

ADV 2937

25

THE  
QUEEN'S  
WORK  
DISCUSSION  
CLUB  
SERIES

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**MORE**  
**EVERYDAY**  
**SAINTS**

DISCUSSION OUTLINE

*by*  
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A QUEEN'S WORK  
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THE QUEEN'S WORK

**Deacidified**

## DISCUSSION I

### WHITHER AWAY?

Before a person can make a change in himself, he must know that a change is needed. He must be convinced that his new state will be better for him than his present one. It is human for a person to want something before he will lift a finger to gain it. You cannot want anything, be it a cigaret or a penthouse, until you know that it exists, what it is, and what it is worth to you. A need for knowledge and desire holds for sanctification or sainthood as well as for anything else.

Unfortunately there is a quirk in our American makeup that causes us to shy away from the idea and the appellation of saint. You can give a man any number of compliments or heap upon him huge imprecations; you can call an American boy or girl or woman or man almost anything; but tell any one of them that he is a saint, and he begins to squirm and to appear decidedly uncomfortable. He seems to have the idea that to be a saint and to be a freak or a mild monstrosity are one and the same thing.

#### Project

(It may be well for the group to pause here and have the leader take a consensus of opinion of these two points:

(1. Is the above statement about American ideas of sainthood true?

(2. If so, what reasons can be assigned for this attitude?)

Such an attitude would be unimportant if it did not run completely contrary to God's ideas and wishes. That God does disagree with us can be seen from what He said through St. Paul: "This is the will of God, your sanctification." And again: "You are called to be saints." There you have the clash. Good Americans feel a bit foolish about the whole matter; yet God tells them that whether or not they like it, He wants them to be saints.

What to do about it?

Undoubtedly the first thing for us to do is to find out just what God means by sanctity, by being a saint. He can't be wrong. Therefore we must be. If we but learn in what sainthood really consists, we shall find that our own ideas about it have been awry. More than that: Once

those same ideas are clarified, we shall drop our disinclination to become saints. We shall find that such a becoming is the very thing that in our heart of hearts we all want, even though we do not realize it.

## Discussion

The rest of this discussion period can be taken up profitably in the following manner. Let each of the group give his or her ideas and answers to the ensuing questions. The intellectual humility engendered will be an excellent first step toward sainthood. The answers can be used later, if they are taken down by the secretary, as a sort of flashback when the full number of discussions has been completed. Then each can see where errors have been removed and wrong notions put right.

1. What is sanctity? In what do you think it consists?
2. Do you think there are many saints in the world?
3. Do you believe that you personally are a saint?
4. Are you honestly and firmly convinced that you ought to be a saint?
5. How would you know whether or not you are a saint?
6. Do you know people whom you consider saints? What qualities do they have which makes you think them saints?
7. Do you think that to become a saint you must be extraordinary or do extraordinary things such as some of the saints listed in the Church's calendar did?
8. Discuss together this statement of St. Paul's: "You are called to be saints."
  - a) To whom was he writing?
  - b) Does his statement refer to you too? If not, why?
  - c) Is it true that we are missing out in our lifework, our vocation, if we fail to become saints?
9. What need is there of saints today in the United States? in your own home town? in your school? in your place of business? in your parish? in your own home?



## DISCUSSION II SANCTITY A HUMAN THING

### Part I

#### 1. Saints Are Human

Since our discussions will have to do with becoming saints, it is well to realize at the very start that we are talking about very human human beings. It is sometimes forgotten that it is the *whole* person—*nothing* left out—that goes into and works at sanctity. Be it known right here that sainthood is not a ghostly, wraithlike, disembodied thing. It is the possession of a very much alive, very flesh-and-blood person. It deals with things profane as well as sacred. It uses for materials not only grace and the sacraments but such earthly things as “dates” and socks and cars. It is an alchemy that changes *all* things in life into things divine.

Now despite the fact that we have been living with human beings all our lives, and with those humans closest to us—ourselves—we find that we have still much to learn about human nature. Since the saint is also human, the starting point of our discussions should be right here. What does it mean to be a human being?

#### Project

(Have one of the group stand up. He represents each person present, in fact every human being. The other members look at him, study him. They are then to jot down whatever they see about this person that is common to all other people. The fact that the standee has, for example, flaming-red hair is not to be noted; the fact that he has a head and hair is to be noted.)

Five minutes can be taken up in this study. Then going the rounds of the members, draw up a list of facts, qualities, characteristics—this to be done by the secretary. This composite list should give a fairly good idea of what the group thinks goes into the makeup of a human—as far as they can gather just from appearances. These items should then be compared with what follows in these discussions.

#### 2. You Are

To make the whole matter more personal, more concrete, more pertinent and interesting, from now on get away from talking about people in general and discuss that most interesting person in the world, you yourself.

We start off with the statement that you *are*, that you exist. Fifty or a hundred years ago you just were not. At that time you were only a possibility. You could have existence, but you just did not have it actually. You were but a hope in your mother's heart, a dream of your father's, a thought in the mind of God.

Today you are, you exist. You have stepped onto the stage of actually existing beings. You now have your part to play in the world of trees and wind and starshine, the world of country hamlets and sprawling ugly cities, of buildings and motorcars and bakeries.

This idea is inserted here for one reason. The primacy of being is stressed here because it gives introduction to a most important truth about sanctity—a truth which will be taken up more in detail later—that you must *be* before you can act.

### 3. You Have a Material Body

One of the items that headed the list of nearly everybody who examined the person who stood up as your representative at the beginning of the discussion was the human possession of what men call a body: a head, arms, legs, and a torso.

One thing is immediately certain. No matter what anyone may endearingly call you, you are not an angel. You are not a spirit. You have a body, and that body with all of its parts and functions enters into the achievement of the sanctity to which you are called. Yours is to be the holiness, not of a specter, but of a human being, possessing a material human body.

#### Project

(At this point have the members of the group give their ideas of the meaning of the words matter and material. Check them against what follows.)

If you compare your body with other things that men call material—a piano, a house, a mountain, an atom, an airplane—you will find that that same body has characteristics in common with these other things. Step on a scale, for example, and you will find you have weight. Let someone measure you as well as the suits you are wearing, and you will find both have a definite length and breadth. Further examination will show that like rubber you pos-

sess elasticity; like a ship, displacement; like iron, inertia; like a wall, impenetrability; like mercury, density.

Further if you will betake yourself to a laboratory and let yourself be subjected to various chemical analyses, you will find within yourself certain elements and compounds—water, salt, phosphorous, sulphur.

### Project

(At this point have the members of the group give their ideas as to how the matter that is found in themselves differs from similar matter found, for example, on a match-head or in an iron pipe. How would you define life? Work out together a definition that will satisfy all present.)

### 4. . . . That Is Living

Materialists think that there is no difference between you and the chair on which you are seated at the moment. They say that you are not living, that you are merely "matter that has organized itself." Sometime, when you feel like going quietly mad, just try to fathom that idea. The fact is that you *are* living. Though life is one of the hardest things on earth to define, it is one of the things most obvious to experience. Though you may not be able to put it in exact words, you know with certainty that matter in a living thing and matter in a nonliving thing are quite different—in fact, essentially different.

Various chemical compounds and elements have been brought together in you in such a way that they make up an organism, a living whole whose every part is so related to every other part and to the whole that you have a complete vitalized unity. As a result you have the power of self-movement. This self-movement technically is called immanent action, that is, the power of an agent to produce an action that begins and terminates within itself, e.g., sap circulating in trees, blood circulating within you, thinking, loving. This immanent activity is absent in nonliving objects.

You have a part of you called a head and at your other extremity two useful but rather unbeautiful things called feet. Cut off either your head or your feet, and they are no earthly use to the rest of your body—a thing which is not true of the roof of a house or the bricks in its foundation, for these can be used in the building of another house. Let the head and the feet remain attached to the body however,



and these parts work together beautifully for their own good and the good of the whole body. The feet carry the body where the head directs, and the head directs the feet to such places that will be most beneficial to the whole body.

Food, even when rich in vitamins, is really as dead as can be until it is taken into yourself. Then it is changed. It ceases to be dead. It becomes part of you. It lives by you, and you live by it.

## 5. Bodily Manifestation of Life Project

(Before undertaking this section of the discussion, see if the members can point out for themselves various vital functions as they appear to their senses and are possessed in common by the lowly vegetable and the frisky puppy.)

You find yourself craving food and drink. You take some into your mouth and chew, food and drink slide down into your stomach and are digested. These buns and this coffee become a part of you, not by being plastered on from without, as mud might be, but by being taken into yourself, by being worked on by your internal organs, and by being assumed from those organs into your body. As a result of this self-nourishment (nutrition) you find yourself increasing in size, sometimes to alarming proportions. Old waste matter is thrown off, new materials take its place. You find yourself growing (growth). You find within yourself also organs, functions, drives, and urges which manifest that you share in God's creative power—that under proper conditions you can reproduce another human being made to His image and likeness (reproduction).

Further investigation shows that you have yet other organs and aptitudes and powers we call senses. When these senses are stimulated, they produce a change in themselves and hence in you. They effect a new state of consciousness or feeling you did not have before these senses went into action. You are skating, for example. You have a feeling of well-being, of exhilaration. Then your skate strikes a bit of branch frozen into the ice, and down you go! For a moment you sprawl there, dazed. Then you experience a sensation, in fact, a whole batch of very violent sensations. You see stars; you hear a roar in your ears; you taste salt tears that have begun to flow; you feel wounded all over.



## 6. Digging in Deeper

If a person observes human beings long, he will find that the commonest expressions used by them are "I wish . . . I want . . . I'd like . . ."

These phrases are a clue to the fact that men and women have within themselves earnest wishes, cravings, longings for a whole variety of things. If you examine yourself, you will find that these longings are for definite things, things near at hand and considered attainable. Though the child may cry for the moon, the well-balanced adult does not lose much time craving for things which are completely beyond his reach.

Further observation and probing will show that these definite and concrete desires of yours spring from possessions yet deeper in you. They arise from what are called urges, drives, or instincts buried deep in the human being and working on the fringe of consciousness or below the conscious level.

### Project

(Since there are so many classifications of these instincts and urges, there is no reason why the members of the group should not work out their own catalog of them. Go from actions or expressed desires such as hunger, flight from harmful or unpleasant things, etc., to the drive from which these expressed desires arise, namely in this instance the drive to self-preservation.)

## 7. Action!

From all that has been said above, it will be seen that all these manifestations of life are activities or actions.

### Project

(At this point discuss the essential difference [which means what?] between life and nonlife. Get from the group a common definition of action. Now go on with the discussion.)

Vital action may be described as a response on the part of a living being to stimulation coming from within or from outside himself. The response itself remains within the living being. It is seen to be, then, a process of change, a reaching out hungrily for greater perfection or the use of some perfection already attained. We can define perfection

as "any respect in which a thing can be completed in its being."

Hunger for example is a reaching out for bodily completion in energy. It is a stimulating thing and sets in motion those actions that take you to the icebox to devour whatever you may find to your liking there. After you have eaten, you are changed; you are now more complete in being than you were before you had eaten and drunk.

Why, you may ask, all this bother about action? It is simply to be tucked away for future reference, like the notion of being. You will see later that it is not enough for you to be holy. You must act holily as well. Vital action is of the very essence of sanctity. If there is one thing that sainthood does not imply, it is deadness, nonvitality, inaction. Sanctity is rather something very much alive. In fact, it is life, life eternal.

### Discussion

1. What three main ideas have come out of this present discussion which are to be inserted into the idea of sanctity that we are building?

2. How do your own previous ideas and definitions of existence, matter and the material, life, and action compare with those given above? Which ideas do you think the more clear?

3. Work out together in just what holiness would consist if there were no more to a person than what you have already seen. Show how holiness would be a matter of: (a) living according to the rules of good physical health, proper exercise, rest, food, recreation; (b) a proper harmonizing of your instincts and drives to fit in with life with your fellows. Do you think that these things will be found to enter into the full notion of sainthood?

4. From actual experience show how something awry in the realm of nutrition can affect you in the realm of sensation or longing, e.g., malnutrition affecting your sight. What does this teach you about an organism?

5. All other things being equal, would you say that a person who is well-adjusted on the plane of vegetative life (nutritional, growth, reproductive) and on the plane of animal life (sensation and instinct) is better able to become a saint than one maladjusted on these planes? What reasons have you for your answer?

DISCUSSION III  
SANCTITY A HUMAN THING  
Part II  
Project

(Recall the highlights of what has been discovered already. You have given yourself a surface examination, have decided what you are to all appearances. You have found out certain things about human life and living. The question that arises now is: "Is there anything more to you than what you have seen already?" [In the answer to this question any knowledge derived from revelations is ruled out for the present.] When the answers have been boiled down to a common residue, compare them with what follows.)

**1. Somehow Double**

There are men and women in the world who say that man is but one thing throughout. These people, the monists or only-one-ists, declare that he is as much of a piece as is a stretch of cloth woven from one skein, a bottle blown from one dipping, an angleworm, a ghost or a spirit.

If these people refuse to admit that there is anything more in man than electrons, atoms, molecules, then they are called materialists. If on the other hand they hold that matter is but an illusion, that spirit is the only really existent being, they are called idealists.

The sane dualist, however, simply by using his head in a normal fashion, arrives at the conclusion that man is somehow double, that he is not a simple unity made up of either matter or spirit alone.

**2. Arriving at This Fact**

Since all of you are sane, you can arrive at the following conclusion—and more—by this process. Keeping within the realm of ordinary everyday experience, you find the following facts true about yourselves.

1) From what you have already unearthed, you realize that you have such qualities within yourself as mass, inertia, height, shape, color, etc. Now all this points to the fact that you are material, at least partially. By such findings your idealistic monists are of course thrown out of court, although your materialistic friends are still there, saying, "I told you so."



2) You have also found that there is a whole set of activities such as seeing traffic lights, touching velvet, tasting sweet pies or bitter medicines, hearing the whispered words of love, smelling the Friday fish afrying. And again our materialists turn up their noses and say, "Sure you're alive; but all of those facts you have just mentioned can be explained by living matter alone."

3) Further experience will show you, however, that there is a struggle of some sort going on within you. It is a cold morning. You are comfy in bed. You are sleepy and tired after last night's dance. The alarm rings, and you know it is time to get up if you are to go to Mass. Then the debate begins. One part of you says, "Come, come, now! Out of bed and off to church!" Another voice pipes up and replies, "Wait a minute; wait a minute. Not so fast. You just lie there and take it easy." How explain this conflict if you are one piece of matter throughout?

4) Finally if you will examine your experience yet more deeply, you will find that you can . . .

a) Make a judgment: War *is* hell!

b) React to nonmaterial motives: A pure-spirit God wants me to go to church.

c) Look to a goal over the horizon of the moment: I will become a religious in two years.

d) Determine ends—aims, goals—and the means to achieve them: A vacation trip, by water.

e) Choose between right and wrong: I won't steal that ring.

f) Check body-drives: I refuse to slay my enemy.

g) Perceive suprasensible relationships: This boy is that woman's son.

h) Reflect perfectly on yourself, knowing it is you who think these thoughts even as you are thinking them.

i) Know that there is a whole world of reality that neither the bench under you nor the dog under the bench can know, a world wherein beauty and justice and love exist.

And turning to your friends, you say, "And now, Mr. Materialist, it is time for you to exit too. You're brazen, God knows, but certainly not so brassy as to say that such activities as these just mentioned can be performed by matter or by merely material beings."



### 3. A Spiritual Soul Our Only Conclusion

You have come then to this realization that you are double; that though you are one you, you are made up of two parts, not as a two-ply board is double, but rather as an electric wire and the electricity that enlivens it are double. You are two in one—or better, one in two, which make up one you.

One part of you is material. And the other part? Why first of all it is a soul. For you are living, and everything living, be it potato or prince, must have a soul or life-giving principle. Second, it is a spiritual soul. It must be a spiritual soul. There is no middle way outside of man himself wherein matter and spirit are intertwined; no other middle course between matter and spirit, between the material and the spiritual. It is only by admitting that you have a spiritual soul within you that you can explain all the spiritual activities which were discovered above in section 4, for the spiritual can no more come from the material than bread can come from stones.

Your soul is spiritual; and because it is so, you find that you hungrily pursue truth. You think; you have a mind, an intellect. You can and do know not merely material things, as a robin may be said to know its nest, but also such intangibles as loyalty and goodness and beauty. Because you have a soul, you have a will, which unceasingly thirsts for things that you think good for you. You not only desire a good meal; you can will to be good yourself. You can long, not merely for loving, but for love.

#### Project

(Right here the members of the group might be asked to give their ideas as to what all this new discovery has to do with the main subject we are pursuing, namely sanctity and holiness.)

### 4. All This and Sanctity?

At last we have arrived at a complete picture of you as a human being. You are neither an angel nor an animal but a strange intermingling of both. And sanctity is something woven from the stuffs that have gone into you. It is a human thing, a matter of human action, that takes place in both body and soul. But since it is on the plane of thought-life and will-life that a man is peculiarly human, since it is here that he pushes up over the rim of the

vegetative and the animal realms, then it is upon this human plane especially that his sanctity will have its scope. It is in soul action, in thinking and loving and in the effect of these over the rest of him, that a man becomes a saint.

Even as just a human thing sanctity is pretty wonderful. But hang on; you just haven't seen anything yet!

### Discussion

1. Let each one in the group give five examples from his own experience which indicate that he is somehow double.

2. Give personal examples from common everyday experience—or better, expressions used in everyday conversations which show that others feel themselves double.

3. Work out together examples of peculiarly human activities which have been manifested in connection with this meeting right here, e.g., coming to the meeting freely. Assign these activities correctly to the intellect or to the will.

4. Why cannot judging, reacting to spiritual motives, choosing between right and wrong, perceiving suprasensible relationships, and perfect self-reflection be activities of mere material beings?

5. Work out together good practical definitions of: (a) material and (b) spiritual.

6. How would you prove to someone who doesn't believe it that he has . . .

a) a soul?

b) a spiritual soul?

7. From a polling of the group draw up a list of those characteristics which would be possessed by a human—and an only-human—saint.

8. From reason alone determine what further elements would go into or could go into such sanctity.

9. Judging from what we have discussed so far, do you think that sanctity is a merely human thing? Or do you think that it must go further to be real sanctity? Why?

10. Together make out a list of questions that will answer the query "What makes a man a good human being?" Apply these to yourselves. You have a checklist that will give you an idea of how good a human being you are.

## DISCUSSION IV

### Project

(Have one of the group members express aloud the first five thoughts that come to his mind. Then with questions work out together how he acquired those thoughts. You will find that his thoughts came either from direct experience with a certain old man, for example, or from listening to a radio or a conversation, or from having put two already acquired ideas together and made a third. Hence you will find that the darkness of a man's mind is enlightened from two main sources: from direct personal experience [a man gets his feet wet] and from accepting the word of another [a newspaper account, for example]. Applying this fact to our own subject, we get the information in the following discussion.)

#### 1. Retrospect

All the knowledge of yourselves that you have gained from the preceding discussions has come to you from the use of your eyes, your ears, or your other senses and from the use of your intellect and your reason to elaborate the data that has come to you over the avenues of sense, or from what others have told you about yourself.

There is one person however who hasn't spoken yet. There is one light which has not yet been cast upon you. You have used your own unaided human knowledge-getting powers. You have also heard human testimony. It is time now that you give God a chance to speak, that you let Him shine some of His divine light into your minds.

#### 2. We Catholics and Faith

We Catholics are often made the butt of much sarcasm and sneering. With much ridicule we are accused of "accepting everything on faith." We are looked upon as traitors disloyal to the supremacy of the unaided intellect and reason of man.

Our "crime" is not so much that we accept things on mere faith as that we accept them on divine faith. That we should give credence to men is perfectly all right. Experience teaches us that a vast amount of the knowledge that packs these heads of ours is gained from the testimony of others, from the statement of facts by people who have seen and known the things they are talking about and hence are competent to tell us of them.



## Project

(Let the group pause here for a moment and give from their own lives examples of that very day wherein human faith or belief in human beings has played a part, e.g., a person's own legitimacy, faith in the sign on a streetcar, the purchase of a box of cereal without fear that it will be sawdust-filled.)

No; we are not scorned because we accept things on human testimony and live our lives very much according to it. We are "fools" for believing, not what a man tells us, but what God tells us. And we ask right here: Why is that so foolish?

### 3. On His Word

#### Project

(Let one of the group, A, tell another, B, a certain truth. Then let B make an act of faith in the thing told him. Finally by discussion work out the elements that have gone into B's acceptance of what A has told him. What two qualities were necessary in A before B would give this assent?)

From the project you have just worked out you should have found that with human faith a new shaft of the light of knowledge shines in the mind. It should also have become clear to you that faith is nothing more or less than the mind's acceptance of a new truth on the authority—that is, the knowing and the veracious word—of another. If Jack, who certainly knows, tells you that he comes from Chicago, and if you can see no earthly reason why he should lie about the matter, then you know without fear of error that he does come from the Windy City. You believe this fact on his word. You have added to your sum of human knowledge by making an act of human faith.

How sensible it is then for anyone to accept some truth on God's word. After all, He is all-knowing and hence knows everything that there is to be known in every way that it is possible to know. He cannot possibly be fooled or mistaken. He is all-holy and hence cannot lie or deceive anyone or allow anyone to be deceived by what He says. His authority is infinitely above any that the best of



humans can have. You would be a complete fool then not to believe Him if and when He speaks.

By reason of your acceptance of God's revealing word a new and brilliant light is cast into the dim twilight that mere human reason gives. You see now by a light divine. You think not merely human thoughts but thoughts that are godlike, divine, that are God's own.

### Discussion

1. Before leaving the present discussion, be sure that everyone understands clearly what faith is in general, how it is motivated, how it differs from direct experience, what the meaning of authority is as used here, how human and divine faith coincide and differ.

2. What is meant by divine revelation? Why is it needed by men? (Cf. step No. 3 in *Sixteen Steps to the Church*, by H. O'H. Walker, S. J., and E. J. Fortman, S. J. Published by The Queen's Work.)

3. Where is this body of divine revelation to be found at the present time? N.B. Be sure that it is clear to everyone that sacred Scripture is but a *part* of total revelation.

### Possible Project

(At this point in the discussions the group leader can assign the New Testament in such a way that the members will cover all of it. Each group within the group is to read the assigned portion. Each group is to seek and discover in the assigned part what God has said of His idea of sanctity. Each of the remaining discussions can start with one of these smaller groups' report on the findings in the matter.)

## DISCUSSION V

### A NEW CREATURE

#### Project

(Report from one of the subgroups on its New Testament findings.)

(When these are finished, effect a minor blackout by turning out the lights in the room where the meeting is taking place. Those present should try to discern one another as best they can in the darkness. After a few minutes turn the lights on again.)

## 1. With a New Being

To step from the realm of reason into that lighted with God's revelation is like stepping from the dim darkness just experienced here at the meeting into the light that the snap of an electric-light button brought about. In reason's dimness you saw man as man. Now you will see him as God wants him to be.

God Our Father might have permitted you to be merely a human being, with your natural powers of body and soul, powers of nerve and muscle and sinew, of drive and urge and desire, of imagination and emotion, of mind and will. He might have left you to work out your life with this equipment here on earth in a way appropriate to that human nature of yours and thus to arrive at perfect natural happiness obtained through a veiled possession of Him. He might have left you to grope your way through life to that goal and never have broken the silence of His inaccessible Godhead.

Such an act however could never have satisfied so generous a God. He is an all-loving and hence an all-outpouring God. He would give you all that He possibly could of Himself and still have you a human being. With His infinite wisdom and His infinite power He set to work and formed and fashioned you anew. Putting creating, sanctifying, or saint-making grace in your soul, He swept you up onto an entirely new plane of being. This new grace-soul gave you a created share in His own divine life, His own divine nature. Through this sharing, God adopted you into the divine family. Through this grace-soul He gave you new being, new powers, and new capabilities by which, here darkly and later face to face with Him, you might perform actions which are possible only to God or to those with whom He shares His powers. To the natural powers, capabilities, exigencies, dues, needs, and body-soul equipment God has added supernatural powers, that is, qualities which are over and above and beyond those which we have as mere human beings. In the light of His luminous revelation you see yourself equipped with a new and marvelously beautiful nature and being. You find yourself to be what you were not before. You are no longer a mere creature, no longer a servant or a slave. Now you are a "new creature," a "child of adoption," a son. You have been "supernaturalized divine."

## 2. With New Activity

You found from your former discussions that life consists in action. Further you learned that your actions take color and quality from the principle or source or cause from which those actions flow, that they are like to the nature or being which produces them. The ant doesn't sing; the bird doesn't build sand-hill homes. A man doesn't grow wings and soar aloft. It follows then that as we have a new supernature, so we must also have new actions, a new kind of activity. Our actions too must be supernatural. They come now, not merely from a source which is human, but from a human who has been made a sharer in a created way in the divine nature. A mere man eats, smiles, talks, works. His actions are those of a human, and they are nothing more. A man in the new state to which God has raised him performs the same humble ordinary actions; but now these actions have a tremendous new value, for they come from a man made like unto God, His adopted child.

## 3. Putting the Thing Graphically

It may help considerably if we see in the following way what God's plan for man is.

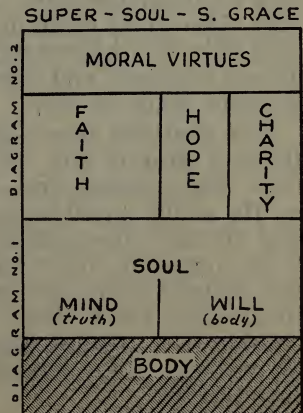
We see from reason that

... man to be man, must have a body, a soul, a mind, a will, and all the other equipment that makes up what we call human nature. The mind has the power to know its object, truth; the will has the power to choose and to love its object, good. (Cf. Diagram No. 1.)

We learn from revelations that

... man must be changed—or better, made anew. To be what God wants him to be, he must have the superbeing that comes from the possession of a supersoul or sanctifying grace;

... that soul brings with it a supermind we call faith, and





. . . a superwill that we call on the one hand hope (the superstrength to face the difficulties of life when we are sure of God's help unto the end) and on the other charity or love (a created share in God's love of Himself and of others), and

. . . new moral qualities that we call virtues. (Cf. Diagram No. 2.)

It is out of this new being and this new set of powers and capabilities that a whole new host of activities arises. It is in this new being and in this new action that the sanctity or holiness God expects of us is begun and worked out. Every good action of ours performed with grace (e.g., receiving a disappointment resignedly, helping a person to cross the street) means an increase, a growth in grace-life. We have as much sanctity or holiness as we have sanctifying grace. Here and now we are living eternal life because this state and these actions have an eternal value and are close-linked with our new destiny.

#### 4. . . . and With a New Destiny

God wished to do all that He could for man and still let him remain a creature. It was impossible for Him to give man a higher destiny than a possession of God. That possession would in one way or another be man's final goal and state. A veiled, indirect, but real coming and clinging to God was man's right and due from the very nature with which God gifted him. God however could go further than that. He could grant to man a possession of Himself of a kind that was higher and more perfect than his unelevated nature required and demanded. It was this grant that He actually made to him.

God destined man—through the new being with which He had graced him and the new activities flowing from that new supernature—to as full a possession of Himself as He could possibly give him. To man's new supersoul and his new superactions is now added a superdestiny. He is no longer to know and love God finally only in a veiled and indirect way—the only way by which a creature left to itself could know Him. He is now to know and love Him, insofar as a created being can know and love God, as God knows and loves Himself, that is, directly, immediately, face to face.

Our destiny then is complete happiness in this superpossession of God. It is this possession that makes heaven



to be heaven. Thanks to our God, heaven is not to be what it might have been had God left men merely men; it is not to be a sort of joyous limbo in which God would have been enjoyed imperfectly and incompletely. Heaven is the ecstatically joyous and full heaven of the Father's house and home, wherein we deal familiarly with Him face to face in knowing and loving contact.

### 5. Sanctity Now?

Your notion of sanctity is bright now with added light. Now you can view your main vocation in life. Now you can see the will of God in your regard. Sanctity does not consist essentially in long prayers, nightly vigils, wasting fasts, severe penances, the giving of abundant alms, the conversion of sinners, the ranging abroad in missionary journeys. All of these may be helps to sanctity or fruits of sanctity. But they do not make up the real essence of sanctity. If they did, then not *all* men could fulfill God's will, their sanctification. Not all could live up to the call to be saints.

The real job of sainthood consists in becoming and remaining like unto God by the graces which He wants to bestow upon you and by which you share His nature. The greater the holiness, the greater is this likeness, the closer is the family resemblance. To be a saint, to be what God wants you to be, comes down at this point in your discussions to just this: to *live*; to live the kind of life God has revealed as your real life, the superlife of grace. Essentially sainthood is a matter of getting yourself into the state of grace, or of getting grace to reign within you; of living and acting within that grace or with that grace within you as perfectly as your Father would wish it. Its full term is reached when you arrive at Him through the preservation and growth of this shared life of His.

Mark clearly that all this supernature which God has given you is not a thing apart from or only parallel to our nature as you have seen that nature in previous discussions. Everything that is good in the human within us is not destroyed but simply quickened by grace. Everything that we are as men is still there and is to take its part in the pursuit of sanctity. Now, however, everything human in you is permeated with and lifted by grace so that you are become persons whose lives are not merely human but, as it were, divinely human.

There is one person who was really divinely human and humanly divine, one who lived this human-divine life perfectly. For the full knowledge of what God expects of you then, you must look on Him. For the full living of this life that God has given you, you must be made over, made one with Christ Our Lord. How this transformation is to be effected will be the subject matter of your future discussions.

### Discussion

1. Discuss how legal adoption is (a) like to and (b) different from divine adoption.

2. Discuss how your sonship differs from Our Lord's.

3. Discuss the following in the light of the first section above: Why would you say that many Catholics may be but beating the air by their multiple so-called Catholic Action activities? Recall what was said in an earlier discussion about being before doing.

4. How does the principle of *noblesse oblige* (nobility brings with it special obligations) find application to you in a special way as a new creature?

5. Discuss the phrase "supernaturalized divine." Compare it with the notion of naturalization as applied to a foreigner seeking citizenship in a new country. What points of likeness and of difference do you find between this idea and that of supernaturalization?

6. In view of what has been said in this discussion, how can you say that serious or grievous sin is literally mortal, *i.e.*, death-dealing?

7. Pick out ten common actions that people perform daily. What new value do these actions have if these people are in grace?

8. Can you see how the *realization* of God's revelation about man can revolutionize your entire life? Explain.

9. What is a virtue? What are the theological virtues and why are they so called? What are the moral virtues and why are they so named? Would you say that a man without grace who performs a virtuous act is better or worse than a man in grace who performs a less virtuous act? Would you say that a man who is naturally virtuous is a better subject for supernatural moral virtues than a man who hasn't these natural virtues? Why?

10. By putting on a bit of a skit in which one person talks to another through a door or a screen, or receives a letter from a friend, or telephones a friend, illustrate how heaven is going to be more heavenly because of your new destiny.

11. Picking up the notions from former discussions, show how sanctity is neither merely being nor merely acting but a combination of both. Since sanctity is a life, would you say that there should be in that life such elements as nutrition, growth, and reproduction? Or is sanctity a static, sterile thing?

12. In the light of all that has been said so far, how would you word a definition of the whole, complete, entire man as God would define him?

13. List the ideas of the group as to how the knowledge thus far gained has given the members encouragement and inspiration to become saints.

## DISCUSSION VI

### BEING CHRIST AGAIN—OUR IDEAL

#### 1. Subgroup Findings Reported On

##### Project

(The leader will briefly recall the results of the last discussion. One question among others that he should certainly ask is: "Has the new knowledge gained during our last meeting affected your life at all so far?" Discussion which gives new ideas that fail to flow down into the heart and out into daily life is but a sterile thing and of little worth.)

#### 2. A Concreted Ideal

Remember St. Paul's words quoted in the first discussion: You are "called to be saints." These words echo again in the present chapter, but here they should mean much more than they did earlier. Now they mean: You are called to be God-like. You are called to live in the world of everyday, with its subways and meals and laughter and tears and bills and taxes and more taxes—a life as nearly like God's own as a human being aided by His grace can live it. Paul is but saying in a different way what Our Lord once said on a mountain side: "Be you therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect."



## Project

(Stop here and discuss together these stupendous words of Christ. Look out and up at God and into yourselves. Try to conjure up ways by which this poor weak human you can become perfect like the divine Him. List these ways for comparison with ideas which will arise later.)

God Our Father knew how staggering would seem this assignment to achieve divine perfection. He knew that you might become confused and discouraged about it all. He knew that you might say: "But the whole thing is absurd; it is impossible. How can *I* even though aided by His grace, ever hope to scale the height of those infinite perfections possessed by an omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent God?" He feared that you would shrug your shoulders and say, "No can do!" and then go on without even trying. Having made your mind, God also realized that in this life that mind more readily grasps and retains things that fall under your senses or human experiences—more readily than it does those greater and more lasting spiritual realities by which you are really to live. A flaming building, the final gasp of a dying man, a driving blizzard—these seize us more powerfully (even though they pass almost at once) than do the equally real and more lasting abstract notions of sanctions, disembodied loyalty, a supernatural grace-life. God knew too that He is a spirit, that He is invisible to poor blind body eyes which see His world but cannot see Him revealed therein. He suspected that you would ask, "Well, even if it is not God's other attributes but only His holiness that I am to imitate and relive, how am I ever going to make myself over into the likeness of an unseen, a purely spiritual God?"

With all this in His divine mind God decided to give you what you needed. He decided to speak to men again, this time not in the mere human words of His prophets, but by the Word. God Himself in the person of the Son would be this final revelation of God to men. He would be the concrete ideal, human and divine, who would express, in terms that men could understand, two divine ideas. He would be a translation into our own human-life language of the idea of God. He would also show forth in Himself, in terms that we could understand, God's concept of the



perfect man. "He that seeth me, seeth Him that sent me."  
"This is my beloved Son; hear Him."

### **Project**

(Pause here and get from the group a composite picture of:

- (1. God—His nature, attributes, etc.
- (2. A perfect man—his looks, qualities, virtues, activities, etc.)

### **3. Christ's Twofold Aim**

#### **Project**

(There are probably no gamblers in the group; but if there were, one of them could almost certainly pick up a bit of loose change at this point if he laid down a wager that all the members could not tell him correctly the full purpose of Christ's coming into the world. Leaving the betting angle out of the matter, let that challenge be given. We are almost sure that the majority will give but one half of the correct answer.)

Christ Our Lord, God and man, came among men for a twofold purpose. He intended not only to restore to men the divine life which man had lost through Adam; He wanted also to show men how to live this divine life in the midst of the noise and rush of a city's traffic, on the quiet hillside, in the security of a home or amid the terrors of a persecution, in the drowsy hours of the morning, under the star-sprinkled heavens, on a boat at sea, with sinners at a dinner table. It was with both of these ideas in mind that He talked of a more abundant life. It was with this twofold aim that He cried to all men for the imitation of Himself: ". . . come, follow me."

### **4. Our Full Ideal of Sanctity at Last**

Here at last we have the full, complete, entire notion of sanctity as God, and not as we Americans, understands it. Sanctity for the Christian is now summed up in one simple, all-embracing word: CHRISTLIKENESS. Sainthood consists in taking the hard, resisting, stubborn stuff of a selfish, egotistical, fallen human nature and making it over into Christ.

### **5. Another Christ**

To be a saint then is to be nothing less than another Christ. It is to that you have been called. It is to be a prolongation, a continuation, a projection, a quasi rein-

carnation of Him out of Galilee and Judea into Boston, New York, Chicago, San Francisco, the United States of America in the twentieth century. It is a matter of "doubling" for Him. It is to have within ourselves "the mind which was in Christ Jesus," to learn Him and His ideas, hopes, fears, loves, hates, and principles. It is to make ourselves over along the lines of His divine personality, to transform ourselves into as great a likeness of Him as is possible. We do not need to do the things that He did such as carpentering, working miracles, being nailed to a cross on Calvary—although the agony of a garden and the bearing of a cross and the enduring of a crucifixion must be part of the process. No one has part with Christ in true sanctity who does not drink with Him the chalice of His Passion and Death. Rather it is the saint's job—your job—to do all things with His spirit. You do in any set of circumstances—on the subway, at a desk or a counter or a switchboard, in your home, on the street, in a chapel, at a party—what Christ Himself would do were He in your place. He is your ideal. He is the perfect man and the true saint. It is your job as branches to relive Him, the vine.

Henceforth yours is to be a life of imitation in the fullest sense, a re-presenting of Him to the world, a life lived "*Per Ipsum et cum Ipso et in Ipso*" (Through Him and with Him and in Him) unto the end, which is really the beginning of a fuller and eternal continuance of this Christ-life lived here and now within time's confines.

There can never be any resting on the oars in your pursuit of this Christian ideal. You can never be satisfied with yourself. You can never say, "I'm good enough. I'll go no further." You can never feel that at last the "Heavenly Hatters, Inc.," have already fashioned a halo to fit your spiritual head. Christ's call is always, "Onward!" You cannot rest in your pursuit of Christlike sanctity, not until you can say with St. Paul, "I live, now not I; but Christ liveth in me."

For your consolation it may be well to know that for most men sanctity is a slow business. It is the gradual growth into the full stature of Christ and not an instantaneous leap into that likeness full-panoplied. It is a slow, total transformation rather than a fast, overnight surface quick change.

In the first discussion it was pointed out that the will of God was not only your salvation but your sanctification also. And your sanctification? Now you know that it consists in one thing: in the lifework and the gracework by which you are made "conformable to the image of His Son." You labor and sweat and weep and strive and strain, wrestling with yourself until little by little Christ becomes *all* in you. Only then shall you have "put on Christ"; only then can you look up into the face of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the sanctifier, and say: "With the grace-life you have given me I have walked worthy of the vocation to sainthood, to Christlikeness, in which you have called me."

### Discussion

1. From his own personal experience let each of the group illustrate how he has been moved:

a) more by objects or experiences that have fallen under his senses than by supersensible ones: e.g., A was much more affected by a snowstorm than by a dry but thoughtful sermon; B gets much more from a tabloid magazine than from a good textbook.

b) more by some person who has been his ideal than by abstract precepts.

2. Why, would you say, was the Incarnation almost a necessity for man, even if Adam hadn't sinned?

3. Why is it that so many Catholics will give but half of the right answer to the question "Why did God become man?"

4. How is a realization of Christ's secondary aim (i.e., to be a model) necessary if His primary aim (i.e., redemption) is to be effected in you personally?

5. Draw up a list of ten objects or activities in ordinary life. Now let the question be put: "What does God think of these?" To what do you turn for the answer? What is the answer?

6. How many Catholics do each of you think hold Christ as their ideal in home, business, and social life? Why are there not more such Catholics?

7. Do you believe that everyone can achieve Christlikeness, at least to some degree? Do you think that the majority are satisfied with a minimum of Christlikeness? What are the chief obstacles to this achievement?



DISCUSSION VII  
BEING CHRIST OVER AGAIN—"COME,  
FOLLOW ME"

**Project**

(By group discussion discover and define clearly the difference between copying and imitating. It may help in this to analyze the points of dissimilarity between: a snapshot and a painted portrait; a child's imitation of his parents and a monkey's mimicking people; a novel by a surrealist and a play by Shakespeare. A HINT: A copy has surface resemblances to the original; an imitation brings out the idea or the spirit embodied in the original. Keep these differences in mind for reference later in the discussion.)

**1. Always Children**

One of the most popular games of childhood is Follow My Leader. In this one characteristic, at least, men and women are always children. At the age of ninety as well as of nine they continue to play the game of Follow My Leader. The advancing years however take from that game the element of play. It becomes a grim business, a thing which is too, too real and earnest. Often this adult imitation is quite an unconscious thing, but it is there nevertheless. "Man is the most imitative of animals."

**Project**

(Have each one in the group give from his own experience or observation three instances of the working out of this imitative instinct in hair-dos and haircuts, in the matters of clothing, slang, language, reading, activities, movie heroes and heroines, etc.)

**2. As I, So You**

Christ Our Lord as God, along with the Father and the Holy Spirit, made man. As God, He knew man through and through. He knew that this instinct, this urge and drive to imitate others, this need of a leader to go before him, was in man's heart.

Again as the wisest of men He recognized it quickly too from His dealings with human beings in His life here on earth. He knew that you too, since you are human beings, must imitate someone, that you must follow a leader. He knew that the quality of your life would take its color



from the leader you chose, the person you would imitate. Hating mediocrity as He did, He would have you satisfied with only the best. He would have you bring out the highest and the best within you. It was for this reason that He put Himself before you as the model of models. As the leader of leaders He goes before you, saying, "Come, follow me," and "I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also."

### **Project**

(Before going further, recall here for practical application the difference you have found to exist between copying and imitating. Now go on to discuss how you think a man or a woman in this century in the United States can possibly imitate a God-man who lived in faraway Palestine twenty centuries ago. Draw up a list of the possibilities and impossibilities of such an imitation: the things that you could do to follow Him at the dinner table, on a bus, in conversation, at the store or in the office; the things that you cannot do, e.g., change water into wine on the instant, miraculously heal the sick, raise the dead, walk on water.)

### **3. Being Christ Again Through Imitation**

One day long ago God sent an archangel to a little Jewish maiden to ask her to become the Mother of the Word made flesh. He asked her to give the Son of God a body, with hands and feet and head and heart and nerves and muscle and tissue. That same maid joyously assented to the request even though that motherhood was to mean martyrdom.

Since then Christ the Son of God has come to others, you among them. He has stood humbly before you and asked, "Will you, as best you can, do for me what my Mother once did for me? Will you give me your head and your heart and your hands and feet, your whole body and soul, so that I may live again in you, so that I may continue to do the work that I came into the world to do? Will you *be* me again?" You answer, "Why yes, Lord. But how shall this be done?" His own reply is a simple one: "By imitating me."

### **Project**

(What two steps are necessary before you can imitate a person? Discuss this question with a definite person in mind, e.g., some nun or priest or relative or public figure.

Can you say that mimicking a person is the same as imitating or following him?)

There then is the answer. You become Christ again by imitation. The process? You need but come to know Christ to love and to admire Him. Loving Him, you must imitate Him; for one grows in likeness only to the person one loves. Yet you cannot love Him unless you know Him. Notice that we say know Him, knowing *about* Him being hardly enough. The knowledge here spoken of implies a deep, intimate, hearty thing. It means a knowledge of His ideas and ideals and plans and hopes and fears and hates, of His principles and loves and ambitions, of His interests and occupations and preoccupations.

Only the known person can be loved. Only the loved and admired will be imitated. You cannot know some unknown Hindu. You cannot admire some hero of whom you have never even heard. You will not and cannot imitate someone under whose spell you have never fallen, whose existence is nonexistent or at best shadowy to you.

#### 4. Contacting Christ

You come to know and love and admire and imitate a person only when you come in contact with him. You have really to live with a person to arrive at that indispensable trinity of knowledge, love, and imitation. Only when you have seen a person, only when you have lived with him and have heard his words, seen his actions, watched him face good fortune and foul and understood why he reacts as he does to both—only then can you say, "Yes; I know him, and he is such and such a man."

#### Project

(Let someone in the group tell of the different ways by which he knows others, e.g., by sight, as a bus or train acquaintance; casually, as a fellow student, a fellow worker, a neighbor, a friend, a relative; finally as one known thoroughly and intimately. Then each might ask himself in his heart into which of these categories Christ fits in his own life. Ask further: "How can I come to know Christ? Where can He be found?")

There are three main ways by which you can come in contact with Christ in this our twentieth century. Two of them are given here; the other is reserved for a later discussion.

## 5. In the New Testament

There, in the biography God has written of His Son, you find Jesus Christ as He was when He walked the earth in human flesh. There you can meet Him living in the world of men which, save for nonessentials and externals, has not changed since His days on earth. There He still lives. There you see Him, hear His voice, listen to His words, view Him in action, come under the enchantment of His person even as did the Apostles and the others of His own day.

Prayerfully reading and lovingly meditating, mentally seeing Him and the persons with whom He associated, hearing His words, watching His actions as you find Him in the pages of the New Testament will give you that knowledge of Christ which will set you on the road to follow and imitate Him in all things: little things such as sleeping and chatting and great things such as suffering and crucifixion.

### Project

(Take just two high points in His life: What do the birth and the death of Our Lord tell you about Him? How can you imitate in your own life the characteristics surrounding these events?)

When Christ was with us here on earth, a touch of His hand or even contact with the fringe of His garment—contact inspired by faith—was enough to heal body ills. Certainly then contact with Him as you find Him in the inspired page will give new life to your soul. Your mind and heart and will become formed on His. He will spring from the dead page and print and live again before you. Better, He will live again *in* you. Your outlook will become His outlook. Your ways will become His ways. Your mind and will, by reason of their grace-life contact with Him, will be made over insensibly until you find yourself thinking, not your own thoughts, but His thoughts. You will make, not your will-choices, but His will-choices. This will go on until you are made Him all over again.

### Project

(Let each member of the group procure a New Testament. Let the group decide by vote whether or not each will pledge himself to read from the New Testament meditatively each day for at least a quarter of an hour.



The meetings henceforth can begin with the repetition of one of these daily meditations.

(If there is anyone who balks at this idea, he has missed the whole import of the outline up to the present.)

## 6. Through His Presence With Us

More will be said later about Christ's influence on us in the Holy Eucharist as a sacrament. Here you will restrict yourselves to what He manifests of Himself to you simply by His presence in that same sacrament on our altars and in our tabernacles.

The same Christ whom you meet in the New Testament—on a city street in Judea or by the Galilean lake shore—is in our midst today. You can find him in a country church beside some lake or just off to the side of the bustling traffic of a noisy American city.

A study of the characteristics of Christ's tabernacled life among us teaches us much about Him. Such a study will increase your knowledge and love and point out yet further lines for your fuller imitation of Him.

### Project

(Here and now discuss those characteristics that visits with Him in the Blessed Sacrament have taught you.)

The poverty of the bread that clothes Him, the humility that hides the splendor of His glory, His easy accessibility, His patience, His yearning for visitors, His readiness and power to aid all who come to Him, His chiding and consoling and encouraging—all these are found in Him near us.

Truly Christ *is* the same yesterday, today, and forever. He is ever the same in Himself. He wants to be the same Christ also in you.

### Discussion

For the remaining time of this meeting (and for other supplementary meetings) gather suggestions from your present knowledge of Christ—knowledge gained from the New Testament and from your meditations before the Blessed Sacrament—for the imitation of Him in your prayer lives, your lives at home, at school, in business, in ordinary everyday things.

NOTE. Between now and the next meeting the leader should obtain from a priest friend a Roman ritual for use at the next discussion.



## DISCUSSION VIII

### CONTACTING CHRIST THROUGH THE LITURGY

1. Mental Prayer
2. Subgroup Report
3. Another Way to Him

Christ is a unique person in your life. He not only goes before you as a model for your imitation. Uniquely enough He is also within you by His grace as a vital force, giving you the power to do this imitating, to make yourself over into Him. The pursuit of sanctity consists not merely in the following of a leader. It is not a lonely one-man crusade. There are always at least two at work. Your leader is not way out ahead of you. He is within you, working along with you to bring about the transforming process by which you become wholly and completely like unto Him. Together you strive to make you such a double of Him that the Father can look on you and say: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

#### Project

(1. Discuss from ordinary life parallels that bring out more clearly the fact that Christ is not only your model but your co-worker as well, e.g., a mother guiding the childish mind and unsteady hand of her son as he writes to daddy.

(2. Before going on, ask yourself whether at this point you know of other ways of coming in contact with Christ in addition to those mentioned in the last discussion. When and where does this initial contact take place? Is it to remain in this initial state? or is there to be an increasing inflow of the Christ-life into your soul? What are the chief sources of this increase?)

A number of years ago an English publishing firm sponsored a symposium on the question "What would Jesus do if He were on earth today?" The participants were all famous men. Of them all only one gave the correct answer. G. K. Chesterton pointed out that the question itself was stupid. Why? Because there is no would or if about it. Christ *is* on earth today. He is in our midst, living and working with us. Our Lord is with us not only through grace, not only in the Blessed Sacrament but also in the Church, which is His body. It is with Him living and acting here on earth that we first come in strictly vital contact with Him.

## Project

(What is the idea behind the words "vital contact"? Do you make vital contact with another when you bump into him? Would you say that your head is in vital contact with your feet? Work out other examples that illustrate this idea, e.g., the vital contact between an expectant mother and the child in her womb, etc.)

Our meeting and union with Christ through the New Testament is pretty much of a supernaturally psychological thing. We come to know Him through the pages of a book. We fall in love with Him. Our love gives birth to our imitation of Him. We begin to think as we know He thinks. We begin to love as He loves. We commence and continue to love and act as He did. Our human mind and will and actions are changed into replicas of His. By prayer, reading, meditation we gradually adopt His way of viewing things and His way of loving. Our mentality becomes His. His mind takes the place of our own.

But in the Church and through its liturgy, through that activity of Christ's Mystical Body at work, at worship, at prayer, and at the labor of sanctifying men, Christ actually comes to our souls and grows in them by actually touching and vivifying them. Therein He directly applies His divine action to them.

## Project

(Work out together a clear and satisfying example to show the difference between these two ways of coming in contact with Our Lord.)

Through that phase of the liturgy which embraces the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, prayer, the Divine Office, the sacramentals, man reaches up to God. He climbs to make contact with Him. Through the other or sacramental phase God reaches down and lifts his struggling child to the plane of divinity through His Son, Christ Jesus.

Further, through the cycle of the liturgical year the Catholic has the life of Christ unfolded before him for imitation, for reliving in himself. Living that cycle, the Church and the individuals who are cells in the Mystical Body relive that divinely human life that flows out of it and into them.

## Project

(Let the group get clearly in mind at this point just what the liturgy is and what it does: what comprises it, how it is made up of two main divisions, what each affects. An aid to this would be the reading of Father Ellard's *Christian Life and Worship* and *Men at Work at Worship*.)

### 4. Four Sacraments

An exhaustive or exhausting treatment of the liturgy or even of the sacramental part of it is beyond the scope of an outline of this size. Some knowledge of it must however be included if you are to gain any idea of real Christlike sanctity. Here then we will present a picture of those sacraments and of *the* sacrament that contribute most to the holiness that has been discovered to be the imitation of Christ with and through the grace of Christ.

#### A. A Rebirth

Since you are a human child, you were born into the world possessed of a human nature; you were a humanly lovable but a divinely hateful little person. Then one day you were taken to a church. There Christ in His Mystical Body, acting through the instrumentality of His minister, the priest, and the humble elements of water and words, touched you. In that instant you were filled with supersoul life. In that instant Christ's own grace-life flowed into your soul. You were incorporated into, made one in body and soul with, Him. You became a Christ-vitalized cell in His Mystical Body.

## Project

(At this point read from the Roman ritual the ceremony of Baptism.)

#### B. A Growing-Up

Christ came to you again in the sacrament of Confirmation. There came a greater inflow of His grace-life into you. You received the commission to profess the faith openly and in an adult manner. You were sealed unto the soldierly and grown-up defense and spread of that same Faith.

(For those who are interested in furthering their knowledge of this sacrament a reading of Laros' *The Sacrament of Confirmation* will prove enlightening. We also recommend Father Lord's *The Sacrament of Catholic Action*.)



### C. Back to Life Again

Mortal sin slays the superlife of the soul. By mortal sin men commit supernatural suicide. In God's eyes they are dead, for He no longer sees them alive with His Son's life. Because He knew our frame, Christ provided another sacrament for just such an emergency. In the sacrament of Penance He stands before the tomb of the body whence the super life has gone and calls that superlife back to us again.

If our sins have been but venial, then the divine physician applies the spiritual medicine of His healing grace to that superlife which, though it lives within us, is languishing.

(For further reading and discussion of this sacrament you will find excellent material in Father Lord's *Confession Is a Joy?* and *When We Go to Confession.*)

### D. For Your Journey's End

Man's last moment is the most important one in his whole life. As you are at journey's end, so shall you be for all eternity. To ensure a continuance of your life with Him in eternity, Christ comes again through the liturgy and gives you by means of the last anointing the spiritual strengthening that you need to overcome the weakness left in you by sin and to beat off the final attacks of that terrible triad, the world, the flesh, and the devil.

#### Project

(Read in the Roman ritual the ceremony on the sacrament of Extreme Unction. Read also the prayers for the dying. They are beautiful prayers; and unless you are familiar with them before you die, it is likely that you will miss their full beauty and strength-giving quality when you are actually dying.)

## DISCUSSION IX

### THE SACRAMENT OF UNION

1. Mental Prayer
2. Subgroup Report
3. A Brief Review . . .

. . . of the preceding discussion in order to clarify again your notions of the liturgy, the four sacraments mentioned there, the connection between all these and sanctity.

#### 4. The One Way to God

There is one unique all-necessary way or medium of human contact with God. That is the humanity of the man Christ Jesus. He is the one way to the Father. He is the one channel through which God-life flows into men. He is the unique source of man's salvation and sanctification. Only in union with Him and energized by the Holy Spirit can we, bearing the family resemblance that He would have us have come at last to the Father.

##### Project

(Pick out four of the group. Let each represent one of the following: A Buddhist, a Hindu, an Australian Bushman, an American unbeliever. Though none of them has so much as heard of Christ, each of them has, as perfectly as he could, lived up to the light of his conscience. Each is now at the point of death. Considering each separately, decide what his chances of salvation are, and the reason for your decision in each case. If all four are to go to heaven, how do they get there? Be sure that each in the group understands this point clearly.

(How would you answer the objection: "Then they are really better off than we Catholics are. They can get to heaven without all the previous obligations and troubles that we have to assume here on earth.")

(Father Winfrid Herbst's pamphlet, *Salvation of Non-Catholics*, gives a clear explanation of this subject.)

#### 5. Opened to Men

The vitalizing and quickening force that is Christ is prolonged and kept operative in our own day in His Body, the Church, and through the sacraments. Through none of these latter is His sanctifying humanity brought into our own twentieth century so completely as through the Holy Eucharist. Nowhere else in the Church, in no other sacrament does God act so fully, so directly in His process of divinizing men as in the Blessed Sacrament. The Eucharist as a sacrament is the hand of the divine potter molding our stiff clay to His form. This sacrament is the chisel in the hand of the divine sculptor, chipping away at our granite-like egoism until gradually He sees His own features emerging from the mass. It is the bread come down from heaven, bread, not changed into our substance, but trans-

forming us into a likeness to itself. Such is the proper effect of the Eucharist. Such an effect does it infallibly obtain if serious sin does not hinder its action.

You are become a saint; you go to the Father as another son only when He sees in you a likeness to His divine Son. To beget that likeness without fail, you need chiefly to receive that Son frequently, daily if possible, in Holy Communion. To do this is to make His likeness in you grow gradually more and more distinct. This *must* happen, for that is what the receiving of Him does to you. That is what Communion, being made one with Him, brings to pass without fail.

### Discussion

Without doubt each of you has heard someone ask one of the following questions:

1. I know men and women who go to Communion daily, and yet a lot of them are apparently no better than—often not so good as—those who do not receive Communion daily. Why is that?

2. I've been going to Holy Communion for years. You say that from that very fact I ought to be more Christlike. Yet I can't see that I am more Christlike. How come?

Before proceeding with the outline, discuss your way through to a satisfactory answer to the above questions.

### 6. Why So Slow?

Though it is Catholic teaching that the Eucharist infallibly brings about its effective transformation of men into the God-man, it is also Catholic teaching that men themselves aid or hinder this "automatic" action of the sacrament. The changing process takes place without fail in anyone who receives Holy Communion worthily; but the amount, the quantity, as it were, of its effectiveness varies with the interior dispositions, the receptivity of the communicant.

Much the same thing takes place here in the sphere of the grace-life as happens in physical life. Two patients, A and B, are sick with the same disease. The doctor prescribes for them, and the nurse gives both of them the same medicine. That medicine physically enters both bodies. In A however the effectiveness of the medicine is



hampered because he is discouraged, not particularly interested in becoming well. He makes no effort to cooperate with the potion. In B on the other hand, who has a passionate determination to get on his feet again as soon as possible, the dose administered produces markedly good effects.

### Discussion

Give other examples from daily life that show how an effect is greater or less according to the disposition of the person or thing to be affected, e.g., a child in school who is well and bright, unwell and dull; molding molten bronze or cold bronze; a footprint on wet cement or one on dry cement; an airplane with adverse winds or following winds.

In the case of Holy Communion you find that the worthy reception of it by John and Jane and Paul and Polly brings about an unmistakable greater likeness to Christ, even though this advance is invisible. But with the first set of twins this union is slight; the likeness is not very marked. Why? Because they pray little; their minds are filled with worldly thoughts; their hearts are cluttered with earthly desires; their wills, while not at positive odds with the divine will, are not completely at one with it. Christ working within them works in darkness, as it were, and against at least negative resistance.

In Paul and Polly, however, the effects are different. They precede their reception of Holy Communion with real and earnest prayer. They know that they share Christ's priesthood and victimhood, and they give expression to this knowledge by offering themselves in union with Christ in the Mass during which they receive Communion. They ask that as this bread and wine are soon to be turned into the body and blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ, so they too may become one with Him. Even before they receive Him then, the spirit of Christ, the spirit of the cross, is in their hearts. There is within them a passionate hunger and thirst for growth in Him, and theirs is the ideal attitude for His working within them.

### Discussion

In view of the above, what would you say is the best way to prepare for Christ's most effective work in you? What should your disposition of soul be when He comes to you? What petitions should you make when He has come?

After you have received Christ in Holy Communion, He stays with you. He labors with and within you. He gives you power to live out daily the spirit of the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the spirit of His sacrifice and yours. Virtue flows out of Him and into you, healing, enlivening you. He does this now with His whole self as He once did it with a word of His mouth or a touch of His hand. He helps you to fight your egocentricity. He helps you to loosen the fast grip you have on your poor human judgments, on your self-will, on your selfish imaginings and daydreams and affections, on your ambitions and desires for ease and pleasure, for riches and honors and fame. He strives mightily to displace you and to put God and His will at the focal point of your life.

## 7. Your Part

Your part in the process of sanctification is at once a simple and a hard one. It is simple because it consists in doing but one thing. It is hard because that one thing is so completely distasteful to human nature. You cannot possibly build the Christ-life within you by your own efforts. Only the divine carpenter Himself can do that. The one and only thing that you can do is bend all your efforts, aided by His grace, to push your disruptive selves out of the way so that He can enter in and find you as completely receptive to His divine action as possible. He does the work. We but prepare the way by prayer, penance, self-denial, self-discipline, self-sacrifice. These are hard words for soft human ears and harder practices for proud human spirits and weak human flesh. These are, however, the human instruments that you must use if you are to create within yourselves an atmosphere favorable for the transforming action of the divine workman, who comes into you to make you over again into Himself.

### Discussion

1. Take a poll of the group to learn . . .
  - a) how many go to Holy Communion daily;
  - b) how many should go;
  - c) what obstacles stand in the way;
  - d) how these obstacles can be removed.
2. Discuss also means and methods to render yourselves less resistant to Christ in the Eucharist working within you.

3. Draw up definite and usable plans of activities, e.g., reading, prayer, self-denials which will at once prepare a man for a better cooperative reception of Holy Communion and for a better working with Him throughout the day at home, in school, at the office, etc.

4. Get as many of the members as possible to pledge: (a) daily Mass and Communion; (b) the following of the program outlined in No. 3.

## DISCUSSION X

### A PRIEST AND A VICTIM

1. Mental Prayer
2. Subgroup Report
3. Unifying Worship

It was Alexis Carrel who once said, "Properly understood, prayer is a mature activity indispensable to the full development of personality . . . the ultimate integration of man's highest faculties. Only in prayer do we achieve that complete and harmonious assembly of body, mind, and spirit which gives the frail human reed its unshakable strength"—(*Notre Dame Bulletin*). In other words a man is most truly a man when he engages in prayer and worship. In no other activity do his human powers work more highly at their human best than when he stands before his Creator and joyously adores Him for His wondrous perfections, gratefully thanks Him for His myriad gifts, sorrowfully asks His pardon for his misuse of those gifts, and humbly pleads for further graces to use those gifts aright for Him in the future.

#### Discussion

Answer the following questions:

1. Do you honestly believe that prayer and worship are the most important activities you can engage in? Do you honestly think that it is more important to say one Our Father well than to build an Empire State building without God in mind? Recall today's newspaper headlines. Was it blazoned there that someone said a prayer or that Mass was offered? Why not? Would these facts be noted above in today's *Heavenly Herald*?

2. When is a person's personality said to be integrated?



3. Why is worship such an integrating or unifying force . . .

a) by reason of the person addressed?

b) by reason of the action of worship itself?

c) by reason of the answer to prayer?

4. Why is worship necessary for a man precisely because he is a man? Why is it fitting and proper for him?

5. Why is the statement true that there never has been a saint who did not pray often and much?

6. Does the chief value of prayer from a psychological viewpoint come from the getting or from the giving that the prayer implies? Why?

#### 4. The Prayer of Children

If prayer and acts of worship are fitting and necessary for man as man, how much more right and just and needful are they for one who is also a child of God, a son. As human creatures we are God's, by our natural life. By our supernatural life we are elevated to be His too, this time as a son belongs to his father. What has been said above of worship becomes even more pertinent when we realize that we are members of God's family. Then prayer becomes not merely an obligation but a lovely privilege, an opportunity to talk with God as a child chats with his father. The good effects of prayer looked at naturally, as Carrell looked at them, are enhanced in your own case by their being supernaturalized. Now a cementing of the natural and the supernatural in a man is effected. Grace and nature are harmonized throughout the whole being.

#### 5. The Prayer of Prayers

One characteristic of the life of Christ is that which marks it out as essentially a life of prayer. Time and again we read, "And . . . He prayed." As He did, so He taught us to do. Our Lord gave us the perfect prayer, the Our Father. (It would be well to note here the number of petitions in that prayer. Then note how many of them have to do with temporal things.) He insisted that we ought always to pray and not to faint. Hence if you are going to climb the ever heightening reaches of sainthood, there must be prayer in your life, prayer prayed with Him, prayer in imitation of His prayer.

## Discussion

A helpful procedure here would be an examination of the prayer-life of the group—if the members are humble enough to submit to it. Cover such points as: (1) the amount of prayer; (2) the best time to pray; (3) the kind and methods of prayer to use; (4) how more prayer can be inserted into the life of each one; (5) the amount of corporateness in each one's private prayer, that is, the amount of prayer for this group as a group and for the Mystical Body as a whole.

Great as was Christ's prayerful worship and pleasing as it was to the Father, it was when He, as the great high priest, went up on the wooden-cross altar on Calvary and offered Himself as the perfect victim that Our Lord gave Him the prayer of prayers, the perfect act of worship.

Sacrifice is the best form of worship. There in adoration, thanksgiving, atonement, and petition man offers himself under the form of a victim in acknowledgment of God's supremacy over him. Therein he pledges oneness of will with God. Therein he finds the fullest expression of his yearning to climb up to union with Him.

Until the coming of Christ sacrifices were many in number and in kind. Yet numberless and varied as they were, these sacrifices were but imperfect things. Then He came and as an anointed priest offered to God infinitely perfect worship. He made of Himself the perfect victim for mankind. From the tragic gloom of that first Good Friday there rose to light the courts of heaven for the first time in the history of the world a human sacrifice worthy of God. On that day all former sacrifices which had pointed to this sacrifice were fulfilled. All future sacrifice was rendered void, save that which should be a re-presentation of this one great sacrifice.

## Discussion

Clarify for yourself, first in general and then in particular as applied, to Christ, the following notions:

priest . . .

victim . . .

sacrifice (what it is; its essential parts; its aim and its effects) . . .

## 6. Shared With You

Christ Our Lord was the very antithesis of selfishness. He was not satisfied that He alone should be a priest and a victim. He willed that the *whole* Christ, His members as well as He—the head—should perform these offices. That is why, on the night before He offered His unique sacrifice, He ordained priests to carry out into lands unknown and centuries unborn the re-presentation of the morrow's redemptive act.

It is Christ's teaching through His Church that any person incorporated in Him through Baptism and made adult through Confirmation, even though he has not received Holy Orders, shares in His priesthood and victimhood. Just as a cell in the human priest's body shares in that man's priesthood, so do you as a cell in Christ's body share in His priesthood. Baptized and confirmed, you are made an instrument that He can use to re-present in the twentieth century the same holy sacrifice He offered and consummated on the cross in the first century.

The imitation of Christ mentioned before as essential for sanctity now takes on a clearer character. He is to be imitated, not merely as the perfect man, but as the perfect man who is also at once a priest and a victim. As He, so you.

### Project

(Some supplementary discussions might be engaged in here to give each one in the group a greater understanding of his share in the priesthood of Christ. As a help we suggest the reading of such chapters as are pertinent in Father Ellard's *Men at Work at Worship*.)

## 7. You as a Priest

The essential work of a priest is to offer sacrifice. So also then it is your work if you are to share actively in Christ's priesthood. And what does that mean for you in actual everyday living?

1. It means that you are to be on hand to hear Mass as often as it is possible for you to do so.

### Project

(Poll the group to see how many attend daily Mass. Why is it that more do not go daily? If possible get each one in the group to pledge himself to daily Mass in the future.)



2. It means that you are to be active in the great action when you are present at Mass. This can be done . . .

a) *By using a missal.* In this way, unless you are taking part in a recited or a sung Mass, you are best made one in mind and heart, in spirit and thought and affection with the priest at the altar and with the great High Priest invisibly present there.

b) *By making at the Offertory a conscious and active offering of yourself* as part of the whole Christ; by putting yourself consciously on the paten and into the chalice with the bread and the wine and holding yourself aloft for acceptance by the Father in His Son, praying that you may be changed yet further into Him.

c) *By partaking of the bread now become the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ Our Lord,* and offered to you as a return gift by God. What an exchange! You give yourself to God. And in Holy Communion He returns your gift, giving you not merely yourself but Himself as well.

### Discussion

1. How many in the group use missals at Mass? Get a summary of the members' reactions to the use or nonuse of the missal. Is there any possibility of the group's having a recited Mass, or taking part in one, or having the custom started in the parish or the school? Do any of the group suffer from "missalitis," that malady which makes some missal-users forget that the purpose of the missal is to help them toward a closer union with the priest and the High Priest, forget that the missal is not an end in itself?

2. How many of the members consciously offer themselves with the bread and wine at the Offertory?

3. How many understand that the holy Sacrifice of the Mass is a "social" action, that it is the whole Christ at worship, that the Blessed Sacrament is the sacrament of union between head and member and member with member?

4. Work out together some practical implications of this sharing in Christ's priesthood in home life (e.g., Should two people, at one in Christ, fight?); in social contacts at work (e.g., What inconsistency is there in one priest's hurting another's reputation?); at school (e.g., What

about cliques?); in matters of justice (e.g., Should one sharer swindle another?); in matters of race (e.g., What about discrimination against Christ in "ebony"?).

5. For further reading along these lines confer Thorold's *The Mass and the Life of Prayer*.

### 8. You as Victim

Just as the Mass itself would be incomplete if the priest offering it stopped with the Offertory, so is your own participation in it imperfect and incomplete if you stop with merely praying the Mass or even merely offering it. To be a full living counterpart of Christ, the offering and praying of the Mass must be filled out with the living of it. As Father Ellard points out, the best translation of the words *Ite missa est* is, not, "Go, the Mass is ended," but rather, "Go now and work." Go now and live out what you have offered here.

As the paten and the chalice were held aloft, you put yourself onto and into them. Thus you signified that you were giving yourself completely to God. You said in your heart that you were willing to do whatever He might demand of you, that you were willing to accept from His hand whatever annoyances, dislikes, disappointments, hardships, pains, and joys might lie in the day ahead. You signed, as it were, a blank check and said you were willing that God should fill in the amount that you should give Him during the day.

Now having received Holy Communion, with Christ in your heart, you leave the church to begin to live out those demands of His. You work with Our Lord to fulfill God's will in your regard by such actions as kindness at home, full service at work, study in school, avoidance of dangerous amusements, participation with others and for others in amusements which are healthy. All these you do as He desires them to be done. You suffer uncomplainingly a headache, a toothache, a heartache. You accept a reprimand, a zero for a recitation, the disappointment of not getting a bid to a dance, the impatience of some fellow worker or family member—all in the spirit of sacrifice, of the morning's holy Sacrifice of the Mass. You realize that these are but tiny splinters that will gradually grow into

the cross on which you will be crucified with Him; they are the tiny insignificant instruments of every day by which Christ's victimhood is etched into your soul.

When you are living the Mass in this way, you can echo the words of St. Paul: "Who [Paul] . . . fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ, in my flesh, for His body, which is the Church" (Col. 1:24). You can say in truth that you are living out your victimhood with Him. You can never hope to be a saint, another Christ, until you are not only willing to follow Him even here but are actually working hard to become a priest and a victim for and with and in Him.

### Discussion

1. What is the idea contained in the word "victim"? in the word "Host"?
2. How is the whole Christ such a thing?
3. How can St. Paul say that there are deficiencies in the sufferings of Christ? How can you fill up these deficiencies in yourselves?
4. Work out together:
  - a) daily occasions for the practice of your victimhood;
  - b) the spirit in which these should be met;
  - c) how, by your linking these occasions with the Mass, life becomes, not easier, but more joyous and fuller;
  - d) how the corporal and spiritual works of mercy fit in here.
5. List occasions and opportunities and methods by which an active campaign of mortification and self-denial can make you daily a fuller participant in Christ's victimhood.



**THE QUEEN'S WORK**

**3115 South Grand Boulevard**

**St. Louis 18, Missouri**