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**WHAT
CAN
I
DO?**

by **MONSIGNOR
FULTON J. SHEEN**

WHAT CAN I DO?

prepared by

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for

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC MEN
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DEDICATED

to the

BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

TOWER OF DAVID

HELP OF CHRISTIANS

QUEEN OF PEACE

that

SHE WHO MOTHERED CHRIST

MAY MOTHER MEN

to His

LOVE AND JUSTICE.

INTRODUCTION

THIS little booklet is born of a fear that class hatred, prejudice, bigotry, anti-Semitism, and atheism may destroy and rot America from within. Unfortunately the only basis of unity among many Americans is a common hate: Some are united in their hatred of the American way of life, others in their hatred of Catholics, or Protestants, or Jews, or dictators; others in their hatred of morality, discipline, and order. They know whom they hate; but whom do they love. They know what they are against; but what are they for? Human beings cannot be united on the basis of negation. Some way must be found to unite us in the bonds of charity, brotherhood, and common service. There is only one such bond: A common love of God. Love of God is the foundation of love of neighbor and love of neighbor is the foundation of love of country. The loss of God is the beginning of tyranny, for in those countries where God is most exiled, there man is most enslaved. "God, who made the world, and all things therein . . . hath made of one, all mankind, to dwell upon the whole face of the earth. . . . That they should seek God, if happily they may feel after him or find him, although he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and are" (*Acts 17:24-28*).

WHAT then can one do to restore brotherhood in man through the Fatherhood of God? You may be presently an atheist, or perhaps a bigot, or perhaps indifferent. You may be a Jew, a Protestant, or a Catholic. In any case, whatsoever you be, the problem still remains: *What can I do?* This little book will tell you.

FULTON J. SHEEN.

WHAT CAN I DO— IF I AM AN ATHEIST?

IF THERE be no God, where do I get my rights and liberties? From the State? Then the State can take them away. From the will of the majority? Then the majority can take them away. The Declaration of Independence says I get my rights and liberties from my Creator. If this be so, no one can take them away; they are therefore *inalienable*. If I want to keep my perfume, I must keep my flowers; and if I want to keep my rights I must also keep my God! Democracy is not a root but a branch. The root is religion which alone gives value to each person as a creature of God. But atheism is the root of anti-Americanism. That is why subversive activities are always anti-religious.

THE Declaration of Independence is also a Declaration of Dependence, for it affirms our dependence on the Creator and on Divine Providence. As the pendulum of the clock is free to swing on condition it be suspended from a fixed point, so I am free because I recognize dependence on the Supreme Lawgiver who is God.

IF THERE be no God, then there is no foundation for human brotherhood, for how can we be brothers unless there is a common Father, and how can God be a Father unless He has a Son? "God so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son" (*John 3:16*) " . . . that we might receive the adoption of sons" (*Galatians 4:5*).

IF THERE be no God, why do I want to live, not for a day or a week but always? Why do I want to know truth—not the truths of geography or economics but *all* truth? Why do I crave love—not to satiety, nor to death, but with an unending “passionless passion and wild tranquillity”? Would there be a stomach unless there were food to eat? Would there be an eye unless there were things to see? Would there be these segments of life, truth, and love, unless there were the circumference? Would there be a spark unless there were also the flame? If I look for the source of light where there is no admixture of shadows and darkness, should I not look for the source of life, truth, and love in a Life without the shadow of death, in a Truth without the shadow of error, and in a Love without the shadow of hate—in pure Life, pure Truth, and pure Love, which is the definition of God?

IF THERE be no God, then there is no distinction between ruler and citizen. Why should I obey and respect the President, the Governors, the members of the legislature, and the judiciary? Because they are better, wiser and more virtuous than anyone else in the land? Not even they would claim that. I honor and respect them because they hold authority from God. “Let every soul be subject to higher powers: for there is no power but from God: and those that are, are ordained of God. . . . For he is God’s minister. . . . Wherefore be subject . . . also for conscience’s sake” (*Romans* 13:1-4-5). Respect for law for this reason is inseparable from religion, as anarchy and revolution today are inseparable from atheism. Patriotism is grounded

on Piety; that is, on love of God and neighbor.

IF THERE be no God, why should I hate God and religion? Either my hatred is directed against the reality of God, or it is directed against a fantasy. If it be directed against a figment of my imagination, then I am mad. Would there ever be anti-cigarette laws unless there were cigarettes? Would there be prohibition unless there were something to prohibit? How can there be atheism unless there is something to "atheate"? What saves atheism from madness and insanity is the fact that God exists; otherwise it is storming ghosts and fighting wind-mills.

IF THERE be no God why do I hate Christ? Do I hate Napoleon? Do I hate Caesar? Do I hate Cyrus? Hatred for these men died with them. Hate perishes with the object hated. Why then do I hate Christ? Nothing better witnesses to His living influence in hearts and in His Church than my hatred. My hatred is nothing but a veiled attempt to despise: "And they were filled with madness; and they talked one with another, what they might do to Jesus" (*Luke* 6:11). "And as they liked not to have God in their knowledge, God delivered them up to a reprobate sense. . . . Foolish, dissolute, without affection, without fidelity, without mercy" (*Romans* 1:28, 31). "Be not deceived, God is not mocked. For what things a man shall sow, those also shall he reap. For he that soweth in his flesh, of the flesh also shall reap corruption. But he that soweth in the spirit, of the spirit shall reap life everlasting" (*Galatians* 6:7-8).

THERE are some minds that start with the assumption that there is nothing beyond the material universe and what appears immediately to their senses, just as there are some who forget that there is a dynamo beyond the electric switch which turns on the light in their room. “. . . they are persuaded that the things are good which are seen. But then again they are not to be pardoned. For if they were able to know so much as to make a judgment of the world: how did they not more easily find out the Lord thereof?” (*Wisdom* 13:7-9).

“If there had anywhere appeared in
space
Another place of refuge, where to flee,
Our hearts had taken refuge in that
place,
And not with Thee.

“For we against creation’s bars had beat
Like prisoned eagles, through great
worlds had sought
Though but a foot of ground to plant
our feet,
Where Thou wert not.

“And only when we found in earth and
air,
In heaven or hell, that such might no-
where be
That we could not flee from Thee any-
where,
We fled to Thee.”—(*R. C. Trench*)

“**T**HERE is nothing good in atheism. Will men be more virtuous for not acknowledging a God who enjoins the practice of virtue? Assuredly not. I would

have princes and their ministers acknowledge a God—nay, more, a God who punishes and who pardons. Without this restraint I should consider them ferocious animals, who, to be sure, would not eat me just after a plentiful meal, but certainly would devour me were I to fall into their clutches when they are hungry, and who, after they had picked my bones, would not have the least idea that they had done anything wrong”—*(Voltaire)*.

PRAYER

To thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul.

In thee, O my God, I put my trust. . . .

Direct me in thy truth, and teach me;

For thou art God my saviour;

And on thee have I waited all the day long. . . .

*The sins of my youth and my ignorances
Do not remember.*

According to thy mercy remember thou me:

For thy goodness sake, O Lord. . . .

For thy name's sake, O Lord,

Thou wilt pardon my sin: for it is great. . . .

Look thou upon me, and have mercy on me;

For I am alone and poor. . . .

See my abjection and my labor;

And forgive me all my sins.

(Psalm 24:1-18)

WHAT CAN I DO— IF I AM A BIGOT?

I CAN thank God that I have a passion for what I believe to be right; but I must not forget to ask God if what I *believe* to be right *is* right. There is always the possibility I may be wrong: "Some out of *contention* preach Christ not sincerely" (*Phillipians* 1:17). "If I have erred, teach thou me: if I have spoken iniquity, I will add no more" (*Job* 34:32).

I CAN always do what the greatest bigot of history did and, like St. Paul, accept the truth when it is presented to me even though it knocks me from the horse of pride. "For you have heard . . . that, beyond measure, I persecuted the Church of God. . . . He, who persecuted us in times past, doth now preach the faith which once he impugned" (*Galatians* 1:13, 23).

MY BIGOTRY is excusable when due to ignorance: "And now, brethren, I know that you did it through ignorance" (*Acts* 3:17). But it is inexcusable when I refuse to be enlightened or to accept the evidence: "If you were blind, you should not have sin" (*John* 9:41). "If I had not come, and spoken to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin" (*John* 15:22).

I MAY hate the sin, but never the sinner; I may hate Communism, but never the Communist. I must be tolerant of the err-

ing, but intolerant of the error. By hating him who hates me I multiply hate. By loving him who hates me I kill hate. By what right do I hate the Jew, or the Protestant, or the Catholic? Am I the judge of their motives: "For with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged: and with what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again" (*Matthew 7:2*).

WHY do I hate my neighbor, and not hate his fault when I find it in myself? "And why seest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye; and seest not the beam that is in thy own eye? . . . Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thy own eye, and then shalt thou see to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye" (*Matthew 7:3, 5*).

WHEN I begin to love the persons I now hate, and to hate the evil I now love, I will be the opposite of what I am today. To love my enemy is the only way to conquer him: "And falling on his knees [Stephen] cried with a loud voice, saying: Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep in the Lord" (*Acts 7:59*).

DO I really hate the Catholic Church or do I hate what I have heard or read about the Church? What if I have been told lies about it? Cannot lies be printed as well as told? And if the bigots in the time of Christ called Him a winebibber and said he had a devil, could they not lie also about His Church? If the Church is all I believe it to be, why has it alone survived these 1900 years and produced so many saints? Do I realize that the Church which is most

hated by the world is most apt to be the true Church of Christ: "If you had been of the world, the world would love its own; . . . but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. . . . If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you" (*John 15:19-20*).

PERHAPS I do not hate the Church at all, but only what I mistakenly believe to be the Church. Is not therefore my present hate for it the measure of the love I could have for it if I saw that it was true? Only one who hated like Saul could love like Paul. If I be a bigot, I am an apostle in reverse. The zeal of my persecution can one day be the zeal of my apostolate.

WHAT is my zeal for religion more *anti* than *pro*? Do I love Christ more than I hate certain Catholics or Jews or Protestants? Do I love God more than I hate my fellowman? Why do I spend more time in attack than in prayer? Why do I spend more energy in depriving people of what they have, than in giving them something I really have not? Do I ever say to those whose religion I hate: "I know how you can love God more. I can give you a faith with a deeper sense of sacrifice. I can give you a more intimate communion with God?" Or is my message: "The Pope is anti-Christ"; "Protestants are pagans"; "Jews are atheists"? Would these souls be happy if they had my hatred?

MUST I not studiously inquire into whether my bigotry is justified, for I shall endanger my salvation by depriving a single soul of the fulness of the truth of Christ? On Judgment day shall I have noth-

ing else to say to Christ than, "I filled the souls of others with hate for Catholics or for Protestants or for Jews"? Would it not be better to be able to say: "I taught men to love Thee, the Way, the Truth, and the Life." "So that by all means, whether by occasion, or by truth, Christ be preached: in this also I rejoice" (*Phillipians 1:18*).

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, may I know myself and know Thee.

And desire nothing save only Thee.

May I hate myself and love Thee.

May I do everything for the sake of Thee.

May I humble myself and exalt Thee.

May I think of nothing except Thee.

May I die to myself and live in Thee.

May I receive whatever happens as from Thee.

May I banish self and follow Thee.

And ever desire to follow Thee.

May I fly from myself and fly to Thee,

That I may deserve to be defended by Thee.

May I fear for myself and fear Thee,

And be among those who are chosen by Thee.

May I distrust myself and trust in Thee.

May I be willing to obey on account of Thee.

May I cling to nothing but to Thee.

May I be poor for the sake of Thee.

Look upon me that I may love Thee.

Call me that I may see Thee,

And ever and ever enjoy Thee. Amen.

(*St. Augustine*)

WHAT CAN I DO— IF I AM ANTI-SEMITIC?

I CAN either be Christian in fact or renounce the glory of the title; for "This is my commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you" (*John 15:12*).

BUT *the Jews are my enemies.* Maybe my greatest enemy is the hatred in my heart. But even if Jews were my enemies, and I be Christian, how escape the law of Christ: "You have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thy enemy But I say to you, Love your enemies: do good to them that hate you: and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you: That you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven, who maketh his sun to rise upon the good, and bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust. . . . For if you love them that love you, what reward shall you have?" (*Matthew 5:43-46*). To be pro-Christian does not mean to be anti-anybody.

BUT *all the Jews are Communists.* Not all! Only some! And there are some Irish Communists and Swedish Communists and English Communists and Italian Communists. Why attribute to one race or one class the faults of some of its members? Not even Communists want to be called Communists. Therefore I must spare from such ignominy and disgrace those who do not deserve it.

AS A Catholic, I *may not be anti-Semitic.* The Catholic Church solemnly and officially declared through the Holy office on September 25, 1928, that it was opposed to anti-Semitism: "The Catholic Church habitually prays for the Jewish people who were bearers of the Divine Revelation up to the time of Christ; this despite, indeed on account of, their subsequent blindness. Actuated by this love, the Apostolic See has protected this people against unjust oppression, and just as every kind of envy and jealousy among the nations must be disapproved of, so in an *especial manner* must be that hatred which is generally termed anti-Semitism."

"ALL things therefore whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you also to them" (*Matthew 7:12*).

"HOW would you feel if all the people you met never mentioned your father or mother except with the greatest disdain, if their attitude toward your parents was pure scorn and sarcasm? But that is what happens with Our Lord Jesus Christ. We forget, or else we do not wish to know, that our God Who became man was a Jew by birth; that His mother was a Jewess, the flower of the Jewish race; that the Apostles were Jews as well as all the prophets; that our holy liturgy is gleaned from Jewish books. How can we express then, the monstrous insult and blasphemy it is to demean the Jewish race?"—(*Leon Bloy*).

AS AN American I may not be anti-Semitic, for the question is not whether any race or people is sympathetic to me, or temperamentally likeable, but whether they

are entitled to the common justice and common fraternity guaranteed by a Constitution which holds that all men derive their rights and liberties from God.

ANY man or any people which has a mission from God excites the wrath of the spirit of the world, even though he be not faithful to that mission. Never having lost his Messianism, though having largely secularized it, the Jew is destined never to leave the world in repose. He is restless without the God whose messenger he was meant to be and whose message he was first to receive.

DID not the greatest theologian the Church ever had, who was himself a Jew, St. Paul, write of his own people: "Blindness in part has happened in Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles should come in. And so all Israel should be saved" (*Romans* 11:25-26). "Hath God cast away his people?" (*Romans* 11:1). St. Paul therefore counsels the Gentile Christians who were tempted to look with contempt on the Jews: "Be not highminded, but fear. For if God hath not spared the natural branches [of his Holy Tree] *fear* lest perhaps he also spare not thee [the grafted branch] (*Romans* 11:20-21). "I say then, have they so stumbled, that they should fall? God forbid. But by their offence, salvation is come to the Gentiles. . . . Now if the offence of them be the riches of the world, and the diminution of them, the riches of the Gentiles: how much more the fulness of them?" (*Romans* 11:11-12).

SUPPOSE there were suddenly torn out of the heart of the world the contribution of the Jews to civilization. How much poorer the world would be and how weakened its heart. Without Judaism there would be no historical roots for Christianity. But even apart from religion, suppose we lived in a world in which the music of the Jew was never played, in which the scientific discoveries of the Jew were never accepted, in which his literature was never published, in which his law was never woven into codes of people and nations, and in which the philosophy of the great Moses Maimonides was never taught! The impoverishment would be disheartening. We owe our thanks, therefore, to the Jews who, *as Jews*, enriched the culture of the world.

PRAYER

God of goodness and Father of mercies, we beseech Thee, by the immaculate heart of Mary, and by the intercession of the Patriarchs and holy apostles, to look with compassion upon the remnant of Israel, so that they may come to a knowledge of our only Saviour Jesus Christ, and share in the precious graces of Redemption. Amen.

(*Raccolta*)

WHAT CAN I DO— IF I AM INDIFFERENT?

IF I knew a vast fortune was available to me upon certain conditions, would I not investigate those conditions? Have I ever investigated the claims of Christianity: "Lay not up to 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. . . . For where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also" (*Matthew 6:19-21*).

HAVE I a right to say there is no life higher than this, anymore than the rose has a right to say there is no life above it? Have I ever investigated the supernatural life to which it is said a man must be re-born as Nicodemus was? "Now this is eternal life: That they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (*John 17:3*).

DO I know, by my own unaided reason, with certitude, all the truths of the natural order? Is it possible that there may be truths beyond my reason, which I do not yet know, but could know, and which if I did know would do to my reason what a telescope does to my eye? Am I teachable—even by God? May there not be a certain disposition needed on my part which pride and sin obscure, and which now prevent discovery? ". . . thou sayest: I am rich, and made wealthy, and have need of nothing: and knowest not, that thou art wretched,

and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. I counsel thee to buy of me gold fire tried, that thou mayest be made rich; and mayest be clothed in white garments. . . . Be zealous therefore, and do penance. Behold I stand at the gate, and knock. If any man shall hear my voice, and open to me the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (*Apocalypse* 3:17-20). The latch to the Kingdom of God is not on the inside, but on the outside. God breaks down no doors. He knocks. It is for us to open!

DO I ever think of what will happen to me at death? Friends and relatives will gather round me and say: "How much did he leave?" But the recording angel will ask: "How much did he take with him?" I can carry away from this life only what I can carry away in a shipwreck—my merits and demerits. "For what shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his soul?" (*Mark* 8:36).

NOW *this is my idea of religion. . . .* But do I ever say: "Now this is my idea of a triangle, or my idea of astronomy, or my idea of the multiplication table?" Does the clay dictate to the potter? Would it not be better to inquire: "What is God's idea of religion?" Do I think that I have something better than what God wills? Do I forget that the *good* is what God wills? "Not every one that saith to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doth the will of my Father who is in heaven, he shall enter into the kingdom of heaven" (*Matthew* 7:21).

I WOULD not have a ten cent gadget in my house for ten minutes without knowing its purpose? Will I live 30, 40, or 60 years without knowing why I am here or whither I am going? If I make the final step of my journey determine all the intermediate steps, why do I not so regulate my life? Is my attitude: "I want to be good, Dear Lord, a little later on, but not now?" ". . . it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment" (*Hebrews* 9:27). "And thinkest thou this, O man, . . . that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and patience, and longsuffering? Knowest thou not, that the benignity of God leadeth thee to penance? But according to thy hardness and impenitent heart, thou treasurest up to thyself wrath, against the day of wrath, and revelation of the just judgment of God. Who will render to every man according to his works." (*Romans* 2:3-6).

I WANT a religion but a religion without authority. In other words, I want a religion which will let me do what I please. The choice is not: Will I or will I not accept an authority? Rather the choice is: Will I accept the authority of public opinion or the authority of Christ? Do I want a religion that is right when I am right, or a religion that is right when the world is wrong? "Let no man deceive himself: if any man among you seem to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God" (*1 Corinthians* 3:18-19).

RELIGION can give me nothing. Perhaps at present it can give me nothing; but it can take something away—my pride, my conceit, and my self-sufficiency. Before the building can be erected, a hole must be dug. “Amen I say to you, unless you be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven” (*Matthew 18:3*).

I AM a sinner. Then let me begin with these facts: Christ forgave sins—“Thy sins are forgiven thee” (*Matthew 9:5*). He communicated that power to others—“Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained” (*John 20:22-23*). Where is that power to forgive sins now? Who claims it? Might it not be worth investigating?

AND Christ prayed for the unity of one fold and one shepherd. “. . . not for them only do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in me; That they all may be one, as thou, Father, in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us. . . . And the glory which thou hast given me, I have given to them; that they may be one, as we also are one: I in them, and thou in me; that they may be made perfect in one: and the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast also loved me” (*John 17:20-23*). Where on the face of the earth is there one and the same Christ preached now that was preached in the first century?

PRAYER

*Come Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful,
And enkindle in them the fire of Thy Love.
Send forth Thy Spirit and they shall be created;
And thou shalt renew the face of the earth.*

*O God Who didst teach the hearts of Thy faithful,
By the light of Thy Holy Spirit, grant us,
By the same Spirit, to be ever truly wise,
And to rejoice in His Holy comfort,
Through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.*

(Raccolta)

WHAT CAN I DO—

IF I AM A PROTESTANT?

I CAN follow the truth of Christ in all things: "He therefore that shall break one of these least commandments, and shall so teach men shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven. But he that shall do and teach, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (*Matthew 5:19*). "If you love me, keep my commandments" (*John 14:15*).

I CAN believe and practice fidelity to the marriage bond and be opposed, as Christ was, to divorce: "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (*Mark 10:9*). "And he saith to them: Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if the wife shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery" (*Mark 10:11, 12*).

I CAN give my children a religious education: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not. For of such is the kingdom of God" (*Mark 10:14*). "And whosoever shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in me: it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea" (*Mark 9:41*).

I CAN forgive my enemies: "For if you will forgive men their offences, your heavenly Father will forgive you also your

offences. But if you will not forgive men, neither will your Father forgive you your offences" (*Matthew 6:14, 15*).

I CAN pray daily for the full knowledge of the truth of Christ and the strength to follow it: "Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and you shall find: knock, and it shall be opened to you. For every one that asketh, receiveth: and he that seeketh, findeth: and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened" (*Matthew 7:7, 8*).

I CAN sacrifice myself for others as Christ did for me: "And calling the multitude together with his disciples, he said to them: If any man will follow me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (*Mark 8:34*).

UNDER no circumstances will I ever deny, but like Peter confess, that Jesus Christ is the Son of the Living God: "Jesus saith to them: But whom do you say that I am? Simon Peter answered and said: Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answering said to him: Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee: That thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven" (*Matthew 16:15-19*).

PRAYER

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord: Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified; died, and was buried. He descended into hell; the third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

(Apostles' Creed)

WHAT CAN I DO— IF I AM A JEW?

I CAN keep the Commandments: "I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt not have strange gods before me. Thou shalt not make to thyself a graven thing, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or of those things that are in the waters under the earth. Thou shalt not adore them, nor serve them: I am the Lord thy God, mighty, jealous, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me: And shewing mercy unto thousands to them that love me, and keep my commandments.

"THOU shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that shall take the name of the Lord his God in vain. Remember that thou keep holy the sabbath day. Six days shalt thou labour, and shalt do all thy works. But on the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: thou shalt do no work on it, thou nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy beast, nor the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them, and rested on the seventh day: therefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it.

“HONOUR thy father and thy mother, that thou mayest be longlived upon the land which the Lord thy God will give thee. Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s house: neither shalt thou desire his wife, nor his servant, nor his handmaid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is his” (*Exodus 20:2-17*).

PRAYER

“Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy great mercy. And according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my iniquity. Wash me yet more from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my iniquity, and my sin is always before me. . . . Turn away thy face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create a clean heart in me, O God: and renew a right spirit within my bowels. Cast me not away from thy face; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and strengthen me with a perfect spirit. I will teach the unjust thy ways: and the wicked shall be converted to thee. Deliver me from blood, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall extol thy justice. O Lord, thou wilt open my lips: and my mouth shall declare thy praise. . . . Deal favorably, O Lord, in thy good will with Sion; that the walls of Jerusalem may be built up.”

(*Psalm 50:3-20*)

WHAT CAN I DO— IF I AM A CATHOLIC?

IF MY conduct is not distinguishable from the worldly, then I am failing as a Catholic: "I have chosen you out of the world" (*John* 15:19). "And they that are Christ's, have crucified their flesh, with the vices and concupiscences" (*Galatians* 5:24).

ICAN know and follow in my personal and social life the teachings of the Church regarding the rights and duties of employers, workers, and citizens; I can recognize that though the Kingdom of God is not of this world, it is *for* this world. Therefore I must take my part in society as a Catholic, for I do not save my soul alone but in conjunction with my fellowmen. "For I tell you, that unless your justice abound more than that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (*Matthew* 5:20). "Not every one that saith to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doth the will of my Father who is in heaven, he shall enter into the kingdom of heaven" (*Matthew* 7:21).

IN ADDITION to saying my morning and evening prayers, attending Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation, abstaining from meat on Fridays in memory of the Passion of Our Lord, keeping the fast and abstinence ordered by the Church on certain other days of the year, and obeying the laws of the Church concerning marriage, education, justice and charity to all, I can

say the Rosary daily for peace. "And the work of justice shall be peace" (*Isaias* 32:17).

R, IF it be possible, and even though it involve sacrifice, I can attend the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass daily in reparation for my own sins and the sins of the world. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (*Luke* 9:23).

R, IF the duty of my state of life permits and if it is physically possible, I can make a daily Holy Hour in the presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament in reparation for blasphemies and irreverences and that Christ may reign in the hearts and souls of men. "Could you not watch one hour with me?" (*Matthew* 26:40).

PRAAYER

Most sweet Jesus, Redeemer of the human race, look down upon us, humbly prostrate before thee. We are thine, and thine we wish to be; but to be more surely united with thee, behold each of us freely consecrates himself today to thy most Sacred Heart. Many indeed have never known thee; many too, despising thy precepts, have rejected thee. Have mercy on them all, most merciful Jesus, and draw them to thy Sacred Heart. Be thou king, O Lord, not only of the faithful who have never forsaken thee, but also of the prodigal children who have abandoned thee: grant that they may quickly return to their Father's house, lest they die of wretchedness and hunger. Be thou King of those who are deceived by

erroneous opinions, or whom discord keeps aloof, and call them back to the harbor of truth and unity of faith, so that soon there may be but one flock and one Shepherd. Be thou King of all those who are still involved in the darkness of idolatry or Islamism, and refuse not to draw them all into the light and kingdom of God. Turn thine eyes of mercy toward the children of that race, once thy chosen people. Of old they called down upon themselves the blood of the Saviour; may it now descend upon them a laver of redemption and of life. Grant, O Lord, to thy Church, assurance of freedom and immunity from harm; give peace and order to all nations, and make the earth resound from pole to pole with one cry: Praise to the divine heart that wrought our salvation: to it be glory and honor forever. Amen.

(Leo XIII)

