

~~Teppist~~, A. Raymond, Father, 1963 -
Say fiat and remake your world.
ADX 4625

SAY:

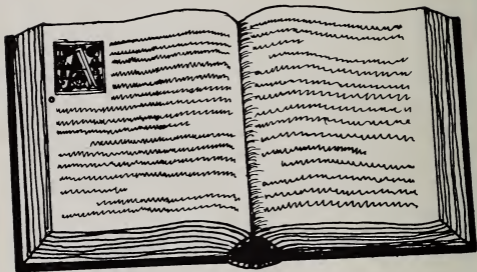
"
Fiat"

and

REMAKE

YOUR WORLD!

UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME



LIBRARIES

Yale University Archives

A Trappist Cries

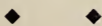
SAY:

"Fiat"

and

REMAKE

YOUR WORLD!



NIHIL OBSTAT:

Fr. M. Mauritius Malloy, O.C.S.O.

Fr. M. Albericus Wulf, O.C.S.O.

Censores

IMPRIMI POTEST:

✠ Fredericus M. Dunne, O.C.S.O.

Abbas, B. M. de Gethsemani

IMPRIMATUR:

✠ Joannes A. Floersh, D.D.

Archiepiscopus Ludovicopolitanus

die 21 Martii, 1940

First Printing 10M
Second Printing 10M
Third Printing 10M
Fourth Printing 10M
Fifth Printing 20M



COPYRIGHT 1940

by the

ABBAY OF GETHSEMANI, INC.

Deacidified

TO
MY SISTER
ELIZABETH M.
WITH
THE PRAYER
THAT "LITTLE AMIE" WILL
ALWAYS SAY
"F I A T"

Foreword

Would that the whole world were Irish!

At least to this extent that they would learn to say and to mean the prayer that leaps to Irish lips when the steel of affliction touches the heart: "God's holy will be done!"

That is a prayer that can be compressed into one word if we use the Latin tongue, and that one word is the most important word of all life. It is the one word — "FIAT."

God Almighty said "FIAT," and into the void that was leaped a universe of light. That was **Creation**.

A lowly maid said "FIAT," and down from the high walls of heaven leaped the Trinity's Second Person and God became man. That was the **Incarnation**.

A blood-drenched Man said "FIAT," and across the infinite chasm that had been gorged by sin, was flung the drawbridge of Divine Mercy, and the portcullis dropped by Adam was lifted by the loving Christ. That was **Redemption**.

You and I must say "FIAT," and that will be **our Salvation**.

"FIAT." It is only a little word that means "God's holy will be done." It is a magic word, for it brought a world into being, a God into flesh and unbolted the bars of heaven.

Learn to say it always, and your whole world will change!

Your Letters Are Bleeding My Heart!

Yes, truly bleeding my heart. Some of you write that you are childless and long, with a longing inexpressible, to look into eyes that have been lit from your own, to smile into a baby-face that has your own mouth, your own nose and your own dimple. You tell me that your arms are aching to crush to your heart a baby-head that is a miniature of yourself. That is terribly tragic, and it moves my very soul, but it does not bleed my heart. To learn that you will never be called "Mother" or "Dad," that your house will ever remain a house and never become a home, is crushing, and I feel for you with all the virile feeling in my manhood — but that is not what is bleeding my heart.

Others of you write me something even more tragic than childlessness. You have babies; but baby mouths are empty and you cannot buy them food. You tell me that you have held baby-heads within your own hard hands, looked deeply into innocent eyes, and wondered, as you half wished that they had never been born, upon what miseries these baby-eyes would yet look. You brought these little ones into life and you want them to mature; but life and living costs — costs much; and you are without the down-payment. To make tragedy more tragic you say that while the present is bad, the prospects for the future are worse. Such lines ache my very being. I feel for you, feel deeply; I feel for those youngsters — and yet, that is not what is bleeding my heart.

Those of you that write that Worry's wand has flecked with silver the head that was once all gold and that Anxiety has initialed with cruel, deep cuttings his name on the brow that

used to be marble-smooth and fair, strike me deeply. You say that she sees bills and bills and bills — and yet, you can find no work. That pierces, and pierces deeply. To have aged before your time is tragic, but not nearly so tragic, as in your old age, to have lost your all — that is the tale that many more of you write.

On and on they come, these letters that are weighted with woe. Some of you are victims of injustices that cry to heaven for vengeance. When appointments are to be made, merit is ignored, while money, personal gain and political advancement weigh heavily with those who have the power of appointing. You tell me that real worth and true virtue must go begging, and I believe you — yet, even this is not what is bleeding my heart.

For your very real sufferings, you have all my sympathy, my deep, virile, full-hearted, whole-souled sympathy. From my cloistered City of God I give you my heart. I suffer with the suffering, hunger with the hungry, am lonely with the childless, lost with the homeless, anxious with the moneyless and worried with the jobless. That these very real sorrows shall pass, I will penance my body and pray my ceaseless prayer; but my first petition and my main petition shall be for what is bleeding my heart.

It is not what you write that bleeds my heart, it is what I read; not what you have lost, but what you are losing; not what others have done and are doing to you, but what you are doing to yourself.

Let me explain.

You have not caused the failures of which you write. Most of you have spent and been spent in your mighty efforts to achieve. You have strained and sweated and slaved; you

have sacrificed and suffered and prayed. Every atom of your energies, every ounce of your strength, your time, your talents, your thoughts, every bright hour of the day, and the dark, dark ones of the night, you have given in one mad endeavor to breast this thing they call Depression. And with what results? — None! You find yourself knocked over, swamped and swept along by this flood, whose cause you do not know and whose fullest extreme you cannot guess. You are innocent victims, and that is the tragic pity.

I can appreciate your bewilderment. I can understand your dread desperation. The world is proving too much for you; its economics are overwhelming; its present times, tyrannical. You are finding life a battle, a bitter battle against odds that are overpowering. When you write as you do, it is not the wail of the weakling; it is rather the desperate shout of the frenzied and the frightened. I can understand it all. The **outlook** is appalling. But what hurts me most and what actually bleeds my heart is that you do not try the **uplook**.

I have viewed and reviewed your situations. Had you been the causes of them in any way, we could say that your sufferings were but retributive justice. But no! you have not been the causes. You are innocent victims, victims of the times, the tyranny of dishonest politicians and cruel injustices. And yet, it is not the actions of these that are bleeding my heart — it is your reactions.

Do you know what cuts more deeply than deep? — You, just you. I am not wounded because you are inculpably childless, unwillingly jobless, unblamably homeless. I am not wounded because you are without money, without food, without resources. But I am

deeply wounded because you are without clear sight.

Have you read any of Henry Van Dyke? He wrote "The Story of the Other Wise Man." It is a little gem. He also wrote "The Sad Shepherd," in which he tells of the shepherd who, when the others went "over to Bethlehem to see this thing that had come to pass," stayed behind to watch the fire and tend the sheep. Thus it was that he failed to see the Light of the World and meet the Lamb of God. It is a tragic little tale, for this man missed seeing his Maker. Do you know that I am afraid that you are doing the same? — That is what hurts.

But let us drop fiction and look at fact. Three hung on crosses on Calvary. Two were thieves and murderers, the Other was the Maker of men. In the gathering gloom towards three o'clock, they on the outside crosses turned to the One in the center. The thief on the left snarled, sneered and mocked, for he saw only a man in misery — a sorry mess of a man, one who had been scourged and crowned and spit upon, one who was only a mass of wounds from bleeding head to spiked feet; and so, with his dying breath, this thief swore and cursed and made fun of his Maker. The thief on the right looked, and beneath that panoply of purple blood, beneath that welter of wounds that clothed His nakedness, beneath that thorn-helmeted head, he saw his God: and by a plea for pardon, won Paradise.

The difference between Dismas and his companion is the difference between near-sightedness and clear vision. The pathos in the life of "The Sad Shepherd" is that he missed so glorious an opportunity to see his

God. The stark tragedy in the death of the thief on the left is that he failed to pierce appearances, to look behind the veil and recognize his Redeemer. These men missed God, and that is the tragedy of tragedies. I wonder if you are not enacting it!

Look! My heart is actually bleeding. But it does not bleed because you are poor — poverty can be a blessing. My heart does not bleed because you are suffering — a torrent of suffering wrought our Redemption. My heart does not bleed because you are in want; but it does bleed because you are wanting — wanting in vision, wanting in perception, wanting in keen sight!

Do you know what this lack of vision is doing to you? — It is causing you to kill bees, thinking them to be wasps; and you are going to lack honey! It is making you slash at the bush because it has thorns, forgetting that it can also have roses! It is inducing you to call this Depression a curse, when it really can be one of God's greatest blessings. It is leading you to look upon opportunity as a dread affliction and forcing you to say "Faugh," when you could and you should be saying "Fiat."

I have admitted all that you have written. I wonder if you will now admit all that I am going to write. I have pondered and puzzled over your difficulties and distresses; I have taken them to work with me, to prayer with me, to bed with me. I have searched and searched, and at last I have found THE solution. You have asked me to help you; I am only too anxious to do that. But I am wondering if you will help yourself. It was when I found the solution that my heart bled, for then I saw what you had been doing. I admit the injustices; I admit the palpable

wrongs; I admit the shame of it all, but my greatest suffering came when I found the solution for all your sufferings.

Strange, is it not? And yet, you, too, will grieve if you are honest, truthful and Catholic. Will you think, really think along with me and see why I say that it is not your troubles that are trying me, but that it is you? Will you look inside with wide-open eyes? Will you look behind and beyond? If you will, you will find treasures! the solution to the Depression and to all difficulties! the one answer to the "Why?" of your every heartache and headache! If you will be what I know you can be — completely logical and sterlingly Catholic — then you will no longer be lost in making a living, but be found making a life! If you will be what I want you to be — a real, red-blooded, full-blooded, clear-visioned Christian — you will learn to say "Fiat" and thus remake your world!

Come! Let us be honest. Let us face the truth. It may sting, but it will strengthen. It may smart as iodine does on an open cut; but, like the iodine, it will purify and prevent a deadly tetanus. Let us look behind and beyond. Let us look inside and stop merely gazing at the outside.

Inside . . . Outside: Behind and Beyond

You must pardon my staccato style. I am so anxious about your vision that I fall into a monosyllabic abruptness. I will make an effort to be more controlled, You, however, must make a generous effort to follow my every word. This is not only important — it is eternally important. It means more than money, it means merit; more than a living, it means an everlasting life; more than a home, it means heaven. I am going to be

very serious, because your soul and mine are at stake, and a soul's salvation is terrifically serious. We are not dealing with things merely of time, we are dealing with things that mean our eternities; for it is only by what you and I do with the things that daily affect or afflict us that we make a success or a failure of the one and only life we have. The Depression, childlessness, joblessness, homelessness, foodlessness — these are the things that may mean salvation or damnation for you and for me. The salvation of our souls and our economic struggles are not disparate affairs. Religion and earning a living are not to be dissociated. Most men give six days of the week to the pursuit of money and a part of the seventh to the worship of God; but this is exactly the unbalanced budgeting of time that I mean to balance in your life by showing you things from the inside instead of from the outside, by showing you what is behind all your troubles and beyond all the causes of your worry.

Let me explain.

I was looking at a stained-glass window yesterday — from the outside. I found it a horror. All I could see were strips of lead patching odd-sized and more oddly shaped pieces of glass, glass that looked blurred, blackish and very dirty. I could find no design, no figure, no art. For quite some time I stood staring at it, studying its grating grotesqueness. It was an eyesore; truly, a mess. Then I went inside. I went inside and I found — magnificence! Through light and drifting clouds, a pale paschal moon was breaking, shedding shadows in an olive grove. At some distance off in the rear, three drowsing disciples proved that "the flesh is weak," while out in the foreground, flamed

my Jesus. Robed in the richest and warmest of reds, flung against a rock, with hands tense in agonizing prayer, He knelt and lifted a wan and weary face to a vision that was coming from a heaven that had hitherto been heedless. He was gazing upon an angel, the Angel of Consolation, who was winging his white-robed way in anxious adoration to minister to his God the Chalice of Divine Comfort which His Father had sent Him because He had drunk to the dregs the bitter cup of the world's miseries and had said, "Fiat."

It is the window of our God in Gethsemani the night He taught us how to suffer and how to pray. I stood in open-mouthed wonder, for it was hard to believe that such magnificence could look so mean and messy from the outside. It was harder still to realize that the horror of the outside was the background for such startling beauty. And here is the lesson it taught me: "We look at the Depression and all its subsequent evils from the outside. We look at all afflictions, be they personal or family, physical or mental, national or international, only from the outside." Come inside now and see what I mean!

Your letters have made me seek what or who was behind all your woes. You are innocent victims. I wanted to know why; so I searched and searched, inside and outside, I looked behind and beyond, and I made a tremendous discovery.

Do you remember, over a decade ago, when the stock-market crashed? Every brain with any economic acumen wanted to know what or who was behind it all. It was the correct thing to do. Find what or who is behind things, and you can usually rectify wrongs and set all affairs right. Find the tooth that

is aching and you can get relief. Find the focus of infection and you can prevent relapse. Find the cause of cancer and you are on the road to its control if not its absolute cure. These are undeniable truths. As in medicine, so also in economics, politics, plagues, and afflictions of any and all sorts. Find the one behind them and you have found the proper party with whom to parley.

I have found the One with whom you are to deal, for I have found the One behind the Depression, behind this wholesale unemployment, behind this international savagery. I have found the One behind all our social upheavals and our universal unrest. I have found the One behind all your miseries. I can tell you now why you are involuntarily childless, inculpably homeless, unblamably jobless, penniless and foodless. I can tell you now why your head knows weariness and your heart knows ache. I can tell you now why you are in such sorry straits. I have found the One — but I do not cry, "Eureka!" as did the Greek; instead, I bow down in humble adoration and with Didymus say, "My Lord and my God!"

Do you begin to understand me?

It took me ten years to find out why there is a Depression. I was slow in the discovery because I had been looking at it from the outside and not from the inside; I had been viewing it economically instead of theologically. I had actually divorced religion from my workaday, everyday life. I had used prayer, the Mass and the Sacraments alone with which to worship God when I should have been using my trials and afflictions as well. I had kept my Sunday as the one day on which to give God His glory when I should have been using my blue Mondays, my try-

ing Tuesdays, my Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and my black Saturdays. I was using the church as my formal place of worship and adoration when I could have, and I should have, been using the whole wide world with its Russia, its Roosevelt and its rents, its joblessness, palpable wrongs and crying injustices. I was using only prayer to get God when I should have been using my every pain. I was paganized and decatholicized by my environment and did not know it. Unconsciously I was a pragmatic materialist and not a practical Christian. I was purblind to the supernatural as I stared and squinted at the natural. I was not piercing appearances. I was not looking inside and, hence, I was never seeing God and, of course, never saying, "Fiat."

I lost much those years. I wonder if you are not doing the same.

Now I see from the inside. Now that I have cloistered myself and locked out the world, I get the entire world in proper perspective, and I have made the startling discovery of what was always staring me in the face. I have discovered that it is God's world and that nothing happens in that world, with the single exception of sin, but by His sovereign and omnipotent will — either directive, preventive or positively permissive.

I know that those are big words and would entail endless explanations; so I give you a little illustration that will clarify the entire situation. I show you the One behind and beyond as I show you **the One in the "mixing room."**

Day in and day out, night after night, you listen to your radio. At times you hear the velvety voice of a silver-toned tenor; at other times you listen to the passionate chorus of

some grand-opera stars; sometimes you are mightily stirred by the moving magic of a symphony; or again, you are soothed by the dulcet strains of some stringed ensemble. All come to you beautifully blended; artistically modulated, and expertly proportioned; but did you ever think of the one behind it all? Did you ever reflect that it is not upon your artist at the microphone, nor the maker of your receiving set, but upon the tiny fingers of a single man that the ultimate success or failure of the broadcast depends? One man, and one man alone, controls the broadcast, and he is the man in the "mixing-room." His fingers are on the dial that controls the volume, and it is his will, ultimately speaking, that determines what goes out over the air and the way it goes out.

Do you grasp that? Do you see that with the tip of his little finger he could give a tiny turn to the dial which gives more power and the silver-toned tenor would sound like a screech-owl, the grand-opera stars like a rowdy and raucous cheering section and the symphony, cacophony? Do you not see that by a flick of this man's fingers the whole performance can be cut off? Therefore, it is ultimately due to his will that you hear things and hear them the way you do. This man in the "mixing-room" is not the cause of the silvery tenor tones. No, your artist is the cause. But that you should hear those silvery tones and hear them as silver is due to the will of the man in the "mixing-room." He controls the broadcasts.

At times he tempers and tones down what the artists in the studio produce, for they can be too strong; at other times he strengthens or steps up what the musicians produce, for they can be too weak; and at still other times he simply permits things to go along

as they are. Get this picture and get it clearly. It is eternally important. See that, while the man in the "mixing-room" does not cause the sounds, the songs nor the symphony, his will is the ultimate reason why you hear them as you do. He can temper, he can change, he can cut off the various artists; he can permit their productions to go out as originally produced, for he is the man at the controls and the one man in control.

Allowing now for finite limitations and the limp in every comparison, look upon life as the Big Broadcast from the universe's one grand studio and you will immediately see that God is the One in the "mixing-room." A startling true picture, is it not? Has not God His omnipotent fingers on the dials of every man's existence? Is not every voice that trembles the ether under His ultimate control? Do you not see, then, that the ultimate reason for the smoothness or the harshness of the world-wide Big Broadcast is to be found only in the Will of the One in the "mixing-room"? I do not say that He produces the sound; I do not say that He is the immediate Cause of the song, the shout or the wail of the world; but I do say, and you should see, that the reason why you hear what you hear and in the way you hear it, is ultimately the Will of the One in the "mixing-room"; for He steps up, tones down or simply permits. It is man who immediately produces the sounds, but that you and I should hear these sounds, and hear them as we do, is ultimately traceable not to man, but to the Will of God, be it directive, preventive or permissive.

If there are strident blasts breaking upon our ears, if the thunder of war guns shakes the world, if the mad cacophony of wrangling dictators fills the air, do you not see that it is

only because He permits it? He has His fingers on the dials. If it were not His Will, directive or permissive, that certain men should fill the air with shrieks, He has but to flick His fingers and all is changed.

Why do the melancholy wails of Depression work their way into the lives of so many millions? Why is it that upstart dictators rave and rant, filling the air with bristling screech and rupturing the song of the world? Why is it that whole people madly shout, bombs crash and cannon give forth their deep-throated roar? You say, "the free will of man"; and you are right. But behind and beyond man — what then? That you and I should hear these things as we do, is that due to the free will of man, or is it not rather ultimately due to the permissive Will of the One in the "mixing-room"? And that is the most important fact in life!

The parallel is perfect. He, the omnipotent One, stands in the "mixing-room" of the whole world's Big Broadcast and there is needed only one flick of His all-powerful Will and the universe's whole mad performance ends. That things go the way they do, then, with dictators yelling here and atheists ranting there, with war-bugles blowing over yonder and hushed expectancy obtaining here, with the world in happy prosperity and in the next decade moaning a low and mournful lamentation because of cruel adversity, is due immediately to the perverse will of man, but ultimately to the omnipotent and all-wise Will of God. He allows things to go on the way they do, and He allows them for a very good reason. And that is the second most important fact in life.

I have just given you what I call the two most important facts in life; the first is that

nothing happens in this wide world, with the single exception of sin, but by the Will of God, directive, positively permissive or preventive; the second is that God allows, directs or prevents things only for a very good reason. That is why I can fearlessly say that the most important word in all the world for you and for me is "Fiat." Your salvation and mine, your sanctification and mine, your glorification and mine rests on our doing the Will of God. That is why "Fiat," meaning: "Thy Will, O God, be done!" is so everlastingly important for you and for me.

Since God is the One in the "mixing-room," since all things are under His ultimate control, then, no matter what sound comes to me out of the wide world's airways — as long as it is not the shriek of sin — I know it is due to the Will of God, directive, preventive or permissive, and I say, "Fiat." I do not have to know whether it is directive, preventive or permissive; the form makes no difference to me, the fact alone counts! It is the Will of God, so I say, "Fiat." I know that He is God, the All-good, and though the air be filled with a killing cacophony, I am sure that He allows it for a good and a wise purpose, so again I say, "Fiat." I may not know what that purpose is; but I am positive that it is good and that it is wise.

Would I not be a madman to pit my puny intellect against the will of the all-wise God? Would I not be an imbecile of a blasphemer were I to whine against what He sees fit to allow? God will never hurt me — that I know. So I try never to hurt Him — I always say, "Fiat."

Have you followed me closely? Do you now begin to see things from the inside as well as from the outside? Do you begin to

recognize the One behind and beyond? The man in the "mixing-room" controls the broadcast, so too, does God control the world and all things in the world, with the single exception of sin. With this truth firmly grasped I can speed on. You can see now what is bleeding my heart, you are not saying, "Fiat." You are hurting God, you are hurting me, you are hurting yourself!

Stop Bleeding Your Own Heart!

Let me now be personal. You are interested in you, and so am I. So let us talk about you. Think now, and answer honestly. Why are you white and not black, nor red, nor yellow? Why are you of the Twentieth Century and not of the Twelfth nor of the First? Why are you in America and not in Asia, Africa nor Australia? Why are you living this moment? Is not the ultimate answer — because God so wills it? Could He not have put your soul into the body of a mulatto or of a Mussulman? Could He not have brought you into being at the time of the Pharaohs or the Caesars as well as in this era of dictators and Depression? Could He not have called you to judgment last year or last night? Certainly! Then the ultimate reason why you are you and in your present plight is not the stars, the stocks, nor the economic cycle. The ultimate reason is the sovereign Will of the all-wise God! That is why you should say, "Fiat."

What a revelation is contained in that second last sentence! The **sovereign** Will of the **all-wise** God. Would that we could fully realize its truth and beauty! Then "Fiat" would leap to our lips and we would never know worry. This is God's world, and we are God's children. That is why everything,

except sin, happens by His will and for our good. St. Augustine summed up the whole situation in a sentence when he said, "**There would be no evil in the world if God could draw no good from it.**" That is why I say and why I want you to say, "Fiat."

God! God! God! He is the ultimate reason of all things except sin. Why are you involuntarily childless? — Ultimately, because God so wills it. Why are you jobless? — Ultimately, because God wills it. Why are you homeless, foodless, penniless? — Ultimately, because God so wills it. Does He will the sins of the clever and crooked international bankers? Does He will the injustice of the thieving politicians? Does He will the hoggishness of the capitalists, the greed and the gluttony of the stupid, over-producing industrialists? No! No! No! God wills no sin! But that you should be affected by what these men do is the permissive Will of an all-wise and all-good God. So, say "Fiat."

Look! You cannot have an oak without an acorn, can you? You cannot have a child unless there has been a mother. You cannot have a creature unless there is a Creator, nor a world unless there is God. Ultimately, then, behind and beyond all things is God. Therefore, if it was not according to the all-wise Will of the all-good God that your husband should lose his job, then the particular individual who made your husband jobless would not have had such power. If it was not according to the permissive and all-wise plan of the all-good God that His people in Russia should suffer, then Stalin and his army of madmen would long since have been removed. If it was not according to that same wise Will that Poland be purged and Austria purified, then He could call Adolph Hitler to judg-

ment and the world might be at peace. Remember behind the "higher-ups" is the "Highest-up"; beyond all men is God!

Again I say God! God! God! He is behind all things in this wide, wide world with the single exception of sin. And He IS the all-wise and the all-good God. He blows the sun to splendor and gives the darkness and the dew; He drops with delicate tenderness the snowflakes and the rain; He sends us in May the blossoms which in harvest-time will be fruit. He lashes the sea to fury and shakes the very pillars of the world. He scourges, for He will not be mocked. He purges, for He is all-pure. He winnows and flails and grinds and He does all things exceedingly well, for He is God the all-wise and the All-good. You — He permits to suffer, but only that you may be sanctified. Stop looking upon affliction, then, as a castigation and recognize it as a means to sanctification, and you will stop bleeding my heart and your own! Look at things from the inside. Look to the One behind and beyond! Say "Fiat" and remake your world!

Let me grow abrupt again. I want to point this lesson. It means everything to you and to me. We are members of the Mystical Body of Christ. But do our eyes ever smart with tears unshed and are our hearts internally bled because of what is happening to that part of our Being which is in Russia? or that which is in Mexico? Are we seriously affected because our brothers — brothers by the splashed Blood of Jesus Christ — are suffering in Hitler's mad realm? No! What affects most of us, and affects us most, is the economic Depression. We have lost money; therefore, some of us are losing our faith. We want a job, for that will bring us money,

and money means social position, economic security, freedom from worry and the opportunity to purchase what we call pleasure. We pray for employment and get others to pray. When we do not get what we want and pray for it, we whine. We do not complain because Christ is suffering in Russia, in Mexico, in Germany, in our own America. No! We complain because WE are suffering. — That is a selfishness which is suicidal. That is what I call "spiritual insanity." That is what I know to be the bleeding of your own heart. That is forgetting that God is the Creator and that we are His creatures. That is forgetting that God is our Father and we, His little children. That is completely forgetting that, while suffering may come immediately from men, it is ultimately permitted or directly sent by God and for our own good.

Concerning prayer, let us be reasonable for a moment. If we are not all parents, at least, we have all been children, and we can recall that children do not get all that they ask for and crave, even from the kindest and most indulgent of parents. Sometimes baby wants the moon. She does not get it! Sometimes she wants a loaded revolver or a straight-edged razor. Does she get them? Tell me, are such parents, who refuse these requests, cruel? Let me tell you that success has been the razor with which many a man has slashed his own soul and bled it white — not white with the whiteness of purity, but white with the whiteness of a corpse. Let me tell you that position has been the loaded revolver with which many have blown out their spiritual brains. And, finally, let me tell you that you and I are nothing but "children of a larger growth," and God is our kind, indulgent and loving Parent.

I hate sulphur and molasses. Every March I have nightmares in which I see gigantic tablespoons heaped high with the sickly-sweet and sticky stuff. I have a mother who loves me as no one but an infinite God could love me. And yet, every year when the snows began to go and the March winds to blow, she dosed me with that detestable stuff. I know that she was not unkind!

One Saturday night I saw a surgeon saw off the two legs of a twelve-year-old boy. All during the operation this bone-specialist sang; he sang "The Roses of Picardy." At the end of his work, he put his hand on the head of the youngster and collapsed in manly sympathy. Was that specialist cruel! I talked with that twelve-year-old boy Sunday morning and he was all smiles. He could never have smiled and I could never have talked to him, had not the specialist used the surgeon's saw on gangrenous limbs. Let me tell you that gold is gangrenous! When God permits it to be taken from some people, He is helping to save their eternal lives.

Remember St. Augustine, "God would never permit what we call evil unless He and we could draw some good from it!" Do you now see why I plead with you to stop bleeding your own heart? Do you see why I want you to look behind and beyond? Do you see why I say that you have been looking at things from the outside? View the Depression from without, and we will call it a curse. Look at it from within, and we see that it can be a blessing. Stop looking at what it takes, and begin to see what it can give. Forget that it hurts, pinches and pauperizes, and realize that it can purge and purify, that it can scourge and sanctify, it can help save your soul, and then God you will glorify. See in

it God's Will, directive, preventive or permissive, and say and live "Fiat."

Do you know that the Depression reminds me very much of the purple drapes that we place over our statues during Lent? To the unknowing they are unsightly things; but I can kneel before them and pray, for I know that behind that purple drape is the beautiful figure of my all-beautiful God. So, too, with the Depression. It is dark and repulsive, bitter and vexatious, grim and appalling; but I know that behind it all is the all-wise Will of my all-good God, and hence, I say, "Fiat."

Let me insist that, while the Depression may take much from you economically, physically and mentally, it can give you much spiritually; and when the long total of life is finally read, one thing, and one thing alone, counts — spiritualities! So, stop bleeding your own heart. Open your eyes and see; see that nothing happens, either rapturous or revolting, but by the Will, directive or permissive, of Him who loves you with an everlasting love. You are His child, and He is your Father, and no really good father hurts a child for the hurt.

We make a profession of faith by a "Credo" in which we say, "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth **and all things.**" Let us live that "Credo"! We say the "Our Father," and one of its striking petitions is "Thy Will be done." Let us mean our prayer! From the light of reason and the light of faith, we know that God did make all things and that God rules all things. Let us live according to our lights! This is not Hitler's world, nor Stalin's world, nor Roosevelt's world; it is not the world of the atheist, the communist, nor the material-

ist; not the world of the capitalist, the unionist, nor the humanist. It is God's world! And just as He it is Who will flame the east in a pageantry unpaintable as tonight's stars fade, so it is He Who permits the ache in your human heart, allows tears to flood your troubled eyes, permits your golden hair to silver and traces of Anxiety's deep tracks to furrow your young and worried brow. These things are really gifts, gifts from a good God, to aid you on to glory. Use them as such! Make out of these things, which are very real weights, wings; and then soar — soar to the God who gave you life, sustains you in life and will take you in death, if you but clear your vision, stop bleeding your own heart and make mines out of your mountains and molehills by saying and living a heart-sincere "Fiat."

Do understand me. I am NOT trying to give a solution to the problem of evil. That is a mystery whose depths we shall never plumb until we see God "face to face." But I AM giving you THE SOLUTION for your miseries! I am giving you a practical way, a prudent way, a Catholic way, the Christ-like way to meet your very real afflictions. It calls for faith, I know; but it calls more loudly for reason! Faith is always based on reason, and my reasoning is as straight as this:

God, Who is all-good, rules the world.

God, Who is all-wise loves you.

Nothing, except sin, happens but by the Will of the all-good and all-wise God.

Therefore, all things that come to you, ultimately come from your all-loving God and are meant for your good. That is clear. That is logical, That is true. But what have you been doing? — Looking at the outside and not

at the inside; seeing only the natural; forgetting the One behind and beyond. That is why my heart has been bleeding. — Not for what you have lost, but for what you are losing. That is why I say you are actually bleeding your own heart.

To bring my message out of the seemingly pious and platitudinous — I say directly that you have not been mining your miseries. I may sound sharp and a trifle harsh, but, do understand me! I am trying to help. Your life here and, to a great extent, hereafter, depends on how you handle trouble. There is only one way that is rational. There is only one way that is Catholic and Christian. And that one way is — "FIAT."

Say, "Fiat," and you remake your world! Say, "Fiat," and you make mines out of your mountains and molehills.

Molehills — Mountains and Mines

Most people make mountains out of molehills, but God's people make mines out of mountain and molehill by making them mines!

Understand me, I am not saying that your troubles are trifles. Far from it! They are staggeringly tremendous. To stare poverty in the face is not a trifle. To meet failure on every street and at every single door, is not a trifle. To be willing and anxious and craving to work, and yet find no one to hire you, is far from being a trifle. Your difficulties are mountainous, and for them I have heart-deep sympathy. But what hurts me and has hurt you is your neglect to make mines out of the very real mountains of your miseries by mining them. Every one of them is loaded with ore; ore that is precious beyond price; but

you are leaving it all deeply buried by your neglect to look deeply and think clearly.

Come! Let us think together. It will pay tremendous dividends.

America needs eleven million jobs. That, I am the first to admit, and for that I daily pray. But America has a much more vital need than eleven million jobs. What America very especially needs is eleven million Jobs! Men and women who will sit on the dung-heap thrown up by our mad materialism, and with perfect calm, scrape off the sores inflicted by a greedy, grasping, piggish group of money-maniacs; men and women who, though robbed of material riches, are millionaires in peace; patience, piety, in fortitude, fear and love of the Lord; men and women who can see their savings swallowed up in a bank's crash, their homes denuded, themselves reduced to want and beggary, and yet say, with masterly composure and sterling sincerity, "The Lord has given. The Lord has taken away." So far they are only being logical; but when they add the prayer of all prayers, they are being loving. When they adoringly say, "Blessed be the name of the Lord," then they have pushed logic to its logical length and have become mystics. Such men and women are making mines out of mountains and molehills; such men and women are sages and saints; such men and women have sight — and such, you and I must be, if you and I would live the life of all living; for conformity to the Will of God is man's greatest act of adoration; and to adore, man was made.

All of which reminds me that your most priceless possession is your penny catechism. For therein you will find a logic for which you will look in vain in all the world's philosophies; therein you will find a truth and a

beauty that the literature of all the lands has not compassed, nor the libraries of the world contained. That is your textbook of all textbooks for it contains what was taught by the Teacher of all teachers. Therein you have reason at its deepest depths and revelation in all its sublimity. And if you would live life, you must translate those lessons into the diction of every deed.

Long years ago you learned the questions and answers; today you must live them. And the most thrilling truth that the little book tells is that you and I **were made by God**. I swell with just pride and exaltation when I think of that. I am no wage-slave. I am no beast of burden. I am no mere machine. I am the product of Omnipotence. I was fashioned by fingers infinite and modeled on a plan divine. I am God's masterpiece in His visible creation. Hold fast that truth — then take its corollary, a corollary that is all beauty; you and I **were made for God**. That ravishes. That enraptures. That should set us in ecstasy. Life then is worth living, its burdens suddenly lighten, its miseries quickly change and, though the road be rough and stony, though we stagger, stumble and fall, though we must fight to a blinding fury, we struggle on to win our way out and up to Him who is Light and Love and Glory!

You and I are not creatures of Time; we are Eternity's children. Omnipotence did not fashion you and me to grovel in the slime of this world of matter and money-made men. No! You and I were made for heaven, for happiness, for God. We are more than a body whose nakedness must be covered, whose belly must be filled and senses gluttoned. You and I are much more than hands and head and heart; we are also souls! spirits of

immortality! We are as completely at home in this welter of work and rest, eat and sleep, that some call life, as a skylark would be in the depths of the sea or a star in a stagnant pool.

We have a goal to gain unconfined by this world's horizons; a destiny to achieve that dwarfs all the accomplishments of genius. You and I must scale the "hid battlements of eternity" and fall into the arms of God. And there is only one way to do it. It is by saying and living "Fiat."

To you and to me there is no such thing as Fate or Fortune. The goddess of Fortune and the allotments of Fate are monstrosities of the pagan poets. Absolute lot, luck and chance are the fabrications of the sluggish, the lazy and the weak. Christianity knows no gods or goddesses; Christianity bows only to the Will of the one true God, the Maker of all men and the lover of all souls. To this Giant Lover you and I must go, but only in the way He wishes — and that way was taught us by the Man who said, "I am the Way," and then walked to Calvary! It is Jesus Christ whom you and I must learn to love and live. And He has said, "If any man come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow Me." Once I have told you that, I have told you how to mine your miseries and make them gold. Bow to the Will of God, and He will reward your adoration.

Christ did more than teach us how to die. He expressly taught us how to live! And from birth to burial, by His every act and action, He made articulate His condemnation of all that you and I have been taught by this luxurious Twentieth Century. Remember when He preached on the Mount? He prom-

ised much that day, very much. He told hungry hearts that they could have their fill of happiness. What a promise that is! But, in all the promises of beatitude that fell from lips divine, I find none that says, "Blessed are the rich." "Blessed are the comfortable." "Blessed are the prosperous, the well-off, the worry-free." I find none that says that the Kingdom of Heaven shall be given to the banker, the broker or the builder. To none of these did Christ say "blessed." Not that He excludes the moneyed man and the wealthy woman, the leaders in society or politics, from His Kingdom. No. But implicitly He says to them, "If any man have money, he must be poor in spirit. If any woman have wealth, she must ever be ready to let it go; her purse strings may close over gold, but never her heart-strings, if she will be a Christian. If one has position, he must hunger and thirst after justice, be full of mercy and always anxious for peace. Christ did not exclude such people from His Kingdom, but when He spoke His Sermon on the Mount, I find Him directly and explicitly addressing the others. I find Him promising blessedness expressly to the poor, the meek and the mourning, to the hungry and thirsty after justice, to the merciful, the pure and the peaceful, and very especially to the persecuted. Those whom the world scorns, abuses and hates, those whom the world despises, sneers at or pities, those who are crushed by the millstones of modern civilization, those who stagger, strain and starve in this mad maelstrom of materialism — these are the blessed to whom Almighty God has promised the Kingdom of Heaven, if they accept it all as His Will! Suffering, poverty and persecution, do not, of themselves, sanctify; it is only their acceptance as part of God's all-wise

plan that brings grace in time and glory for eternity. Ah! but let me tell you that these beatitudes are more than promises; they are prophecies. To you and to me they are saying in accents unmistakable, **"Unless you suffer, for, by and with Jesus, you shall not be saved."**

That is the money that can be minted in this moneyless Depression. Gold, real gold, can be dug from the depths of our miseries and vaulted where thieves cannot enter, nor moth consume, nor rust destroy. We have but to bow to the Will of God and live "Fiat." When we are smitten with suffering, rejoice! for salvation can come through tribulation. We are not in this world for self-gratification and self-glorification; we are here for purgation and purification. If that sounds harsh, remember that it is only a paraphrase of the sentence spoken by the gentlest of all men, the very Lamb of God.

We all should be looking for an Easter-eternal; but we all must remember that no Christian calendar can show us Easter until after we have seen Good Friday. If we would have the Resurrection and the Ascension, we must first have the death and the burial: Victory comes only with battle, triumph after trial, honors after examination, success after struggle and wages after work. If we would get to heaven, we must walk the road that Jesus walked, and that leads first to Gethsemani, then to Golgotha, and then to a hillside tomb. But in rapid succession follow the Resurrection, the Ascension and the Glorification. If we would live worthy of our Christian name, we must die! die to all that the modern world teaches and, if we would die like Christ, we must live like Him. That mystic poet, Francis Thompson, has caught

the truth of Christianity and seen it exemplified even in nature, so he says:

"The falling acorn buds the tree;
The falling rain, the greenery.

The fern-plants molder, where the ferns
arise,
For nothing lives but something dies;

And nothing dies, but something lives —
Till skies be fugitives."

We must live like Christ, and we must remember that there was nothing anemic about Jesus! He suffered agonies — and Christianity without affliction would be Bethlehem without a shivering Babe, Egypt without an exiled Boy, Nazareth without the Village Carpenter, Gethsemani without the Man of Sorrows, and Calvary without the flayed and flagellated, the mocked and spit-upon, the thorn-crowned and heart-pierced Savior of the world!

The law of life is struggle. The law of the Christian life is war; war against Satan, sin and self. The law of the godly Christian life is bowing to all that the world calls "blows and buffets," the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune," but which we know to be God's blessings. So,

Be strong

We are not here to play, to dream, to drift.

We have our work to do and loads to lift.

Shun not the struggle — face it —

'Tis God's gift!

When you listen in vain for the cry of a child and learn that you will never be "Mother" — then, though your heart fail, say, "God is refining." Or worse, when you are forced to listen to hungry children cry and know

that they cannot be fed — then, through blinding tears, say, "God is refining." When brilliant hopes are blighted and days without end are only disappointments — grit your teeth and say, "God is refining." When health goes and wealth goes and all the world is gray — pierce the gathering gloom with the cry of truth — "God is refining." If the Angel of Death takes your heart's very life, be it mother, father, brother or son, be it an infant child or mellowed old age, fill the void and break the hush with these words of wisdom, "God is refining."

There is silver in your soul. It must be made sterling, and "God sits as a refiner of silver," as His prophet Malachias foretold. The Divine Silversmith sits by His fires, watching, closely watching, His souls. They must be purged and purified, and silver is only refined by closely watched fires. If the time be even the slightest extended, then the silver is always ruined, and God, who counts the hairs of your head, is not going to allow His fires to injure your soul. He will purify and clarify, He will sanctify and render sterling this metal of His most precious making.

A worker in silver will tell you that the purifying process is ended when he can see in the silver his own image. And I tell you that life is over and eternity dawns when the Silversmith Divine, who sits by His fires of trial and tribulation, of sickness, suffering, sorrow and death, of unemployment, disappointment and universal Depression, sees in the silver of your soul the image of His only-begotten Son.

Do you now begin to understand your Baptism? Do you now begin to realize what Christianity is? At long last do you grasp

the meaning of life and the reason for living?

When the waters of Baptism flowed on your head, you were made a child of God, and the only child He has ever recognized is the One who said, "I come to do Thy Will, O God." In that blessed birth, you were made a brother to Jesus Christ, and He has said, "Whosoever shall do the Will of My Father who is in heaven, he is my brother"; in that divine adoption, you were made an heir to heaven, a home wherein "nothing defiled can enter." Life, then, is your process of purification, and life's difficulties are God's closely tended fires. That is why I say to you, "Rejoice when suffering comes, for then you know that your Father is refining."

We know that statues would slumber forever in the marble's stony depths were it not for the sculptor's chisel and the hammer's heavy blows. We ought also to know that suffering is the stony stuff from which we can quarry our purest marble and chisel out our image of Christ. Christian living is only for artists, who want nothing but truth and beauty and will rest satisfied only with perfection. The art of all arts and the life of all living is modeling on Jesus Christ, and that means making mines out of mountains and molehills, by always saying, "FIAT," for we are here not for money but for merit!

Not Money — But Merit!

In my cloistered City of God I have a quaint little classroom, and to it I always go when your letters bleed my heart. It is out among the crosses where one hundred years of sacrificial love sleep on in sacred peace. There, the silent speak to me and the dead teach me much about life. There is where I get vision when all else is growing dark, for the dead

say, "Look long vistas; your perspective must be true. Beyond Time's near horizon is Eternity's endless shore."

Thither to my faultless teachers I took your latest cares. I wanted to know what should be said to people who cannot see God; to people who summon to the judgment seat of their "thin minds" the Providence of the only omniscient One; to people who are implicitly saying, "God is unjust," "God does not rule," "God does not care." And there amid the thunder of my own tumultuous thoughts, I heard the soft words: "Merit, not money."

I stood behind the graves of our three most recent dead; three lay Brothers, all fairly aged men. One had been an orphan — for fifty-one years he served his God in this garden of Gethsemani; another had been a cripple — for over two full decades he gave his limping all; the third was a man of eighty-two, who had found his way back to his first fond love as the sun of his life was setting. I stood and stared at their crosses and suddenly there flashed to my mind three names that made a contrast antipodal. I thought of Rockefeller, Carnegie and Wanamaker, and I slowly said: "My brothers, you are right. It is NOT money that counts. It is MERIT."

Carnegie is reported one time to have said, "I would rather be a citizen of the United States than a member of the Kingdom of Heaven." When death came, I wonder if he held to his preference. When judgment was held for this Scotchman, do you think that his stocks or his bonds, his countless costly shares, his safety-vaulted millions counted? — Not an iota! For life is for merit, not for money!

When John Wanamaker died, two Irishmen were overheard in a conversation that could

have been held only by two Irishmen. With a wit that is their life's blood and a depth of perception that is characteristic of the Celt, one was heard to say, "Well, I see that old John Wanamaker is dead." "You don't say," said the other. "How much did the old gentleman leave?" And with a chuckle that was priceless, the answer came back, "Every last red cent."

True, isn't it? And on the other side of life another conversation took place; but I doubt that it was quite so comical. Wanamaker was not asked, "How much money did you make?" but, "What do your merits total?"

John D. Rockefeller was a multimillionaire. That you already know. But, if today, you had to change places with him or my little orphaned lay Brother, who gave to God one half a century of service, whose place would you choose? Not much question of choice, is there? No! for merits count, not money.

The Oil King lived almost a hundred years; but when his last moment of life came, he saw how short a century of time can be and how worthless was all his wealth. In life, the contrast between him and the little orphan who became a Trappist lay Brother was sharp; at the moment of death, it was sharper; and now in the endless day of Eternity it is sharpest of all, for money DOES NOT count! Merits DO!

"Money talks," the saying goes, and it is true. A millionaire can be speechless and yet the most eloquent and persuasive of men. Money also silences, for "hush-money" is no fiction, it is a force. But there is one place where money will be silent and one moment when "hush-money" will not hush, and that is Existence's most important place and most important moment. It is the place of death

and the moment of the judgment. Then all will see with a blinding clarity that life was only for merit and not for money; then all will see that money talks and money silences but money seldom prays; then all will see that the millionaire is a pauper, and the beggar, with his merits, is the richest of men.

Oh, I know that in our complicated modern civilization, money is a necessity. But what I am trying to show is that it is not the prime necessity! What I am especially trying to show is that of all the dust that gets in men's eyes, the most blinding is gold-dust. I know that it is hard to live in this world without money; but I also know, and I want you to know, that without merit, you die for all Eternity; I also know, and I want you especially to know, that this is not our real world, Eternity is! A few more years for the youngest and most long-lived of us, and it will not be a question of our income, but of our output, not of our dollars but of our deeds, not of the glory we got, but of the glory we gave, and the greatest glory that man can give is glory to God in the highest by bowing down to His all-holy Will in a heart-sincere "FIAT."

If we are Christians, real red-blooded Christians, we are modeling on Christ, and, if there is one thing that Christ taught clearly, it is the danger, yes, I might almost say, the curse, of money. The gentle Jesus, whose holy hands were laid on the putrefying flesh of lepers, on the contaminated and contaminating flesh of the dead and the diseased, whose hands clasped the foul Judas, more filthy than filth, was never willing that His hands should touch money. He told of Dives and Lazarus; He was saddened by the walking away of the Rich Young Man; He spoke

that frightening word, "Amen I say to you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." And yet, there are those who call themselves Christians and crave that deadly, dangerous thing called money.

Think now of what they should be seeking. Think now of what merit is. It is money made by doing good deeds while in the state of grace. Merit is wages won by work, the works, both corporal and spiritual, of mercy. It is the government bonds, those gilt-edged securities procured by prayer, the Sacraments and the Sacrifice. Merit is the only coin that will pass as currency in the Kingdom of Heaven. It is minted by those who change the mountains of their miseries into El Dorados by a "FIAT" and bank the very real gold, dug from the depths of their afflictions, in the safe-deposit vault of Christ's Sacred Heart.

Merit is more than money, it is the gems of the soul to be worn that glad day when you and I make our bow to our King. Merits are the pearls of purity, the blood-red rubies of charity, the rare, noble opals of true humility, which glow in their rich iridescence with the seven spectral shades. It is the gleaming emerald, mined in dark trial and tribulation, the scintillant sapphire of penance and prayer, the red-sprinkled blood-stone that is found only in the deepest depths of soul-shading affliction. These brilliants, can be yours for the asking, if you remain in the state of grace. But if you would have your soul's diadem blaze with a Koh-i-noor, whose every facet shoots out rays that put the sun to blush, then when you are childless or homeless or jobless, when you are foodless and penniless and hopeless, when your universe is black with pain and the battle of

life is so fierce that the will to win, the desire to live, is gone — look up from your depths and, though to your senses the whole world reels, say, "Great God! Thy Will be done. I am Thy creature. FIAT."

Yes, merit is like money and gems, but merit is even more like life's full harvest. I like to think of it as the pure white wheat that has been growing in adversity and ground by the cruel, crushing stones of life's sad sufferings. I like to think of it as the rich ruby-red wine that has run from the squelching presses of worry, fright and care, those merciless presses of sickness, suffering and death, of headache and backache and heartache, those omnipotent presses of life's countless ills and woes. I like to think that when life's short day is done, we can stand before our Great High-priest and with hands outstretched, make offering of spotless wheat for one whiter host, and of blood-red wine for a more rubied cup, that He may present us to His Heavenly Father acceptable offerings, fully satisfying sacrifices. Such a fantasy becomes a fact when we live for merits and not for money, when we learn to say, "FIAT."

Odd, is it not — and yet perfectly compatible with the rest of Christianity's puzzling paradoxes — that the economic Depression can be our spiritual exaltation and that the more moneyless we become, the more riches we can acquire? Odd, is it not, that eyes that were tear-filled here below will never weep in Eternity; that hearts that were broken and hopes that were dead will leap with life and swell with joy in our Paradise beyond the stars. Odd? — No, not odd, except to those whose tastes have been vitiated by the ways of the world and who have forgotten that Jesus said, "If any man come after

Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow Me"; that Jesus said, "The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and only the violent bear it away." The only thing odd about our whole situation is that we very illogically sweat and strain to change our times, when what really needs changing, is our tastes.

Change Our Tastes, Not Our Times!

Depression is a reality, a stark, nude and naked reality, a fierce and snarling reality. That, I am not denying. Ten years of blasted hopes, fewer banks and longer bread-lines tell that all too forcefully. And yet, I also maintain that the Depression is a relativity. There would never be a valley if there were not two hills; never a depth if there was not a height; never a plain if there was not a mountain; and so what we call dark Depression, we would never have known if we had not seen an excessive Rise. Our economic exaltation was after the war; our present Depression is the past dark decade. So far I have written obviosities; truths that no one denies, but what all will not so readily admit, and yet, what to me is an equal obviosity, is that what many of us are calling "the depths of dark Depression" are actually our strict economic level! That is why I say the reality is also a relativity.

Society has always been stratified. History tells of freeman and slave, noble and serf, landlord and tenant, rich and poor, capitalist and laborer, the upper, the lower and the middle class.

Normalcy obtained as long as the laborer took his wage and guided his tastes by the size of his earnings, as long as the middle-class offered what the middle-class could buy

and the capitalist was satisfied with legitimate profit and was not seeking pyramided returns. When the poor got the middle-class wages and the middle-class became rich, we became abnormal. When the hodcarrier drove his own car to work and the bricklayer was landlord of a block of apartments, neither times nor tastes were normal. The luxuries of the middle-class became the necessities of the poor, and the excesses of the wealthy became the ordinary and the expected amidst the one-time comfortable middle-class. At this mad pace life went on for a few frenzied years and we saw an era of spending, sporting and speculation never equaled in the world's long history. The intoxication ended when the markets crashed and the banks failed. Then the world awoke with a dark-brown taste in its mouth and a very big head. But those who had stepped up have been unwilling to step down, and that is why we hear people crying about a Depression from what is actually an elevation!

I know that it must seem strange to have a hermit talk to the world, and many of you will wonder what title a recluse can claim to tell the worldling his own business. The only excuse I dare offer is taken from Gilbert Keith Chesterton. Things had all gone wrong and people were calling for a practical man. Chesterton says, "It would be far truer to say that when things go very far wrong we need an unpractical man." So, if you will allow an unpractical man to be practical, a spiritual man to talk materialistically, and a recluse to advise the world, I say, "Change your tastes, and the times will take care of themselves!"

When your salary allows for a comfortable flat, you have no business to be living in a

mansion. Johnnie should not be going to Harvard when you cannot afford the tuition to the nearest Catholic College or hardly pay his car-fare to the local State University. Gertrude should not be being prepared for Vassar when her place is helping at home. Ambition is a grand thing, it is a blessing; but prudence and honesty are virtues. Why do you buy on the installment plan what you will never own until your are paying the last installments with your old age pension?

These are some of the practical thoughts that are sired by letters that tell of a \$25 a week pay-envelope and a \$45 a month apartment; of six months unemployment and yet borrowing to pay the installments on his car; of earning a dollar and spending one hundred cents and contracting installment debts for a lifetime. Yes, I shout at such people, "Change your tastes, and the times will already have changed." There are as many puffs of smoke in a 5c Cremo as there are in a 35c Corona-Corona. You cannot live in 1940 as you did in 1925!

Have I wandered from my original theme? — Not a half-step. All your unbalanced budgeting has been brought about by that cursed mistake of forgetting that life is for merit, not for money; that we are here to win our way to the top, but not the top of the social ladder and the economic world, but to the top of the spiritual world; that we are not supposed to be spending our nights and our days in a breathless endeavor to "keep up with the Joneses," but in one unending effort to catch up with Jesus! It has all come about by our compromised Catholicity, our anemic Christianity, our dismal failure to live to the hilt the lessons of our penny catechism!

Our tastes have not been vitiated, they have been totally corrupted. Who among us reflects on the fact that man can make money, but money can never make a man; or that, while many a man has succeeded in saving money, money never has and never will succeed in saving a man. Who of us fully realizes that grace and gold are the strangest of strange companions, and that experience teaches that he who has the most of this world's goods usually has the least of the goods of and for heaven. Most of us would prefer to be miserably rich than happily poor, and most of us would quite readily mortgage our very soul to Mammon. Most of us seem to have forgotten that the greedy desire for riches is the greatest possible obstacle to true enrichment of a soul. And when do we ever reflect on the fact that the richest man on earth is nothing but a pauper, fed, clothed and housed by the free bounty of a merciful God?

No! I have not wandered one inch from my original theme when I say, "Change your tastes, and the times, as if by magic, will already have changed." Why don't we be Catholic? Practically the entire world has gone off the gold-standard; why don't we? Go off it today and go on the grace-standard. It will be far more stable and stabilizing. See what a mountain of merit you can pile up by changing your tastes and seeking first the Kingdom of God, which is found by bowing down to His sovereign all-wise, all-good, all-merciful Will. Learn to say, "FIAT," and your world will be re-made!

Take a lesson from life. Learn from the children of this generation. Learn to buy on the installment plan — your home, your heavenly home, which is a "mansion prepared

from all eternity." Pay for it by daily installments of merits won by bowing to the Will of God, whether that Will be to your liking or not. He may see fit to send you even to the bread-line. If He does — thank Him, and then be wise enough to join that other line that forms in the early gray dawning and ends where a small, dancing flame flickers its life away before the God of the Universe buried in Bread. Join this line which ends at the altar rail, and you will get the Bread of Angels, the true Bread of Life, the superstantial Bread, which is the Body and Blood of the only Man who was strong with the strength of omnipotence. He will sustain you.

Yes, "Change your tastes!" That is my cry to YOU! Sharpen your appetite for the Sacraments; deepen your desire for the Sacrifice; whet your cravings for immortality, and the Depression will soon be seen as a very real exaltation, a blessing direct from the hand of your Giant Lover to give you a chance to mint merits!

Do you know that you are not really seeking money? You do not want power, position or fame. What you are really seeking is what you think these things will bring. You are hungry for happiness. That is why I shout, "Change your tastes!" You will never find happiness where you are looking. Never! It is not to be found in a bank-account or in the plaudits of the crowd. Its home is in the heart. Happiness comes from within, not from without.

Think back over the years that are gone and find for yourself the happiest day that you have lived. Most certainly it is not the one on which you made the most money. Think back on those days that are dead, and

you will find that you do not even think of money. You may stop at the day that you were married, for that day you got something that gold cannot buy. You may stop at that blessed day when, by the breath of God, life was given and you earned the name of "Mother" or could be spoken of as a "Dad." But if memory is long enough and tastes are true enough, you will go back even beyond these blessed days, you will go back to that morn when, as a tiny tot, you clasped your little hands and bent your little head and, with all the reverence, recollection, innocence and nervous anxiety of childhood, you walked those blessed steps that brought you to the altar rail and to your first Holy Communion. That was the happiest day of your life! Not because you were without worry or care; not because you had not met suffering (the griefs of childhood are more heart-breaking than those of later years); not because you had not known soul-sorrow, but because you had come close to, you had actually received, your God. Your tastes were true then, your instincts proper, and that day was the happiest of all happy days, because you had been kissed, embraced, lost in the Lover of your soul, your Jesus Christ. That day you knew peace and joy. That day your heart was really happy, for that day you got grace and the Author of grace!

Do change your tastes, for what you are calling treasure is more nearly trash. Learn a lesson from this wise little lady whom I call the wise little lady with the Catholic heart. Her husband came home to her one day at a most unusual hour. He was haggard, worn and wan. He slumped into a chair and said, "Mary, I am a ruined man. Everything I had, is lost. I am a bankrupt. Every-

thing is in the hands of the sheriff to be sold for what it will bring." From the eyes that tabernacled tears this brave little lady looked at a very beaten man. As soon as she could control her voice, she quietly asked, "Will the sheriff sell you?" "No," came the almost unthinking answer. "Will he sell me?" "No" — the husband's head was out of his hands now, and he was looking questions at his little wife. "Will he sell the children?" "No." Then our wise little lady went to a very puzzled man, put her two hands on his shoulders and, looking deep into his troubled eyes, smiled a bright smile and said, "Then don't say we have lost everything! We have love and life" — and in a whisper she added, "and God." We have lost much, John, dear, very much; but we have not lost true treasure. The fruits of the years have gone; but we still have God, our hearts, our hands and our children. All else is really trash. Under God we can start again." Then before tears fell, she kissed him.

Was she not right? Did she not know true treasure? Learn from her. Learn to model on Christ. Then, though your pockets may often be empty, your hearts can always be full; then, though skies be gray and even black, you can have sunshine in your soul; then, though money be lacking, you can always mint the true gold of merit and lay up a treasure as overwhelmingly precious as it is eternally incorruptible.

It is all a matter of following the Model or falling into the muddle and though we know much of the muddle from intimate and personal contact, the same cannot be said of the Model. We do not know Jesus Christ! There **is** a way out of the Depression, be it economic or moral. There **is** a way to live

life that is life. There is a way to be red-blooded Catholics, and that way is to follow the Model given us by the most perfect Man, the most perfect woman, the most perfect family. It is high time for us anemic Christians to forget the "Joneses" and to think only of Jesus, Mary and Joseph!

Follow the Model and Avoid the Muddle!

Ours is a muddled world, a very muddled world. That, no thinking man denies. Our world is muddled in its ideas and its ideals, its practices and its principles, its lives and its loves; muddled it is in its aims and ambitions, its dreams and desires, its hopes and its fears, but most muddled in its worships and its religions. Ours is a very muddled world because it has never studied its Model.

Over six thousand years ago a man and a woman stood by a tree, they had just lost grace. That was the sad start of it all. Sin had darkened the human intellect and weakened the human will. Paradise was lost that day, and an angel with a flaming sword sent your father and mine, your mother and mine, out into a hostile world to earn their bread in the sweat of their brows and to bring forth their children in pain. That is why ours was the inheritance of a muddled mind, a vacillating will and passions that flame. That is why ours was the legacy of a life amidst briars that pierce, beasts that are savage, and men who are worse than beasts. But God added a clause, a saving codicil, to our awful inheritance. He annexed a clause that promised us ultimate victory. Nineteen hundred years ago that promise was fulfilled when it was made possible for you and for me to become heirs of heaven, adopted children, partakers in the nature Divine; for another Man

and another woman were near another Tree. Then the expelling sword of the guarding angel was sheathed and Paradise regained for all who would follow the Model of the Son who was a Father, and the Mother who was a child.

Tell me honestly, have you ever studied your Immaculate Mother or endeavored to learn her ways? You bear the name of Christian; but what do you know of Christ? Now is the time for the revaluation of all existing values, and the only scale to follow is the one given us by Omniscience. What is it? . . .

The Trinity had determined that God should become a Babe, so the Trinity took counsel to see with what It would adorn that creature who would one day be called the Mother of the Redeemer and the Mother of the Redeemed. Now remember that the Trinity is omnipotent and all love, the Trinity is omniscient and all truth; then what the Trinity chooses for adornment must be the most precious thing in all creation. Remember that the Trinity owns all things. It placed the gold in the veins of the mountain and deeply hid the diamond in the earth's dark folds; the snowy pearl It had created and stored in the vaults of the sea. All the gems that men call precious fell from the prodigal hands of the Omnipotent. As for beauty — stars dripped from Their fingers and silvered the dome of the night; at Their Triune "Fiat" the sun burst into flame; the lily of the field is Their painting and done with such exquisite art that Solomon in all his glory is put to a blushing shame. The kings of the world are Their making; palace and crown are Theirs and They cloak with the royal purple and scepter with imperial might whomsoever They will. Power, position, beauty, fortune,

name and fame — all are trinkets to the Trinity. Yet, the creature crowned with heaven's luxury of luxuries was not found in proud, imperial Rome or in haughty, temple-crowned Jerusalem; but down in lowly little Nazareth, the Mother of God was found, rich in the richest adornings that the Omnipotent Three could create.

And what was it? Was it money? Was it power, position or fame? Was it happiness or joy-filled pleasure, as we reckon delights and joys? Was it any of those things that greedy man teaches you and me to seek in the wide world's busy marts? None! None of these? It was not gold, nor greatness, nor glory as muddled man conceives such things. The gift of gifts from the infinite God was to have Mary conceived immaculate. Grace! Grace it is that Omnipotence and Omniscience chose as the greatest gift that God could give His Mother.

Do you grasp that truth? ... If you or I had the making of our own mother and had all things at our command, would we give her anything but the best? God did the same. He gave Mary His very best, and it was GRACE! In our readjustments of mental modes and outlook, in our revelations of all existing values, then, the first place must go to grace. And in all life's zealous questings the first thing to seek is grace. It is the most important thing in life and after-life. For when "life's fitful fever" is over, we must be rich with the gold that will bring us close to God, and that is the gold of grace.

Now ask yourself honestly — how often do you add to your store? How often do you make an earnest, energetic effort to gain more of what God has shown to be the greatest thing in all His great creation? How much

of your thought and your time do you give to the acquisition of the one and only thing that you can take with you beyond the grave?

Grace, you know, is won through the Sacraments, the Sacrifice and prayer.

If we are to model on Mary, the first thing we want is grace. That was God's first gift to her. He made her immaculate and full of grace. Sinlessness and sanctity — pearls beyond price — He gave her and gave her them from her conception. The other great gift He gave also begins with an "s," and this He gave her in abundance from the Annunciation to her Assumption, from the "Fiat" she breathed at Nazareth to her coronation as heavenly Queen. The Trinity's third great gift made her Mother of Sorrows, Queen of Martyrs and Consoler of the Afflicted, for it was SUFFERING. Strange collocation of words, is it not? "The gift of suffering" — and yet, I know that God would give His Mother nothing but the best.

How soon it all started! Joseph, her spouse, "was troubled and sought to put her away"; then came Bethlehem's cold closing one by one of doors. Forty days fled from Christmas, and she took her Boy to the Temple to present God to God. Simeon, in his aged arms held Infinity and sang in accented joy his sweet swan-song, his "Nunc dimittis." Then handing back the Babe to the Mother he spoke that bitter prophecy that set the little Mother's heart ableeding. "Thine own soul a sword shall pierce," and seven times, we know, it was fulfilled. Seven deadly times was Sorrow's savage sword sheathed to the very hilt in the scabbard of the heart of her whom the man in me calls, Lady, and the boy in me calls, Mother. Thus it was that the most beautiful of women became the

Mother of Sorrow, the Queen with the broken heart. From the very beginning the Lily of Israel was a crushed and broken bloom. I wonder if it was because crushed flowers give a more fragrant and a fuller perfume? I do not really know, but of this I am sure, that God chiseled with a sharpness unmistakable the model for all men . . . Sinlessness . . . Sanctity. . . Sorrow. Of this I am equally sure, that by becoming the Mater Dolorosa she also became the Consoler of all the Afflicted.

Are you homeless? — Then think of Mary. In the dark of night she clasped Jesus to her bosom and hurried out into the Sahara's sea of sand to find lonely exile in Egypt beyond the Nile.

Are you childless? — Then think of Mary. Think of the three endless days and the longer nights that she spent with broken heart and tear-blinded eyes searching, ever searching for her Boy.

Are you jobless? — Think of Mary. Think of the daughter of King David who became the spouse of a village carpenter. Think of the poverty, the pinching poverty of Nazareth, and know that it was the deliberate choice of an all-wise God!

Is your dear one sick! — Then think of Mary. She had to stand by the deathbed of her Boy, denied all the comfort and consolation of helping the agonizing. She could not smooth the pillow of thorns, or freshen the hard bed of the cross. She could not bathe the blood-filled and fevered brow, nor quench His burning thirst with so much as a tear.

Have you lost your parents? — Then remember that Mary, your model, was orphaned early; for Saints Joachim and Anne went to Limbo to await their little girl who would be

their Queen and their little Grandchild, who was their God.

Has half your heart gone to heaven? Are you a lonely widow? — Then think of Mary. She closed Joseph's eyes one sad day, laid him beneath the sod and then came back to a house that was filled with echoes — only echoes — of the gentlest saint of God's creation.

Has a cradle been turned to a coffin; or is there a vacant chair? Has some loving heart that was beloved been forever stilled? — Then look long at our little Lady as she holds in the paten of her virgin hands the broken Host of Calvary's First Mass. Look very long at our Queen, our Mother and our Model, as she turns from the mammoth stone that locks Arimathea's hillside tomb and hides from her eyes the Body of her murdered Boy, that Sacred Body of God that was bone of her bone, flesh of her flesh, and heart of her heart.

Do you see how the **Mater Dolorosa** became the **Consolatrix Afflictorum**?

Neither you, nor I, nor any one else, will ever suffer as Mary suffered, and through it all she spoke one word — it was, "FIAT." That was the answer that she gave to God's first messenger Gabriel. That was the answer she gave to the seven other messengers of God which we call "Dolors." Bethlehem's unkindness cut, and so did the hillside cave, but Mary said, "Fiat." Egypt's exile hurt, but not so much as Jerusalem's loss, yet Mary said, "Fiat." To every station of the Way of the Cross she staggered and fell with her Son, but the grief of griefs was that Longinus' spear-point found His heart and not hers — still she said, "Fiat." Crushed Lily of Israel,

broken-hearted Queen, sorrow-swamped Mother of God and our Model!

"Fiat" was her favorite prayer, and because of it Angels and Archangels now fold their wings in holy adoration; Cherubim and Seraphim bow in loving veneration; Thrones, Powers, Dominations with the Virtues and the other Choirs before her make prostration; earth's every generation calls her "Blessed," and you and I have her for invocation and consolation. Because she always said, "Fiat," her tomb was found white with lilies, and Heaven held high jubilee as the Triune God crowned a creature from earth and made Mary Queen of Creation.

There is our Model and our inspiration. After Sorrow's seven swords came the Assumption and the Coronation. Because her heart was pierced her head was crowned; and one day you and I will see our Mother's heart, and its blazing beauty will flame from seven wounds of love. Mary's rosary has fifteen long decades, but the last five are glorious. Ours can be the same if we follow the Model and say, "FIAT."

We cannot miss the lesson, the Christian philosophy of life, the startling paradox that suffering is the way to joy. Jesus will not allow us. A shivering Babe, an exiled Boy, a sweating Carpenter, the Man of Sorrows, all should unerring teach the truth; but Jesus knew that man's intellect is dull and man's memory is short, so He etched His lesson in steel. He used three spikes and a spear. One went through His feet, one through each of His hands, and the spear went through His Heart. Thus did He emblazon with Blood Divine the truth of all truths for man, namely, there is only one road to heaven, and it is not the highroad. Not the wide-open road of

pleasure, popularity, riches and pride, but that narrow, black, staggering stony, stumbling and often bloody way of poverty, pain and humility. He knew that the only truths that remain in the fleeting memory of man are those that are written in blood, so from Gethsemani to Golgotha His every step is bloody. Have we learned those lessons?

With His Sermon on the Mount He had turned all human hierarchies upside down. He climaxes that Sermon with the Sermon from the Cross to show you and me that the world is topsy-turvy, that its values and its very sense of values are all wrong. When are we going to listen to Omniscience and stop giving our ear to muddled man? When are we going to be Catholic? When are we going to follow our Model in everything? If pain, be it physical or mental, be something evil, then God is not God!

How little we know our Christ and our Christianity? He taught us, and He still teaches us everything. He is not only our Model of how to suffer and how to die; but He is our Model of how to pray, to work and to live. But we are dull, very dull pupils. We take His promises gladly. We delight in the thought of His heaven; but the way there, how many of us know? How few of us take! — "If any man come after Me... let him DENY HIMSELF... take up his CROSS... and follow Me."

Would you learn how to do this? How to live red-blooded Christianity? How really to follow Jesus Christ?... Then say, "FIAT." Say, "Thy Will be done!" That is what He always said, and that is what He always did. His prophet gave us a pen-picture of the Son of God when he wrote, "In the head of the Book it is written of me: Behold I come to do

Thy Will, O God." He Himself summed up His life by saying, "I do always the things that please Him." He was asked to teach us how to pray, and He made solemn answer saying: "Our Father, who art in heaven, Thy Will be done. . . ." But knowing the weakness even of Omnipotent's words with the mind of man, He acted out His lesson one night in Gethsemani's garden. Though it sent His Heart's blood spurting, from the pores of His beautiful face, He said "FIAT." "Not My will, but Thine, be done." That He meant His prayer is evidenced by a blood-splashed corpse on a blood-soaked cross that was flung against a blackening sky on the Friday that we now call "Good."

His life was one long FIAT, and He closed His life with the greatest of all His FIATS, for just before He "gave up the ghost" He uttered a loud cry; but He changed the mood and the tenses . . . it was no longer "Thy Will BE done," it was now "Thy Will IS done," and all mankind had a lesson on how to live and how to die.

Are you and I this moment following the Model or are we in a very real muddle? Are we red-blooded Christians or are we only anemic, straddling, staggering Catholics? Are our standards those of Jesus Christ or do we try to compromise and weigh worth in the lying scales of the world? Here is your test and your touchstone. . . . When sorrow comes, do we rebel or do we say, "FIAT," as we think of the sign of the cross?

The Shadow and the Sign of the Cross

The cross had always meant suffering, and even yet we speak of our sufferings as "our crosses"; but Christ has turned things so far upside down that the cross has now become

the sign of blessings and we bless ourselves with the sign of the cross. Before Good Friday the cross was a gibbet of infamy and shame; today it is a jewel. Before Good Friday it was hideous and hateful; today it is so loved that it can be seen as the gorgeous gold pendant gleaming at the throats of beautiful women. Before it was the sign of disgrace and meant degradation; today it is our exaltation. They shunned it in the ages past; today it is kissed and venerated, for it is the only key to heaven. And the sign of the cross, or even its shadow, is the surety of salvation.

That is why when suffering comes we say "FIAT," for we know that we are being blessed.

Tell me why I should not revel in the sign of the cross. It has given me everything that is of value and it promises me more. And the same is true for you!

Look! We were still-born babes as far as heaven was concerned, for our first Parents had sinned. But Baptism gave us life, real, supernatural life. It was like creation all over again with God breathing the breath of life into our dead souls. Baptism made us children of Omnipotence and that adoption neither you nor I shall fully appreciate "till skies be fugitives." Baptism stamped your souls and mine with the only sign that will be recognized in the Kingdom of God, and Baptism was given with the sign of the cross!

Then find for me, if you can, amongst your souvenirs sweeter memories than those moments you spent at Mother's knee learning the sign of the cross.

When old enough we went to the Miracle of all miracles — the Mass. Therein we saw countless signs of the cross, for the Mass

IS Calvary's cross erected again, without the pain and without the shame, but with all the glory to God, of Golgotha. Think of it... at the whispered words of a man, the Infinite God leaps down from heaven to hide Himself in a tiny wheaten wafer and then dies that we might live!

When giving you the Bread of Angels the priest does so with the sign of the cross.

Then, when we have played traitor and blackened our souls with the filth of sin, pardon, an infinite pardon, is given us in absolution with the sign of the cross. What a miracle and mystery is absolution! It caused Cliff Laube, speaking of Magdalene, to exclaim in rapturous awe:

"No ray, no art can reillumine
A wilted water-lily's bloom;

No alchemy reclaim
A once extinguished flame.

But Innocence, by Heaven's Grace,
Shone again in Mary's face!"

So, too, from your eyes and mine went that look of shame and that slinking glance of guilt as we were given permission to lift up our head again and breathe. Absolution has been to us, time and time again, a resuscitation, a resurrection, a rehabilitation... It is given with the sign of the cross!

Those of you who are married can readily recall that God's witness signed your sacred dedications with the sign of the cross. And I was made more than man by a bishop who chrismed my palms, rested his hands on my head and gave me a paten and a chalice that I might live the sign of the cross.

From birth to burial and even after, it is always the sign of the cross. At Baptism it gave us life, at Confirmation, strength, resurrection after suicide of sin came from absolution and its sign of the cross. Under that sign we are given the Bread of Angels and receive the Triune God into our souls. It blesses your marriage and stamped me priest, and when we are at death's door it will anoint the five gateways to our intellect. It will consign our bodies to the sod and then stand silent sentinel over our dust until the general resurrection. That is the day on which it will be seen in all its splendor, and that is the day that the sign of the cross will serve as the beam of that balance which will weigh the worth of souls, telling with unerring accuracy those who lived under it, loved under it and died under it; then, for all eternity, joy will be found in the sign of the cross. Why, then, when its shadow falls across my heart, should I not say, "FIAT"?

I say "shadow" for, though masters in the spiritual life and writers of sound asceticism speak of sufferings as "splinters" from the cross of Christ, I am learning something of the torrent of torture that overwhelmed our Love on that awful day of terror and triumph, and that is why I say that neither you, nor I, nor any man receives more than the mere "shadow" of Calvary's cross. Yes, even though dishonor, degradation, and lifelong disgrace be our part, though we stagger through a world of shattered hopes, stumbling at every turn over the unpolished stone of our dreams' unfinished foundations, though we reel through life blinded with the mists rising from a broken heart, I still say we have only a "shadow" and not a "splinter" from the monstrous Tree on which our Brother breathed His last.

Why should we not say "FIAT" — for that sign is ever illumined with the legend that blazed for Constantine these 1600 years that are gone. Look closely and you will always read, "In hoc signo vinces" — "In this sign, and in this sign alone, you shall conquer." Under that sign we shall conquer the unconquerable. We shall conquer self, conquer sin, conquer Satan, and above all conquer the world! Why, under that sign, and under it alone, we shall conquer the unassailable stronghold of heaven. Yes, we shall conquer, you and I, and conquer under that sign, but only if we live under its shadow. If we war under the shadow and the sign of the cross, if we live under it and die under it with an ever ready "FIAT" on our lips and a real worship in our hearts for the Will of God, we shall glory under it forever!

Does all this talk of the "cross" frighten you? Well, know that it is not mine; it is the word of the strongest, purest, bravest, tenderest, truest Lover that ever lived. It is the word of Jesus Christ. "If any man come after Me," He said, "let him take up his cross."

I give you no sentimental Christ, for I want you to live no sentimental Christianity. Let us have done with anemia! Let us be full-blooded, red-blooded, fiery-blooded followers of Jesus Christ. He is God, and by deliberate choice He took what our mad, modern age tells us to avoid. He took poverty, humility and pain. He took suffering both mental and physical. He took agony and the cross. He took a broken Heart from Bethlehem's cave to Arimathea's tomb, and lest we doubt it, He had His side spear-dug so that all the world might read His love.

And yet — Man of Sorrows though He was — there never was a happier man to walk the ways of our world. Paradox? Yes, Divine Paradox that teaches us truth. Happiness is not outside, it is entirely within. It is found in the mind, the heart and the will; the mind that sees God in all things, the heart that loves God in all things, the will that says "FIAT" to all things except sin. Christ is a mighty mystery, but the source of His peace, His imperturbable happiness, is not a mystery. He told it at birth, in life and at death. It is found in the one word "FIAT."

And the Christianity that has lived Christ has found the truth in that paradox. There IS joy in suffering, heart-thrilling joy. If you doubt it, go to the nearest convent or monastery and see there women in the grand blush of their full youth or in the golden-glow of their mellow old age, see men bursting with virility, young and old, and all radiating joy. They lead what the world calls "painful" lives, and yet they have what the world cannot give, for it is what the world has not got. They have peace, a profound peace, which gives true happiness and brings lasting joy.

Would you know the secret? It is this: they have mined their mountains and their molehills; they seek merit and not money; they changed their tastes and not the times; they follow the Model and avoid the muddle. Would you further know the secret? They do all under the shadow and the sign of the cross and are always saying, "FIAT! FIAT!"

If you still doubt it, if you still wonder if there can be joy in suffering, let me tell you this . . . the happiest body of men that I have ever had the great good fortune to see is the community of Trappist monks, these one hun-

dred and twelve men buried alive in this monastery of Our Lady of Gethsemani. They have nothing, absolutely nothing, as the world weighs worth, and yet — they have ALL! The smart world smiles at their "delusion"; the knowing world pities their "medievalism"; and yet, I find them living a REALITY in an ULTRA-MODERN way. They have forgotten "blue-blood" and "brown stone fronts" in their manly quest for whiteness of soul and redness of heart. They are living the life of all living, for they are loving with a blazing love the Love Who never will die. They are happy, these men, unbelievably happy, because their lives are one long "FIAT" and their death will be a "Consummatum est." They are always doing the Will of God, and that is why they will die smiling, changing their lifelong "Thy Will be done" into "Thy Will IS done."

Forgive me if I seem to be boasting, but know well that I am merely stealing a thought from St. Paul. He said: "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of Christ." Know well that I am only trying to give you the secret of success in life and of triumph at death. Know well that I will penance my body and pray out my heart for all the requests you send me, but over and above them all, I beg God to give you the sight to see and the will to say, "FIAT."

Won't you try it today? Tomorrow is a long way off. In fact, tomorrow may never come. "Tomorrow" is the slogan of Satan, for very few people ever do tomorrow what they put off today. So, do start now, for some "tomorrow we die," and

"When I am dying, how glad I shall be
That the lamp of my life has been burned
out for Thee;

"That sorrow has darkened the pathway I
trod,
That thorns and not roses were strewn
o'er its sod;

"That anguish of spirit full often was mine,
Since anguish of spirit so often was Thine.

"My cherished Rabboni! how glad I shall
be
To die with a hope of a welcome from
Thee!"

Give fire and flame to that hope by always saying, "FIAT." And remember that every blessing an infallible Church gives, is given with the sign of God's suffering, and that is why I can tell you every suffering is an infallible sign of God's blessing on those who say, "FIAT."

Let us have done with anemia. Let us live red-blooded Christianity. Let us bravely embrace the Will of God. Away, then, with compromise and on with Christ. Live under the shadow and the sign of the cross. It blesses. It purifies. It sanctifies. It will glorify! Learn to say "FIAT," and your world IS re-made!

May God always bless you, even though it be with the "shadow" of His cross!

FIAT VOLUNTAS TUA!

★ ★ ★

Abbey of Our Lady of Gethsemani
Holy Thursday, March 21st
Nineteen hundred and forty

BOOKS AND BOOKLETS

SUPPLIED BY THE ABBEY OF OUR LADY OF GETHSEMANI



The Family that Overtook Christ	\$2.75
The Man Who Got Even with God	2.00
Life of Dom Edmond Obrecht	1.50
Life and Times of St. Bernard	6.50
St. Bernard on the Love of God	1.50
The Soul of the Apostolate paper	1.00
	cloth 1.25
	leather 2.50
The Cistercian Life50
Joseph Cassant, Trappist Priest . . paper	.50
	cloth .75
Yvo Poussin, Trappist Lay Brother	
	paper .65
	cloth 1.00
Louise Tessier	1.00
Descriptive Booklet of Gethsemani Abbey	.25
Cistercian Nuns	1.50
Order of Citeaux	1.75
Holy Abandonment, Dom Lehodey	4.00
Spiritual Directory (Cistercian) 2 vols.	
	each 1.75
Spirit of Simplicity40
Lieutenant Michael Carlier, Monk	2.00



BOOKLETS (10 cents each)



REDUCTION FOR QUANTITIES



Are You?

Fiat and Remake Your World

Life is a Divine Romance

The God-Man's Double

What's Wrong?

Set the World on Fire

Doubling for the Mother of God

What Are You Doing to Jesus Christ?

Do You Want Life and Love?

Have You Met God?

For Your Own Defense

A Startling Thing for You

To Mothers Who Have Sons in the Service

Eventually: Why Not Now?

Apostolate of the Contemplatives

Master Magnet (St. Bernard)

24 Hours a Catholic

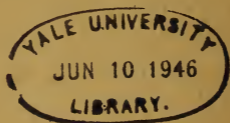
An Hour With Christ

Let's Build a Home



**Our Lady of Gethsemani
Trappist, Ky.**





Printed in U. S. A.