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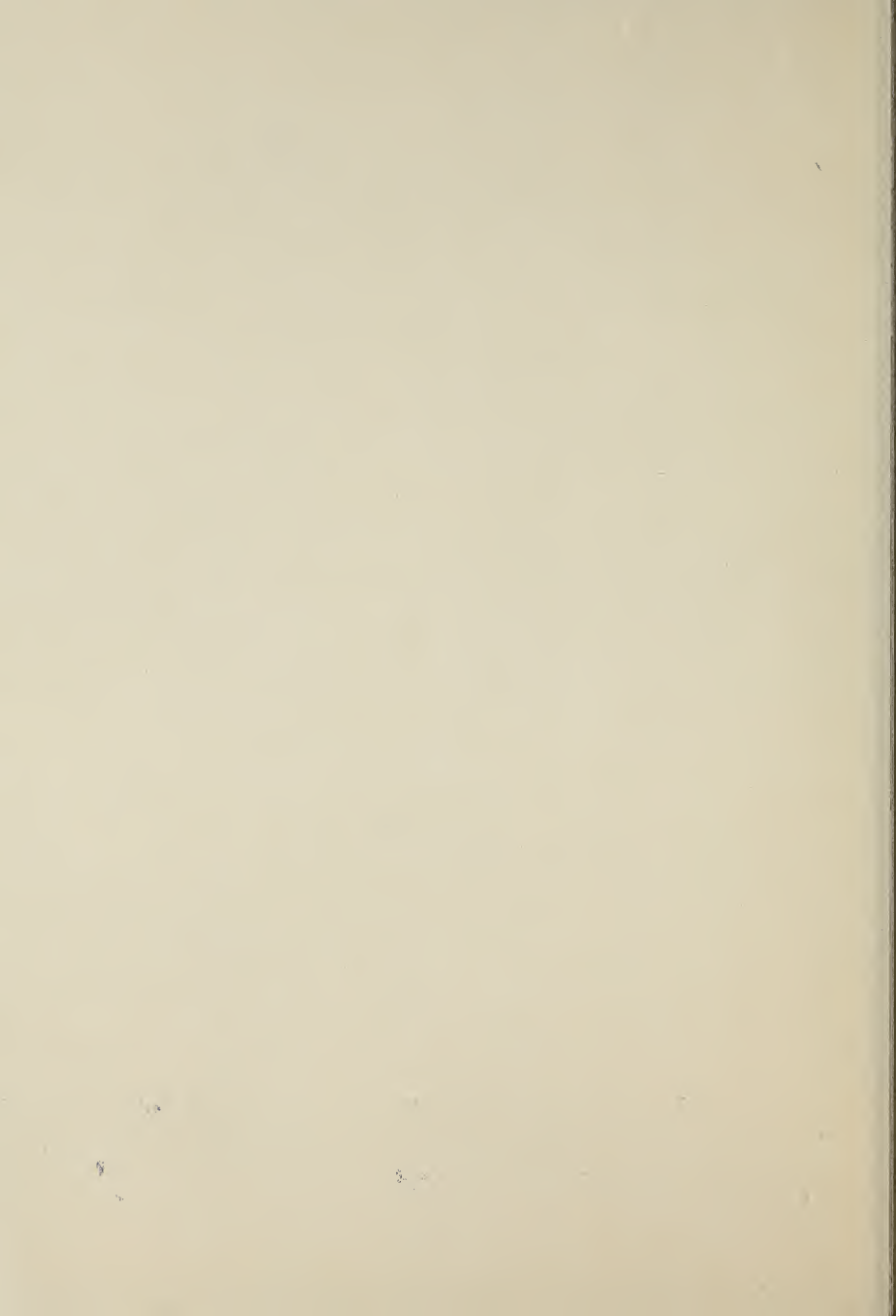
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PERISCOPE PEEKS'

at the
**WORLD
ABOVE**



By The **REV. A.L.HOPKINS**



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PERISCOPE PEEKS AT THE WORLD ABOVE

By
The Rev. A. L. Hopkins



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Subs And Alphabet Soup

This is a series of re-edited sketches written originally for a small-town newspaper. I imagined the readers as submerged in the Sea of Life, confined in the U-Boat of their daily job, with only an occasional Periscope Glance at the World Above, the supernatural world of Religion—that ancient binding force—as *invisible* yet as real to man as the force of gravity which binds him to this Earth.

Since we must start somewhere, I assume you admit the force of gravity. Nor is it assuming too much that you can read what I write. Therefore we are *two* jumps ahead of all other animals. We *believe* something we can't see; and we *understand* man-made A B C's in all sorts of combinations. Hence we must admit we have what the so-called "intelligentsia" call "intelligence," For by *common consent* we *agree* that four of our arbitrary capital letters H, O, I, X, always mean the same in *either* direction, whether the printer turns them upside down, or gravity has us hanging by our heels—an absurd position for "anyone who has the right to think and choose for himself." That, however, is one definition of a PERSON. So already by your own admissions, dear reader, I perceive that *you* are quite a person.

The Author

Of Rulers And Wrist-Watches

Every blue-print represents a design drawn to a scale previously agreed-upon. It denotes the existence of an intelligent designer free to choose the scale. But we must check all measurements by ruler. You glance at your wrist-watch to see if we still have time. The rule and the watch are the works of other *persons*—intelligent, free agents. They represent law and order.

The watch is no result of chance. No one can convince you that the inventor threw 17 jewels, 26 numbers, three hands, two springs, into a metal box with some screws and wheels—and it just began to tick. The inventor had intelligence. *He knew how* to use many tools, to choose and put many things in order. We call him the Watch-Maker.

Reason alone tells us, too, that the vast universe we live in is no result of chance. Its beautiful design, fixed laws, marvelous order all required an intelligence above man's, free to choose right combinations—hence a personal Designer—Ruler—Maker. We call him GOD.

Reason alone also tells us everything that begins to be must have a cause. Go back if you will, eventually you must come to something that did not begin to be, the First Cause of all other things, the source of intelligence, law, order—a personal Being, Creator of the universe—God.

Calling All Cars—And God

The intelligence we each possess is not a toy imitation of our Maker's Intelligence. We know it really works because we can communicate our thoughts to each other. But the Greatest Intelligence must have all the perfections of our own. Therefore, God can communicate with us, and we with Him, like the Chief of Police and his men in their prow-cars—very unusual models of prayer, I'll admit, but suggested here for a practical purpose.

Prayer is the most ordinary religious act of the human mind—the original two-way radio gift of our Divine Inventor. Better start using it! In a strange town, you ask a traffic cop to direct you. You take for granted he knows and you don't argue.

In many ways this is a strange world. Whence came you? Why are you here? Whither, after death? As God is the Master Mind Who planned and made all things, He alone knows all the answers including man's origin, the purpose of life, his final destiny. Ask *Him* to direct you, and don't argue, even tho' His directions *are* often *opposite* what you expect.

You can tune in on God any time. The line is never busy. Prayer, like the telephone made for man's daily use, is for talking *and for listening*. So many of us forget to listen. We want to do all the talking. Some even try to tell God what to do. That's not prayer. It's anarchy!

Bald Heads And Radio Reception

You can refuse to pray to prove you have free-will. You can refuse to eat and drink and show your independence of created things. But you can never stop thinking to prove that you are independent of your Creator. You are like your home radio-set, absolutely dependent on an invisible, external influence. Both were made to receive "news."

Every man *knows* he is only a part of a vast creation. Realizing this dependence on a Creator, he shows it by admitting it. But he also shows it by responding to God's directions. If our radio works at all, it must respond.

Our *intelligence*, like a sensitive selector, is attuned to an All-Knowing God. Static may develop from "old tubes" or out-side interference. But there are times when our reception is almost perfect.

For it is a fact of everyday experience that we too, like our radio, have an amplifier commonly called "*conscience*" through which God makes His Will known to each. A man in good working order always *knows* the good he should do, and the evil to avoid. Proofs? The physical "blush" and the mechanical "lie detectors." We do not lose it with our hair.

But unfortunately *our free-will* is too much like the switch which turns our radio on or off. We can, and often do, miss the Good, the True, the Beautiful recordings. We do not choose to listen when God whispers soft and low.

Super-Broadcasts And Signatures

“Signature” once meant personal copyright on a letter or official approval of a monarch. Radio extends it to theme song, trade name or station identification. But always there is the fundamental idea of *guaranteeing true representation*.

As “Conscience” assures us of God’s private communication, so history gives us public instances of God “drawing aside the veil” to let men know more about His intervention than they could by reason alone. This is “Revelation.” When God speaks, it must be *truth*, and no created intelligence may question it. It is true whether we like it or not, accept it or not, because God is Truth and can’t deceive us.

But we may question whether *God* is really “speaking.” Hence God has His “signatures” which guarantee divine authorship and defy imitation. They are “Miracles” and “Prophecies.”

Only the Supreme Law-Maker can suspend or reverse laws of nature. Therefore when events contrary to, or beyond such laws are witnessed by men, they are both *historical facts* and “Miracles.” As such they are God’s visible *Signature*.

Prophecy means foretelling events which depend on free agents like Congressmen rather than on fixed laws or calculation like *weather*. Only God can know beforehand events depending on His or men’s free will. When they happen as foretold they become *historical facts*. But the foretelling proves that God Himself was speaking.

God’s Super Broadcasts of history are the Hebraic (or Old) Testament and the Christian (or New) Testament. Both bear His Super Signatures.

The Phone Book And Bible As History

The handy Telephone Directory is often *used* to tell you where someone lives. This is not its purpose, but it is usually right because it is up-to-date. Compiled each year as an authentic list of 'phone subscribers, its purpose is to give correct telephone numbers.

The Bible's purpose is to state religious truth. It is a collection of very old hand-written stories of men, sacred songs and messages. The original writings have all vanished. There are some copies in Hebrew and Greek. Over 1500 years ago all were translated into Latin; many times since into everyday languages of all peoples.

The Bible, like your 'Phone book, tells where and when certain persons lived. Tho' not the main purpose of either, we can use both as *histories*. The Bible as mere history is the oldest account we have of a group known as Christians, followers of a Man called Jesus Christ, who named His organization "MY CHURCH."

This is why we are as sure that His Church existed before the Bible, as we are that the Telephone Co. came before the telephone-book. Both are simple facts of history—their own history. As the 'Phone Co. gathers names by "Centrals" to list correct phone numbers, so Christ's Own Church collected ancient writings of God's dealings with men to teach religious truth. (Please remember—we cite the Bible *as mere history* until further notice.)

By Parcel Post Or Adams Express?

From the Bible as mere history we learn of Adam and Eve, our first *parents*, who had no parents. God told them how *He* made them as He alone was there. Simple facts: bodies material from earth; souls spiritual like *breath* direct from God, "to His image," hence everlasting with great minds and free wills. Such is "human nature."

But God added *super* gifts: His friendship ("Grace") and freedom from pain and death. He also gave them power over earthly creatures.

Adam and Eve had *no right* to special gifts. God gave them a chance to *earn* them. Heaven is not an express package. It doesn't come by parcel post, but is a prize *to be won* in the Game of Life. Every game needs rules. In "hide-and-go-seek" there is always one tree no one can hide behind. So God reserved a single tree. Its fruit was *desirable* to see, *good* to eat, but forbidden to man. This was the trial or contest; happiness the reward: happiness *on earth* by *abstaining*, happiness *forever* by *winning*.

But man lost. First Eve, then Adam ate "to be as God," independent, absolutely free—a sin of will and intellect, as well as of bodily appetite—total rebellion—a terrible sin, now called "*Original*" because it comes through our *origin*. We receive that same human nature as a damaged express package. It was all Adam had left to give us—T.N.T. (our Total Nature Tainted.)

T.N.T. And Torpedoes

Man is more complicated than a torpedo. Both are marvelous combinations, but when out of order become quite unmanageable and frustrate the purpose of their makers.

Our Total Nature Tainted (T.N.T.), we have been out of order since Adam sinned, thereby losing for us all science, integrity, immortality—those super-gifts to which we had no right.

The Fall is an immutable fact; its effects remain. The human nature we inherit from our first-parents is defective, its parts working independently (instead of in coordination, as God intended) to attain happiness. Each part seeks its own satisfaction; the will self-worship (“the pride of life”); the intellect self-exaltation (“the lust of the eyes”); and our five senses self-indulgence (“the lust of the flesh”).

Thus our human nature is like the torpedo whose motive-power, directional device and timer all work perfectly,—but independently. The explosion occurs prematurely. The torpedo fails to reach its mark.

We, too, can fail to reach the end for which God made us. First we need to share God’s (i.e. supernatural) life. Then we need to learn *how to live* supernaturally.

God promised Adam and Eve that a model member of their race would make it possible again for all to live God’s life both here and hereafter. He amplified this promise thru Prophets, whose forecasts were later recorded. Read your Bible.

Major And Minor Leagues

Even tho' Cain made a base hit, Abraham a sacrifice and Noah caught some fowls, the Bible is not a history of baseball. If it were, the famous triple-players would be Adam to Noah to Abraham. For God's promise of a "Messias" is as evident as a baseball, and is the topic batted around publicly later in both Major and Minor league—of Prophets.

"Messias" is Hebrew for "Promised One"—to be sent by God to free all men from sin, and reopen Heaven Highway closed by Adam's wreck—a supernatural job.

This required one perfectly human, to atone thru *human nature* for all its sins; and one humanly perfect, because He had a *divine mission* to do God's will. Hence everything He said must be true, everything He did perfect.

Such is the composite prophetic picture, drawn hundreds of years in advance, highlights by Isaias, shadows by Jeremias, and many exact details by other Prophets.

Using the Bible as history, rating Matthew, Mark, Luke and John as good reporters, we discover that all they tell us about Jesus Christ (Whom they knew personally) fits. Not only His teaching and life, but all details of birth, infancy and death (events beyond control of an actor) fulfill exactly circumstances described by Prophets hundreds of years before.

Therefore history proves Jesus Christ is the Messias. That includes human perfection, divine mission. Hence everything He taught must be divinely true.

Reporters Hound Wonder-Worker

You smiled at reference to Matthew—John as Reporters. Must men have two names to merit a by-line? Then call them Matt Levy and Johnny Devine if you will, but don't deny their flair for *news*. They covered the most colorful public figure of their time for three years. No AP correspondents ever had such tenacity. They were real "News Hounds."

They wrote what they *saw* Jesus Christ do, what they *heard* Him say. They got the "inside story" from Him later. They interviewed the people He cured.

Wherever He went, things really happened. They drank *His* wine, then talked to the waiters. Five minutes before it *was* only water! They *saw* Him walk on the lake where Peter sank. They *saw* the waves and *felt* the storm stop instantly at His command. Headline: Nature obeys her Master's Voice!

It was the same with human nature. Sports—"Lepers become jumpers,"—"Withered Cripples runners,"—"Blind man sees"; (they question his parents. Born blind sure enuf!) Never before in history! Comes Lazarus' obit. They hear Jesus pray: "*That* these here may know *You, Father, sent me*"—and out walks Lazarus *alive*—a direct proof of Jesus' *Divine Mission*. News!

Never anything like it, until Jesus Himself arose from the dead—the only case in history. John checked up carefully because it was the biggest proof of the *Divine Mission* even in Jesus' own opinion. Only One sent by God can suspend or reverse the laws of Nature.

Every Kingdom Has Ambassadors

An Ambassador is an official sent by one Nation to represent all its subjects and interests in another Nation. His mission is as real as his portfolio. He lives away from home, follows the customs and speaks both his mother-tongue and the language of that other nation. Because he is not just "John Doe" but officially "John Bull," for example, he must do always the things that please his fatherland.

This gives you an idea of the Divine Mission of Jesus Christ. He was sent by God to represent the Kingdom of Heaven, to ransom souls—God's subjects held captive by the world, to show them the way, and provide transportation, back home. He presented visible proofs that He was sent. "He spoke as one having authority" from God, and all nature obeyed.

He foretold events of politics, conquest, crime. Therefore He was God's Ambassador, for only God knows future events which depend, not on fixed laws and calculations, such as weather, but on man's free-will: the destruction of Jerusalem, Christ's own death and resurrection.

His teaching, too, is unusual, new, unworldly. He spoke the language of the Kingdom of Heaven. "No one ever spoke as this Man speaks." His conduct, life, virtues also marked Him as God's Ambassador. There is no doubt that He had a *Divine Mission*. Therefore He taught nothing but the truth. An Ambassador speaks and acts for His King. God is absolute Truth.

Super-Secrets In Technicolor

Some years ago the rays of the setting sun found a man praying in Our Lady's Chapel at the Oropa Shrine in Northern Italy. As he was descending to the city, he met a friend. "Guiseppe," he said, "up there at the Chapel a beautiful idea suddenly came to me. Later on you will see what I mean!" An inscription there now reminds all visitors: "From the Cloisters of Oropa, Guilielmo Marconi drew inspiration for his great discovery."

It seems so simple, why didn't Moses think of it? Because God didn't want anyone to think of it then. God controls our minds. We show our dependence on an All-Knowing Creator by admitting *Mysteries*—facts we can't fully understand now.

Because there are mysteries in Nature, what is more reasonable than that they exist concerning the God of Nature! Under the title "Super-Broadcasts and Signatures" we considered two revealed religions, the Hebraic Testament and the Christian. The latter became like the prism thru which light is revealed as really composed of three fundamental colors. The Hebraic One Only God was shown thru the Christian revelation to be really The Trinity—One God in three Divine Persons, The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit.

God let this Super-Secret out over His Signature thru His Ambassador Jesus Christ, whose Divine Mission guarantees its truth. Now we see the Triune God's footprints everywhere on *land—sea—air*; in matter, in dimensions, in time. (Look for more) It seems so simple now, we ask: "Why didn't the Hebrews think of it, Marconi?"

Who Taught Gabriel To Blow?

Jesus Christ, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Heaven, long heralded by God's propagandists—the Prophets, trailed by cleverest news hounds, thoroughly demonstrated His Divine Mission by words and deeds, by prophecy and doctrine, by miracles and mode of life. Therefore all—absolutely all His official claims must be true. But He claimed to be the real, substantial, only Son of God. As it is one of His official (not private) pronouncements, it must be true.

This is not an instance of a man “blowing his own horn.” There is a mistaken notion about tooting one's own horn based on the fallacy “It may be—therefore it *is*”—false. There is in fact more probability that it is true.

A stranger in a strange land knows something no native knows. He knows who he is, whence he came, and why. If he is travelling “incognito”—privately—he won't talk about himself. But if he has been sent officially on a definite mission, he must talk about himself, make himself known, show his credentials. He is essential to his mission. They succeed or fail together. His self-identification is “official business,” not private bragging or “horn tooting.”

So we accept Jesus' direct statements: Caiphaz said: “Swear. Are you the Christ the Son of God?” Jesus answered: “I am.” Peter said: “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” Jesus answered: “My Father in Heaven *revealed that to you.*” It must be true. God can't lie. His Ambassador couldn't lie. But He could die to prove it. *And He did.*

Flash—Movie Star Gives Light!

In "My Favorite Blonde" Bob Hope as leading man loses himself in a crowd of silent "extras" at a truck drivers' picnic. Nervously fumbling a cigarette, he turns to the nearest one for a light. Without a word the *extra*, Bing Crosby, (with no other part in *this* picture) hands him a match. Bob appears puzzled, looks again, and walks away saying only: "It can't be." But your movie audience everywhere *knows it is*—and always laughs.

Why? At Bob Hope's prejudice. Bob has "*previously judged*" and subconsciously decided that Bing Crosby is too big a Star to take a job as an extra. *It isn't done* in Their Elite Circle. Therefore: "it can't be" Crosby.—But IT IS. (A perfect example of *Prejudice*).

If Jesus Christ is the Son of God, (you ask) why didn't Caiaphas and the Jewish officials recognize Him? Prejudice. They had a pre-conceived idea that the Messiah must be a Leading Man, not just one of the crowd. They wished God to conform to their idea, instead of reforming their minds to God's ideal. So they asked Christ: "Are you *greater* than our Father Abraham?" implying, of course, "You can't be!" Their prejudice *closed their minds* to all the evidence Jesus offered.

Examine the evidence in this series with good will and an open *mind*. Do not prejudge! Prejudice is a mental blind-spot. It can put you in the intellectual position of the Jews. Like Bob, they said "It can't be." But all who are not prejudiced know IT IS the Son of God, eternal, yet as truly Man as Bing Crosby.

The Everlasting Electric-Light Pole

If by chance there is an electric-light pole with its sturdy crossarm in your front yard, it should be more welcome than a Christmas tree. Both symbolize Christ. But suppose your electric bills unpaid for months. The Company disconnects you. Light, heat, power gone all at once. General disorder! First the bill must be paid in full; secondly a man is sent to restore the broken contact. Then only does the invisible power flow again.

Jesus Christ, Son of God, spent less than 24 hours of His 33 years of earthly existence atoning, by the surrender of His human life, for the sins of all mankind. We omit historical details of our Redemption as we might pass over daily papers' accounts of an execution. Except for the fact that they fulfill accurately centuries'-old prophecies, thereby confirming Christ's Divine Mission, they are irrelevant here.

In our parable above, the *effects* of the Redemption alone are important. The pole is the Cross. Your account squared—the satisfaction of God's justice by the infinite value of the God-Man's Sacrifice. The Man sent to repair the broken circuit—Jesus Christ. Follow His orders and the *invisible power is on again* for us—God's grace, that supernatural gift bestowed on us thru Christ's merits for our salvation. It will give us new life—a sharing of God's Life. It will make us *temples* of the Holy Spirit, filled with the light of supernatural faith, the power of hope to make our spiritual motors hum, the warmth of divine love. All this—and Heaven too becomes available, if we but heed directions of The Man on the Pole.

Power House And High Tension Wires

For hundreds of years the power of Niagara Falls went to waste unheeded. Then George Westinghouse, with barefoot memories "down by the old mill stream," built a power-house; and now that mighty force transformed into invisible power, Electricity, is sent in all directions thru high tension wires, helping millions of people daily.

In the spiritual darkness surrounding you, do you ever wonder about the Power House? In shedding His Blood for us all on Calvary, the Dynamic Christ, the Son of God, generated enough invisible power to save all men of all time. But like Niagara's power long unheeded, it can be going to waste as far as you or I are concerned!

It is not enough to be "saved." We must be connected with Christ, or we cannot get our share. HE suffered; HE died. He alone has the right to make the terms of the contract or *contact*.

And He did. He established a corporate organization as visible as the Light, Heat and Power Co. He founded a "power-house" which He called *His Church*. He built it on solid Rock. He guaranteed it indestructible by even the floodgates of hell. And He installed seven High Tension Wires called Sacraments—channels of invisible power (Grace), as real as the wires fanning from Niagara Falls.

These are the real, permanent, necessary means which The Dynamic Christ provided to enable men of all time to share in the fruits of the Redemption. The rest is up to us.

Compasses And Other Guides

My pocket-compass always fascinates me. "Don't take the easiest way," it says, "Head into the storm. The North is always where I point. Act—don't argue! For I am infallible." How true! Its needle moves by an invisible, directive power of Nature's God.

This same Divine Guide sent Jesus Christ, His Son as a Teacher to show us safely Home. His doctrine, like the compass, is meant for men of all time. He lived among men only 33 years, but He organized a Teaching Faculty to which He entrusted all His Treasures of Divine Truth.

The greatest Teacher in history, He trained others for three years to carry on His teaching. They were no longer "ignorant fishermen." "He who *hears* you, hears *Me*," He said, as Crosby might say to a juke-box.

"He who believes not (what you *preach*) shall be condemned." God can't damn a man for another's mistake. But He can make a compass infallible—or a messenger just as easily, or a whole group of men. And He did. "*Teach* men of all *nations*, ALL, whatever I have commanded YOU." How can *we* be sure? His guarantee to supervise: "Behold *I am* with you all days." He saw His Faculty ever renewed as each member died, teaching only His doctrine "even to the end of the world."

Jesus Christ established a visible Church with infallible teaching authority. A mystery! So is the Trinity. But we have the same assurance for both. Size means nothing to the Son of God. An infallible Church—or compass. Without both man is *lost ALL-WAYS*.

"Somewhere A Voice Is Calling"

"They do not answer." Ironically a Mr. Bell had to invent something that must ring to work. The telephone, the Central, a standing army of service men, millions of miles of wire, millions of dollars in equipment—all available for three little words: "Long Distance, please." But all going to waste for some who do not hear the bell.

Christ's Own Church is a similar world-wide organization. Time and space mean nothing to God. You listen. Jesus speaks at the other end of the line. The telephone system in between is His Universal Church. Its purpose is to transmit Christ's *spoken* message. He delivered it orally to His teaching Church as to a cable. A cable cannot change a message. It can add nothing. It can omit nothing. If called upon to create a message, it would remain silent forever. It is powerful *only to transmit*.

Christ emphasized that His Church is not merely for the few who can read, but for all men. "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" "Blessed are they who hear the Word of God, and keep it." "Who *hears* you, hears Me." "*Preach* the Gospel to every creature." "My sheep *hear My Voice* . . . and other sheep I have . . . not of this fold. **THEY SHALL HEAR MY VOICE**, and there shall be one fold and One Shepherd."

That is a promise of the Son of God. It cannot fail. It requires that His official teaching Voice still lives in this world. Trace that call. Find it. For somewhere that Voice is calling *YOU*. You will hear it only in that Church where the unrecorded overtones of a rich Tradition assure you of Christ's *entire* doctrine still "ringing true."

Do You Feed A Cold—Or Think?

Mental “bad habits” are worse than physical ones. “Stop biting your nails, child,” you say. “See what it did to Venus de Milo.” But it’s harder to reform your own childish rules of life, e.g., “Feed a cold, starve a fever.” Many do. Others say: “Old quacks! It’s just the reverse.” But lovers of ancient wisdom *examine* old prescriptions and find the original: “*If you feed a cold, you will starve a fever.*”

Now examine your childhood impressions on the Bible as a rule of life. Here are some historical facts to guide you. Jesus Christ read and frequently quoted the Old Testament scriptures. “Beginning with Moses and all of the Prophets, He showed them the things that were there concerning Him.” But He the greatest Teacher of all time never wrote a single line. He founded a teaching hierarchy *to preach*, not to write.

Two of His Apostles wrote short accounts of Him. Others wrote official letters. These are now found in the second part of the Bible called “the New Testament.” But not a single word of this part was written until long after Jesus had finished organizing His Church, delegating His infallible teaching authority as “*the rule of faith.*” It was not until 397 that this Sole Divinely Authorized Guide for redeemed mankind, examined all ancient writings, decided which were authentic Sacred Scriptures and assembled them into a *little library* now called “The Bible.” Therefore the Bible cannot be the “sole rule of faith.”

Supreme Court Denies Reputed Right

Neither Columbus nor Vespucci knew our Constitution. It was composed when the original States were United. As no written document can interpret itself, the Constitution provides for a Supreme Court as official interpreter consisting of only 9 trained men from our millions of citizens. Neither you, nor I, nor anyone else has the right of private interpretation.

The Bible may be called the Constitution of the Church. Neither Christ nor the Apostles had a copy. The Church got along without it for over 300 years. When it became impossible for Christians to tell the sacred writings from the spurious ones which had appeared, the authoritative teaching Church decided which were the authentic manuscripts, on the basis of Inspiration.

Inspiration means that God is the real Author. He prompted certain free agents to write, in their own words and style, facts which they either knew or which He revealed to them. Inspiration guarantees religious truth only, not secular sciences. It extends only to the original writing, not to copies or translations.

From all these facts arises the danger of misunderstanding the Divine Author's meaning. Official interpretation becomes necessary. No book can interpret itself. God in founding His Church delegated to it His infallible teaching authority. "He who hears you hears Me" etc. *This* is His Rule of Faith. The successors of the Apostles alone form "The Supreme Court" of Christ's Own Church; not the millions of us ordinary members. There is no such thing as the *right* of private interpretation of the Bible.

Headlights For The Infantry

Supernatural Faith is more than a rational conviction. It is believing something on the authority of God Who reveals it, because God is absolutely true. This is not *blind* belief; it is based on *knowledge*,—not our own, but God's. Such faith is indeed a favor from above, but a favor granted to prayer and good-will.

So far we have used the Bible as authentic ancient *history* only. From now on it is divinely inspired Sacred Scripture assembled by Christ's Church which guarantees its *inspiration*. Therefore we must accept its religious teaching to be as infallible as God, the Author, Himself. It is often called the written word of God.

The same Church gives us the "unwritten word of God" i.e., Tradition—that complete system of revealed truth taught by Christ to the Apostles, or infused into their minds by the Holy Spirit, but of which they themselves kept no written record.

The Bible and Tradition have equal value, as we accept both on the same authority—that infallible teaching authority delegated by the Infallible Son of God when He said: "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." (John 20-22).

Forward, then, with the Church that leads as a mighty tank with Christ in the turret above still directing Peter's successor in the driver's seat below. Its two powerful headlights, Tradition and Bible, piercing the darkness of world-wide unbelief, throw their gleaming rays of divine Faith undimmed on the steep and narrow road ahead, inviting all who would survive to follow the Light of the world to journey's end!

Is One Bank As Good As Another?

“A run on the bank” may be a terrifying event or everyday recreation. “Do you mean a Savings Bank or a river’s bank?” you ask. Terms must be defined. We must also avoid sentiment, in dealing with an exact science. Think of a Bank with all Tellers Blondes—(Ah!)—*who* agreed that 2 plus 2 equals 3. “Who cares?” you smirk. But if you accept it regarding *one*, you admit it as to hundreds, millions.

Religion like mathematics is an exact science. Truth excludes even the slightest error. It is as unchangeable as God. God sent His Son as our Teacher. Jesus gave us a perpetual Teaching Faculty as visible as a Board of blond Directors. This Faculty gave us The Bible guaranteed as God’s inspired *text-book*. In this triple divine guidance—the *Son of God*, the *infallible* teaching Church and divine *inspiration* of Holy Writ—we have ever available a spiritual foundation as sure and stabilized as the tripod—that perfect pedestal of surveyors.

But we must be certain to use this tripod. All three legs assure our stability. It is not enough to believe in Christ. And if every *bank* is *not* a Bank, and one Bank is *not* so good as another, is every church Christ’s own Church? If not, how can one be as good as another? And where did the book you’ve been calling your Bible come from? Is it complete, untampered with, truthfully translated? Look for *God’s* trademark on *your* tripod.

Trademark "1" Older Than "57"

Whether a banker or a blonde, you could be like the new garage-hand asking the loan of a wrench till payday: "I see the same guy's name on all these tools. Surely he can spare one. Tell me, now, where can I find this Pat Pending?"

With Christ's Name on so many churches today, you may have trouble finding *Him*. Only *one* of these can be His, because He founded *one Church only*. It's as simple as that! Look for *Unity* as Christ's first trademark. It still indicates the divine Original from all human imitations.

He always visualizes Unity in describing the "Kingdom of Heaven" which He came to establish. He likens it to *units* such as a tree, a net, a particular field, a special vineyard, a sheepfold. *He* gives us the word "Church" used only twice in the Gospels: "Thou art Rock (Peter), and upon this rock I will build my Church (not Churches). And I will give *thee* the keys of the *kingdom* of heaven, and whatever *thou* shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven" etc. (Matt. 16-18, 19).

The Old Testament word "Church" meaning the assembly of Israel is here used by Christ in a similar sense of a visible society of men *united* to serve God, with *unity* of *government* under *one man*, first Peter who of all disciples present is to receive "the keys"—symbol of authority.—There is only *one Church* in the world today that fits Christ's promise above. Are you and I thinking of the same thing—as Christ?

Arius, Luther And Henry VIII Were Cards

A business machine in your town sorts, "reads" and computes millions of cards more accurately and rapidly than any human agent can. For each different operation it depends on numerous electrical contacts—and holes in cards previously measured and punched by a micrometer. All cards even slightly out of line are automatically rejected. *They do not stop the machine.* Its inventor thus protected it from all computing errors. It is mathematically infallible.

Christ made His Church an "International Business Machine" for saving souls. The Holy Spirit supplies the invisible power for each exact operation . . . It is fed with souls. If they do not measure up to the Divine Inventor's requirements, because of any deliberate deviation from His Doctrine, *they eject themselves.* Thus Christ protects His Church from all religious errors. It cannot make a doctrinal mistake.

"I will build my Church," said Christ, "and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt. 16-18). God always keeps His word. His *One Church* is still one—because He made it indefectible against all hostile, evil powers. His promise stands—they shall never overcome or destroy His Church.

Since He made it a *teaching Church*, it would be overcome if *error* prevailed. But it cannot be overcome. Therefore it is also infallible. How? "If he (thy brother) refuse to hear even the Church," said Christ, "let him be to thee as the *heathen* and the *publican* (outcasts). Amen I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed also in Heaven." (Matt. 18-18).

"Only God Can Make A Tree"

Thus Joyce Kilmer, Poet, found immortality thru his new found faith. So in the poetic parables of Christ this ideal He had of His Church as a *living organism* is unmissable. That explains best how it has remained *one* in spite of apparent "operations" by "tree doctors" and butchers from Nero to Hitler.

"The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed . . . which becomes a tree." (Matt. 13-31). Christ foresaw the living branches of His Church spreading unsevered from the *one* original root.

"I am the vine and my Father is the vine-dresser," said Christ to His Apostles. "You are the branches . . . If anyone does not abide in me *he shall be cast outside* and shall wither; and they shall gather them up and cast them into the fire, and they shall burn." (John 15-1, 5, 6). Thus Christ anticipated and disposed of "the branch theory" of later "churches" and their apostate (instead of Apostolic) founders.

"Abide in me, and I in you" (same). His Church is not a dead organization but a living organism, *His Mystical Body*, so that the great Convert St. Paul inspired by the Holy Spirit exclaims most truly: "I live, *now* not I, but Christ lives in me." "We are members of His Body, made from His flesh and from His bones." (Ephes. 5-30).

Christ still lives in and thru His Church on earth. It is not an impersonal body but a living Personality. Read St. Paul (I Cor. 12); Newman, Chesterton, Benson—brilliant *converts all* to whom this unique truth appealed so strongly. It may attract *you too*.

Whose Yardstick Decides Who's Right?

Argue with an architect, and he always proves by *pocket-rule* that here—and here—the artisans did not follow his blueprints. “Produce a *mental yardstick*,” you say, “of what Christ had in mind when He planned His Church, which we can use today to *measure* all churches claiming to be Christian.”

You asked for it. Then scan the climax of St. Matthew's Gospel—Christ's commission to *the eleven*: “Go and make disciples of *all nations*” (1 ft.) . . . “teaching them to observe *all* that *I* have commanded *you*” (2 ft.) “And behold *I* am with *you* *all days*” (3 ft.). (Matt. 28-19, 20). A perfect 3 ft. rule.

First, Christ's Church must be *universal* geographically, or global; 2nd, *universal* doctrinally—*all Christ's* teachings exactly; 3rd, *universal* in time from *that hour* thru now to *the end* of the world.

By this yardstick of Christ, there is only One Church that measures up foot by foot: *only one* that is actually found in every part of the globe; *only one* that is teaching all that Christ taught just as He taught it, including doctrine, worship, Church government, indissoluble marriage, forgiveness of sins, hell: *only one* that has Christ for its Founder, dates from the Apostles and gives every indication of perpetuity.

That there is only one is not a coincidence. It proves that we have discovered Christ's own yardstick, because all Christ's blueprints and composite specifications from all the Gospels require *One only*. The coincidence is that the Divine Yardstick's unit of measure is the idea “universal”—your own translation of the classic Greek word CATHOLIC.

Wait!—Blind Hate Or Date?

War teaches us to consider first the *source* of all information. Who told you so? Is he trustworthy, capable of judging, "on the inside," friend or enemy? Where did this broadcast originate?

What of your present ideas of Catholics and the Catholic Church? Examine them carefully like coins. Are they true or counterfeit? Where did you get them? Do they contradict religious truths in this book? You have never doubted before! Because the books you have read, the people you know, are non-Catholic or misinformed as to Catholic belief and practice.

Our spiritual life on earth is a warfare. Judas was not the last traitor. Christ lives on in His Catholic Church. He is still on trial and false witnesses contradict each other. Religious leaders like Annas and Caiphas jealously misrepresent His cause to new Pilates and Herods. The Scribes and Pharisees are always active, still inciting the mob: "Not this man, but Barabbas!" (Jno. 18-40). Lies and misrepresentations!

It is even worse. Christ unjustly condemned said: "This is your hour, and the *powers of darkness*." There was, and is, more than meets the eye. God still permits Satan's legion to try us, just as in the cases of Eve, Job and Christ Himself, on which occasion the devil even quoted Holy Writ! Lies and misrepresentations!

"If the world hates you, know that it has hated Me before you," said Christ. "If they have persecuted Me, *they will persecute you also*." (Jno. 15-18, 20). Here Christ gives us another MARK of His Church. Hatred, persecution, propaganda. Whence *your* ideas of Catholicism? Who said so?

All Elevators Are Limited

Governor Leonard Saltonstall, entering a self-service elevator in Massachusetts State Capitol, was joined by a stranger saying: "5th. floor." Without a word, the Governor pressed Button 5, winked at his officials, and the uninvited passenger alighted never realizing he had no right to such distinguished services.

You who believe in *life everlasting* are probably treating Jesus Christ that way. You want to *go up*, but on your own terms, in *your own way*. You insist on giving orders to God, whereas you have no rights whatsoever.

Thru His Atonement, Christ furnishes us sanctifying grace as "the power to become sons of God." He provides the Holy Catholic Church as the only elevator by which we can ascend to Heaven. But of what use is the power to you, if you are not on the elevator? Of what use is Life Everlasting if it is to be lived apart from Jesus Christ?

Have you been saying The Apostles' Creed all your life without meaning it? So many believe the first part, but only half of the second, and a quarter of the third. Note the divine company—the Creator, the Redeemer, the Holy Ghost. Then *we enter* the Creed thru "the Holy Catholic Church—the Communion of Saints." This article is as *important as the others*—on the very same authority. It is the only way to Life Everlasting.

Let us be careful not to give orders, or God, like the Governor, will take us at our word, and we may *never* reach the top.

The Exception Proves—What?

Anything else but the rule! The old adage means, of course, "the act of excepting proves the rule exists," as an apple is evidence of a tree somewhere. Loose thinking is rampant. Worse—we have a mean tendency to draw a general conclusion from one or a few particular instances. When applied to free agents, like bad Catholics, instead of rotten apples, this method often produces the wrong answer.

The Catholic Church is like Christ Himself, part divine and part human. It is Holy because its Founder and invisible Head is the all-holy incarnate Son of God. It is Holy because it teaches only His holy doctrine divinely guaranteed absolutely free from error. It is Holy because He established it for man's sanctification *on earth*, because millions of its members leading holy lives form "the Communion of Saints" here below and already in Heaven.

But the human element in the Church is weak and vulnerable. In founding an indefectible, infallible teaching Church for all men, Christ did not guarantee *impeccability* to anyone. He established it for sinners; not for saints but to make saints. He foretold scandals, the bad fish with the good in His net, the weeds among the wheat in His field. "Suffer both to grow till the harvest," He orders, *for the sake of the wheat!*

Bad Catholics, scandals, immoral defections in every class and century of the Catholic Church only prove that it must be a *divine* institution because it is the only corporate body of all societies and nations of the first Century that still survives.

Ashes And Push-Buttons

The electric-light switch is not a thing of magic. Push the button and the light comes on. Why? Simply because the switch is connected with the Power-House. It makes contact and *invisible* power flows. There is nothing magical or superstitious about it.

The same is true of Ashes on Ash Wednesday, of candles and palms, of beads and holy-water, of medals and scapulars. By the solemn blessing of the Catholic Church they become *power-full* because Christ said to the men He ordered to keep His works on earth going: "ALL POWER is given Me . . . In like manner I send you." "Whatever *you* ask The Father in My Name, He will give you."

The Church asks God to bless things, such as ashes, and *all who use* these things. Thus everyday articles become *means through which*, like electric-light switches, we *share* in the invisible help guaranteed by Christ, the Divine Inventor.

So whoever you are, wherever you may be, always remember that any *blessed* article (we call them "sacramentals") connects *you* with Christ's Power-House, His Church. Its power to bring you spiritual help is as real as the electric button's—and there's nothing magical or sentimental to that.

But sentiment does not nullify its spiritual value. You may be wearing a "Miraculous Medal" or St. Christopher's emblem because your girl-friend gave it to you. Those Saints love *her* more than you do. They are perfectly human because they were humanly perfect. So you are *doubly insured*.

A Neighbor Invites You In

Once a young welfare investigator from a city office called on a suburban Pastor whom she had never met. She inquired for him of a gardener in front of the Rectory. "*Knock*, and it shall be opened unto you," said the gardener disappearing through the side door. Soon at the front door, in cassock and Roman collar, appeared a priest who looked enough like the gardener to be his twin brother—only Father Purcell has no twin brother! He was delighted over her mistake because long ago Mary Magdalen had made the same about his Risen Master.

You need not wait till you go to New York to visit a Catholic Church. You will find the Catholic Church open *for you* all day, every day (as is St. Patrick's Cathedral) in your own home town. And you will find the resident Pastor delighted to answer all your questions and to explain the meaning of the interesting externals of Catholic practice.

So don't wait to visit all the great basilicas of the world as John L. Stoddard did, only to enter by the nearest door at seventy and write: "One thinks of the familiar metaphor of a stained-glass window in a vast Cathedral. Seen from without by day, this seems to be an unintelligible mass of dusky glass. Viewed from within, however, it reveals a beautiful design where sacred story glows resplendently in form and color. So it is with the Church of Rome. One must enter it to understand its sanctity and charm." (Rebuilding A Lost Faith p. 221) Christ's conditions are easy—"ASK"—"SEEK"—"KNOCK."

Lights Inc.—Stellar, Literary, Votive Farrow.

If you ever attended a Catholic Novena in Hollywood (never an obligation) you saw many familiar faces and came away thrilled. You sang the old hymns with Bing Crosby and Irene Dunne, heard Eugene Pallette and Spencer Tracy whooping it up behind you and glanced across the aisle at lovely Jennifer Jones. Maybe you noticed that "awful gangster," Calleio, remaining behind to Maureen O'Sullivan and her convert husband John make the Stations as you left the church with

I get the same thrill in a literary way here in the same Church with G. K. Chesterton and Heywood Broun, journalists, Belloc-historian, Benson-novelist, and John Henry Newman, the greatest writer since Augustine, whose only peer was St. Paul. *Great thinkers all*—and each of *these chose* the Catholic Church after careful investigation, weighing the evidence and *deciding for himself*.

When I consider these Mental Giants against my own misguided ancestors, knowing that Religion is an intellectual conviction and not a sentimental fanaticism, it is not difficult to decide in favor of Catholicism. For as dumb as I am, I am forced to admit that it had to be right to win such searching scientific approval down the ages.

And as you visit the nearest Catholic Church, you too will get the same thrill—a combination of the dramatic, artistic and mystic—when you find yourself in the company of such as Francis of Assisi, Anthony of Padua, Theresa of Lisieux, Joseph of Nazareth and Mary the Mother of Jesus—Catholics all—recalled by pictures and statues for your imitation, encouragement and spiritual uplift.

Of Water Mains And Hydrants

A city's water supply is a vital problem. Drinking, bathing, sanitation, sewerage, laundries, Fire Dept. and gold fish depend on it. But of what use is a lake or reservoir unless channels are provided to supply these seven needs? An intricate system of pumps and pipes must maintain constant flow.

Strangely, many take all this for granted until an earthquake interferes. But it is stranger still how many take their salvation for granted, and never ask how to get their share for *soul-needs* more varied and vital than those of their bodies.

Christ's Precious Blood shed for all mankind formed the *Reservoir*; His Church is the *Water Works*; His seven Sacraments the visible *Channels* bringing the "living waters" of justification to each soul.

A Sacrament is an outward sign (as real as a hydrant) instituted by Christ to bring grace (as invisible as the water flowing under our pavements) to souls (more private than homes). As the faucet produces the *water* which it signifies (hot or cold), so each Sacrament bestows grace, both sanctifying and sacramental. Only God can give such power to material things used thus with divinely inspired words. So we have seven—no more, since Christ gave only seven; no less since Christ does nothing uselessly.

Owner of Angels and platinum, He chose rather men and oil, bread and water—ordinary things always handy for everyone. So on our Highway to Heaven, our two great Headlights, Tradition and Bible, show us seven hydrants—Holy Orders for His Officers; Matrimony for the great majority of marchers; Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction for each and all.

"Three-In-One" And Other Oils

Squeaks? Handy lubricating oil saves nerves as well as hinges. It counteracts friction both in the Vac. and with the "Wac." A "three-in-one" Chapter here may prevent spiritual jitters. The Church gives three anointings to each member: first in solemn Baptism, next in Confirmation, and last (as named) in Extreme Unction.

The olive trees of Gethsemane beheld the agony of the God-Man, witnessed the traitor's kiss and now in silent reparation yield the fruits of their bloody-sweat stained roots to be crushed for each soul's *growth, strength* and *healing*. So twice each year the Church mingles this holy oil with water to remind each aspirant to choose, for choose you must since Christianity *does not mix* with the doctrine of the world.

If you remain at the Font, you get your first unction (cruciformed on breast and shoulders) to assure you of growth to bear your cross with Christ. Fear not! There is no public exhibition. A little water poured on your forehead, your choice of a lone witness, and lo! Christ works again a miracle like Siloe's. He Who unlocked the Gates with blood-stained Cross can condition our entrance. How very simple: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Spirit, *he cannot enter* into the Kingdom of God." (Jno. 3-5).

As Baptism *effectively* makes us adopted sons of God, so by second unction Confirmation (cf. Acts 8-14) *strengthens* us into soldiers of Christ. If happily we die with Him, Extreme Unction (cf. James 5-14) is the final anointing to heal our wounds for—death? No—Everlasting Life!

Pancakes, Flour And Phrases

An American legend: One hungry man discovered pancakes made from a special flour formula, got an idea and expanded it into a fabulously rich industry with two short words—"BOX IT."

But only God could think of the Eucharist. "This is My Body," said He Who had made water wine, Whom the *Apostles had helped* feed thousands with five loaves; Whom they had heard promise His Flesh to eat. Others then had dared to ask "How?" We have no right to ask God "How?" If He makes a promise or states a fact it has to be possible. Otherwise He would never say it.

The Catholic Church was there that night when Christ first took bread and wine and said, "This *IS* my Body . . . This *IS* my Blood . . . Do this in memory of Me." By that divine command Christ *extended* His Own Priesthood till wheat and grapes no longer grow. For over 1500 years no one dared ask "How?"—or tried to twist His meaning. Fantastic explanations!

The fact is not fantastic. His words indicate a *change of substance*. "Is" means the essence, not the appearances. Color, taste, smell, size and shape are not of the essence. Ice and steam are still H²O. Your eye and nose, your tongue, your touch can fool you, but never change any substance. Christ does not change anything but the substance, because He wants us to believe, not the evidence of our senses, but because *He says so*. That is supernatural faith in "The Mystery Of Faith."

Periscope And Heliotrope

“From the rising of the sun even to the going down . . . in every place there is sacrifice and there is offered to my name a clean oblation; for my Name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of Hosts.” (1-11) Malachias was right. Our periscope assures us that, as source of light and heat, *our sun* never sets on The Mass.

The Eucharist like the sun has a perpetual double purpose. It *is* a Sacrament; it is also *the* Sacrifice of the New Law. If Christ intended merely Communion, He would have used but bread. God does nothing in vain. That He gave us also a Sacrifice, St. Paul testifies: “This cup is the New Covenant in my blood; do this as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” (I Cor. 11-25)

Briefly compare Christ’s sacrifice on the Cross with the Last Supper [in brackets] and the Mass (in parentheses). On the Cross the Victim offered to God alone is Christ’s Body and Blood [same] (same) by a Priest, Christ Himself [same] (same by proxy) and the destruction of it [(by humiliating helplessness)] to acknowledge God Lord of all things.

The Mass is therefore the *same* Sacrifice as the Last Supper and Calvary’s bloody Sacrifice. It is the only way God wants to be worshipped today. Those who wish to serve God in God’s way offer Him Supreme Adoration, Contrition, Thanksgiving and Supplication *thru, with* and *in* Christ by The Mass. All human substitutes are as pitiable as fire-flies in the splendor of the noonday sun!

Orders, Boulder Dam And Roman Rock

One man who sat of necessity in Washington, approved the plans, provided the means and built Boulder Dam. He gave orders. When those who actually did the work were finished, our President pressed a button starting the perpetual operation of this new source of power, light and irrigation.

Christ likewise left the development of His Church to others; to teach, legislate, and govern. He sent the Holy Spirit upon His Apostles to preserve forever the divine powers delegated to them in Person; to forgive sins and to offer sacrifice. Sacrifice presupposes a priesthood. Christ made *both* necessary when He said: "Do this in remembrance of Me." (Luke 22-20) "Except *you* eat My Flesh, *you* shall not have life in you," is true *for all time*.

So He gave them "Orders"—a special Sacrament to perpetuate the priesthood of His Church, as Matrimony perpetuates its membership. The name indicates how the Church ordains "step by step" men selected by the Bishops. "You have not chosen Me, but *I have chosen you*." (John 15-16) We find the Apostles using this Sacrament to ordain assistants, notably Paul who later writes, "For Christ therefore we are ambassadors" (2 Cor. 5-20) "dispensers of the mysteries of God." (1 Cor. 4-1). But "let *women* keep silence *in the churches*, for it is not permitted them to speak." (I Cor. 14-34).

Scripture and Tradition establish Christ's intention and plans. The Catholic priesthood alone recognizes the successor of Peter as the Roman Rock on which rests *validity of Orders* without a break in action or by intention. This Sacrament has always been as effective as the telegraph wire connecting the President with Boulder Dam.

"Just Married"—Or For Keeps?

This is one chapter that needs no introduction, tho' believe it or not, I once unwittingly introduced a man to his divorced wife—both guests at their son's wedding—which produced another civil divorce, I'm told. "Like father, like son." Mixed marriages are so sadly *mixed* from the start!

Prudence is that virtue by which the intellect recognizes the way and means to eternal happiness. Justice similarly assists the will to choose the right means to reach that goal. Most choose Matrimony and assume responsibility for *another soul* and perhaps souls of children since that is its primary purpose. "Increase and multiply," said God when He, instituting marriage, united Adam and Eve—"two in one flesh" specifies *Holy Writ* (not *Hollywood*).

The sex instinct often mars God's plans. Any increase outside the family has always produced disorder. To govern passion, guarantee grace to parents and guard the rights of children, Christ made marriage a Sacrament, a *sacred* contract, and declared its permanent nature: "What God has joined together, let no man put asunder." (Matt. 19-16) The Church is God's qualified witness of this sacramental contract. St. Paul says: "This is a great sacrament, but I speak in Christ and in the Church."

Today the Catholic Church alone regards marriage as Christ and the Apostles did. All other religions have made concessions. You cannot contradict Christ and remain right. There can be no mixture of error with truth in a divine organization.

An Airplane Swoops To Conquer

The P-47 Republic *Thunderbolt* can run as slowly as an animal on the ground, travel like an ordinary plane at low level, but its top speed is achieved only in the stratosphere.

Mary, Virgin Mother of God has always been like that, uniting earth to Heaven, so supernaturally at home with Angels that Gabriel humbly bowed when presenting God's highest compliment, "Hail, Full of Grace!" yet, so natural that other women knew and loved her intimately in the ordinary affairs of daily life; and even of the earth, since she possessed, despite her Immaculate Conception, our animal nature unexempted from hunger and heat, fatigue and final separation from the soul.

To love Her as Christ did is beyond us. To love Her as sweetheart, housewife, or human Mother is a possibility and our privilege. She was and is all these—so super-angelic that God Himself found in Her all spiritual perfection. Absolutely sinless, Mary gave God more glory than all the rest of His creatures combined. She also gave Him human nature thru' which alone we all are redeemed. Of Her purest flesh and blood came our "Bread of Angels." We are blood-relatives of Her also—by Holy Communion.

The Catholic Church is the only Church that has given us Mary totally. The Catholic Church alone is the Mystical Body of Christ entrusted by Christ Himself to His Virgin Mother when He left Her behind Him on earth. We supervenerate Her because the Triune God sets the example. Can you think of a *better* one?

Of Erasers And Pencil Sharpeners

Our U-Boat log nearly done, my pencil is worn down at both ends: the eraser because of censor; the point by its very purpose. The pencil-sharpener, please! "Don't put me in that thing, Bergen. It hurts!" says the pencil. "Don't you want to be sharp?" "Yes, but not that way."—"It is the only way."

Penance is like that. The eraser says, "We all make mistakes." When we grievously offend God's moral code, our speedometer—"conscience"—records we have gone too far. It is too late for the eraser. "Tell it to the judge." There is no other way. "But I'd rather tell my sins directly to God," you say. Sure, who wouldn't! But who is the *offender*? Then you have no right to forgiveness or to make terms. If you're sorry, God forgives. But He dictates the terms.

If you break a State law, you offend the State. But you don't go to the State Capitol. The State provides judges with power to decide. If condemned to death, you plead pardon, *not directly* but thru the Governor. If the Governor refuses you a hearing, saying, "See my Secretary," you're still lucky.

So with sins. It is not the way *you* prefer, but the way Christ has arranged. He gave the Sacrament of Penance as the only ordinary way. He dictated terms of forgiveness, *Confession* is necessary because required by His only utterance *delegating* this divine power to His Catholic priesthood: "Whose sins *you* shall forgive they are forgiven; whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." God's Guarantee—and He didn't make men mind-readers!

Read The Bible Romantically

So many take for granted that the Magi were led by a star all the way to Jerusalem. But they say to Herod: "*We have seen his star in the East.*" (Matt. 2-2) They saw the star; then it disappeared. They recalled some prophecy and said. "Jerusalem!" When the headlights (revelation) go out, use your flashlight (reason). *They inquired the way.* St. Matthew agrees. *After* they left Herod—"behold the star *that they had seen* in the East went before them until it came and stood over the place where the Child was." (2-9) It only accompanied them from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, but it was enough.

Another random shot—you think Christ got a great thrill over that Palm Sunday demonstration with waving palm-leaves and loud Hosannas on the descent from Olivet to Jerusalem. Yet "when He drew near and saw the city He WEPT over it, saying: "If thou hadst known, *in this thy day, even thou*, the things that are for *thy* peace!" (Luke 19-41, 42).

Those words are addressed directly *to you*, if you are among the singing crowd who are always trying to pull Christ down to your worldly idea of what *you want Him to be*. He came to establish a spiritual Kingdom, His Church, on earth. But they had secularized the Messiah in their minds. All they wanted was national supremacy—a temporary leader "to restore the Kingdom of Israel." They were *cutting down* not palms but *Christ* to their idea that day! They would not see His Divine Mission. No wonder Jesus wept. Don't treat Him so—"EVEN THOU"!

Odds And Ends

The man who lived thru a trip over Niagara Falls in a barrel, slipped on a banana peel in Sidney, Australia, and died of a broken neck. Recently a hero of many air battles died *on the ground* when his plane ran into a young kangaroo on an Australian airport runway.

A practical Catholic is any person who serves God in God's way. A protestant Catholic—one who serves God *in his own way*. It is tough going to be such a Catholic. It is easy to be a practicing Catholic because, though the way is hard, you are using *all the means* Christ provided,—His Church and Sacraments. If they were not necessary *He* would not have instituted them. God is all-wise, all knowing, all-just. He cannot make a mistake.

God has revealed the existence of Hell—"everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25-41)—not because He wants us to join a "certain rich man" there (cf. Luke 16-24) but because He wants us to avoid the danger. We have a much better chance to save ourselves from a wreck if we know beforehand that the bridge is out. When clever men can't see banana peels and baby kangaroos, how can you expect them to know there's a hell, unless somebody warns them?

The Catholic Church warns everybody about hell only because *Christ revealed* it. If *He* thought a thing worth teaching, it is still worth teaching. The Catholic Church is the only Church in the world today teaching Christ's entire platform. St. Paul says: "If an Angel should come to you and teach another doctrine, let him be anathema." (i.e. politely "damned to hell.")

R. R. Fares—"All Tickets Please!"

Every railway is a means to an end. If there are several tracks you must choose the right one, and have the "right of way." In this business of religion, you can't be like the crossing tender who thus described a wreck: "As I came out with me lantern, I saw No. 7 coming in from the west on Track 1 as usual. Then I looked east and saw another train coming towards me *on the same track*. So I went back to me shanty, set down me lantern and sez to meself, sez I: "Tis a helluva way to run a railroad."

The Catholic Church, like the Railway, is a means to an end. It is an organization of men, activities and buildings which being *material* require money to maintain. Each parish church is like a railway station, only a part of a vast system. The spiritual crews must be trained, "accident cases" and pensions paid. There are salaries for divisional superintendents and Dept. heads, the expenses of "ticket offices," headquarters and the "President of the Road."

When you travel by rail, you pay your fare without arguing, and leave all the rest to the railway. It should be the same with the Church. "How do they do so much with the little I pay for my ticket each year?" you should ask.

In many places you find the *free* use of equipment and edifices, more permanent than the railroad, provided by the sacrifices and toil of past generations. But always, everywhere the Church proclaims with Christ, as another evidence of His Divine Mission: "The poor have The Gospel preached to them."

Railway Tracks And Wrecks

So ends our first global excursion. As our train rushes us triumphantly from the port of landing back to our humble home, it sways, but with majestic balance, avoiding now an immovable mountain and now a disastrous abyss, carrying us safely onward, ever on the track.

Truth is as intolerant as a railroad track—the slightest swerve to right or to left and there's always a wreck. If you want to get where you're going, you must stay on the track. The Catholic Church, like Christ, is tolerant toward all who err or differ with it, but absolutely intolerant of error, as Christ was. To preach truth and tolerate error is to talk of a square circle. The Catholic Church is right because it teaches the Complete Truth revealed by Christ the Son of God as necessary to get to Heaven; because it is the *right way* to worship God; because it has the means of forgiveness and *eternal life*.

Christianity today seems to be a wreck at the crossroads. But *you* can't sit idly by, indifferent, helpless, hopeless as that crossing tender. *You* can't, because whether you like it or not, you are *on one of those trains* moving inexorably towards your destiny. On which train are *you* riding?

One train only is going in the right direction. Those on it, fear not wrecks, or even death. For Christ the Son of God has promised (and God always keeps His Word): "He that will lose his *life* for My sake, *shall find it*." "He that believes in Me, even tho' he be dead, *shall live*." Because "I AM the Way—the Truth—and The Life."

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