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WHAT IS



BY

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WHAT IS CATHOLIC ACTION?

By
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P R E F A C E

To interest anyone in Catholic Action we have to tell them about it or supply them with appropriate reading material. Surprisingly enough there is only one easily available treatment of it in English, Msgr. Luigi Civardi's *Manual of Catholic Action*. But this Manual is a book and few would qualify it as easy reading. The need, therefore, of adequate pamphlets is quite evident. Add to this the experience of so many Catholic Action groups which, after concentrating on some topic of current interest for several months, come around to the conclusion that they ought to have begun their group life with a study of the principles of Catholic Action. This is a logical conclusion since the basic training of an apostle is precisely the study of these principles.

The debt of the writer to Msgr. Civardi's work is hereby heartily acknowledged. Whatever goes beyond that work, together with any change in pattern is derived from further documents and from actual experience in training groups.

The division of our treatment into parts each followed by its set of questions is designed to provide sufficient matter for a fifteen minute discussion at group meetings. The pamphlet ends with a summary which some may prefer to read first instead of last.

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Feast of Christ the King
October 27, 1940

WHAT IS CATHOLIC ACTION?

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THE SETTING

The World Scene

AMERICAN life is so complicated that a lot of it has to be automatic. There is, of course, a danger in this: that we will allow the sphere of the automatic to spread so far that it engulfs all of living—green lights, red lights, quitting-time, social security numbers, bank night, democracy, Nazism, Fascism, cash and carry, call and deliver, how's tricks, oomph, money talks. All that's necessary is for you to hear or see these and countless other words and signs and you know what to do or how to feel without thinking about it. When people think, it slows up traffic and the pace of life bogs down so that we end up in a jam.

Hence the tendency has been to cut out thinking and make life more and more automatic so that we can get things done as quickly as possible.

The radio has accelerated the destruction of thinking. An announcer is trained to recommend products with such emphatic confidence that the listeners will believe and buy without stopping to question the statements. This coming on top of the advertising in newspaper and on billboard has extended the sphere of the automatic so far that we are in danger of becoming automata or robots.

Is it any wonder then that many of us have missed the meaning of the oft-repeated words, "Catholic Action"?

We've never done anything about it or even thought of it till it becomes for us a mere phrase or label with very little meaning or no meaning at all. Let's be honest—what does it

mean to us? "Something that has to do with the Church that I might look into when I find more time?" That's about it.

Would it surprise us, therefore, to recall that the last five Popes, Pius IX, Leo XIII, Pius X, Benedict XV, Pius XI, have never ceased to talk about Catholic Action? that the more they thought about it, the more they wrote and said about it? that the thing reached a climax in Pius XI who scarcely missed an opportunity to expound its principles and urge their application? that the very first encyclical letter of Pius XII devotes its final and conclusive section to the re-affirmation of the Church's answer to the modern challenge, Catholic Action?

Just as a preliminary thought to stir up our interest, let's recall that Christ's Church never fails of an answer to the attacks of her enemies.

At the last great crisis, the Protestant Revolution, the Council of Trent established seminaries and extended the parochial system to the whole world. Then with the help of the religious congregations that sprang to her assistance the main threat to the Church was met and partially dissipated. Since then hundreds of years have passed. Another crisis is at hand. Is it possible to meet it with the weapons of the past? Indeed, it is not!

Because today we have a different world. It is an urbanized, industrialized world of vast populations and vast ramifications. The clergy can no longer keep in touch with their own flock most of whose life is outside the parish. Much less can they tend to the non-Catholics who are committed to their care within the parochial confines. This is not a recent condition. It has become increasingly the case ever since the French Revolution when the ever more successful movement was launched to imprison Christ in the church buildings and keep Him out of the rest of life, family, school, press, society, and government.

Now this cannot go on! It must be stopped dead, the damage repaired, and the world restored to Christ!

If there has been any thought that this could be accomplished (outside of God's special interference) with the previously existing organs of the Church, the case of Russia alone refutes it. The tide of battle runs too strong. Do we understand that for the first time in the history of the world, we have not just a few egoists but a great organized modern State which advertises the determination to gamble its almost unlimited resources in a deliberate, serious, unyielding campaign to conquer all men and instill a hatred of God into every human heart? Yes, you and I are living while it appears, an unparalleled phenomenon in the whole history of man.

To the challenge of modern times the Church has her answer and that answer is Catholic Action. The faithful have been summoned to the side of Pope, Bishop, and priest not only to repel the invasion, but to turn the tide of battle and reconquer the world for Christ.

It is this great campaign which will engage our attention in the pages that follow: and, while we're at it, let's say a prayer that our hearts will be fired with its spirit.

Questions

1. Who was the first Pope to speak of Catholic Action? When did he live?
2. Then should not all our generation know what Catholic Action is? Why do they not?
3. What do you think Catholic Action is? Do we know anyone who has a good knowledge of it? Could we get him or her to come and explain it?
4. Have we a copy of Pius XII's first encyclical? What does he say about Catholic Action?
5. What was the Church's answer to Protestantism?
6. What is the Church's answer to the modern world? Why is it necessary?

Before We Start

ONE of the first things we'll have to say about Catholic Action is that it is an apostolate. That word needs stressing and we will come back to consider it again and again.

To be an apostle means to be out among our fellow men for God's glory and the salvation of souls. But you can't make any headway toward the establishment of God's kingdom or the saving of souls till you've tried out your own soul first.

So Catholic Action means preparation for Catholic Action. This does not mean that we prepare ourselves this year and wait till next before we begin to act on others. The two things may go forward simultaneously. As a matter of fact, human beings are so close together in this day and age that you can't prepare your own soul without affecting others. On the other hand we will not escape embarrassment if we try to conquer another soul for Christ while our own is alien to His grace and love. Let's see what we think of this little story.

A few days ago a young woman said to a priest, "Father, I'm going to join one of those Catholic Action groups."

Father was a bit surprised. He glanced at the girl, then turned his eyes to the window. Finally he spoke and his words were unexpected. "Just what for?" he asked.

It was the young woman's turn to be surprised. She got off a preliminary "We-ll" and waited for words to come. None came. "I just thought I'd like to," she floundered helplessly.

"My dear girl," said the priest, "on yonder table I see the picture of a rather handsome young man. If I'm not mistaken you're keeping company with him at the present moment. Now I happen to know that he's not a Catholic. . . ."

"What's the matter with that?" interjected the young woman quickly.

Father looked out of the window again. It was a long time before he answered. When he did it sounded as if he were talking to himself. "People who go in for Catholic Action,"

he said slowly, "are people who have definitely determined to follow the mind of the Church in their daily life so that they may use their influence sincerely to conquer other souls for Christ." He paused for a moment, then added, "May I inquire whether you had anything like this in mind when you spoke of joining a group?"

There was a protracted silence.

Here's another.

When Mr. Paul McGuire was in Toledo he told me of a parish priest in the East who confided that he hadn't much hope for Catholic Action. "A group of men from my parish came in to talk about a study club," he stated. "They are all employers. When I asked them what they wanted to discuss they said they were thinking of Communism. Isn't it strange," he mused, "how the first thing that comes into our mind is the sins of other people? I wonder why they didn't think of themselves. They might have said 'let's study our duties as Christian employers.'"

"There was a group of women who came in before that," he continued. "They were well-to-do, happily married wives and mothers and—(he shrugged his shoulders)—they wanted to study Divorce."

Many people use the term Catholic Action with only a vague idea of what it means. This often keeps them from doing anything about it but sometimes it does not. When they go ahead nevertheless they generally end up by substituting their own ideas of it for the principles laid down by the Popes and Bishops. As a matter of fact, the thing has been authoritatively outlined and we ought to shape our minds to the outline, not the outline to our minds.

What do you think of the following?

Bulletin Board Notice—"Do your part in Catholic Action—Sell your Quota!"

"Hello, Father, can you send me over a couple of those Catholic Action youngsters? I've got a little job to do that is real Catholic Action."

Questions

1. What is the first thing to keep in mind about Catholic Action?
2. Why does it involve preparation?
3. Can the two things go forward simultaneously?
4. Does Catholic Action exclude the observation of defects and sins in the society around us? Then what was wrong with the attitude of the young woman and of the study club members?
5. Have the principles of Catholic Action been authoritatively outlined? What obligation does that impose upon us?
6. Is it all right to use Catholic Action as just another motive to get things done? What do you think of the bulletin board? Of the request for help?

WHAT CATHOLIC ACTION IS

Five Elements Examined

ALL sorts of activities and societies are called Catholic Action. Is that all right? Yes, it is, in a general way. However, to distinguish Catholic Action properly so-called from the broader sense of the term, we must keep four words in mind: apostolate, organization, hierarchy and mandate.

Any act conformable to the principles of the Catholic religion might be called Catholic Action, *e. g.*, to say one's morning prayers. But Catholic Action in its proper sense signifies an apostolate so this definition is insufficient.

Supposing that the above-mentioned act was not only conformable but also favorable to the Catholic Religion, for example, to convince others that divorce is an evil, then it would be apostolic. But this, too, falls short because Catholic Action is not merely an apostolate. It is an organized apostolate.

Then we might ask, are there not many organizations with an apostolic scope that are, moreover, approved by the hierarchy? The answer would be affirmative. You have leagues against profane language, societies on behalf of the educational theater or moving picture, or on behalf of the Catholic press. Nevertheless, here again we miss certain elements for lack of which such associations may not be called Catholic Action in the strict sense. These elements are universality and authority. Catholic Action in the proper sense is not limited to one or another scope but includes every form of apostolate. It is, moreover, carried out at the special behest, not merely with the approbation, of the Bishop.

Summing up therefore—any of the activities or organizations mentioned above may be called Catholic Action in a broad sense; it is only the last which merits the official name of Catholic Action.

Pius XI defined Catholic Action as "the participation of the laity in the apostolate of the Church's hierarchy."

In this formula there seem to be five essential elements:

1. Apostolate, *i. e.*, a mission for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

2. Lay, *i. e.*, its membership is lay and the projects are undertaken by said laity. The clergy and religious play a necessary role in Catholic Action but they do not compose it.

3. Auxiliary and subordinate to the hierarchy. The apostolate of the hierarchy is the principal, true and strictly so-called apostolate; that of the laity is secondary and auxiliary. In other words, they help the hierarchy in every event, and as best they can.

The necessary and immediate consequence of this auxiliary apostolate is that it is subordinate and subject to the principal one of the bishops.

4. Organized. The word "hierarchy" in our definition implies that Catholic Action must be organized. A hierarchy means a sacred rule or power and it results from a series of persons exercising power not in a separate and independent way, but in subordination and unitedly, *e. g.*, Pope, Bishop, Priest. If the hierarchy is organizational so will its apostolate be organizational; hence Catholic Action, too, because it is a participation in the hierarchic apostolate. It has been the common experience of many great Catholic Action movements that all attempts come to naught where there are no close ties between local units and central committees.

5. Consecrated to the triumph of the Kingdom of Christ. This is the supreme "end" of Catholic Action. If Catholic Action is a participation in the hierarchical apostolate it must desire precisely what the hierarchy does, *i. e.*, that Christ should reign in each soul, in families, and in society at large.

Hence, filling out the first definition we can describe Catholic Action as: "The organization of the Catholic laity, consecrated to the apostolate in aid of, and in direct dependence on the hierarchy, in view of the triumph of the Kingdom of Christ, in individuals, in the family, and in society at large."—*Civardi.*

Questions

1. What element must be added to an act conformable to the Catholic religion before that act can be apostolic?
2. Is the simple fact that an act is apostolic enough to constitute it Catholic Action in the strict sense?
3. What two things would still be lacking if you had an organization with an apostolic scope, which was approved by the Bishop?
4. How does Pius XI define Catholic Action? Name its five essential elements.
5. What is meant by "apostolate?" Why is it called lay? Could there be such a thing as a Catholic Action organization composed entirely of clergy?
6. What is meant by "auxiliary?" Would it be Catholic Action to undertake an apostolate without the knowledge of the bishop or without his mandate?
7. What is meant by a hierarchy? Who constitute this series of persons in the Church? Why must Catholic Action be organizational? Why do attempts at Catholic Action frequently come to naught.
8. Give Civardi's definition.

The Goal at Which We Aim

TO conquer the world for Christ is the supreme goal of Catholic Action. If we are not clear about that, the cause will be lost so far as we are concerned. Only when we know what we are after are we able to figure out the steps to bring us there. So our first job is to impress on our minds the supreme aim of Catholic Action, which our definition states is "the triumph of the Kingdom of Christ, in individuals, in the family, and in society at large."

We can be clearer about this by stating more fully what such a triumph involves.

First of all it involves the restoration of Christ's Kingship in the territory whence He has been expelled. To repair the ravages of secularism is the principal and most imperative aim of Catholic Action. In this field secularism is the very reverse of Catholic Action, for secularism seeks to dethrone Christ where He is enthroned whereas Catholic Action seeks to enthroned Christ where He is dethroned.

Secondly, Catholic Action involves the defense of the present borders of Christ's Kingdom. It would be a hopeless task to repair the damages of secularism if the march of its armies were not simultaneously halted; because what was gained in one territory would be lost in another. In this function especially Catholic Action has been successful time and again in our own country, as witness the defeat of so many attempts to disestablish the Catholic school system and to pass immoral legislation.

Catholic Action, though not the same as Missionary Action, proposes nevertheless to extend the Kingdom of God into new territory and conquer souls for Christ who have never known His Kingship. This is indeed the principal function of Missionary Action, but is essential to Catholic Action, too, wherever it is found.

Finally, Catholic Action consolidates the gains made for the Kingdom of Christ. No matter how heroic the exploits of our revolutionary ancestors at Lexington and Concord and on the Delaware, all would have been lost had not a stable government followed. Gains must always be consolidated or we shall find ourselves with a house built on sand.

The supreme aim and the whole aim of Catholic Action may therefore be summed up in one sentence—to restore, defend, extend and consolidate the Kingdom of Christ, in individuals, in the family, and in society at large. Such is the goal toward which we bend our steps.

Although such an aim is definitely religious and spiritual and not at all material or political, it does not follow that the means we use in achieving it must be purely religious and

spiritual. In a certain sense, nothing is farther from the practice of Catholic Action which proposes to use any good means, material or spiritual, to bring about the reign of Christ. The plain fact is that in our day a purely material activity may be much more conducive to a spiritual end than a purely religious activity. Helping along a young man who is just starting in at your office or a young wife who has just moved into your neighborhood may be a case of strictly material means, but it is the very stuff and substance of which Catholic Action is made.

Discussion:

Questions

1. Why do we have to know the end first before the means?
2. What is meant by restoring, defending, extending, consolidating Christ's Kingdom?
3. Could we think of an example of each in regard to individuals, families, and society at large?
4. Is the supreme aim of Catholic Action material or spiritual?
5. How about the means?

Secularism Destroys

WHEN addressing various groups on the subject of Catholic Action a speaker almost inevitably will be faced by a questioner with the demand, "All right, but precisely what do you expect us to do about it?"

The repetition of this experience soon makes the reason apparent: Catholic people are puzzled about what is expected

of them because they cannot see much that is wrong about the world in which they live. They have grown so used to Secularism that they are almost completely unaware that the framework of the society which molds their lives is near the very contrary of what God would have it to be.

The final triumph of the Kingdom of Christ is indeed a distant goal and many a stage must be traveled before its accomplishment.

In order to enumerate definitely such intermediate stages and outline clearly the tasks to be performed, we can do no better than review the accomplishments of Secularism in recent centuries. Because it is the triumph of Secularism that has made Catholic Action the absolute necessity of our particular day. Knowledge of what's wrong with our world will make it easier to see what's to be righted.

Before the sixteenth century the Church had pretty well succeeded in laying the foundations of the Kingdom of God in this world. All human institutions were building with Christ as their corner stone.

The first turn in the tide, the beginning of modern Secularism, is marked by the Protestant revolution. Luther and his contemporaries said—let's do away with the Church. They were sufficiently successful to initiate the trend which became a drive at the time of the French Revolution. Only the drive went further. This time it was against the Saviour of mankind, and the battle cry could be heard in the world—let's do away with Christ. By the nineteenth century the drive was almost universally triumphant and its leaders were ready to complete their task with the final slogan—let's do away with God.

So you and I are born into a world where the final campaign against God has begun. It has been a matter of stages.

First of all they said—we will take God out of government; and they not only planned it but they did it by the complete separation of Church and State.

Then they said—we will take God out of education—and they not only said it but they did it. We have only to look around.

Then they said—we will take God out of business, and labor and economics—and they destroyed the old guilds and told capitalists, business men, industrialists and bankers—when it is a question of profits, anything goes.

Then they said—we will take God out of the family—and their plan has succeeded. On all sides religious marriage was supplanted by a civil ceremony. They knew that Christ had said “what God hath joined together let no man put asunder” so they passed the laws permitting divorce.

The next object of attack was the children who might be born as fruit of the watered-down marriage contract, and propaganda for eugenics and mercy-killing followed on the heels of contraception and abortion. The ethics of the medical profession were de-Christianized and the Law was denied its basis in the Ten Commandments.

They took God out of entertainment, out of the theater, out of the movie; they paid no attention to Him or His rights. Literature declared its independence. The press passes God by in discreed silence; books and weeklies deliberately reject Him. Many of the pulp magazines went the whole way and became an outright campaign in the interests of God's enemy, the devil.

Outside of church buildings the name of God is scarcely mentioned except in profanity. Social pressure is so much against it that the subject of religion is excluded even from private conversation. So far has Secularism progressed that in our day we see the threat of its final triumph in the total rejection of God. Militant atheism is on the march.

It is this success that has made Catholic Action the necessity of our day. The steps of Secularism indicate the stages we must travel. The undaunted soldier is now in position to estimate his immediate tasks in the great campaign to reconquer the world for Christ.

Questions

1. Why are Catholics often puzzled about what Catholic Action proposes to do?
2. Why is Catholic Action so necessary in our day?
3. What had the Catholic Church succeeded in doing before the sixteenth century?
4. Name three rejections in the rise and progress of Secularism.
5. Mention the various spheres in which Secularism has been very successful in separating man from God.
6. How does the enumeration of these various steps help the apostle of Catholic Action?

Catholic Action Restores

SINCE Catholic Action in the strict sense implies a mandate from the hierarchy we shall confine ourselves here to a compact statement of its chief particular aims as contained in papal pronouncements.

The very first and the most immediate of all particular aims, the Christianization of consciences, cannot be stated compactly and is reserved for fuller treatment below. The other aims, being so many stages on the road to the supreme goal, the triumph of the Kingdom of Christ, are as follows:

1. Co-operation with the Parish Priest in Parochial Religious Life. For example: in preparing and ensuring the success of religious functions, sermon courses, missions; in preparing children and the sick for the Sacraments; in teaching catechism; in the church choir.

2. The Intellectual Apostolate. This means the spreading of Christian ideas to people outside and beyond the confines of Catholic organizations. Catholic Action proposes to "actuate" Catholic principles in all sections of social life. To accomplish this Catholic principles must first be known, asserted and diffused. This is primary and precedes all other activities.

3. The Christianization of the Family, *i. e.*, in preparation for Sacramental marriage and in molding parents and children to the fashion of the Holy Family.

4. The Defense of the Rights and Liberty of the Church so that she has that position which Christ has assigned to her and thus may be able to make herself the mistress and guide of all other societies. These are no more than the rights of Jesus Christ Himself, and they are the rights of every religious conscience.

5. Co-operation in the Scholastic Field by helping the Church in the foundation and maintenance of her own schools and in the Christianization of all other schools.

6. The Promotion of the "good" Press.

By press is meant books, pamphlets, periodicals and newspapers. By the "good" press we mean not an inoffensive one but one that positively spreads and defends Christian dogma and morals, hinders the effects of the bad press and educates in Christian spirituality. In this field Catholic Action first must form consciences in regard to the fundamental problems of the press, especially of the daily press; second, it ought to prepare its own press and not only a Catholic press but also a Catholic Action press.

7. The Moralization of Manners.

This involves a positive work, namely, the education of consciences, because the loss or distortion of the moral sense is the great scourge of our times; and a negative work, *i. e.*, the defense of public good behavior. This defensive work, which is indeed a shallow accomplishment without the positive work, is aimed at scandals such as immoral literature, indecent spectacles, moving pictures, dramas, indecent fashions, prostitution, blasphemy, degraded speech, alcoholism, and so forth. Here one can collaborate with State authority and institutions. Also still more private works of assistance and prevention are needed like clubs for young men, circulating libraries, moral plays and amusements.

8. The Christian Solution of the Social Question.

This is to be accomplished in two ways: first, indirectly by educating consciences in Christian principles (without which all exterior laws and reform are mere scene-painting); second, by promoting and assisting all the organizations and enterprises that set out to apply Christian principles to politico-social life.

9. The Christian Inspiration of all Civil Life—laws, ordinances, public institutions. Quite outside of party politics, this is to be accomplished by direct and indirect means. It is to be done indirectly by the Christian education of consciences and the propagation of Catholic principles in public life; directly, by way of intervention with the public powers for the safeguard of the religious conscience and by the realization of Catholic principles in laws and public institutions.

Question

Every militant apostle of Catholic Action should know these particular aims by memory. Do you?

GETTING READY

The First Move

IT is difficult to overstate the importance of the immediate aim of Catholic Action, *viz.*, the Christianization of consciences. Without it our apostolate to others becomes impossible because, as Pope Pius XI quoted, "No one gives what he has not got."

Hence, all Catholic Action has two distinct parts. The first is a preparatory part which consists in the formation of its own members for the apostolate. The second is the actual apostolate whose chief fields we have just enumerated.

If we are going to convert the world, the first people we ought to convert are ourselves. Here we differ from all other movements of reformation. Liberal reform movements are all for correcting the other fellow, but never for reforming the reformer.

A priest friend of the writer put the matter quite concretely in the following words:

"The aim of Catholic Action is to make every action intensely Catholic. At least with this definition one can get up in the morning and immediately start Catholicizing his actions. He can take a cue from the prayer, The Breastplate of St. Patrick, and find Christ before him, behind him, on his right side and on his left, while dressing, praying, eating breakfast, talking to his wife, taking his car out, driving, working, talking, in business, in labor, in drinking, in bowling, at the ball park, and in the movies. It opens up possibilities even for slogans, such as 'Eat with Christ,' 'Talk with Christ,' 'Walk with Christ,' 'Play with Christ'; 'Christ in the Office,' 'Christ in the Barbershop,' 'Christ at the Telephone.'"

Here is what the Popes said about this preparatory Christianization of our own consciences. Pius X, "Only when we

shall have formed Jesus Christ within us, shall we be more easily able to give Him back to family and society." Benedict XV, "Christ must be formed in the conscience of each Catholic, before Catholics can be ready to fight for Christ." Pius XI, "The profoundly Christian formation of the members of Catholic Action is presupposed: fruitfulness comes second."

Hence, both reason and authority point out that Catholic Action is primarily a formative, educative action.

This will be the predominant task of all Catholic Action organizations for the young, because the young are precisely in their period of formation when they enter such organizations. This does not mean that adult groups need not work for this end. In fact, it would be a very bad mistake for them to deduce any such thing. Because, in the first place, it is perfectly obvious that all men simply must reproduce Jesus Christ in themselves. But Christ is an *INEXHAUSTIBLE* model. There is required, therefore, of all, of the older as well as the younger, a continuous spiritual perfecting with its prerequisite a life-long education.

In the second place, the adult constantly finds himself in new conditions and with new responsibilities. As a result, further education is necessary. During the infancy of their children, a father and mother need not know much more about the matter than what concerns their children's physical health. But when that period has passed they are under the constant necessity of keeping ahead of their sons and daughters. If they neglect to develop their own ideals in proportion to their increasing responsibilities, they may quite possibly lose their children not only for Christ but for themselves, too.

Whether for young or for adults, therefore, preparation must go forward in two ways, *viz.*, both in depth and in width, in intensity and in extent, in a deeper imitation of Christ, and in ever widening fields. "The formation of members of Catholic Action is complete when it is religious, moral, social and apostolic."—*Civardi*. We are now ready to turn our attention to these four characteristics.

Questions

1. What is the immediate aim of Catholic Action? Why is it necessary? What do the Popes say about it?
2. Give some examples of what it means.
3. What position does it occupy in Catholic Action for the young?
4. Give two reasons why adult groups are not exempt from this task.
5. On what four lines will the formation of the lay apostle develop in depth and in width?

Religious Formation

THE immediate task of Catholic Action is to Christianize consciences, to prepare its members for the apostolate by their religious, moral, social and apostolic formation. We shall concern ourselves first with the religious formation.

To be religious you've got to be touchy about your relationship with God. Every Catholic should be that way. Pius XI made no exceptions when he said in the encyclical *Rerum Omnium* that the faithful should be made to understand thoroughly that sanctity of life is not the privilege of a few to the exclusion of the rest but that all are called to it and the obligation rests on every one of them.

If this is so for all Catholics how much more intense should be the religious preparation of the militant apostle of Catholic Action! Our duties toward God are very definite and obviously they are nothing we can be vague or negligent about. Such defects as Exteriorism and Religious egoism are incompatible with the apostolate so the apostle must be trained in such conscientiousness about his duties toward God as will render unlikely his contracting either of them.

Exteriorism consists of empty ceremonies, barren exterior

practices that do not arise from the springs of interior life. If you are milking the Mass dry of what it's got for your sanctification you needn't worry about Exteriorism. If you are attending Mass merely from habit or human respect then Exteriorism has got you.

Religious egoism is most manifest in the exclusively "gimme" Catholic who reduces religion to petition and confines this to requests for temporal favors. It puts religion "on a business basis." This spurious religiosity is not so very different from Paganism. Pagans prayed in order to make their divinities feel good so that they would lavish favors in return and keep disasters far away. Paganism scarcely knew the relation of adoration, or trust, or love, or generous self-devotion between worshiper and worshiped.

A good religious formation must prepare a man for the fulfillment of all his duties toward God, for the interior acts first and then for the exterior acts as their natural flowering. Religion should be like a leaven that lightens and sweetens the whole of life in the words of St. Paul—"Let, therefore, those who weep be as if they wept not, and those who rejoice as if they rejoiced not, and those who buy as if they possessed not . . . for the mask of this world passeth away."

It should be the motive force, too, that arouses from lethargy and directs our acts toward their supernatural end so that every single move is a step toward God. Beyond these things lie the heights of sanctity where the Christian Apostolate seeks to form its members in a true reproduction of Jesus Christ, the model of all perfection. The aim of Catholic Action, here, is to have more abundantly that life which Christ came to give.

In a story called *Brother Orchid* that appeared some time ago in one of our popular weeklies, an ex-convict was described as stumbling into a monastery to take refuge from the pursuit of the gang-leader who had succeeded him in control of the rackets during his sojourn in prison. Gradually "Little John" was introduced to the life of the founder of the religious order and reluctantly his admiration increased. Being fully

acquainted with the sick confusion of modern life "Little John" knew very well that little help could be expected from the type of men that modern life produces. So as full understanding of the character of the Blessed Founder dawned upon him, "Little John" gave birth to this profound observation, "Say, yuh know we need more guys like that now a'days. What do you call 'em? Saints? Yah! That's it."

That is the point. We need a lot more saints, not Saints with a capital S, but saints with a small s. Anyone who thinks that modern man with his lack of spirituality and moral indifferentism is going to heal the sickness of society has gone wrong on his diagnosis of the disease.

The first task of Catholic Action is to intensify the religious life of its members.

Questions

1. Ought religiousness be a characteristic of all Catholics? What follows in regard to the militant apostle of Catholic Action?
2. What is meant by exteriorism and religious egoism? How do we stack up beside the pagans here?
3. What will a good religious formation do to a man? What is meant by saying that religion should be the leaven and motive force of life?
4. Do you think we need more saints in the modern world? What are YOU going to do about it? Has your group got a program for the religious formation of its members?

Moral Formation

JUST as religious formation aims at integrating our relationship with God, so moral formation consists in checking up our personal standards and our connection with our neighbor.

We all know that this matter is roughly contained in the

last seven of the Ten Commandments and in the evangelical counsels. When by knowledge and practice we succeed in patterning our life according to these rules we are said to have attained the corresponding virtues. This should be the aim of all Catholics. For Catholic Action groups it should constitute an intensive program.

The whole thing can be put briefly by stating that the human will has to be prepared along four lines before it can handle the problems of personal life and the problems of relationship with one's neighbor. We must be trained in prudence, in justice, in temperance and in fortitude. In acquiring prudence we learn how to apply our rules to the numberless situations that make up life. The temperate man will be the enemy of excess in the use of things that God has given us. We will insist, if just, in holding intact the good and goods of our fellow man. Fortitude keeps a man unafraid as obstacles increase and friends desert.

Only a few fundamentals to any program of moral formation may be advanced here.

Training of the will should not be confined to just the bigger matters but should include the so-called smaller matters, too. Many of us who would resent the larger accusations are conscienceless regarding the little things. We follow popular standards just as faithfully as if they were the standards of Christ and we are unabashed to admit it with the shameless phrase, "Well, everybody does it."

Moral duties are substantially the same for all but they vary according to state of life. The discipline of obedience is not so strict for the adult as for the young, and the duties of chastity differ before and after marriage. This should be taken into account in selecting the material for group discussion. We should remember, too, that perfection is attained one step at a time and not in a single leap. Hence Catholic Action plans will include a short-range program as well as a long-range program. Little by little complete moral formation shall be reached.

A question might easily arise as to the obligation of Christians to follow the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience. The answer is yes—in so far as they are compatible with the duties of one's state in life.⁷ When they conflict with such duties then the duties prevail, otherwise, the counsels are to be followed.

As a matter of fact the evangelical counsels constitute a program for anyone who rightly claims to be a Christian. To think that they are for religious alone is to be unquestionably and thoroughly mistaken. The difference between religious and ordinary Christians is just this: that the religious have PROMISED to observe these counsels "and have put themselves into easier conditions for realizing their ideal." If this be so in the case of any Christian there can be no doubt that the counsels must be included in the training of the lay-apostle.

It is just as well before concluding to call attention to a deadly enemy that stands across the path of the militant of Catholic Action. That enemy is spiritual pride. When we begin to think that we are better than other people, the end of all this beautiful apostolate is very near. As far as the writer can understand the humility of saints, it comes to just this—that the nearer you are to Christ, the farther away from Him you feel.

Questions

1. In what does moral formation consist? Where is the matter of it contained?
2. In what four virtues must we be trained to handle these problems?
3. Does moral formation take in the whole law of God?
4. What differences should be taken into account in selecting the material for group discussion?

5. Why have a short-range as well as a long-range program of Christian perfection?
 6. Must the evangelical counsels be included in our program?
 7. What must be avoided in the business of moral formation?
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Social and Apostolic Formation

LET'S recall that we are considering the preparatory part of Catholic Action which consists in the formation of its own members for the actual apostolate. This preparation has to be religious—moral—social—apostolic. There remains to be treated the latter two.

Social formation is nothing more than an extension of the moral development that we touched on in the previous article. Since men are social beings as well as individuals we find them tied up with their neighbors in a number of special ways: as fellow citizens, as fellow laborers, as professional men and women, as legislators and so forth. In this manner we are all bound together in a social fabric with very definite relations to one another. Social education teaches us HOW we are to translate Christ's gospel in these social relations; HOW social and political problems are to be solved "in the light of Christian thought and on the lines marked out by the Church."—*Civardi*.

A lot of work has already been done along this line and an enormous quantity of literature is available for group training. The fact that so much has been done perhaps has obscured the further fact that the greater part of the task remains.

All who desire to conquer the world for Christ must cast off the shell of indifference and set about the job of enlighten-

ing themselves on social and political problems. In the Encyclical *Ubi Arcano* Pius XI declared that Catholic Action must form "consciences so accurately Christian as to know—at any moment in every situation of private or public life—how to find, or at least thoroughly to understand, and apply the Christian solution of the manifold problems that present themselves in the several conditions of life." How very much we need this formation we shall never know till we get down to the business of training ourselves. Then for the first time it may dawn on us how long we have been playing the old secularist game of having two consciences, one for private life and the other for economic and political life.

The formation of the militant of Catholic Action is not complete till the vital spark of the "apostle" has been fanned into flame. To be apostolic is, first of all, to be generous. We have always had in our midst many an excellent Catholic who lacked nothing but the love of souls to make of him a complete Christian. It is this lack more than anything else that has left us cold while God was stolen from the hearts of our fellow-men. Now, the secularized world must be won back. It can be done only by men who love and have the courage of love. Courage is the second apostolic virtue. To conquer for Christ is to fight for Christ and the odds are so great that the recruits must be trained in a deep, calm, unswerving courage.

So every Catholic Action association must be a school of apostolate. Practically this means a school in which the participants learn the nature, end, principles and program of Catholic Action. It was to furnish Catholic Action groups with an outline for such a training that the present pamphlet was undertaken.

All of this is especially important for youth and where Catholic Action movements have taken hold in grade and high schools, their principal scope will be to impart such ideas to the future militants envisioned by Pius XI as a "pacific army of apostles, wishful to win souls to Christ and to the Church."

Questions

1. How are citizens, workers, professional men, and legislators tied up with their fellow-men? What do we call these relationships?
2. What will the formation of the lay apostle involve here? What did Pius XI say about it? Have any of us ever read the social encyclicals? Do we know any one that has? Could we get him or her to help us out?
3. Is the formation of the members of Catholic Action complete when it is religious, moral, social?
4. What two virtues are required here? Practically, what will the training include? For whom is this especially important?

THE APOSTOLATE ITSELF

Helpers of the Hierarchy

WE TURN quite naturally now from preparation for Catholic Action to the Apostolate, itself. It is toward this that we have been tending and it is with this we shall be occupied from here on. Now what is an apostolate? An apostolate is a "mission." So in the Church an apostolate will mean a "mission for the spiritual salvation of our neighbor." Hence it is peculiar to the apostle to save the souls of others. In fact, he saves his own soul by saving the souls of others.

Furthermore—no apostolate is easy. To conquer souls for Christ means going after them, searching them out and working on them. The Catholic who confines himself to the business of his own soul has no more right to the title of "apostle" than would the Twelve had they remained behind closed doors in the Upper Room after the descent of the Holy Ghost. So much for any apostolate. The apostle must save the souls of others and he must labor and toil at that task.

Now we know that the twelve disciples and their successors, the Popes and Bishops, are the properly so-called and true apostles. They were commissioned directly by Christ to teach, govern and sanctify all men. Hence if these tasks are undertaken by the laity it will always be as helpers or appointees of the Catholic Bishops.

Such a lay apostolate has always existed in the Church. Side by side with the clergy and religious have labored the faithful and they continue to do so today. Any help of this kind has ever been approved, appreciated and praised by the Hierarchy.

What is new about the modern apostolate is Catholic Action. Never before has the laity been organized and commis-

sioned on such a universal scale to take its place beside the clergy and religious.

All right, Catholic Action is a call to the laity. We must add that it is an invitation to ALL of the laity. Whatever other excuse Catholics may now advance for non-participation it surely cannot be the ancient one that "No one has hired us." Pius XI is very explicit when he writes to Cardinal Bertram "Catholic Action is a universal and harmonious action of all Catholics, without exception of age, sex, social condition, culture, or social or political tendencies."

However, "Many are called but few are chosen." Since "Not all can take this saying," Catholic Action cannot expect to number in its ranks the great mass of the faithful. Although never ceasing to increase, it will always remain a select group, a special battalion, a sort of spiritual aristocracy.

As we remarked above Catholic Action gets its right to be called an apostolate because it is auxiliary to the apostolate of the Bishops. But what distinguishes Catholic Action from any other apostolate is the mandate of the Bishop. It operates under orders from the Bishop for the salvation of souls. In a word, it is the help that the Bishops NEED, not merely the help that they GET. This makes Catholic Action an OFFICIAL apostolate different from and superior to every other form of apostolate. It is united to the Hierarchy and forms with it one thing. For this reason it shares in the dignity and honor of the Hierarchy whose glory it is to co-operate with God in the salvation of immortal souls. Hence, too, it can be rightfully said that Catholic Action constitutes a QUASI-PRIESTHOOD. Indeed this is insinuated in Pius XI's *Ubi Arcano* when he writes "Say to your faithful laity that when they, united to their priests and their bishops, share in works of apostolate and of individual and social redemption, then more than ever are they, the 'chosen race,' the 'royal priesthood,' the 'holy people,' the people of God extolled by St. Peter."

Questions

1. What is an apostolate? Is it easy?
2. What are the two apostolates that have always been in the Church?
3. What is new about Catholic Action?
4. Are all Catholics invited? Will all accept? Therefore, what will Catholic Action remain?
6. Why does it share in the dignity and honor of the Hierarchy?
7. What remarkable conclusion follows from all this?

Obligation: This Apostolate is Obligatory

ALL Catholics without exception have been invited to take part in Catholic Action. This is the same as to say that all Catholics CAN participate. But there is a further question. Do they have to? Are we all bound in conscience to share in this modern apostolate? The answer is a complete—yes! We must all contribute something to Catholic Action—how much is still another question to which we shall turn our attention below.

In order to be clear about this obligation let us distinguish Catholic Action from other forms of lay apostolate. Supposing there had been no call to Catholic Action, would some form of apostolate be required of all Catholics by the very fact that they are Catholics? Yes, it would, because to be a Catholic is to be an apostle.

Let us consider first this universal obligation of all Catholics to exercise some form of apostolate and second let us ask whether the duty of Catholic Action in particular is just as universal.

Besides the reasons which we advance here and now to prove the universal obligation of an apostolate there is a further one which merits separate consideration. That reason is the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ. The other reasons are as follows:

1. The apostolate of the laity has been stressed so frequently and for so many centuries in the writings of Sovereign Pontiffs, Fathers and Doctors of the Church that it could rightfully be enumerated among "the precepts of the Church."

2. We are all required to love God. But a love that does not work for God's glory and the salvation of His creatures is no true love. Our love, therefore, must include the apostolate.

3. God wants all men to have faith and grace. He wants them to receive faith and grace not by any means whatsoever but specifically by prayer and speech and action. But these are human acts. In other words grace and faith are to be transferred from man to man. This means, by apostolate.

4. We all owe Christ a debt of gratitude. How can we repay it better than by bringing Him souls to quench His thirst? Again—the apostolate.

5. We must love our neighbor as ourselves. If self-love demands that we ensure *our own* salvation, love of neighbor demands that we work for *his* salvation; which is nothing else but the apostolate.

6. The same is explicit time and again in the words of Christ, "no man lights a lamp and puts it beneath a bushel but on a lamp stand that it may give light to all that are in the house."

7. The "Our Father" which is so often on our lips is tinged with irony, not to say hypocrisy, unless it comes from the mouth of an apostle. "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"—"Give us (not give me) this day . . ." How are we sincere when we utter these aspirations without intending to do anything to realize them?

8. Baptism makes us citizens of the Church. But every citizen has to make some contribution to the welfare of his

community, otherwise he is a parasite. Therefore a citizen of the Church must be an apostle.

9. By Confirmation we become soldiers of Christ. But a selfish soldier is nonsense. Any militia must abandon itself to the general interest. What else is Christian warfare but the apostolate? Every apostle must be a fighter, and every fighter an apostle. Confirmation is the Sacrament of the lay apostolate.

For these reasons we must conclude that some form of apostolate is the duty of every Christian. There can be no doubt about that.

There remains, however, our other question. Does the same universal obligation bind all Catholics in regard to Catholic Action which, after all, is only one form of the apostolate.

Let Pope Pius XI answer. When the late Pontiff spoke of Catholic Action he said explicitly "all must co-operate," and he described this co-operation as "obligatory" and "indispensable." These are strong words. But they are no stronger than the following from one of his first encyclicals, "Catholic Action belongs undeniably to the pastoral office and to Christian life"—"the restoration of the Kingdom of Christ is connected indissolubly with Catholic Action." If these words have any meaning at all, they mean that without Catholic Action there will be no restoration of the Kingdom of Christ. This is the same as to say that it is the duty of every Catholic to co-operate in the apostolate of Catholic Action.

Questions

1. Is some form of apostolate an obligation for all Catholics? Do we all understand why from a discussion of the reasons given?
2. What reason does Pope Pius XI give why all Catholics must co-operate with Catholic Action?

Obligation: Who Can Resist the Doctrine of the Mystical Body?

THE doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ explains why no Catholic can shrug his shoulders about Catholic Action. It is the sum and substance of the nine reasons we just gave to prove the obligation of the lay apostolate.

From the start we ought to state quite clearly that the price of neglect here is the loss of our soul. Even if it were difficult to get a sufficient grasp of the doctrine we simply could not afford to neglect the effort. But it is not difficult.

The plain fact is that Christ has two bodies; one, His physical, the other, His mystical body.

Of His physical body we know that He was born of the Virgin Mary, grew to manhood and labored as a carpenter. He used that body to teach, to heal, to pray, to suffer and to die. In that body He rose again and took it away from this earth into Heaven.

Did Christ leave another body behind Him on earth? Yes, He did! We know this because He told us so. He said that the reason why He came into this world was in order that men might have LIFE; "I am come that they may have life." What did he mean by "life?" He meant HIMSELF. He said explicitly "I am the life." He repeated the same thing again in the parable of the vine and the branches. He said "I am the vine; you are the branches" and He went on to emphasize that it made the whole difference between our fruitfulness and fruitlessness whether we lived in Him and He in us or not. There you have it! There is no other way!

Now you may well ask how this can be. How can we "have" Christ so that He lives in us and we in Him? The answer is not difficult, because St. Paul gives us the clue. A living body is made up of cells. These cells live in the body and, of course, the body lives in its cells. So if Christ had a body that was composed of us Christians just as a living body

is composed of cells, then WE COULD BE SAID TO LIVE IN HIM AND HE IN US.

Has Christ such a body? Yes, He has and St. Paul proclaims its identity when he cries "YOU ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST." This he repeats again and again. Christ is the head, we are the members. We are embodied in Baptism. Each member has his own task to perform for the good of the whole body. This doctrine is not hard to understand. It is simply this, Christ has two bodies and they are His very own. One is in Heaven and in our tabernacles. The other is ourselves.

This is why we must treat our neighbor as if he was Christ. Indeed he is Christ. Some may think that statement an exaggeration, but it is not. We have Christ's own word for His identification with His Christians. They are His own body. What is done to them is done to Him. The same is true of all of us: What is done to our neighbor is done to us, for we are all members of the same body. It is St. Paul again who warns us that the health of the whole body is lowered when one member suffers.

Do we see Christ in our fellow Christians? Do we suffer and rejoice when they suffer and rejoice? When they are unemployed, are we unemployed? Would that we had grasped this solidarity, this community with one another in Christ so that we who call ourselves Christians might exclaim with St. Paul, "Who is weak and I am not weak! Who is scandalized and I am not on fire!" This thing has to be a part of our lives or we simply are not Christians. Indeed, on the statement of the gospels, the very last words that shall ring in our ears at the judgment before we pass into eternal life or eternal fire are the very doctrine of which we are speaking. They contain the ultimate and final reason for our salvation or condemnation. Listen! "As often as you have done it to any of these, the least of my brethren, YOU HAVE DONE IT UNTO ME."

Questions

1. What do we want to prove here by the doctrine of the Mystical Body? What price must a man pay for neglect of this doctrine?
2. What is meant by Christ's physical body? How do we know that Christ has another body?
3. In what way, according to St. Paul, does Christ live in us and we in Him?
4. Why must we see Christ in our neighbor? Are we our brothers' keepers?
5. At what moment will Christ bring up this doctrine again? Is it, therefore, a doctrine which we can neglect with impunity?

The Degrees of Obligation

NO Catholic is free from the obligation of Catholic Action. The Vicar of Christ has made that clear. There is, however, a further question. To what are we obliged? Must all be active militants?

Well, certain obligations fall on everyone. There is, in the first place, a negative obligation, namely, not to hinder Catholic Action nor to go in for defeatism. If it is the plan of the popes to bring the secularized world back to Christ, we have no right to oppose that plan nor to speak of it as if it were a hopeless task. This will exclude, too, any indifferent or sophisticated attitude toward it as if it were a matter of indifference or were the business of inferiors alone.

There is, moreover, an obligation incumbent on all to advance the cause of Catholic Action positively. The only limits to the extent of this obligation are our own abilities and possibilities. Here is the way the Cardinal Secretary of State put it to the president of Italian Catholic Action in October, 1923. "As every Catholic must feel the need and the duty of DEDI-

CATING himself or at least of CONTRIBUTING to this work of apostolate (Catholic Action), so must he feel the need and the duty of CO-ORDINATING himself, so far as possible, with the recognized organs of action, if he does not wish to expose himself to rendering his efforts sterile, if not actually disturbing and hurtful."

In this sentence we find a scale of positive obligations—self-dedication to Catholic Action—contribution to Catholic Action—co-ordination with Catholic Action. All Catholics, then, must find their place in one of these three, depending on their own capacities and opportunities. What are these three degrees?

The first are those who dedicate themselves as militant and active apostles to the great task of winning men to Christ. Not all, however, have either the aptitude or the opportunity for this active service.

The second, then, are those who must content themselves with sustaining the active militants. This is to be done in several ways. They must pray for the success of the apostolate. Here is an obligation that binds all Catholics, because it is possible for all, even for the sick and aged, and constitutes a minimum positive contribution.

Furthermore, the active apostolate can be helped by talking about it, by spreading the good word to others, and by lending moral and material aid. Moral help will involve encouragement and co-operation. The militant of Catholic Action confronts frequent discouragement and his morale must be sustained by frequent encouragement. Co-operation is needed in carrying out the campaigns of Catholic Action.

Without great numbers of helpers the work of the militants is bound to be limited in effect. The Legion of Decency, for example, owes its success to the backing it received from the great mass of faithful Catholics. Material aid means, for the most part, financial assistance. Pius XI called it the financial apostolate, or the apostolate of the purse, "because even finance is needed for the works of God among men." This is espe-

cially important for the well-to-do, and is the sole hope of those of the rich who do not contribute anything else to the apostolate.

It may be noted here for those who have some acquaintance with the presently existing forms of Catholic Action, that in the above degrees they will discover the division of Catholic Action membership into "militant" and "ordinary."

The third category in the scale of obligations comprises the co-ordinated societies. This co-ordination is for those who exercise their apostolate in societies other than Catholic Action. Pius X calls them the "auxiliaries" of Catholic Action. The precise relationship between Catholic Action and such auxiliaries will be treated below.

Questions

1. What negative obligation toward Catholic Action is the duty of all Catholics?
2. What are the only limits to the positive obligation?
3. Name the three degrees on the scale of positive obligation. What does each involve?
4. In which one would you place yourself? Are you doing anything to fulfill the obligations of your degree? If so, what? If not, how will you begin?

Everything, Everywhere, Always

CATHOLIC means universal so Catholic Action must be a **UNIVERSAL** apostolate. Here we have another very meaningful term which upon examination will prove of further help in understanding the providential plan of Pius XI for the re-establishment of the Kingdom of Christ. The first idea that will occur to us spontaneously in this connection is that Catholic Action is universal in the sense that it is to be undertaken

by all Catholics. While this is certainly true, as we have seen, it is not enough because Catholic Action is still more universal in three other ways, namely, in object, in means and in place.

As far as the object of the apostolate is concerned Catholic Action proposes to Christianize everything, individuals, families and society as a whole.

In regard to the individuals the aim will be to Christianize all men, not just a few. Each individual, too, must be entirely Christian so that every phase of his life is renewed according to the plan we outlined for the religious, moral, social and apostolic formation of members in preparation for Catholic Action.

Not only the individual but the family also and society as a whole must be impregnated with the spirit of Christ—all things, therefore, as well as all men. It is more precisely this universality, described above as the nine particular aims of Catholic Action, that distinguishes the latter from all other particular apostolates heretofore existing in the Church.

The third universality of Catholic Action is the universality of means. By this is meant that we propose to use every means—"individual and collective, private and public, religious and social, material and spiritual"—to attain our supreme spiritual goal which is "to restore all things in Christ." The end is spiritual, the activities we develop may be either spiritual or material—whatever is conducive to the end. It need scarcely be added that our means must be pure, means approved by divine and human law. From Catholic Action, said Pius XI "no form of activity must remain excluded or be disesteemed, so far as it in any sense belongs to the Church."

To hold, therefore, that religious activities are no part of Catholic Action but belong rather to sodalities and confraternities is to mistake the whole idea. On the other hand it is just as wrong to condemn social activities as profane and, therefore, outside of the purposes of Catholic Action. The

end is spiritual, we repeat, the means may be spiritual or material.

(Those who are interested in a more accurate analysis of Catholic Action may observe that the above is a rough statement of the case especially as regards the effect of Catholic Action on society as a whole. More carefully stated the object of the apostolate in this phase is the DIRECTION of human society toward a Christian Social Order. The actual building up of the Christian order is a work of direct lay responsibility and pertains rather to Catholic Social Action than to Catholic Action in the proper sense.)

Sometimes it may happen that Catholic Action is hampered in its activities or that the field of the apostolate in one place or another is very narrow. This must not discourage the true militant. "Authentic apostles" says Civardi, "will never be out of work, for they will always be able to find something to do for the glory of God and the spiritual benefit of their neighbor."

The final universality of our apostolate is that of place. Pius XI proclaimed "Catholic Action has no limits of times or places: we can say of it "Always and Everywhere."

Our wonder and admiration is bound to increase as we consider the magnitude of this plan to restore the world to Christ. All the faithful are summoned to the side of their bishop. They are permitted every legitimate means that lie within lay possibility while the whole world and the entire human race is the field of their labor.

Now we can understand how Pius XI would not disclaim that in this he was moved by divine inspiration.

Questions

1. In what sense is Catholic Action universal as regards those who undertake it?
2. Is Catholic Action a mission to all men? Can we recall what we said, in speaking of preparation for the

apostolate, about the formation of the whole man?
What are the nine particular aims of Catholic Action?

3. Is our purpose spiritual? What means do we propose to use? What must be the character of these means? Will the true militant be discouraged when he finds his field of apostolate narrowed?
4. What is meant by universality of place?

AN ORGANIZED APOSTOLATE

Organization

THERE is one element in Catholic Action that we appreciate very slowly. Catholic Action is an organization. It is an organized apostolate. We have used the words so often to describe some apostolic work or act which we've accomplished that it becomes difficult for us to think of those two terms as the name of an organization. We ought rather to say that we "belong to Catholic Action" than to say that we have "done some Catholic Action." Perhaps this will come home to us more thoroughly if we realize that we can speak of Catholic Action in the plural. Thus we might read some day that "the Catholic Actions of San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Portland met in convention."

Referring to his own definition of Catholic Action (the participation of the laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy), Pius XI said "this definition states both the 'organicity' and also the whole beauty of Catholic Action." Again, writing to Cardinal Segura, he insisted "even as Catholic Action has its own proper nature and purpose, so it must have its proper organization, unique, disciplined, and able to co-ordinate all other Catholic forces."

To understand this point well we ought to ask ourselves what we mean by an organization.

Every human being, by the very fact that he is a human being, is very limited and quite weak. Alone, by himself, he cannot get what he needs. In order to provide for his spiritual and material needs he simply has to get together with other men in what we call an organization or a society. This is the reason why philosophers call man a "social being."

An organization, therefore, is a union of several individuals who try to get what they all need by working together.

Hence, unless we have got a number of individuals inter-

ested we have not got an organization. But anyone who has attempted to get a number of human beings together knows that it is not always easy. There are so many different personalities and so many different ideas. There will have to be something about an organization that explains how a unified whole results from so many diverse individuals. What is it? Why it is the unity of purpose. It is because they want to obtain something that is necessary or useful to all, that people are able to band together. Their common goal is the source of their unity.

You may have noticed, moreover, that various organizations with which you are acquainted often drop some of their members from the membership role. Why is this? Because any individual who belongs to an organization must contribute his share of activity in order to attain their common goal. As soon as any member stops working he begins to cripple the organization in the achievement of its purpose. Such members are often referred to as "dead wood" or "dead timber." The members of any society have to be "active," "alive," "vital."

Summing up, therefore, we have three elements that must be present in any organization that has a right to the name: (1) many individuals getting together, (2) getting together because they have a common purpose, a common need, (3) the common purpose is attained by every member doing his part.

Of the effectiveness of "organization" there can be no question. A bundle of rods welded together has more strength than the sum of the strength of each of the rods. "In union there is strength" is a proverb to which there are no exceptions.

This makes it easy to understand why the new apostolate of Catholic Action is to be an organized apostolate. Pius XI wished to co-ordinate all individual apostolates and all particular social apostolates into one organized whole because separately they can do little while together they can conquer the whole world for Christ.

Those of us who are given to philosophizing will note that our day is the day of organization. What are the great organizational movements of the past fifty years (be they Communist, Fascist, Nazi or otherwise) but a wholesale reaction against the preceding Secularism which had been cutting up human society into lonely individuals, one against the other, without strength and without consolation! No wonder men are banding together again. Would that it were not for evil but to restore all things in Christ!

Questions

1. Have we personally ever used the term, Catholic Action, in the sense indicated above?
2. Why is man called "a social being?"
3. What is an organization? What three elements does it include? Why are these elements necessary?
4. What is meant by the "effectiveness" of organization? How does this apply to Catholic Action?
5. Why do we say that the modern tendency toward organization is a reaction to Secularism?

Just Like the Church

CATHOLIC ACTION is organized on a triple plane, parochial, diocesan and national. Why? Because that is the way the hierarchy of the Church is organized and it is with the hierarchy that Catholic Action must co-operate. Let us recall that the Pope exercises supreme authority in the Church and next to the Pope come the Bishops. Some of the authority conferred by Christ on the Pope and Bishops is given by them to the parish priests. All right, there is your hierarchy—Pope, Bishop, parish priest. There, too, is your Catholic Action—national, diocesan and parochial. This is why Catho-

lic Action organization is called "hierarchic." Each plane of it is dependent on a different level of the hierarchy: on the parish priest, the parochial associations; on the Bishop, the diocesan councils; on the Pope (represented within the nation by a Council of Bishops), the national organizations.

Because it is hierarchic Catholic Action is also "unitary" and "concentric." By unitary we mean that there is no such thing as several totally independent organizations of Catholic Action but that all unite to form one unitary whole. This union is accomplished by arranging all associations around the centers of Ecclesiastical Authority. Thus the hierarchy is the basis of "centrality," and centrality gives "unity" to Catholic Action.

The fact that we are dealing here with a lay apostolate makes it evident that Catholic Action will have lay officials and offices that work in connection with the hierarchy. As a matter of fact these offices exist and exercise authority one over another. Thus the diocesan councils direct the parochial associations and the national offices direct the diocesan councils.

All this leads to the obvious conclusion that discipline, *i. e.*, the ability to take directions, must be one of the virtues of the apostle of Catholic Action. This does not mean however that initiative is to be stifled or that central offices should prove to be stumbling blocks instead of promoters of progress.

To make this clear we ought to remember that PIUS XI wanted many different types of association within the grand embrace of Catholic Action. He wanted different societies for men, for women, for young men, for young women. He said that "workers must be the apostles of workers and business men must be the apostles of business men." This is what is meant by "specialized" Catholic Action. Each member must try to influence his own familiars for Christ, those with whom he works or plays or whom he meets at Church. When several militants have the same environment, they get together in a special organization where there is a community of problems, interests, and sympathy. This specialization was reiter-

ated this past April by Pius XII, in his speech on Catholic Action, when he said to the International Federation of Catholic Women's Leagues, "your works of apostolate are numerous and diversified in practice because you adapt them to the differences of countries and times. For the apostle, to be listened to, must speak, not to representatives of some abstract humanity, which would belong to all times, and all conditions, but to a particular group of one's own kind, of a particular age, in a particular country, at a particular level of the social hierarchy. That is one of the golden rules traced by the ever-lamented Pontiff who was the great promoter of Catholic Action and who remains now its invisible inspirer."

It is in such specialization that we find the solution of the relationship between the diocesan and national directive offices and the various associations of Catholic Action. Surely, while discipline must be maintained, there should be no rigidity. The Central offices will exercise their natural competency which is to co-ordinate the activities of the various associations. All "general" activities will therefore proceed from the higher offices in accordance with the "general" aims of Catholic Action.

But in all specific activities the various associations will enjoy a relative independence. Practically, this means that they will be independent, (1) in all the activities they develop to attain their special ends and (2) in the recruiting and training of their members, together with the assignment of such members to the duties proper to Catholic Action.

Questions

1. Why is Catholic Action organized on a triple plane? Whence comes the authority of the Pope and bishops? Where does the parish priest get his authority?
2. How is the Pope represented in the national organization of Catholic Action?

3. Why is the organization of Catholic Action said to be "unitary?" How is this unity attained?
 4. How is the lay organization constituted? What is discipline? Is it necessary here? What difficulty may arise?
 5. What is meant by specialized Catholic Action?
 6. How is the difficulty of discipline and initiative in Catholic Action solved?
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Benefits

THE tremendous and varied organization planned by Pius XI to conquer the world for Christ is beyond the grasp of anyone who will not meditate upon it. It is, beyond doubt, the most extraordinary phenomenon of the modern Church. We may well ask why the Popes decided that this apostolate was to be an organized one. What utility did they envision in the organizational form? As a matter of fact, no other way would be half as effective in the prosecution of the plan to restore the world to Christ.

In the first place the hierarchic and unitary character of the organization will insure our keeping our eyes on the goal and making tremendous strides toward it. It is the task of Pope and Bishops to point the ship of the Church toward Christ and keep it on its course. The connection of Catholic Action with Pope and Bishops should prevent our getting off the course and thus make sure that what we do will really count for CHRIST. The singleness of the organization will insure the magnitude of the effect. Instead of the dissipation of energy that inevitably accompanies the multiplication of separate organizations each with its separate purpose and each perhaps with its narrowness of view, we are to have a union of all forces in one unitary organization to guarantee the effectiveness of our campaign.

Specifically such an organization will make available to every member the instructions, exhortations and assistance of the leaders. Wherever Catholic Action has begun to function, to take one example, the papal encyclicals and instructions have reached millions of people who were previously unacquainted with them. A multitude of books and pamphlets, too, is turned out at central headquarters. The benefit of these to the members is inestimable. Without great organizations such pamphlets, etc., would scarcely be printed much less read. The work of separate and smaller societies in this regard has always been negligible.

Then there is the fellowship of the members in this vast organization, with the Vicar of Christ, himself, as leader. We have all been so much alone. Now we shall find a new solidarity. We shall stand shoulder to shoulder in the cause of Christ and of His Church. It will be a great antidote to the curse of individualism and egoism, that has dogged the footsteps of modern times. It will cure the timidity that has characterized so many Catholics, a timidity deeply lamented by Pius XI. In its place will flourish a new courage, a fighting spirit because we shall feel in our hearts the surge of a new strength that stems from our union with one another in the Mystical Body of Christ and in Catholic Action.

It is not, however, the members alone who benefit from the organization of Catholic Action. It is still more useful in our chief task, the apostolate to others. Doing good to others is not an easy thing. The passions of men and the fury of Satan are aroused by the very appearance of good. To restore Christ in spite of these obstacles requires a strength that will only come from the combined forces of organization.

Finally, the usefulness of an organized apostolate is most apparent in the frontal attack, that must be made on the forces of evil. For Catholic Action must not only do good but it must halt the march of the enemies of Christ. The ministers of evil are many and united. However much they may be divided in other matters they are as one in their hostility to the

Church. Against such an adversary we must oppose arms to arms and organization to organization. Otherwise they cannot even be successfully checked. Here there is not merely a question of the usefulness of organization but of its necessity. With this necessity, the sixth section in our treatment of Catholic Action, we shall now concern ourselves.

Questions

1. What should be the result of the connection of Catholic Action with pope and bishops? Why is Catholic Action to be one unitary organization?
2. What benefit to members will organization effect: (a) in the matter of instructions, pamphlets etc. (b) in the matter of fellowship and solidarity?
3. Why should the apostolate be organized in order to do good?
4. Why must Catholic Action be organized in order to hinder evil?

A NECESSARY APOSTOLATE

No Restoration Without It

VERY many Catholics, ardent ones, too, have remained indifferent to Catholic Action because they do not think of it as a necessity. A good thing? Yes, but not necessary.

Now, what do we mean by saying that a thing is "necessary"? We mean that you cannot achieve any given result without it. Thus the restoration of the modern world to Christ without the help of the laity is humanly impossible. It is in this sense that we say, without any further reservation, that Catholic Action is a "necessity." No blindness, contrariness or laziness of mind can get around that point.

Pius XI told Cardinal Segura that Catholic Action is necessary for three reasons: (1) because, as a result of Secularism, society is growing ever more pagan, (2) because the clergy are insufficient for the work of restoration and therefore need the help of the laity, (3) because only under the direction of the hierarchy can the laity meet the situation adequately. This last is no more than to say that nothing will serve as a substitute for Catholic Action.

Secularism means disregard of God. We have already stated in another connection what Secularism had accomplished and what it stood to accomplish in separating Christ from society. We need only add here that in our day the ravages of Christ's Kingdom are so apparent that they force themselves on anyone who will reflect for only a moment that the modern riot is not just something in the newspapers or a threat to our national or private well-being, but the destruction of the Kingdom of God, itself.

All right! the de-Christianizing of society proceeds apace. What about the clergy? Are they equal to the task that confronts the Church? Pius XI stated that the clergy alone were insufficient numerically and influentially. Just consider the following figures. In the whole world there are roughly 330,000,000 Catholics and 300,000 priests. That means one priest to take care of 1,100 Catholics, a considerable job even

if our modern civilization were Christian. In Godless surroundings it will require heroic effort. Now add to this the task of winning and converting the rest of the human race, of planting Christ's standard on the top of the world. To every one of the priests mentioned above there would fall 5,000 non-Catholics. Without any further comment such figures make the need of lay help a crying, nay, a screaming necessity. Are we forever going to see our redeemed brothers go over the brink without the name of Christ on their lips!

Even against such appalling numerical odds the clergy might succeed in winning society back to Christ if they had access to the world of Christless people and of those who are fast losing their Christ. Beyond the church walls, the parish school and parish activities the priest can scarcely make his voice heard.

In the first place, his preoccupation with the spiritual and material needs of the parish leave no margin of time to maintain any complete personal contact with the souls of his own parish.

Secondly, the non-Catholic world is closed to the priest. They will not listen because they have been trained for generations to see the priest as a sinister figure whose sole intent is to further his own professional and selfish interests by bringing others under his influence.

Thirdly, even if people were willing to listen, the priest would have to get in touch with them. To get in touch with them he would have to go where they are, into their homes, their offices, their factories, workshops and places of entertainment because it is precisely in these spots that the great campaign to root Christ out of men's hearts is being fought and is succeeding. Into such places, however, the priest has no entrance. He is completely barred. On the other hand the lay Catholic not only has access, he is already there! in the homes, offices, workshops and at the parties. He is, moreover, freely received and is unaffected by any suspicion of professional interest.

It becomes quite clear, therefore, that the lay apostolate is the answer; not a hit or miss apostolate or a limited one, but a great unitary organized apostolate equal to the giant task before it. Such is Catholic Action and for it we can "accept no substitutes."

Questions

1. What do we mean by saying that Catholic Action is necessary?
2. What three reasons did Pius XI give?
3. Do we remember anything about the disastrous effects of Secularism?
4. What is meant by numerical insufficiency of the clergy?
5. Give three reasons why the priest is limited and confined in the modern world. What follows in regard to an organized lay apostolate?

Nothing Can Take Its Place

A SOLID phalanx of lay apostles is needed to bring back the world to Christ. This is the only possible conclusion to what we have seen about the pagan conditions of our time and the fewness of the clergy. There is, however, a further point. Does this apostolate have to be the apostolate of Catholic Action? Is Catholic Action necessary in this sense, too. Couldn't this work be done by the splendid Catholic associations and enterprises that already exist? Pius XI gives an explicit answer, "Catholic Action," he said March 19, 1931, "is not only legitimate and necessary, but also **IRREPLACEABLE.**" Indeed, he had already told the Argentine Episcopate, "Catholic Action is the form of the apostolate that corresponds best to the needs of the times; and we have proved it with the practical experience of each day of the vast ministry that we have

for some time been exercising." There you have it! Given the times in which we live nothing can take the place of that type of lay apostolate which we call Catholic Action. Other Catholic societies can and should help it. They cannot fill its shoes.

In the face of such claims it is not inhuman to experience a slight hesitation. In fact the program of Catholic Action has seldom been explained without arousing a certain skepticism. Some may call it "a novelty." Others think it will blow over as soon as the excitement dies down. A few may react with the amusing objection, "If the Holy Father wants all this why doesn't he tell us about it?"

To those who cry "novelty" Pius XI replies in no uncertain tone, "Catholic Action is not a pretty innovation of our own times, as some people imagine—people who are not disposed to accept it, or who do not like this 'pretty innovation.' It existed, and did so better than it does, and ever so long ago. The first diffusion of Christianity, here, too, in Rome, was achieved like that—was done by means of Catholic Action. How should it not be?" (March 19, 1927.)

A Pax Romana commentator after an investigation of the point presents an overwhelming answer to those who expect Catholic Action to die out or who are worried about whether the Holy Father really wants all this. In the first place, he says, "the official and unofficial statements of Pope Pius XI on Catholic Action for only the first ten years of his reign fill a closely-printed volume of about 600 pages, and certainly his statements during the last half of his reign are almost as numerous . . . Such unremitting and intense insistence on a single idea by the Papacy is something which is without parallel in the history of the Church. The closest approach to it is to be found in the preaching of the crusades." In the second place we have, "the direct statement of Pope Pius XI that he considered Catholic Action AN INSPIRATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE BEGINNING OF A NEW ERA IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH."

It will not be amiss to conclude this sixth section with a brief statement of what is NEW in Catholic Action. In this way its importance will stand out in clearer relief.

1. Catholic Action adds to the lay apostolate the official mandate of the hierarchy.

2. It rediscovers the apostolate as an inseparable part of Catholic professional and social life. To emphasize this it has a new technique, "the apostolate of like to like," of lawyer to lawyer, of workingman to workingman, of employer to employer.

3. Side by side with it has come a new development of the dynamism, the activity inherent in Catholic Doctrines like those of the Kingship of Christ and of the Mystical Body of Christ.

4. In its unitary organization it is arousing a spirit of "togetherness" that is equal to the gigantic tasks it confronts.

5. It develops new means for the formation of a "social conscience" as well as an individual conscience.

6. In it "thinking with the Church" is more deeply realized.

7. It is a means to unite all other existing Catholic societies and enterprises without supplanting or weakening them.

This last point will supply the matter for the seventh and concluding section in our consideration of Catholic Action.

Questions

1. Is Catholic Action necessary in the sense of "irreplaceable"? Why?
2. Is Catholic Action just a novelty?
3. How would you answer those who say it is not to be taken too seriously?
4. Did it ever strike you that much is new in Catholic Action? Discuss this newness. Can you add any points to the seven?

THE AUXILIARIES

Other Societies

IN the Catholic Church there have always been many associations and societies. They exhibit an immense variety and cover a wide field whether in spiritual formation and worship or in apostolic works of piety and charity. A question rises as to the relationship between such religious associations and Catholic Action. On account of the universality of the Catholic Action apostolate it is easily seen that this is no small question. A definite solution will come, no doubt, only after long experience. In the meanwhile there are certain principles and instructions of the Holy See which must form the basis of any practical solution.

The difference between Catholic Action and other religious associations such as sodalities, confraternities, charitable societies, dramatic societies was considered before in our analysis of the definition of Catholic Action. They differ in means, purpose, apostolate, organization, hierarchic mandate and in standards of membership.

In indicating their relationship papal documents designate the other societies as "auxiliaries of Catholic Action." They state, however, that between them there is to be no opposition or confusion. On the contrary, "mutual good will," "cordial understanding" and "mutual co-operation" are to intercede.

Opposition is, of course, completely excluded. How could there rightly be any opposition where the same ultimate aim, the glory of God and the salvation of souls, animates both? But confusion, too, is prohibited. No religious association is to cease its work on account of Catholic Action, nor is it to assume a Catholic Action pattern, nor should it be absorbed by Catholic Action.

Positively, it is required that the two should aim at real co-operation. Time and again Pius XI insisted on this point. Time and again he stressed the obligation of mutual good will

and cordial understanding without which co-operation becomes impossible.

Catholic Action and religious associations must respect one another. It is a work of Christian charity to give proper esteem to societies whose dignity and value is unquestionable. The Church, herself, sets an example by repeated words of praise for each.

But such good will is not enough. Indeed a warm attitude that is not intelligent may be merely flabby. We must strive to understand one another, to know what each society is trying to do. Thus, we prepare the way for that collaboration which Pius XI so sincerely desired, aye, commanded. "All those forms of good (the auxiliary works) CAN AND MUST, assist the central enterprise of Catholic Action. In a very special way, the Pope expects to see the best off-shoots, the best auxiliaries, coming from so many of its sons, so well prepared."—(March 30, 1930.)

Then in a Pontifical Letter published the same day three ways are indicated in which this assistance is to be provided. "Even as Catholic Action will take place to assist (the auxiliary works) as best it can, so these must continue to lend their providential aid to Catholic Action, either by the most efficacious . . . contribution of their prayer, or again, by making the grandeur, necessity and advantages of Catholic Action better known—by exhorting and directing, on suitable occasions, their own members to take part in it." On its side, Catholic Action may help by urging its members to join such religious associations as respond best to their personal spiritual needs and religious vocation.

Practically speaking, conflict and overlapping may be avoided by conferences between directors of Catholic Action and the religious associations. This may often result in their joining forces to perform some act of mutual interest.

A special problem concerns those societies which may be called Catholic Action in a wide sense, societies which engage in an apostolate of charity, of the press, of the drama, and so

forth. These, it is true, are also "auxiliaries" and therefore "can and must assist" Catholic Action. But with them it is a question of co-ordination. Should the case at hand be a matter of real mutual contribution, this co-ordination might involve some genuine connection of the auxiliary with Catholic Action. Or again it might be accomplished by placing representatives of the auxiliaries on the central committees of Catholic Action. In any case it will be up to the Hierarchy to judge the best form of co-ordination.

Questions

1. What do the various religious associations in the Church do? Why does the question of their relationship with Catholic Action rise?
2. How are they designated in papal documents?
3. What two things are excluded in this relationship?
4. What is meant by mutual good will? Let's see if we could actually name any religious association and state just what it is trying to do.
5. What three things should the auxiliaries do for Catholic Action and what can it do for them?
6. How could co-ordination between the apostolate of Catholic Action and other apostolic societies be worked out?

Social-Economic Field

IT is extremely difficult for a human person to exercise his right of leading a decent moral and religious life in a society whose institutions do not respect this right. For this reason we hold that social and economic problems are religious and moral problems. Of them Leo XIII says, "they can find no solution worth anything without recourse to Religion and the Church." Hence it is easily seen why Catholic Action is an apostolate to social and economic institutions as well as to

individuals. Indeed it is one of the principal aims of Catholic Action to get the principles of Christ's Gospel realized in such institutions.

Due to the seriousness of social and economic problems in the modern world, we have had in recent times many appropriate encyclicals. These in turn have given rise to many enterprises which concern themselves with the material well-being of certain groups. Such enterprises may take the form of associations to promote the interests of some special class such as workingmen, or of co-operatives and credit unions to bring financial assistance to their members. Now in so far as the purposes of these societies are material, they do not fall under the jurisdiction of the Church. Since, however, they pursue these purposes in subordination to the principles of the gospel, they must look to the Church for religious and moral guidance.

Given, therefore, on the one hand the aims of Catholic Action and, on the other hand, the need of these splendid social and economic works, it is not hard to see that a very special question rises about the relationship between Catholic Action and such enterprises. Certainly these works are not official Catholic Action. Certainly they are Catholic Action in a wide sense. If we have said this of the auxiliary societies mentioned above, we must say it of these economic works. But here is the special point: while the social and economic enterprises are like other societies in being subordinate to Catholic Action which, according to the disposition of the Holy See, is charged with "making the best of and directing toward the apostolate any and every work and association," the close pursuit by these works of one of the most important aims of Catholic Action, the Christianization of society, makes them rather **DISTINCT** than **SEPARATE** from Catholic Action. This is to say that they are a means of which Catholic Action must make use. Hence it is in the sphere of co-operation between them that we shall have to look for their special relations. Summing up the papal instructions, Monsignor

Civardi states that Catholic Action should help the social-economic works:

(1) By promoting them when they would be useful to the aims of Catholic Action and do not already exist. But even when they are inaugurated by Catholic Action, these works should be allowed to run themselves; that is, they are autonomous in all matters that are purely economic, technical and administrative. Their primary aim being a material aim, they do not in this depend on the Church nor, therefore, on Catholic Action, but on themselves so that they act on their own responsibility.

(2) By assisting them lest they deviate from the rules of faith or the rules of morality. Hence the first task of Catholic Action will be to formulate and defend the principles of Christian social doctrine so that the social-economic works may develop their program accordingly. Furthermore, Catholic Action ought to take care of the religious, moral and cultural preparation of the directors of these works. Finally, it can lend religious and moral assistance to the members so that their spiritual advancement may keep pace with their material improvement.

On their side, the social and economic works must collaborate in the apostolate of Catholic Action:

(1) By accepting the assistance and direction that Catholic Action, as representative of the Hierarchy, offers in religious and moral matters. For they must keep in mind what Leo XIII said when he wrote in *Rerum Novarum*, "the true and radical remedy can come from nowhere but from religion," and that without the practice of the Christian virtues "the wise 'regulations,' reputed to be so efficacious, will prove broken reeds in the hour of need."

(2) By co-operating with the general campaigns of Catholic Action and in every case to co-ordinate their own activities with it. They should, moreover, make Catholic Action well known to all their members and even persuade their best formed members to give in their names to Catholic Action.

Questions

1. Why does the apostolate of Catholic Action include social and economic institutions?
2. What is meant by social-economic works? Can you think of any existing organizations like these?
3. What do we mean when we say that social-economic works are distinct rather than separate from Catholic Action?
4. How should Catholic Action help them?
5. How should they help Catholic Action?

RESUME

WE come now to the conclusion of our treatment on the principles of Catholic Action. Our purpose has been to catch a glimpse of this great plan to reconquer the world for Christ and to call attention to the enormous amount of detailed instructions that have issued from the Holy See. Here we wish to review the matter treated and sum up what we have seen.

The whole thing falls readily into seven sections comprising (1) our approach to the idea of Catholic Action, (2) its definition and aims, (3) preparation for the apostolate, (4) the apostolate itself, (5) organization, (6) necessity, (7) the auxiliary societies.

(1) Our approach to the Idea of Catholic Action. The two introductory considerations were designed to jolt the reader out of any possible complacency about the modern world and the solution of the modern problem. We said things are in a pretty bad fix. The Church's answer is Catholic Action and Catholics simply don't know enough about it. This we followed quickly with a further statement in order to rid the reader of any superficial idea that Catholic Action might be "just another movement." We said the apostle of Catholic Action had to begin by reforming himself! Winning others comes second.

(2) The Definition of Catholic Action with its General and Particular Aims. Having aroused, as we fondly hoped, the interest of the reader, it was now incumbent on us to state just what we were after in Catholic Action. The shortest road to understanding a thing is to find out its purpose. So after analyzing our definition of Catholic Action as the co-operation of the laity in the apostolate of the Hierarchy, we at once set forth its general aim which is to restore our rejected Christ in individuals, in families and in society at large. But it is hard for humans to get a solid grip on general aims so we had to reduce this generality to particular fields. Since

Catholic Action proposes to RESTORE Christ where He has been rejected, we thought it best to preface our enumeration of the nine particular fields by a short history of the successes of Secularism which is the very force that has dethroned Christ in the modern world. The work to be done was spread before us.

(3) Preparation for the Apostolate of Catholic Action. We were now ready to tackle the business of getting ready for the tasks to be accomplished. This much was evident; without preparation there would be no apostolate. To give Christ to others we have to have Him ourselves. As Pius XI said "No one gives what he hasn't got." The training of the apostle must proceed along four lines, spiritual, moral, social and apostolic. These we examined in detail.

(4) The Actual Apostolate. Here we asked the meaning and implications of being an apostle. Then we saw that all Catholics were not only invited but obliged to be "apostles." This obligation finds its deepest expression in the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ which is so important that it becomes the ultimate reason for our salvation or damnation in the words of Christ, "What you have done to others, you have done to Me." But our obligation admits of degrees and though all must contribute something, only the few will respond with entire generosity to dedicate themselves to the task. Besides being obligatory, the Apostolate of Catholic Action is auxiliary to the Hierarchy and universal. Its job is to co-operate with the Hierarchy and to co-operate in all things, individuals, family, and society at large, and in every place, and with every means, spiritual or material, provided they are pure means and really contribute to the restoration of Christ's Kingdom.

(5) An Organized Apostolate. This point is treated next as a sort of crown to the preceding section. It may be just here that the full significance of Pope Pius XI's gigantic plan might break on us for the first time. The great Pontiff must have felt that the instruments of which the Church had made

use in the past were simply powerless to meet the modern situation. An immense amount of good work was being done but it was not being done in sufficient unison. To pile all these separate apostolates one on another, to weld them into one great instrument so that the effect for Christ would be equal at least to the forces against Him, such was the substance of his dream. He wanted organization and to make sure of the unity, he built the movement around the Hierarchy.

(6) The Necessity of Catholic Action. After our eyes have been opened to the magnitude of the apostolate envisioned by Pius XI, we are apt to feel some hesitation. Too many of us are men "of little faith." Lest we quail before the task we ought to understand that Catholic Action is not just a possible solution of modern problems but our only solution. Reject it and there is no other way. Accept it and a new day is at hand.

(7) The Auxiliaries of Catholic Action. Our last section is by way of corollary. Catholic Action must combine every other lay activity in the Church. Otherwise we shall not have the cumulative apostolate we emphasized above. The relation of Catholic Action to societies of purely spiritual aim, to apostolic undertakings, and social-economic works demands good will, understanding and mutual co-operation.

Such are the principles of Catholic Action! Must we not find the way to make them concrete? What are YOU going to do about it?

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