: "Why did Christ live so long on earth?" and the answer is given very simply: "Christ lived so long on earth to show us the way to heaven by His teaching and example." To *show* us the way to heaven! To show us the way to live, to be an example to us of correct thinking. People who are concerned with television know that both the sense of sight and the sense of hearing are involved in that medium, and to listen to the words of Christ without looking at His life for example, would be like sitting in front of a television screen with one's eyes closed—we would be hearing everything that was being said, but not seeing how it works out in actual life. One might say that in a certain sense our Divine Saviour dramatized the perfect life, and though He took the principal part, there were others that He brought close to Himself for our observation that we might see in their lives the example that a single life could not portray. In order to found His Church He selected the disciples, and from them He chose the Apostles to continue

His teaching—but for the example that we need in our daily lives, He was born into a family and extended His example through the lives of Mary and Joseph. They were not commissioned by Him to teach, although they knew Him better than anyone else in the world—it was their lives that were to be our examples. The story of the Holy Family is more suggested than told in detail in the Scripture—some facts are given, but the lines are lightly drawn so that everyone, no matter what his condition in life, may find in it his model and inspiration.

When we look to the Holy Family for an answer in this matter of proper thinking about the use of authority, we must look, strangely enough, to the most humble member of that family. Christ was God and was with His Father when the world was made and all the laws of nature put into operation, but He did not rule the family; His Mother was the most favored of all creatures in her selection to be His Mother, and she was to be called the Queen of heaven and earth, but she did not rule that family; it was left for Joseph, whose only apparent qualification was that he was "a

just man," to exercise the authority over the little household. The Gospels do not tell us much about him; he is mentioned as the Spouse of the Virgin Mary, and we know that he was present at Bethlehem, that he guarded and guided the Mother and Child on the Flight into Egypt, and that he shared the worries of our Blessed Mother when the Boy was lost for those three days in Jerusalem. It is not so much what is actually said about St. Joseph that makes him a model for the use of authority, but the conclusions that we ourselves are able to draw from the circumstances in which he is mentioned. That he did really possess authority is beautifully summed up in the Preface that is read in the Mass for his feasts: "Joseph, as a just man, was given by Thee to be the Spouse of the Virgin Mother of God, and as a faithful and prudent servant, was set over thy family, that with fatherly care he might guard Thine only-begotten Son." He was "set over" that Family! In our conclusions there can be no doubt that he was aware of his own inadequacy, but he accepted the commission that God had given him, and he did not shirk his responsibility. With

"fatherly care" he loved the members of his little family; he planned for them; he worked for them, and he put their comfort above his own; and as a "faithful and prudent servant" of God, he ruled them with a deep sense of humility. There may have been men alive at that time who were better fitted by nature for the responsibility, but he recognized that God wanted him to bear it and that all that would be asked of him would be to do the best that he could, and that is all that God will ask of any of us. In the light of the example of St. Joseph, how do we administer whatever authority may have been given to us?

The very word "authority" has become for most people today a distasteful one. We simply do not like to be ruled, and we resent having to submit our wills to the will of another, even if this other be the will of God. And it may be this repugnance to submitting to another that makes us loath to exercise authority over others. We rejoice in the fact that we live in a democracy, chiefly because we think however wrongly that it implies doing our own will, rather than the will of a ruler—forgetting that a democracy is sim-

ply a way of ruling. Nowadays the supreme test for the acceptability of an idea is whether or not it is "democratic"—and what we really mean is whether or not any force or compulsion is to be used in carrying it out. In a democracy we do have the power to select our rulers, but once selected, they are to exercise power; we have a part in the making of laws, but once made, they are to be enforced. It is easy enough for us to accept this and to criticise those who should be exercising power in high places, but how about the God-given right and responsibility of using authority in little places, like the home and the classroom? It is very easy to sit by the radio and come to weighty conclusions about the decisions of the Supreme Court, and to suggest to a neighbor just what action the UN should be taking in any given case, but how important do these suggestions seem to the neighbor who knows that our own household is falling apart at the seams because of the lack of proper use of authority? Before we criticize others, it might be well for us to take a good look at our own lives to determine by this private test just how we would

be using more important powers if they were entrusted to us.

Authority is essentially the moral right to direct the conduct of others. All authority is from God; since He is the Supreme Lawgiver, then those of us who possess authority in any degree, do so as the agents of God Himself. And this is true whether we are speaking of the authority of a king, the president of a country, a bishop of the Church, a parent, or the teacher in a classroom. No one can properly rule unless he accepts this responsibility as being from God. Students are sometimes told in their classes that society is a gradual evolution, worked out on a sort of trial and error method by man himself; when, as a matter of fact, it is God's own plan that man should be a social creature and society was planned by God. In a society of men, authority is absolutely essential for peaceful and well-ordered lives. We do not always like to be told what to do, nor are we always pleased to order the lives of those that we love, but if every individual in society were to act exactly as he pleased, what a chaos there would be! A river flowing between its banks is a beautiful

and wonderful thing—it gives life to the soil and in its movement it seems to possess a dignity that stands as a symbol of life itself. But let that river overflow its boundaries, and it becomes a thing of terror. When it overflows its banks, when the restraints that nature placed on it are no longer functioning, then it becomes a vicious force for destruction, and what has been once life-giving and serene, becomes life-destroying and savage. The banks of a river have a duty to perform, and when they guide the course of the stream, then all is well, and every curve of its progress stands as evidence that the river was not allowed to have its way—and it is the conquering of the river that makes for its beauty.

Authority is rightly found wherever men live together, and it permeates the whole structure of society, with a little given to some and a great deal to others. A radio is a very complicated piece of apparatus, and every tiny wire has its part to play if the whole instrument is to work properly; its functioning can be stopped just as effectively by breaking a little wire as by pulling the main cord from its socket. And the peace in any man's

life can be ruined just as effectively, and maybe more surely, by an argument at the breakfast table as by reading in the paper of the declaration of war. It would be difficult to study any tragedy without finding someplace in its development the misuse, by tyranny or laxness, of authority. The immediate cause of the crucifixion of Christ was the ineffective use of His power by Pilate; the persecutions of the early Christians followed by the tyranny of the Caesars; there are slaves in Russia today because of the misuse of power—and it is just as true that there are boys in houses of correction and men in prisons because of the failures of their own fathers properly to use their God-given authority.

Authority in the home is not something that parents can “take or leave alone.” There is a great deal of talk these days about children not being respectful as they should be, and of wayward and delinquent youth, but how much of their failure is due simply to the fact that those who were placed over them in the earliest years of their lives refused to recognize the responsibility that came with that relationship? What thoughts fill

the mind of the young father as he holds his infant son in his arms for the first time? Is the pride and joy that is properly his, tempered by the thought of the tremendous responsibility that goes with fatherhood? Not just the burden of seeing that the child is properly clothed and fed and protected, but the need of training him to be a good citizen and teaching him *how to save his soul!* There is nothing more pitiful than a "spoiled" child, yet we must not forget that no child ever spoiled himself—the spoiled child is like a mirror that reflects his parents. If he is selfish and hard to manage, it can only be that his parents were too indulgent of his whims when they should have been more conscious of their responsibility under God of properly training him. Several years ago, a student at the University told me about a visit he had had with some friends who had a little son about three years old. These parents were of some ultra-modern school who were determined not to allow any "repressions" to hamper the development of the child, and they had never, under any circumstances, said "no" to him. During the course of the rather hec-

tic evening that my friend spent with the family, the baby lighted a cigarette and made an attempt at smoking it with no word of comment from his parents! It is a pretty terrible thing to think of the whirlwind that is developing in that household. Why is it that some parents will not curb the selfish tendencies of a child because it might hurt him a little at first, but they have no hesitation in taking him to a doctor to have braces put on his teeth to make him develop a better "bite" and possibly to improve his looks? In some homes there is an abuse of authority that amounts to tyranny, but this seems to be the exception today; the greater evil by far is the almost complete disregard of the responsibility under God of training children in the all-important matter of doing His will.

When we stand before the judgment seat of God, the question will not be what ease and comfort we may have given to those under our charge; but how well did we teach them to respect authority that culminates in God's own will? If we take time now to consider St. Joseph as our model, no matter what our

position of authority may be, we would be moved to correct our faulty thinking, and the happy result would be peace in communities, peace in the family, and our sure attainment of the ultimate peace of union with God.

OBEDIENCE

Talk Given on July 24, 1949

Not long ago, a student at a certain University spoke of a professor who had referred to the freedom of the human will as a "theological phantasy." Now a phantasy is something that exists only in the mind and has no other reality, and so the learned man was telling a group of young people who are being trained for leadership among their fellows, that there is no such thing as responsibility to God or man, and implying that the vast majority of men are wrong; for it is universally accepted that man is accountable for his actions, and that doing evil is a choice which a free man is not forced to make, but is rather a perversion of his power to choose. One of the first defenses a child learns is that when he is caught doing something that he should not be doing, he makes a problem for the one who catches him in his evil ways by simply saying: "I couldn't help it" or "I didn't mean to do it." The very small child who is facing punishment seems to sense that he should not be punished if he did not

have a free choice in his action, but the professor would wipe out all possibility of guilt and its consequent punishment by suggesting that the very idea of responsibility for our actions was dreamed up by some peculiar man called theologians, who had no other idea in mind than the control of the lives and destinies of others. It is difficult to conceive how this particular teaching of theologians should have gained such wide acceptance, even by people who could not possibly have had any contact with theologians, and other theological conclusions be so lightly cast aside; because the most sublime truths of Christian revelation have been denied by men who have given a great deal of time to studying them, but it would be difficult to find a man or woman anywhere who has not experienced the feeling of guilt, which can only exist when one is conscious of being able to choose for one's self. There are various ways of knowing that we have "free will," in the sense of being able to determine for ourselves our manner of con-

duct, but there is perhaps none so telling as the personal experience of remorse for an evil act and the feeling of wellbeing for having acted in accord with one's conscience and the moral law. Men can urge that there is no such thing as free will or conscience or a moral law in the same way that philosophers have sometimes contended that nothing actually exists at all—and with about the same effect on the generality of men. For no matter what the philosophers would like to prove, we know that the car that we are paying for is a reality and that we are not paying for it with imaginary money; and all the fine arguments that men can think up to deny responsibility to God will not bring sleep to the man lying awake because of a troubled conscience. Morality exists only because we have the power to choose in the matter of obeying a law or disobeying it, and so it must follow that both authority and obedience are essential to right order, and the one needs the other.

It is unfortunate that the word "obedience" has fallen into such disrepute in these modern times, and that in some minds it has become almost synonymous with

"weakness." It is true that it is still considered a good thing for children to be obedient because they are less troublesome that way, but the notion of obedience as a moral virtue has been practically lost, and if it is considered a virtue at all, it is confined to the realm of childhood. Some people are not even sure that children should be taught to be obedient, and in a recent magazine article where a list of ways to be a good parent were given, the word obedience is not once mentioned, nor is his responsibility to God considered as a factor in the child's development. Such thinking is bound to have repercussions on our society, and one does not have to look very far beyond childhood to note its results. On our secular college campus the students have become so used to the trend of "developing" the individual without regard for moral responsibility under God that their thinking is filled with strange contradictions. If it were not so tragic, it would be amusing to observe their insistence on liberality of thought for themselves while immediately condemning all opposite views; they are rigorously dogmatic in condemning everything they consider to be dogma;

and they have been known to draw up a "bill of rights" for students, but never a "bill of responsibilities." If one would study the student publications of any secular college or university over a period of time, he would be amazed by the amount of ink that is used to present student demands upon the administration, but it is the rare article indeed that reminds the student that he is in an institution of higher learning in order to be trained, and that training demands obedience—in fact, the word obedience is never used. If I may quote from personal experience, in my eight years as a chaplain at a secular university, I have never seen the word obedience used in a student publication, nor have I heard it used either by students or authorities concerning their relations with each other. This is not to imply that there is no order prevailing, for the order and harmony that exists in an institution with thousands of students enrolled is truly amazing, but the point is that obedience, as a moral virtue, simply does not exist. It seems incredible that somewhere in our so-called social evolution we have lost the greatest of moral virtues, and

yet it must be conceded that this is generally true. When the students meet with their counselors, they are told of the necessity of cooperation, of loyalty, and of being grateful for their opportunities, but there is no one to tell them that submitting their wills to the will of a superior is essential for complete harmony, and that it has an actual value in the sight of God Himself. Every right-thinking person wants order to prevail, but it is foolish to expect it where the wills of men are concerned unless they are impelled by the highest motives, and to rule out obedience as a moral virtue is to invite disaster.

The importance of obedience in God's plan for us is clearly taught in the life of Christ. In the Holy Family at Nazareth we find the paradox of authority being invested in the one who had the least right to rule, and the example of obedience being given by the King of Kings. In the first recorded words of our Divine Saviour, He speaks of doing the will of God—it was when His Mother had found Him sitting with the doctors in the Temple, and He dismissed her concern for Him by saying, "Did you not know that I must be

about my Father's business?" (*Luke* 2:49). This is perfectly understandable to us now because we are so well-aware of His mission, but St. Luke's observation that immediately follows must be unintelligible to the mind that has rejected obedience as a virtue because he says, "he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them." He was subject to them! Who can know how many mistakes were made by Joseph and Mary in the ordering of their little home at Nazareth—how many times they made the wrong decisions and mistakes in judgment, and yet the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity subjected His will to theirs, and under their guidance "advanced in wisdom, and age, and grace with God and men" (*Luke* 2:52). Time and again He said that it was His mission to do the will of Him that sent Him, and in a human way, the preparation for the supreme act of obedience in laying down His life for us on the Cross consisted in the little obedience of a child in His home. There is a real connection between the words "He was subject to them" and the words of St. Paul to the Philippians: "He humbled himself,

becoming obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross" (*Philippians* 2:8). It was the brutal force of men that took His life, but no act of obedience to His Father or the guardians of His childhood even suggests the thought of force. It is the association in the modern mind of force and fear with obedience that is the pity. Men must learn that it is the submission of the human will to superior *right* and not *might*, that is pleasing to God. All of nature, outside of man, is in complete harmony—season follows season, the stars stay in their proper course, even the behavior of animals can be predicted—but man, who alone can know the reasons for his actions, can use his power of choice to reject the will of his lawful superiors, and so confound the very plan of God. To be obedient demands that one has a free will and that he submits it to the will of another, simply because the other has the moral right to make the demand. The sunflower that follows the sun in its course through the heavens never varies, but it is not being obedient; the child who puts away his toys at the bidding of his mother is being obedient, and he has the *right*

to know that he is not only pleasing his mother, but that in so acting, he is keeping his little spot in the world in harmony with the rest of the universe and that the simple act is pleasing to God Himself.

Almost universally, men admire unselfishness and generosity, and if a man gives of his possessions to the poor, he becomes the object of our praise; if a man gives his intellect to the consideration of the needs of his fellowmen, studying the injustices that exist in society and tries to find a cure for them, he, too, merits our praise; why is it, that in giving up his will, which is by far the most difficult thing to do, he is apt to be considered a weakling and easily becomes the object of scorn and ridicule?

One might say that the greater the sacrifice involved, the greater the virtue that prompts the giving, but man has no possession or faculty that is so dear to him as his own will, and there is nothing that he gives up with so much reluctance. That is why, in the religious life, where one is called upon to take the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, it is the vow of obedience that is by far the most difficult

to keep. We are not all called upon to enter the religious life and assume these vows, but obedience should enter into every life to some extent, and if we deny it, we are denying a most important way of pleasing God. It is not a virtue that one outgrows, and it should be found not only in the relationship of children to parents, but of wife to husband, of student to teacher, of employee to employer, of citizen to the state—all within the proper moral rights that one has to direct the other. There are a great many jokes made these days about the idea of a wife being obedient to her husband, but St. Paul intended no humor in his words to his beloved Titus when he commanded him to "teach the young women to be wise, to love their husbands, to love their children. To be discreet, chaste, sober, having a care of the house, gentle, obedient to their husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" (*Titus* 2:4-5). And he was writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit when he wrote to the Ephesians: "Let women be subject to their husbands as to the Lord; for the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the Church. There-

fore, as the Church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their husbands in all things" (*Ephesians* 5:22-24). Any abuse of this power given to the head of the house is instantly checked by the further admonition to the husbands to "love their wives, even as Christ also loved the Church and delivered Himself up for it" (*Ephesians* 5:25). But this charge to the husband in no way changes the obligation of obedience on the part of the wife. All of these may sound strange and out of line with modern thinking, and, unfortunately, it is. The notion of obedience as a moral virtue being lost, any thought of a wife being obedient to her husband would seem to make her his slave and everyone is rightly against that. In a word, unless we can recapture the idea of the nobility of obedience, then we will continue to have broken homes, rebellious youth, and a constant insecurity in human relations. What can we do about it?

The first thing must surely be to consider that it is not unreasonable to be obedient and to expect obedience, but quite the contrary. As a matter of fact, it is only the reasonable or sane person who *can* obey—when the

mind is impaired, then no one expects the acceptance of authority, and force is used to compel some degree of right order, and mental invalids are confined to institutions in order properly to care for them and to protect the rights of others. The sane man can submit his will to the will of another because the proper use of his reason will tell him that the Plan of God, as we know it, makes the consistent demand that we submit our wills to His, as it is made known to us through our superiors. The real answer, of course, as to what we can do about this matter of recapturing the true notion and value of obedience, is to be humble enough to acknowledge that we are inferior to others, and that in the lives of every one of us there is to be found someone who is, with moral right, our superior. It all comes back to the importance of right thinking. How ridiculous we can become in our thinking without realizing it, is pointed out in an incident that occurred in class a few months ago. In an effort to make the students think more seriously of their lives in relation to eternity, they were asked what they would do if God revealed to them that they were to die

within a year. One young lady was singled out to give an answer, and after thinking for a moment, she gave the entirely unlooked-for and vehement answer, "I would be angry!" Her answer was in perfect accord with her thinking, because the explanation that she gave was, "Everyone else would be going around having a good

time, and I would be worrying about dying!" It never occurred to her that if she would be a little more concerned about her ultimate destiny, she would not have to worry about it. It is only when we include eternity in our thinking about the present that we are thinking rightly, and our plans are never complete unless they go beyond the grave.

SELF-DENIAL

Talk Given on July 31, 1949

Every mother knows that the normal child has an enormous appetite, and she is also well acquainted with the fact that children seem bent on eating things that are good, rather than things that are good for them. Who will ever know the ingenuity that has been required of mothers to get their children to eat such necessary items of food as vegetables! It happened a long time ago, but I remember distinctly an instance when a mother was trying to get a tiny little girl to eat a dish of carrots, and the reason that it stays so fresh in memory was the method that she used. Instead of the usual technique of telling her that there would be no dessert until the dish was finished, or the promise of a rosy complexion at some future date, she convinced the child that eating those carrots would be pleasing to God; and it was almost pathetic to see the little girl eating the food that she so cordially disliked in order that she might "offer it up." Tiny little person that she was she could not have been aware of sin, but a wise and good mother had already begun to teach her the importance of pleasing God through acts of mortification, and she was laying the foundation for a virtuous life with a dish of carrots! It is unfortunate that the notion of mortification and self-denial is so foreign to our modern way of living. One seldom hears the words used today, and there is certainly little emphasis placed on the spiritual value of refraining from lawful pleasures, or of making deliberate acts of sacrifice in order to please God. We are told, of course, that consideration of others is the mark of the true lady or gentleman, but self-indulgence rather than self-denial is the theme of our present day living, and as long as we do not infringe on the rights of others we are encouraged to get all that we can out of life. Any notion of doing penance for sin is almost completely lost, and the suggestion that we might strengthen ourselves against possible future temptations by little acts of mortification is hard to hear against the

din of voices constantly telling us to pamper ourselves. It is impressed upon us constantly that we must live life to the full, in the sense of enjoying every comfort, and the fine points of self-indulgence have become modern virtues. If one would make mental note of the time that is spent in any gathering in discussing the best places to eat, fashions in clothes, and the decoration of homes, it would be evident that the gaining and use of creature comforts occupies the foremost place in our lives. This is not being said to suggest that these things are wrong in themselves, but there is something definitely wrong when we place them first on the list of life's objectives. In themselves they are really so unimportant that to make their attainment the ambition of life is to obscure our real destiny, and the result may easily be to exchange the happiness of eternity for the pleasures of the moment. The glorification of self leads not only to an empty reward for ourselves, but it almost always brings unhappiness to others. We are told that the acquiring of some possession will make us the envy of our friends, but we are never reminded that the

envious is an unhappy one, and when we set out to make ourselves the envy of others we are deliberately trying to make them unhappy.

We should not be afraid of the idea of self-denial, because after all in its most basic concept, it is simply making an intelligent use of one's free will; it leads us to "eat our carrots" for the proper motive, and we so live that we will gain the approval of God, rather than the applause of others. We do believe that God made for us Himself, and that this life has been given to us in order that we may prove to Him by our way of living, that we actually want the glorious destiny that He has planned for us. But self-interest is so strong and the pleasures of the moment so enticing, that we must constantly remind ourselves of the real purpose of our existence if we are to attain that end. The daily practice of self-denial not only serves to keep the salvation of our souls in proper focus, but the discipline involved in overcoming little likes and dislikes is bound to strengthen us for the important decisions where sin itself is concerned. No one of us would deny that because of original sin we have a predis-

position to evil, and the force of attraction to the sensual pleasures of life is great. An automobile that is standing on an incline is kept from rolling to the bottom only when the brake is secure, and without the "brake" of mortification we will surely slip into the level of self-gratification where we become the easy prey of sin. And there is no place in the conduct of our lives where the motive is more important than in the matter of self-denial; it has value in the sight of God only when it is done for Him. In order to gain the admiration of others, some people keep a fast that would rival that of the saints; but the saints were trying to reduce the size of their debt to God and not the measurement of their waistlines. Let a man experience a slight heart attack and the awareness of the danger to his life causes him to adopt very stern measures with himself—he will give up smoking and drinking and cut out golf; but he shows a lack of real intelligence when he will make no effort to improve his spiritual life, despite the most obvious warnings. Even in the time of St. Paul, athletes made great efforts to condition their bodies in order

to be first among their fellows in physical combat, and the Apostle makes use of this well-known fact to encourage the people of the church in Corinth to make intelligent use of their free wills when he said to them in his first letter: "Everyone that striveth for the mystery, refraineth from all things: and they indeed that they may receive a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible one" (I *Corinthians* 9:25). St. Paul was comparing the laurel wreath of the victor in a contest of bodily strength to the halo of sanctity, and suggesting that since the one was so much greater than the other, there should be no hesitation in making the sacrifices necessary to save their souls.

When we began this series of talks, it was pointed out that Christ wanted to show us the way to heaven by His example as well as by His teaching, and that His Blessed Mother and St. Joseph were chosen to be His family on earth that they might cooperate with Him in giving this demonstration of the perfect life on earth. The life of St. Joseph serves as a model for the proper use of authority our Divine Saviour gave us the per-

fect example of obedience, and it is from the life of the Blessed Virgin Mary that we learn the importance of self-denial. From that portion of her life that is recorded in the gospels, we know that hers was a constant life of mortification of self. The example begins with her complete surrender to the will of God when she referred to herself as the "handmaid of the Lord" and replied to the angel: "be it done to me, according to thy word" (*Luke* 1:38). Whenever she is mentioned it is most evident that all her desires and inclinations were directed towards the perfect attainment of God's will. She made no complaint at being turned away from the inn; there was no self-pity when she heard the prophecy of Simeon; not a word of protest escaped her lips for having to flee into Egypt; she was thinking only of others at the marriage feast of Cana; and she did not spare herself the ordeal of the Cross. We must always remember that God's grace did not paralyze her will—that she was a perfectly normal woman who had an intellect that she was expected to use and that every moment of her life was her own to live—just as our lives

are our own—and that her senses craved ease and comfort just as much as ours do. When she lost her Son in Jerusalem she did not know where He was, and did not find out until the third day, and all that time her heart was as troubled as any mother's could be. And she stood at the foot of the Cross on Calvary because she decided to go there of her own free choice!

Every time she is mentioned in the Scriptures she is concerned with the will of God, either directly or indirectly, through her solicitude for others, and it is this concern for the will of God even in her relationship to others, that makes her the perfect model for mortification and self-denial. We often speak of the Blessed Virgin as the Sorrowful Mother, and her life was filled with sorrow and contradiction, but we may be very sure that in the midst of her most heroic self-denial she possessed that deep and inward peace which every one of us ardently craves, but which comes only to the soul that lives entirely for God.

It may very well be that the unpopularity of self-denial today is due to the fact that more

people are losing the true notion of God, and all of us are being infected more than we know by the lack of faith that is everywhere about us. When God is discussed at all, outside of completely religious circles, He is often referred to as some sort of "force" upon which nature depends—and the notion that He is the Supreme and Sovereign Lord of all creation, who made us for heaven and gave us life on earth in order that we might freely choose to spend our eternity with Him, is apt to be put aside as rather childish. It is almost a daily experience for chaplains who are working with university students to listen to young men and women expounding their ideas about Him, and if it were not for their woeful ignorance, their remarks would often be nothing less than formal blasphemy.

One day a young man who had lost whatever faith he had ever possessed came to the rectory, and in an attempt to start him thinking correctly, it was suggested to him that it was at least a possibility that his mother was right in the things that she believed, and he was asked what answers he would have to give to his Judge at the dawn of etern-

ity if what she believed were the truth—and it is almost unbelievable, but after a moment's pause he said: "If there is a God, He will have some explaining to do to me!" Maybe it was a bit of boyish braggadocio, but he was intelligent enough to have been admitted to the university, and his attitude towards God and the things of eternity is much more common than we care to admit. The rejection of all notion of self-denial and mortification would be perfectly reasonable for him and all who deny God and His revelation, but for those who accept it the conquest of self must appear as a necessity. Our Divine Saviour was speaking to you and to me when He said: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself" (*Luke 9:23*), and St. Paul's words to the Romans apply equally to us: "If by the Spirit you mortify the deeds of the flesh, you shall live" (*Romans 8:13*).

The general title of this series of talks — "One Needs the Other" — suggested itself, because if it is true that peace in our lives depends upon the proper use of authority and the cheerful submission of obedience, then the denial of one's own

will is imperative, and each does need the other — authority, obedience and self-denial. Authority is an empty thing without obedience; the most willing soul must have direction; and both the one exercising authority and the obedient subject finds a constant necessity for denying his own will. Spiritual writers have frequently pointed out that Christianity as a remedy for the ills of the world cannot be said to be a failure, because it has never been tried—at no time since the time of Christ have all men living at any given time tried to settle their differences on purely Christian principles. It can be just as truly said that no one knows what peace and tranquility would come to men if self-glorification should ever give way to self-denial, because that has happened to any considerable number at one time. But whenever an individual has set about to conquer himself for the love of God, he has always found the peace that his soul desired.

Some months ago, the magazine "Integrity" had for its

cover illustration a line drawing that was entitled "Freedom from Want." It pictured a smiling little monk walking through the aisles of a store, his arms folded and his eyes cast down, not even seeing the wares that surrounded him as he made his way along — here was a man perfectly free from want, because he had given himself to God and he cared neither for bodily adornment nor for the comforts of life. We are not all privileged to make such a complete renunciation of self, but what happiness would be ours if we cared just a little less for the tinsel of the world and just a little more for the pure gold of eternal happiness! Self-denial? Perhaps it would be better to speak of it as "self-enrichment" for eternity—the conquest of self for the love of God does cost a little, but St. Paul was referring to the ancient prophecies when he reminded the Corinthians: "that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love Him" (I *Corinthians* 2:9).

THE PURPOSE OF THE CATHOLIC HOUR

(Extract from the address of the late Patrick Cardinal Hayes at the inaugural program of the Catholic Hour 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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