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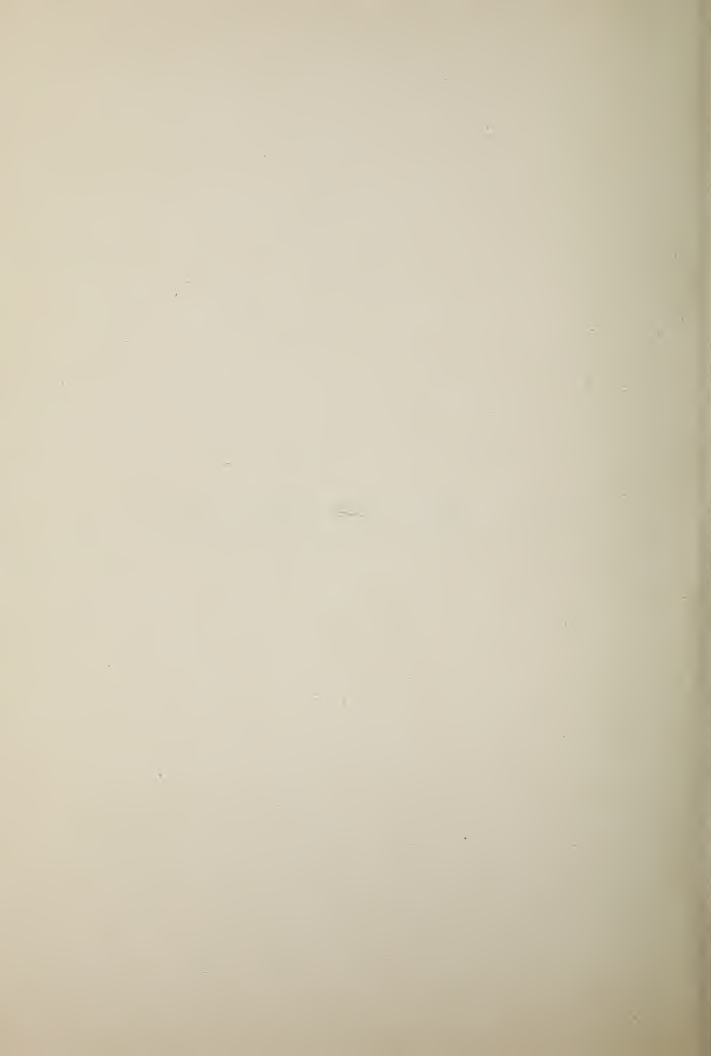
LOVE ON PILGRIMAGE



MSGR. FULTON J. SHEEN

THE CATHOLIC HOUR

LOVE ON PILGRIMAGE



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Twelve addresses delivered in the nationwide Catholic Hour, produced by the National Council of Catholic Men, in cooperation with the National Broadcasting Company, from February 3, 1946 through April 21, 1946.

BY

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of the

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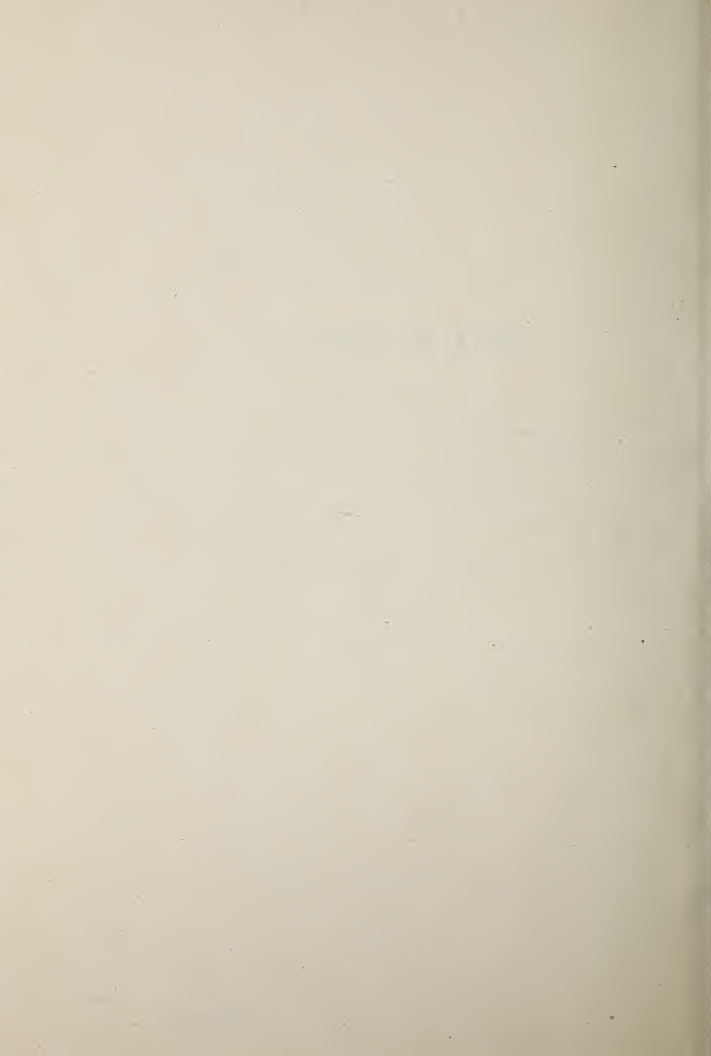
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CHRIST'S LOVE AS OUR PEACE

Address given on February 3, 1946

For 16 years I have been addressing you as "Friends"—and what friends you are! Your thousands of heart-warming letters are not only the pledge of your devotion but also the measure of my responsibility. Well may I, in the face of your welcome, say with St. Paul: "Woe to me if I preach not the Gospel" (*Corinthians*, 9:16). Not only do I extend my prayerful thanks to you, but also to the Radio Executive Committee of the National Council of Catholic Men for so kindly inviting me to the blessed privilege of addressing you again.

What subject should we discuss this year? Certainly something dealing with both the sorry state of the world and our own souls. What do both need most?

First, the world. Have you noticed that the victorious nations were more united in war than they are now? This is because all we needed to unite us in war was a common hate; but in order to unite us in peace, we need a common philosophy of life—but this is lacking. The

end of this war has left us in a kind of moral vacuum. For the last several years, fear of an enemy has inspired us to sacrifice the resources of our land, the young life of our homes, and the blood, sweat and tears of our bodies. It put all other problems on a kind of furlough; individual differences, party politics, economic problems, and even certain moral laws were disqualified in order that a collective passion might be unleashed against the enemy.

But now that the cannons' mouths are mute, the world is like the empty house described by Our Lord. We have driven out a devil, yes, but who now shall tenant the world? Unless Virtue and Love of God come to dwell therein, Our Lord warned that seven other devils worse than the first will come into it to take up their abode. The devil finds a happy hunting ground in a world recovering from a global hangover of war, where no great Passion of Love has come to supplant the passion of hate. Who shall fill the Void? Shall we become Fascist

in the name of anti-Fascism? Shall we, who have prepared ourselves against the presence of one form of totalitarianism, be unprepared against its absence? Shall the hatred against some dictators sublimate into a hatred of God and religion—for thus do some hope to silence the unbearable ennui of their atheism.

What makes this tragedy worse is that, while formerly, in times of crisis, men looked to spiritual guides, they now turn to unspiritual ones; father confessors have given way to father commentators; spiritual directors have been supplanted by prayerless dictators of collective unconsciousness, each endowed with an infallibility the like of which Christ never gave to His Church. Is there a way out?

Now turn your gaze from the world into certain types of souls which are increasing to an alarming degree, and which curiously are found in great metropolitan areas and the cities rather than in the country where people are rooted to the earth and to God—for both often go together. Here we refer to those who may definitely be characterized as “modern souls” and by modern we mean souls who are:

- 1) Bored
- 2) Cynical
- 3) Afraid.

1) Bored. “I don’t know why I go on living” is one of the most characteristic statements of the bored. All boredom results from a loss of purpose and personal vocation. If we do not know why we are here or where we are going, there is not much reason for doing one thing rather than another thing. There is not even much reason for living. The effects of boredom are disastrous, for if life has no purpose, then everything becomes tempting. Perhaps one of the reasons why, socialism, and totalitarianism have grown in the twentieth century, is because man, bored with his individual existence, is looking for a new kind of existence in the collectivity. Just as soon as men are given the right to define liberty as the right to disobey, they become bored with what they do, and demand a tyrant.

2) Cynical. As boredom results from a loss of purpose, so cynicism flows from the failure of a philosophy to fit the facts of life. This is particularly true of modern youth, who was taught to believe not only in the rational goodness of man who

came from the beast, but also in inevitable progress, and the omniscience of science, and then was suddenly thrust into a world where men acted like beasts, where two world wars in 21 years knocked the naive optimism of progress into a cocked hat, and where science, instead of ministering to life, prepared for its wholesale destruction. No wonder modern youth became frustrated and cynical, knowing the "price of everything and the value of nothing," detecting self-interest and psychosis in every generous enthusiasm. I have the utmost sympathy for the protests of youth against an education which, in the freshman year, introduced them to Frazier's "Golden Bough" from which they were taught to conclude that "Christianity and Buddhism were very much alike, particularly Buddhism," and in the sophomore year, were made Freudians, and taught that all restraint and discipline of erotic impulses was inimical to self-expression and a stupid tribute to Victorian taboos, and in the junior year, were introduced to Nietzsche, who helped them sneer at the moral conventions of the world, and gave a few good catch words to blot religion

out of their lives, and in the senior year, were given a smattering of Marx, where they found an absolute in the economic order to take the place of God and the spiritual order, and then fell into the spurious distinction that fascism and communism were at opposite poles of human thought and action. As a result, these youths have power, but no vision; they are familiar with means, but have no ends; they have strength, but no sanctions; they have the power of destroying ideas, but no power for construction. These youths want something from education, but they are not getting it. Their protests against modern ideas are right; the solutions given them are wrong. Is there a way out?

3) Afraid. Finally, there are those who are afraid. Is it not true that we are all living in fear, which is born of a deep sense of insecurity concerning the future. Fear after this world war is different from the fear which possessed minds at the close of the last world war. Then, men had individual fear, that is to say, a fear about their own personal security. Today, the fear is collective; it is totalitarian; we are bound up with everyone

in the world in some way. The atomic bomb has done much to bring to us a consciousness that we cannot save ourselves alone, in what we call the atomic age but which in reality may be only the atomic moment. And well may we fear. Since we justified the bombing of cities because Hitler started it, shall someone justify the atomization of cities because we started it? Can it be that Fear and Guilt are related? Shall men who doubted that the Providence of God ruled the world now tremble at the new providence of man, who can destroy where God would not?

It is probably true that the increased love of noise, alcoholism, is due to a desire to fly from life in which men fear their own consciences, and even their fellowmen. When man ceases to fear God he fears himself and his neighbor. Is there a way out?

If I say it is religion, I am immediately met with two charges: 1) that Christianity has been tried and found wanting. Chesterton gave the answer to this: "Christianity has been found hard but never tried."

The other charge is that God and redemption from sin is wish-

ful thinking and "escapism". But if religion is wishful thinking, why are not scepticism, and atheism, and irreligion wishful thinking? May it not be that sceptics and the cynics are really covering up the nakedness of their own cowardice with the cloak of their own bravery? Is the man whose house is burning down an escapist because he sends for the Fire Department? Is the man who knows he is a sinner an escapist because he seeks pardon and forgiveness? The real escapists in life are those who keep the skeletons of their sins locked up in the closets of their own minds, and refuse to face them in the light of God's Justice, or else go to a peculiar brand of psychoanalyst, who tells them that the skeleton is only a projection of their own minds, dating from the hour when they read a dirty book in a closet during a thunder storm, while their Aunt Susie told cousin Elsie about the inhibitions of her husband's grandmother. The cowards in life are those who *refuse* to face the fact of despair, guilt, and evil, and not those who would seek deliverance in Christ Jesus Our Lord.

There is a way out and that

is the Way of Divine Love. The vacuum left by war can be filled only by Love of God and neighbor; the cynicism of youth can be swallowed up in the love of a Truth that is Absolute. As Scripture tells us, "Love casteth out fear." Aye! But what kind of love?—A love of God that came down to this earth to make us lovable; a love that embraces, not only those who love us, but our enemies, the vanquished, the defeated and those who stole our coat, forced us to walk an extra mile, or struck us on the cheek; a love that is poles apart from respectability or refinement; a love that can be stern, that can make whips, overturn cash registers, cast fire on earth, hound out the money-changers, and use words more biting than any whip, and scourge hypocrites who devour widow's houses; a love that is not a vain optimism which supposes that God is on the side of any afflatus, but which is inseparable from a Truth so absolute that not even an angel from heaven may preach another Gospel; a love which hacks a hole in the roof of somebody else's house in order to get a paralytic to Jesus; a love which rebukes obvious goodness such as Simon in his

own house, and accepts the sorrow of obvious badness such as a woman who broke in uninvited at Simon's dinner; a love which can make a Thief the last friend on earth and a converted sinner the first friend and messenger of salvation; a love which will put a prodigal bad boy above his presumably exemplary elder brother; a love that preferred a sinner capable of love to a so-called "saint" incapable of it; a love that will beckon harlots and publicans into heaven before those moralists who approve what society approves; a love that dislikes moderation but thrills to broken vessels which fill the house with the odor of sanctity; a love which portrays a Samaritan succoring the Jew, and therefore one in which there is neither Czech nor Pole, Armenian nor American, Russian nor German, Jew nor Gentile; but where all are one in Christ Jesus Our Lord; a love which goes beyond forbearance and service, and which, when it has done all its tasks, still considers itself an unprofitable servant; a love which would have us invite the poor to our table rather than the rich, because they have no means to return the favor; a

love which never sees the widow's mite as too little, nor the costly ointment as too much; a love which can fast for 40 days and then go to a wedding feast; a love that is so high that none of the world's standards can touch it, but a love in which few

failures are so low as to be beyond its forgiveness.

This is the way out—Love of God and Neighbor. And until next week when I show how it affects the young, I return to our ever old and ever new valedictory, God love you!

PURITY: THE SACRISTAN OF LOVE

Address given on February 10, 1946

This is the second of my series of twelve broadcasts on the general subject of love. Love is the one domain where the Devil knows he can best hide his equivocation of virtue and vice, and ensnare humans into believing that they are in love with someone else, when they are really only in love with themselves. The devil has pretty well sold the modern world on the idea that love is sex. What does the contemporary stress on sex reveal, if it be not modern man's desire to escape from boredom and his own inner disgust? He feels the need of being dispossessed in order to be possessed by another, whether that other and foreign thing be a body, a utopia, money, or a dictator. Man must always have an idol. He cannot live without adoration any more than he can live without eating.

Sex is the substitution of a creature for a Creator as the object of worship—this is the essence of idolatry. Under its spell, a soul without the God of heaven makes a new god out of another human being, and wor-

ships it. But no human being can bear the burden of idolatry any more than the stem of a rose can support a marble column. In a short time the idol is revealed as human; its gilt which mocked the gold of infinity wears off as it quickly exhausts its capacity to satisfy. The worshipper then turns against the idol and hates it, accusing it of not giving all the pleasure it promised and therefore is guilty of being a cheater and deceiver. The fatal error was that both the worshipper and the worshipper tried to satisfy the craving for the Divine within the limitations of the human, and became bored under its torturous contradictions. The idol and idolator then hate each other, because each is a private hell filled with the Satan of his or her disgust. Such is the basic reason for the ruined homes of America, which, if our spiritual eye did see, reveal disaster and ruin a thousand times worse than the ruined houses of Nagasaki and Hiroshima.

But how instruct our youth on the subject of purity? Unfortunately the subject is too generally

approached negatively. Youth is told what not to do, and as a result thinks of purity as a negation. While it is true the virtue does demand resisting attacks, it is nevertheless true that, as pure water is more than the absence of impurities, as a pure diamond is more than the absence of carbon, as pure food is more than the absence of poison, so purity is more than the absence of filth.

Now what is Purity? *Purity is reverence paid to the mystery of sex.* In every mystery there are two elements: one visible, the other invisible, e.g., in the sacrament of Baptism, water is the visible element, the regenerating grace of Christ the invisible element. Now sex is a mystery too, because it has these two characteristics; sex is something known to everyone, and yet sex is something hidden from everyone. The known element is that everyone is either male or female. The invisible, hidden, mysterious element in sex is its capacity for *creativeness*—a sharing in some way of the Creative Power of God. As God's love is the creative principle of the universe, so God willed that the love of man and woman should be the creative principle of the family. This power of

human beings to beget one to their image and likeness is something like God's creative power by which He made us to His image and likeness.

A peculiar quality associated with all creativeness, whether it be a poem, a statue, or a child, is awe and reverence. In youth, this awesomeness before the mystery manifests itself in the timidity of a woman, which makes her shrink from a precocious or too ready surrender of her secret of creativeness. In a man, the mystery is revealed in chivalry to women, which is not bestowed because he believes that woman is physically the weaker sex, but because of the awe he feels in the presence of mystery.

Because of the reverence which envelops this mysterious power which came from God, mankind has always felt that it ought to be used only by a special sanction from God and under certain relationships. That is why traditionally marriage has been associated with religious rites—to bear witness to the fact that it has been approved by God and in a special way is destined to fulfill God's creative designs. That is why the mys-

tery of creativeness should be explored only in marriage.

Certain powers may be used only in certain relationships. What is lawful in one relationship is not lawful in another. A man can kill another man as a soldier in a just war, but not in his private capacity as a citizen. A policeman can arrest someone as duly appointed guardian of the law fortified with a warrant, but not outside of that relationship. So too, the "creativeness" of man and woman is lawful under certain relationships sanctioned by God, but not apart from that mysterious relationship called marriage.

Who then are the pure? The pure are those who have such a reverence for the mystery of creativeness that they will suffer no schism between the use of the power to beget and its divinely ordained purpose, namely the raising of children for the Kingdom of God. They would no more think of isolating this power to create from God's intended use of it, than they would think of using a knife apart from its humanly ordained purpose, such as to stab a neighbor. Those things which God hath joined together, the pure would never separate. Never would they use the

material sign to dishonor the holy inner mystery, as they would not use the bread of the altar consecrated to God to nourish the body alone. Thus, purity is not just physical intactness as the pagans believed. In the maid it is a firm resolve never to use the power until God shall send her a husband, and in the man it is a steadfast desire to await upon God's will that he have a wife for the use of God's purpose. In this sense, true marriages are made in heaven, for when heaven makes them, body and soul never pull in opposite directions; the physical aspect which is known to everybody as sex is never alienated from the invisible mysterious aspect which is hidden from everyone, save the one willed by God to share in it with God's sanction and in God's own good time.

Notice how experience bears out the definition of purity as reverence for mystery. Why is it that we are never scandalized at seeing people eat in public, or read in buses, or listening to music on the street, but we are shocked at dirty shows, foul books, or undue manifestations of affections in public. It is not because we are prudes, nor be-

cause we were educated in a Catholic school, nor because we have not yet come to the liberating influence of a Freud, but because they involve aspects of a mystery so deep, so personal, so incommunicable that we do not want to see them vulgarised or made common. By its nature, only one person can share in creativeness. Therefore, what belongs to one person should never be thrown to the mob.

You like to see the American flag flying over your neighbor's head, but you do not want to see it under his feet. There is a mystery in that flag; it is more than cloth; it stands for the unseen, the spiritual; love and devotion to country. So here, your shock at the foul is due to the prostitution of the sacred; the reverent is made irreverent. Such is the essence of the obscene, the making of the inner mystery a jest. And, as one discerns Our Lord of the Eucharist under the sign of bread, so one discerns a soul and potential co-partnership with God's creativeness under a body. As the Catholic craves the embrace of Christ in the Sacrament because he first learned to love Him as a Person, so he reveres the body because he first learned to revere the soul. This rever-

ence is adoration in the first instance, and purity in the second.

That is why the educators who hope to make sex "nice and natural" will end in confusion worse confounded, because while sex is natural, it is yet a mystery. It is not body wholeness, but holiness, and to be holy means to live in correspondence with God's creative purpose. Educators who assume that purity is ignorance of life are like those who think that temperance is ignorance of drunkenness. Our Blessed Mother was not ignorant of the mystery of life's begetting, for when the angel appeared to her, she asked: "How shall this be done, because I know not man?" (*Luke 1:34*). She had consecrated her virginity to God, hence her problem was how to fulfill that consecration with God's presently revealed will to become a mother.

Purity then is not something negative; not coldness, but basically a desire, a love for God's will in relation to a mystery. It is passionless only to those who think that love is bodily passion; and if this were so, how could God be love, since He has no passion? If purity were absence of love, how could the Blessed Virgin have become the

Mother of Our Lord? It is absolutely impossible to have creativeness without love. God could not generate an Eternal Son without Love; God could not make the earth and the fulness thereof without love; Mary could not conceive in her womb without Love. She did conceive without human love, but not without Divine Love. Though human passion was lacking, Divine Love was not, for the angel said to her that the Spirit of Love would overshadow her and that the Holy One to be born should be called the Son of God. It is possible, therefore, to have Love without lust, or what Thompson calls a "passionless passion, a wild tranquillity." Since purity is reverence for the mystery of creativeness, who was more pure than the woman who bore the Creator of Creativeness and who in the ecstasy of that love could say to the world without mystery: "In thy house lust without love shall die. In my house love without lust shall live."

Purity then does not begin in the body but in the will. From there it flows outward to the thought, the imagination, and into finally the body. Bodily

purity is only the echo of the will.

As from a great spiritual vessel, there flows down a refreshing draught to man and maid, by which they are energized to be reverent unto a mystery that began when God created the world. There is, therefore, no such thing as an "old maid" or a "bachelor," from the Christian point of view. These terms apply only to those unhappy ones who found no will to share, no purpose to fulfill either in heaven or earth. To find no ear in heaven or on earth, to listen to "I love you," or "I surrender," or "Be it done unto me according to thy Word" must *indeed* be of all human existences the most tragic. But to keep the secret until God calls, and to keep it always if God never calls, is the greatest happiness given to hearts in this vale of tears. Purity is the sacristan of love.

From a purely human point of view, there is something incomplete about virginity, something unshared, and something kept back. On the other hand, there is something lost in motherhood, something surrendered, something irrevocable. But in Mary alone, the Virgin Mother, there is nothing incomplete, nothing

lost. She is a kind of springtime harvest, an October in May. The incompleteness of Virginity is complemented by the fullness of her motherhood; the surrender of her motherhood is forestalled by the preservation of her innocence. Virgin and Mother, she is the common denominator of all Sovereign surrender to Divine Will. She is a Virgin because she sought God's Will directly; she is a mother for exactly the same reason. All are satisfied in her.

Would that the whole world could realize what an impetus to purity the Church gives in holding up the example of our Blessed Mother as a model for the young. There is hardly a young man and woman who has not heard at one time from his own mother these words, "Never do anything of which your mother would be ashamed." What did she mean by that but that the basic reason for being good is the consecration of self to something higher than self. The mother was trying to make her children see that they should aim to care for another person rather than have the other person care for them. But to do this, they must have a love higher

than their own will and their own pleasure.

Since there is a higher love than the human, what was more natural than for Our Blessed Lord to say to us all from the cross, "Behold Thy Mother!" It was the Divine way of saying: "Never do anything of which your Heavenly Mother would be ashamed."

Given this consecration to a higher love, what heartfelt words should be said to bride and groom. If you will listen in, next week, I shall tell you. Until then, God Love You!

PRAYER

O God, from Whose hands cometh the peace the world cannot give, give us the light to see that peace is the work of Justice, and the concord of all nations the fruit of obedience to Thy Law and Thy Commandments.

May we seek not so much to be consoled as to console; to be understood, as to understand; to be loved, as to love, that in pardoning we may be pardoned, and in giving we may receive.

We pray for our President, for our Congress, for our homes, our people, our children, our broken-hearted, that we may be reverent in the use of freedom, just in the

exercise of power, generous in the protection of weakness, merciful to those who have been our enemies. Not for our worthiness, but because of Thy tender mercy hear our prayer that we may so pass through things temporal as not to lose the things eternal, O Christ Jesus, Our Lord.

EXHORTATION TO A BRIDE AND GROOM

Address given on February 17, 1946

It used to be, and it perhaps still is a tradition of the sea, that captains go down with a ship. Until a generation or so ago, every one recognized there was one ship a person ought not to leave, even when he thought it was sinking, and that was the home. But in 30 of the large cities of the U. S. during the first part of 1945, there was one divorce for every two marriages, which means roughly that 50 per cent deserted their ships despite the orders of the Great Captain: "What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder" (*Matthew* 19:6).

The very fact that a first marriage born in love can be broken for a second marriage desired in love, proves that the most beautiful word in our language has been distorted by the lie of Satan, so that what we call love today is nothing more than a confused mixture of sentimental pathos, disguised egotism, Freudian complexes, frustrated living and weakness of character.

But I am not here concerned

with the divorces, only with the articulation of the doctrine of Christ on marriage which is clear and irrevocable: "Who-soever shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if the wife shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery" (*Mark* 10:11,12).

For that reason, all Christians vow in the marriage ceremony that they will love one another until death do them part. The great advantage of the vow is that it guards the couple against allowing the moods of time to override reason, and thus protects the general interests from cancelling out particular interests. There is no other way to control capricious solicitation except by a vow. It may be hard to keep, but it is worth keeping because of what it does to exalt the character of those who make it. Once its inviolable character is recognized before God, an impulse is given to self-examination, the probing of one's faults and new efforts at charity.

It is too terrible to contemplate

what would happen to the world, if our pledged words were no longer bonds. Could one nation extend credit to another nation if the compact of repayment was signed "with reservations"? What queer corrupting of our national soul would result if one year we pledged that there would be no territorial changes without the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned, and in another year recognized a government imposed by force? If domestic contracts can be broken at the will of either party, then why not international contracts? For someone to say two years after marriage: "I gave my vow at the altar, yes, but since I am in love with someone else, God would not want me to keep my vow," is like saying: "I promised not to steal my neighbor's chickens, but since I fell in love with that Plymouth Rock, God would not want me to keep my promise." Once we decide in any matter that passion takes precedence over truth, erotic impulse over honor, then how prevent the stealing of anything once it becomes "vital" to someone else? Then the very violence of passion becomes the basis of usurpation which is the law of the jungle, the routine of barbarism.

When I marry young couples at the altar of God at a Nuptial Mass, I give them an exhortation. Would you like to hear just a few of the ideas I tell them as this great sacrament is received?

You are standing at about the only place in all the world where contracts and vows are still regarded as sacred, namely, before the altar of God. Before His august Presence Holy Mother Church reminds you that the sacrament you are about to receive is unbreakable except by death:

1. Because of the nature of love.
2. Because of the nature of the marriage.
3. Because of the spiritual reality it symbolizes.

1. The lover's language is never temporal nor promiscuous. There are only two words in the vocabulary of love: "you" and "always." "You" because love is unique; "always" because love is enduring. No one ever said: "I will love you for two years and six months." Hence all love songs have the ring of eternity about them: "till the sands of the desert grow cold" and "forever and ever." Love too has its sign language. You, like most lovers, probably carved your names inside of two interlocked hearts on an oak tree. Why did you do

this, if it was not to express the fixity and permanence of love, which today is sealed as your two hearts are fused into one under the fires ignited by God. True love "alters not when it alteration finds." You have only one heart, and as you cannot eat your cake and have it, so you cannot give your heart away and keep it. The jealousy which has been instinctively inseparable from the beginnings of your love is a denial of promiscuity and nature's vanguard to monogamy. In that exquisite jealousy of giving may each of you strive to outspend the other, and find that life is not long enough to sound the generosity of your love.

2) But there is a still more profound reason for the unbreakable character of your marriage. Have you ever noticed that Sacred Scripture nowhere speaks of marriage in terms of sex, but always in terms of knowledge, for example: "Adam knew Eve his wife: who conceived" (*Genesis* 4:1); "Jephte's daughter knew no man" (*Judges* 11:39); "Joseph knew her not" (*Matthew* 1:25). And when the Angel appeared to Mary to announce her Motherhood, she asked: "How shall this be done, because I know not man" (*Luke* 1:34).

And didn't St. Peter say: "Ye husbands, likewise dwelling with them according to knowledge" (*I Peter* 3:7).

Why does Scripture speak of marriage in terms of knowledge? Because that is precisely what marriage is: the knowledge of the mystery of your own completeness.

As individuals we are incomplete, fragmentary, isolated. At the very beginning of the human race God said: "It is not good for man to be alone" (*Genesis* 2:18), for man is dependent on nature, on fellowman and on God. The pagans had a queer picture of this basic unity of man and woman, Plato contending that the first creature had the face of a man on one side and the face of woman on the other and because of some great crime, Zeus cut the creature in two. The two fragments have been wandering about the world since, never destined to be completely happy until they enter the Elysian Fields.

Under this crude image, the pagans had seized upon a basic truth that sin did introduce separation, divorce, fragmentation into the universe; the isolation of God and man, man and himself, man and woman. When finally the Divine nuptials of Di-

vinity and humanity in the person of Christ were celebrated at the altar of the new Eden, Mary, the "unity of two in one flesh" was restored in the Sacrament of Matrimony. Isolation ended; reciprocity was established. Man knew woman and woman knew man in a unity so profound and deep that St. Paul calls it "the great mystery."

If your marriage were only a question of flesh, it would have little more sacredness than the relations of animals, promiscuous and transitory. But once it is regarded as a knowledge of the mystery of your completeness, it follows that its ties are binding through life. Just suppose for example, that you never knew before that St. Augustine was born in 354 and died in 430, but you now came to really know it for the first time. Once you really knew it and identified it with yourself, you never again could put yourself back into ignorance. So long as time endured you would be dependent upon the one who communicated to you that knowledge.

In like manner, once you come to the knowledge of your completeness, through another, you never again can put yourself back into incompleteness and ig-

norance. So long as time endures you are dependent upon the one who gives you the knowledge. You can go on using the knowledge of your completeness once you acquire it, as you can go on reciting a poem once you know it, but you can never reacquire the knowledge. The repetition and enjoyment of the knowledge never is the same as the initiation which took you out of ignorance into knowledge. The union creates a unity, and the unity is born of the fact that physically only one person can communicate the knowledge; therefore, a bond is created with that person which is as enduring as life. No one else in the world can add to it. The woman can never return to virginity, nor the man to ignorance. Two persons revealed to each other the inner secret and found the completeness of life.

What has happened is deeper than the loss of a physical counterpart to incompleteness, for the change is registered in the mind, and heart and soul of both alike. A new relationship is established; that of responsibility toward the other for solving the riddle of life and since the change induced in one another is life-long, the responsi-

bility is life-long. Faithfulness toward each other will be a consequence of the fact that through this young man you have become a woman, and through her, you have become a man. So profound does this unity of the flesh reach, so deep is its center in human nature that other lesser unities may not deter it: "Wherefore a man shall leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they shall be two in one flesh" (*Genesis* 2:24).

3) Finally, you will notice that the Epistle of your Nuptial Mass reminds you that you are fleshy symbols of the union of Christ and His Church. Do you remember the words of the Epistle of this Mass: "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church, and delivered Himself up for it." (*Ephesians* 5:25). "This is a great Sacrament; but I speak in Christ and in the Church" (*Ephesians* 5:32). As Our Blessed Lord took unto Himself His Bride the Church, unspotted and unpolluted, not for three years, nor thirty-three, but for all eternity, and as Christ would never leave the Church He espoused, so may neither of you who symbolize that love, leave one another: "until death do you part." Could you conceive of a

"Divorce" between Christ and His Church? Then neither can we conceive of your leaving one another.

As the Church receives the spiritual gifts from Christ, so you the wife shall receive the inner gifts of your husband, not as lifeless treasures to be buried, but as germs from which will come new life in the Holy Spirit. You therefore shall be bound to one another not in a collective egotism, but because you are the symbols of the unity of Christ and His Chaste Bride which is the Church. As the Lord possesses nothing outside His Church and the Church possesses nothing except her love for Him, so your married life will be not a mutual exchange of services, but a living fellowship in which each takes all that the other has, or is, and uses it for the benefit of the other, for the sake of the love of God.

The Church is asking you this morning in effect: "What guarantee will you give that you will love one another until death do you part?" If you say: "I give the pledge of my word," the Church will answer: "Words and pacts can be broken as the history of our world too well

proves. If you say: "I give the pledge of a ring." The Church will again answer: "Rings can be broken and lost and with them the memory of a promise." Only when you stake your eternal salvation as a guarantee of your fidelity to your vows, will the Church consent to unite you as man and wife. Your life thus becomes bonded at the altar, sealed with the seal of the Cross, and signed with the sign of the Eucharist which you both receive into your souls this morning as a pledge of the unity in the Spirit as the foundation of your unity in the flesh.

I notice too that your wedding ring is not thin and fine like most

wedding rings but wide and thick like my mother's ring, which I always thought was a beautiful symbol of true Married love, as high as heaven, as deep as the sea, and as solid as God's love for man. It takes more than two to make love. It takes three: you, and you, and God.

May your marriage be faithful, happy and long. And as you thrill to the joys of one another's companionship, and are cast into ecstasies of love's delights, often ask yourselves these questions: If a human heart can make you so happy, what must be the Great Heart of God. If the spark is so bright oh! what must be the Flame! God Love You.

LOVE AND CHILDREN

Address given on February 24, 1946

There must always be mystery in life. One wonders if the popularity of murder mysteries today is not to fill up the void created by the loss of the mysteries of faith. So long as there is nothing undiscovered and unrevealed, there is no longer a joy in living. The zest of life partly comes from the fact that there is a door that is yet unopened, a veil that has not yet been lifted.

No one is ever thirsty at the border of a well. There is little desire for the possessed, and no hope for that which is already ours. Marriage too often ends the romance, as if the chase were ended and one had bagged the game. One of the greatest tragedies of life is that we can become used to things; when we begin to take other persons for granted, then is lost all the sensitiveness and delicacy which is the essence of friendship and joy. This is particularly true in some marriages where there is possession without desire, a capture without the thrill of the chase.

The modern world recognizes this fact and tries to meet it by convincing us that Beauty in a woman and Strength in a man were meant to be permanent possessions. All the mechanics of modern advertising are geared to this lie. We are made to believe that if a man eats certain kinds of crunchy, cracky food he can take ten strokes off his golf, or that by swallowing a few pills he will no longer have a fine head of skin. The woman in her turn, is told that Beauty can be a permanent possession, and that her rough laundry hands, her unattractive smile, can all be remedied by a tube of this or that, or that after a few days of diet she will no longer be a victim of circumference but will look not as if she had turned forty, but as if she had returned twenty.

Despite all this propaganda for the permanence of Strength and Beauty, it often happens that a year or two after marriage, the husband no longer seems to be that strong brave Apollo that made end runs on the football team on Saturday

afternoons, or that came home from the war with three stars on his breast. One day the wife asks him to help wash the dishes and he retorts: "You want me to spoil my lily white hands." In her turn, she no longer seems to him as beautiful as the day when she left all other beauty plain. Her baby talk that once seemed so cute, now begins to get on his nerves.

Then it is that pagan couples feel there is no longer any love because there is no thrill, which is just like saying that one ought never to eat cake that has no frosting. I would not make light of Strength and Beauty did not God provide a beautiful compensation. God does intend that Strength and Beauty should endure, not in the husband and wife, but rather in the children. Here is where God's Providence reveals itself. Just at a time when it might seem that beauty is fading in one and strength in the other, God sends children to protect and revive both. When the first boy is born, then the husband reappears in all his strength and promise, as in the language of Virgil "from high heaven descends a worthier race of men." When the first girl is born, the wife revives in all her

beauty and charm and even the baby talk becomes cute all over again. He loves to think that the daughter is so beautiful, because she looks just like her mother. Each child that is born begins to be a bead in the great rosary of love, binding them together in the rosy chains of sweet slavery which is love in the beautiful prison house of mutual togetherness.

The transports of a new-born life come to youth and maid with all the sweet and true illusion of an eternal bliss. The moment for which their mutual love had been yearning has at last arrived—the seed they planted is born. The secret of their love has been whispered and understood in the full consciousness that they who were given heaven's fires passed on the torch aflame to other generations. Their love was made flesh and dwelt amongst them, and that joy no one shall take from them. Eyes that at first could see no other vision than the other, now center on a common image which is neither his nor hers, but their joint "creation" under God.

In this kind of life, like the bush Moses saw, the fires of love burn, but there is nothing consumed, as Love becomes life's

champion and answers the challenge of death. Thus is married love saved from disillusionment, because Phoenix-like it is always rising from the ashes as husband and wife draw up reinforcements of their love in the eternal campaign for life. No self-loathing satiety and fear seize their souls, for they never pluck the fruit of love at its core, nor break the lute to snare the music. Love becomes an ascension from the sense-plane through an incarnation and on back again to God as they train their children for their native heaven and its Trinity whence came their sparks of Fire and Love. From the time the children learn to bless themselves and say the sweet names of Jesus and Mary, through that hour when they learn in little Catechisms greater truths than the worldly wise could give, to that day when they themselves start love again on its pilgrimage, the parents have a consciousness of their trusteeship under God.

The children thus become new bonds of love between husband and wife as a new quality appears in marriage, namely, the deepening of a mystery. There is never any love when one hits

bottom; love, as we said demands something unrevealed; it flourishes therefore only in mystery. No one ever wants to hear a singer hit her highest note, nor an orator "tear a passion to tatters," for once you deny mystery and the infinite, life's urge is stilled and its passion glutted.

In this holy kind of marriage there is an ever deepening mystery and therefore an ever enchanting romance. At first there was the mystery of the other spouse. When that mystery was solved and the first child born, there began a new mystery. The husband sees something in the wife he never knew before existed, namely, the beautiful mystery of motherhood. She sees a new mystery in him which she never before suspected, namely, the mystery of fatherhood. As other children come to revive their strength and beauty, the husband never seems older to the wife than the day they were married, and the wife never seems older than the day they first met and carved their initials in an oak tree. Still newer mysteries unfold: that of fathercraft and mothercraft—the disciplining and training of young minds and hearts in the ways of God.

As the children grow into maturity the mystery continues to deepen, new areas of exploration open up, and the father and mother now see themselves as sculptors in the great quarry of humanity, carving living stones and compacting them together in the Temple of God, Whose Architect is Love.

Here too is the root of democracy for it is in the family that a man is valued, not for what he is *worth*, nor for what he can *do*, but primarily for what he *is*. His status, his position is guaranteed by the fact of being *alive*. Hence, the children who are dumb or crippled, the sons who are maimed in war, the mother who is paralyzed, the father who is aged, are all loved because of themselves, and not because of what they earn, or because of what they know, or because they belong to a certain class. This is the true social principle upon which the wider community life depends and upon which America must build if it is to preserve itself.

Here is love's definition: Mutual self-giving which ends in self-recovery. This is what love is in the Trinity where the Spirit of Love recovers the self-

giving of the Father for Son and Son for Father. In this kind of marriage, love is first mutual self-giving, for love's greatest joy is to gird its loins and serve, to throw itself on the altar of the one loved, and its greatest jealousy is to be outdone by the cherished rival in the least advantage of self-giving.

But love is not only mutual self-giving, for if it were that deliberately it would end in exhaustion, or else be only a dual selfishness with perpetual barter yielding no profit to either, but only enkindling a flame in which both would be consumed. Mutual self-giving also implies self-recovery. Here is the love of husband and wife, in obedience to the creative command, "increase and multiply." Like the love of earth and tree, their marriage becomes fruitful unto new love, as their two hearts conspire against their individual impotence, by filling up at the store of the other the lacking measure. Thus they build up not the mere sum of themselves but that new life which gives to the winter of marriage the springtime of fruit.

Thus does marriage preserve its mystery, thus are chase and capture reconciled, thus do hus-

band and wife never take one another for granted because they see that their love is a loan from the bank of life and is to be paid back into that bank with life and not with death.

Believe not then those who say that human generation is a push from below; it is rather a gift from above. The begetting of children is not done in imitation of the animal, but it is a feeble reflection of the God of the Heavens. Whether we think of earth's First family, where Father sent the Spirit to a Virgin Maiden as a Spouse, begetting in her soul-garden the Son of Man Who is the Son of God, or whether we think of families in wigwams or hovels, here is the origin and pattern of all fatherhood, motherhood and childhood; the Trinity of God wherein mutual self-giving ends in self-receiving.

The most beautiful truth in the universe is this: *All love ends in an Incarnation—even God's.* Love would not be love if it did not escape the limitations of individual existence by perpetuating itself; or if it did not achieve a kind of immortality in progeny wherein death is defeated by life.

There is no disgust in such a life because there is a mystery, and as time goes on the river of rapture of husband and wife broadens. The eddies of passion may remain in the shallows, but their current never stops. That companionship that began in ecstasies of flesh, now widens unto the sharing of bread, the communion of mind and heart and will, as they taste the sweet delirium of simply being together. Love is soon discovered to be oneness more than the mere assimilation at which new lovers strain. The glamor passes, the mystery deepens until they are made one in the deep sharing of life's meaning in the Mystery of an Eternal Love that gave only to receive.

Poor indeed would love be, if it were only two flames within closed lanterns. And to all the fathers and mothers who hearken to words of faith, may I say that nowhere on earth is the satisfaction of your yearning to be found; not here is the last veil lifted for the revelation of the mystery; not here is the paradise of love without satiety, but beyond the "pillars of death, the corridors of the grave," where finally the companionship of your days and years will be

summed up, not in an hour of ecstasy where you say with your whole being what cannot be said with words or looks, but where the consummation of your love is

lost in the ecstasy of eternal union with the one spark you always missed on earth but now enjoy—the Heart Beat of God's everlasting Love.

LOVE BEARING A CROSS

Address given on March 3, 1946

Very few things in life ever come up to our expectations—even marriage. Most of the love songs chant—"how happy we will be"; few sing about how happy we are. But quite apart from the fact that nothing short of the God of Love can satisfy us, there are often extrinsic factors in marriage which make it difficult at times. The marriage vow takes cognizance of all these possibilities as each spouse pledges: "I take thee . . . for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death do us part." In this broadcast we are concerned with how a Christian is to meet a crisis of marriage when evil intercepts the waves of love, or when pain and suffering strike down a young flower ere the summer of life is gone.

The answer, as always, must be sought in love. But what kind of love? There are actually three kinds of love: Carnal love, personal love, and Christian love. Only the last can preserve marriage amidst trials.

Carnal love, and what theo-

gians call love of concupiscence, is a love for the other person because of the pleasure that person gives. Though each may think he or she is in love, basically such love is only an exchange of egotisms. The partner is regarded as of the opposite sex rather than a person. The infatuation associated with it is really selfish, born as it is of a boundless need to increase its own self-centeredness. This kind of selfish love cares only for its own rapture and fulfillment, and for that reason often turns to hate when the other no longer satisfies. Marriages that are entered into on this basis are dissolved as soon as the passion dies. The reason most often given in law courts is "incompatibility" which in simple Christian language means insufficiency of true love.

Personal love, however, is based on the objective value of another person as a source of rights, and may be founded on artistic or moral excellence or a common sympathetic interest, and exists wherever there is reciprocity, duality and understand-

ing. This kind of love can exist without carnal love we just described, simply because there is no direct connection between the flesh and love. It is possible to be in love without there being physical attraction, as it is possible to have physical attraction without being in love. Personal love is in the will, not in the body. In personal love there is no substitution of persons possible; *this* person is loved and not another. But in carnal or erotic love, since there is not necessarily a love for another person, but only a love of self, it is possible to find a substitute for the one who gives pleasure. Because carnal love admits of substitution, it gives rise to the primacy of passion over honor as individual happiness becomes the fetish, which is the invariable mark of a decaying civilization.

Beyond each of these two loves is Christian love which loves everyone either as a potential or actual child of God, redeemed by Christ, and therefore is a love which loves without even a hope of return. It loves the other not because of attractiveness, or talents, or sympathy, but because of God. To the Christian, a person is one for whom I must

sacrifice myself, not one who must exist for my sake. Nowhere else but in Christian love is the torturous contradiction between infinite desire and finite being resolved, for here all human limitations become the channel to the spiritual and the eternal. The urge toward the fulfillment of self can never adequately be satisfied by another self on the same level; to attempt it is to become the victim of cynicism and boredom. Christian love alone supplies that deficiency of human love, by loving every other person for God's sake. The very fact that so many suffer more in the absence of the one loved, than they rejoice in his presence reveals that it is something unpossessed that we crave, namely God's love more than man's and that only the Sacred Heart of God can fill the emptiness of the human heart.

Christian love is not the desire to have, to own, to possess, but the desire to be had, to be owned, to be possessed. It is the giving of oneself for another. That is why it speaks of darts and arrows—something that wounds self like a pelican that others may live. As all love ends in an Incarnation—even God's, so all love craves a cross—

even Christ's. It seeks like Our Divine Saviour to die that others may live. In erotic or selfish love the burdens of others are regarded as impeding one's own happiness, but in Christian love burdens become opportunities to serve. That is why the symbol of Christian love is not the circle circumscribed by self, but the Cross with its arms outstretched to infinity to embrace all humanity within its grasp,

We are now ready to answer our question: How resolve the trials and sorrows, the disillusionments and tears which sometimes come to married life. Certainly not by tearing apart the flesh, for what God hath joined together let no man put asunder. Certainly not by allowing a man or woman who gets some other woman or man into a hole, to be free to get other people into other holes, for if society will not let a man live as he pleases, why should it let him love as he pleases. Neither is the solution to be found in claiming that another person is "vital" for happiness. If desire takes precedence over right and honor, then how prevent future rapes of Poland, or the stealing of your son's bicycle, or any passion becoming

the basis of usurpation, which is the ethics of barbarism.

Suppose the promise of marriage "for better or for worse" turns out for the worse. Suppose either husband or wife becomes a chronic invalid, or develops anti-social characteristics, this much is certain; no carnal love can save it; it is even difficult for a personal love to save it, particularly if the other party becomes undeserving. But when these lower loves break down, Christian love steps in to suggest that the other person is to be regarded as a gift of God. Most of God's gifts are sweet; a few of them, however, are bitter. But whether that other person be bitter or sweet, sick or well, young or old, he or she is still a gift of God for whom the other partner must sacrifice himself or herself. Selfish love would seek to get rid of the other person because a burden; Christian love takes on the burden in obedience to the Divine command: "Bear ye one another's burdens; and so you shall fulfill the law of Christ" (*Gallatians 6:2*).

And if it be objected that God never intended that anyone should live under such difficulties, the answer very flatly is that He does. "If any man will

come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For he that will save his life, shall lose it: and he that shall lose his life for my sake, shall find it" (*Matthew* 16: 24-25). What sickness is to an individual that an unhappy marriage may be to a couple—a trial sent by God in order to perfect them spiritually. Without some of the bitter gifts of God, many of our spiritual capacities would be undeveloped. As the Holy Word of God tells us: "We glory also in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience trial; and trial hope; and hope confoundeth not: because the charity of God is poured forth in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost, who is given to us" (*Romans* 5:3-5).

It may be a kind of martyrdom, but at least the one who practices Christian love can be sure that he is not robbing another soul of its peace, nor his own life of honor. This acceptance of the trials of marriage is not a sentence to death as some believe. The soldier is not sentenced to death because he takes the oath to his country, but he admits that he is ready to face death rather than lose his honor. An unhappy marriage is

not a sentence to death; it is a noble tragedy in which one bears the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" rather than deny a vow made to the living God. Being wounded for the country we love is noble, but being wounded for the God we love is nobler still.

What will Christian love on the part of one spouse do for the other? It will help redeem the other partner. God must have His saints not where all is pleasant, but most of all where saints are unappreciated and hated. St. Paul wrote to the Philippians: "All the saints salute you; especially they that are of Caesar's household" (4: 22). What these saintly souls were to the entrenched evil of Nero's household, namely its cleansing atmosphere and its redeeming heart, that the Christian spouse will be toward the other—the good influence in an environment that might be as evil as Caesar's palace.

If a father will pay his son's debts to keep him out of prison, if a man will give a blood transfusion to save his friend's life, then why is it not possible in marriage for a spouse to redeem a spouse. As the Scriptures tell us: "For the unbelieving hus-

band is sanctified by the believing wife; and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the believing husband" (I *Corinthians* 7: 14).

Most marriages fail not because of infidelity, but because of selfishness—refusing to make sacrifices when needed, or expecting the other party to enter into his or her moods with reciprocity and simultaneity. Sometimes moods cannot be reciprocated. Then it is that Christian love climbs to the peak, counting its sweet sorrow a cheap price for the blissful monopoly of loving while yet unloved, desiring like Paul to spend oneself and be spent for others, feigning all faults as its own, being content to be dismissed if the other's contentment is isolation, putting love in the one who apparently is not lovable and thus finding him lovable as God finds us lovable because He first put His love in us.

What a change would take place in marriage if even only one of the parties loved the other for Christ's sake. And what peace would reign if neither became angry at the same time, if they never retired without prayers together, nor met without a warm welcome, nor parted with-

out reluctance, nor failed to see in the other an opportunity to manifest that love that came from the Cross, "Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (*John* 15:13).

Love on pilgrimage would then march with winged feet back again to the great Flame of God, ever realizing this profound truth that there can never be love between equals. Justice there can be between equals, but not love. Love always regards the other as nobler than self, whether it is love of child for parent, or the love of Apostle Peter for Love Incarnate. Love's true cry is: "Domine, non sum dignus"—"Lord, I am not worthy." True love is always on its knees like Magdalen, or serving like Mary, or adoring like Thomas who saw love's wounds. To the Christian, everyone else is more worthy than I—even though that person is a criminal, for I must think that if that other person had the same grace I had, he would have been a thousand times worthier. Can it be that our greatest mistake in life is in seeking to be loved? May it not be true after all, that only in the degree that we love

shall we be loved? Given this Christian love which puts love where it does not find it, then in any marriage, bitter or sweet, there will be at least one who says with Elizabeth Barrett Browning:

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.

I love thee to the depth and breadth and height

My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight

For the ends of Being and Ideal grace.

I love thee to the level of everyday's

Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.

I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;

I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.

I love thee with the passion put to use

In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.

I love thee with a love I seemed to lose

With my lost saints,—I love thee with the breath,

Smiles, tears, of all my life!—and, if God choose,

I shall but love thee better after death.¹

1 (XLIII: Sonnet from the Portuguese).

JUDAS

Address given on March 10, 1946

Have you ever heard of the expression "a fallen away"? It refers to a person who once blessed with grace and the Divine Intimacy, later abandons it. Our Lord referred to them in the parable of the sower: "And they have no root in themselves, but are only for a time; and then when tribulation and persecution ariseth for the word, they are presently scandalized" (*Mark 4:17*).

We call them "fallen away Catholics"; others call them the relapsed. No one yet has ever left the body of Christ or His Church for a reason; but many have left it for a thing. The thing may differ: it may be pride, wealth, or flesh, or the thousand and one substitutes for Divinity. This truth can best be illustrated by a study of the one man in the Gospels who left Our Lord for a thing, and of whom Our Lord said: "It were better for him, if that man had not been born" (*Matthew 26:24*).

One day a babe was born at Kerioth. Friends and relatives came with gifts for the babe,

because he was a child of promise. Not so far away another Babe was born in the village of Bethlehem. Because He, too, was a child of promise, friends came with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Both babes grew in age, and one day the man of Bethlehem met the man of Kerioth at the parting of the waters, and Our Lord chose Judas as His Apostle.

He was the only Judean among the Apostles; and since the Judeans were more skilled in administration than Galileans, Judas was given the apostolic purse. Probably he was naturally best fitted for the task. To use a man for what he is naturally fitted is to keep him—if he can be kept—from apostasy and alienation and dissatisfaction. But at the same time, life's temptations come often from that for which we have the greatest aptitude. But there must be first an *inward* failure before there can be an outward one.

Judas was avaricious. Avarice is a pernicious sin, for when other vices grow old, avarice is still young. The covetousness of

Judas revealed itself particularly in Simon's house when an uninvited guest, a sinful woman, broke in at dinner and poured ointment over the feet of Our Lord and then wiped it away with her hair. And the house was filled with the odor of the ointment.

Judas was at dinner that day. Judas knew how near the Lord's betrayal was. Mary, that woman, knew how near His death was. Putting on the mask of charity Judas simulated anger that such precious ointment should be wasted: "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? Now he said this, not because he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and having the purse, carried the things that were put therein" (*John 12:5-6*).

Our Lord did not affront Judas who affronted Him. There is something sad and yet so patient, gentle and tender in the words of Our Lord "Let her alone" (*John 12:7*). Surely there could be no waste in a ministry to Divine Love. There will always be souls like Judas who are scandalized at the wealth offered to Christ in His Church. If a man can give jewels to the woman he loves without scandal, why can-

not the soul pour out its abundance to the God it loves in tribute of affection? Our Lord praised the woman saying she had anointed Him for His burial. Judas was shocked! So He was going to die!

Christ would be crucified. That was certain. In the general cataclysm Judas must rescue something to solace his acquisitive spirit. "So he went to the chief priests, and said to them: 'What will you give me, and I will deliver Him unto you?' But they appointed him thirty pieces of silver" (*Matthew 26:14-15*). He who took the form of a servant was sold for the price of a slave.

The next evening on the occasion of Our Lord's Last Supper when He made His Last Testament, and left to us that which on dying no man has ever been able to leave, namely Himself, the Saviour again spoke about His betrayal: "... one of you is about to betray me" (*Matthew 26:21*). The disciples looked at one another saying: "Is it I, Lord? Is it I?"

No conscience is pure in the sight of God; no one can be sure of his innocence. Judas then asked: "It it I, Rabbi?" and the Lord answered: "Thou hast said

it." And Judas went out and "it was night." . . . It is always night when one turns his back on God.

A few hours later Judas leads a band of brigands and soldiers down the hill of Jerusalem. Though there was a full moon that night, the soldiers did not know whom they were to apprehend, so they asked Judas for a sign. Turning to them, he said: "Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is he, hold him fast" (*Matthew* 26:48). Crossing over the brook of Kedron and into the Garden, Judas threw his arms around the neck of Our Lord and blistered His lips with a kiss. One word came back: "Friend." Then the question: "Dost thou betray the Son of man with a kiss?" (*Luke* 22:48). It was the last time that Jesus spoke to Judas. Judas had the right to the fatted calf, but he preferred the golden one.

Only Judas knew where to find Our Lord after dark. Soldiers did not know. Christ in His Church is delivered into the hands of the enemy from *within*. It is the bad Catholics who betray. The greatest harm to the cause of Christ is not done by enemies but by those who have been cradled in her sacred associations, and nourished in the faith. The scandal of the "fallen

aways" provides opportunities for enemies who still are timid; the enemies do the bloody work of crucifixion, but those who have communed with Christ prepare the way. Judas was more zealous in the cause of the enemy than he was in the cause of Our Lord. Men who leave the Church, in like manner, seek to atone for their uneasy consciences by attacking the Church. Since their consciences will not leave them alone, they will not leave the Guide of their consciences alone. The Voltaire who left the Church was the Voltaire who scoffed. Their hatred is not due to their unbelief, but their unbelief is due to their hatred. The Church makes them uneasy in their sins and they feel that if they could drive the Church from the world they could sin with impunity.

But why betray with a kiss? Because the betrayal of Divinity is such a heinous crime that it must always be prefaced by some mark of affection. How often in discussions of religion we hear a word of praise about Christ in His Church and then a "but," which begins the slur.

The human things we can attack without excuse; they need no pretended love to sheath the sword that kills. But in the pres-

ence of the sacred and the Divine one must feign affection where affection should be unfeigned. How many there are who attack its beliefs, only because, as they say, they would keep its doctrine pure; if they assail its discipline, they say it is because they want to preserve a liberty or even a license which they believe essential to piety; if they accuse the Church of not being spiritual enough, it is because they claim to be defenders of the highest ideals—though none of them ever tell us how spiritual the Church must be before they would embrace it. In each instance, hostility to Divinity is preceded by a deference toward religion. "Hail Rabbi, and he kissed him."

No sooner was the crime done than Judas was disgusted. The deep wells of remorse began surging up in his soul, but like so many souls today, he took his remorse to the wrong place. He went back to those with whom he trafficked. He had sold the Lord for 30 pieces of silver, or in our money about \$17.40. Divinity is always betrayed out of all proportion to its real worth. Whenever we sell Christ, whether it be for worldly advancement, such as those who give up their Faith because they cannot get any

where politically with a cross on their backs, or those who give it up for wealth—all feel cheated in the end. No wonder Judas took the thirty pieces of silver back to those who gave it to him, and sent the coins ringing and rolling and jingling across the temple floors saying: "I have sinned in betraying innocent blood" (*Matthew 27:4*). He no longer wanted what he once wanted most. All the glamour was gone. Not even those who received back the money wanted it. The money was good for nothing except to buy a field of blood. He made restitution of his money, but souls are not saved by giving up what they have, but by giving what they are.

We can sell God, but we can never buy Him. Judas sold Him, but the Temple did not buy Him, for He rose from the dead on Easter. We cannot buy Him, because love, like birth, is free. It comes to us without our meriting. But we can sell Him because He gives Himself to us, and is ours to possess. We can sell the things we love, and selling without love is prostitution. No wonder he was disgusted with his sin.

But it is not enough to be *dis-*

gusted with sin. We must also be *repentant*.

Judas *repented* but not to Our Lord as the Scriptures tell us: "he repented unto *himself*." The latter is only self-hatred, and self-hatred is suicidal. To hate self is the beginning of self-slaughter. Self-hatred is salutary only when associated with the Love of God.

Disillusionment and disgust may be a step toward religion, but it is not religion. In the course of time these people turn to a vague religion as a solace; they begin to keep the commandments because they have *no strong* motive for not doing it. Because they are full of anxiety, and complexes, and fears, they begin reading Freud and learn that their emotions must in some way be sublimated; they repent; but they repent unto themselves. They are sorry for their lot, but not sorry for having offended God.

And when did the betrayal of Judas begin? The first record that we have in the Gospels of Judas falling was the day when Our Blessed Lord announced that He would leave Himself to the world in the Eucharist. Inserted in that marvelous story of this great Sacrament is the sugges-

tion that Our Lord knew who would betray Him. The actual betrayal came the very night Our Lord gave that which He promised He would give for the life of the world, namely, Himself in the Living Bread of the altar.

This is the cornerstone of faith, the touchstone of fidelity. Is it asking too much of you who have the faith, to spend an hour a day in the presence of Our Dear Lord in the Blessed Sacrament in atonement for the betrayals of the world? And to ask every Jew and Protestant to spend an hour a day in prayer and meditation that the world which presently lives under God's chastisement, may live under His Love?

Down the valley of Ennom Judas goes—the valley of ghastly associations, the Gehenna of the future. Over the cold, rocky ground he walks, amidst the jagged rocks between gnarled and stunted trees, that looked just like his twisted and tortured soul. There was only one thought in his mind—to empty himself of himself. Everything seemed to bear witness against him. The dust was his destiny; the rocks were his heart; the trees, particularly, seemed to speak—their branches were as

accusing arms and pointing fingers; their knots so many eyes. The leaves seemed to shake in protest against making them the instrument of his vain destruction. They seemed almost to whisper that all other trees of its kind would tremble in shame until the final day of the Great Assize.

Taking a halter from his cincture—and how that cincture reminded him of Peter's cincture whence swung the keys of heaven—he threw it over a strong limb, fastened one end of the rope about his neck. The winds seemed to bring him the echo of words he heard a year ago: "come to me all you who labor and are heavily burdened and find rest for your souls." But he would repent unto himself, not

to God. And as the sun darkened, two trees made history on opposite sides of Sion—one the tree of Calvary and hope; the other, the tree of Ennom and despair. On one, hung Him Who would unite heaven and earth, and on one hung him who willed to be foreign to both.

And the pity of it all was, he might have been St. Judas. He possessed what every soul possesses—a tremendous potential for sanctity and peace. But let us be sure, that whatever be our sins, and regardless of the depths of our betrayal, there is ever a hand outstretched to embrace, a face shining with the light of forgiveness and the Divine Voice that beckons us to His Mercy with that sweet word He spoke to Judas: "Friend."

PETER

Address given on March 17, 1946

The most interesting drama in all the world is the drama of the human soul. Though there are many phases to these dramas, perhaps the most interesting of them all is the psychology of a fall and resurrection.

More concretely, how do some souls lose their faith, and by what steps do they later on recover it? The answer to such questions is to be found in the story of the Apostle Peter, whose fall Sacred Scripture traces through five stages. By studying them it is possible to judge our own spiritual condition. These five stages are:

First, neglect of prayer.

Second, substitution of action for prayer.

Third, lukewarmness.

Fourth, love of ease.

Fifth, human respect.

Neglect of prayer. No soul ever fell away from God without first giving up prayer. Prayer is that which establishes contact with Divine Power and opens the invisible resources of Heaven.

That night that Our Blessed

Lord went out under the light of a full moon into the Garden of Gethsemane to crimson the olive roots with His own blood for the redemption of men, He turned to His disciples and said, "Watch ye, and pray that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh weak" (*Matthew 26:41*). Withdrawing from His three disciples about as far as a man could throw a stone—how significant a way to measure distance the night one goes to death—He prays to His Heavenly Father.

When Our Blessed Lord came back the last time to visit His disciples, He found them asleep. A woman will watch not one hour or one night, but day after day and night after night in the presence of a peril threatening her child. But Peter slept. If he could sleep on such an occasion, it was due to the fact that he had no adequate conception of the crisis through which Our Savior was passing, no consciousness of the tragedy that was already upon them. Finding him asleep, Our Blessed Lord spoke to Peter and said, "... What?

could you not watch one hour with me?" (*Matthew 26:40*). Incidentally, it is this Hour a day we ask from every Jew, Protestant and Catholic for the peace of the world.

The next stage downward is:

The Substitution of Action for Prayer. Most souls who give up praying still feel the necessity of doing something for God and the Church and turn to the solace of activity. Instead of going from prayer to action, they neglect the prayer and become busy about many things. It is so easy to think we are doing God's work when we are only in motion or being fussy. Peter was no exception. In the turmoil of the arrest of Our Blessed Lord which followed, Peter, who had already been armed with two swords, allows his usual impetuosity to get the better of him. Slashing out rather recklessly at the armed gang, what he strikes is not a soldier at all, but a slave of the High Priest. As a swordsman, Peter was a good fisherman. The slave steps aside, and the blow aimed at the crown of his head merely cuts off his ear. Our Blessed Lord restored the ear by a miracle, and then turned to Peter and said, ". . . Put up again thy sword into its place;

for all that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (*Matthew 26:52*). Divinity has no need of it. Our Lord could summon twelve legions of angels to His aid if He wished. The Church must never fight with the weapon of the world.

But Peter having given up the habit of prayer, substitutes violence toward others, and all tact is lost as devotion to a cause becomes zeal without knowledge. Far better it would be to take a few hours off active life and spend it in communion with God, than to be busy about many things while neglecting the one thing that is necessary for peace and happiness. No such activity is a substitute for watching and praying an hour.

The third step downward is lukewarmness.

Experience proves that religious activity without prayer soon degenerates into indifference. At this stage souls become lukewarm. They believe one can be too religious, too zealous, or "spend too much time in Church." Peter exemplifies this truth.

A few hours later, Our Blessed Lord is led before His judges. As that sad procession moves on in the unutterable loneliness

where the God-man freely subjects Himself to the evil darts of men, the Gospel records, "And Peter followed Him afar off." He had given up prayer, then action, and now he keeps his distance. Only his eyes remained on the Master. How quickly the insincerity of action without prayer proves itself. He who was brave enough to draw a sword a few hours before, now strays on behind. Christ, Who once was the dominating passion of our life, now becomes incidental in religion. We still linger as from force of habit, or perhaps even from remorse of conscience—in the footsteps of the Master, but out of the range of both His eyes and His voice. It is in such moments that souls say, "God has forgotten me"—when the truth is that it is not God Who leaves us; it is we who stray on behind.

The fourth stage is love of ease.

Once the divine fades in life, the physical begins to assert itself. The excessive dedication to luxury and refinement is always an indication of the inner poverty of the spirit. When the treasure is within, there is no need of those outer treasures which rust consumes, moths eat, and thieves break through and

steal. But when the inner beauty is gone, we need luxuries to clothe our nakedness.

It was only natural, therefore, to find that in the next stage of his declension, Peter should be satisfying his body. He did not go into the court room; he remained outside with the servants, and in the expressive language of Sacred Scripture, ". . . when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were sitting about it, Peter was in the midst of them" (*Luke 22:55*). He sat by the fire that the enemies of Christ had built. Luxury had taken the place of fidelity. Never before was any man so cold before a fire!

The last stage in the fall is human respect when we deny our Faith or are ashamed of it under ridicule or scorn. As the blaze of that fire lighted up the face of Peter, it was possible for bystanders and those who came into the court to see his face. And at that very moment when Our Blessed Lord in court was taking an oath proclaiming His Divinity, Peter was taking an oath, too, but not to reaffirm as he did at Caeserea Philippi that Christ was the Son of the Living God, but rather to deny it. Three times bystanders spoke to him,

the first two were saucy maidens, and the last a man who said to him: "... Surely thou art one of them; for thou art also a Galilean" (*Mark* 14:70). "... for even thy speech doth discover thee" (*Matthew* 26:73). Peter became angry at their repeated affirmations and with an atavistic throwback to his fisherman days when his nets became tangled in Galilean waters, he cursed and swore saying, "... I know not this man" (*Mark* 14:71). Human respect had gotten the better of him. How often others know what we ought to do, even when we have forgotten. How touchy are these consciences that have abandoned their God; how sensitive they are to even the memory that they once had the Faith. Many a time I have heard such souls say, "Do not talk about it! I want to forget it." But we can never forget—even our speech betrays that we have been with the Galilean.

If these be the steps away from the Faith, what are the steps back? They are three:

1. Disillusionment.
2. Response to grace.
3. Amendment and sorrow.

Since all sin is pride, it follows that a first condition of con-

version is humility; the ego must decrease, God must increase. This humiliation most often comes by a profound realization that sin does not pay; that it never keeps its promises; that just as a violation of the laws of health produce sickness, so the violation of the laws of God produce unhappiness.

This is signified in Peter's case by the fulfillment of a prophecy made by Our Lord to Peter the night of the Last Supper. Having warned His Apostles that they would be scandalized in Him that night. Peter boasted: "... I will lay down my life for thee" (*John* 13:37). And Our Lord answered, "... Wilt thou lay down thy life for me? Amen, amen I say to thee, the cock shall not crow, till thou deny me thrice" (*John* 13:38).

A few hours later, at the very moment that Peter for the third time cursed and swore that he knew not Christ, there came through the halls of the outer chambers of Caiphas' court, the clear and unmistakable crowing of a cock. Even *nature is on God's side*. We may abuse it in our sin, but in the end it will abuse us. How right was Thompson when he characterized nature as having a "traitorous trueness,

a loyal deceit; in fickleness to me, in loyalty to Him." The crowing of the cock was such a childish thing. But God can use the most insignificant things in the world as the channel of His grace—the cry of a child, a word over the radio—please God one of mine—the song of a sparrow. He will even press into the business of conversion the crowing of a cock in the dawning of the morning. A soul can come to God by a series of disgusts.

The next step in the return to God after the awakening of conscience is on God's part. As soon as we empty ourselves, or are disillusioned, He comes to fill the void. As St. Luke tells us: "And the Lord turning looked on Peter" (*Luke* 22:61).

God does not desert us, though we desert Him. He turns, once we know we are sinners. God never gives us up. The very word used here to describe the look of Our Lord is the same word used the first time Our Lord met Peter—the meaning being that "He looked through" Peter. Peter is recalled to the sweet beginnings of His grace and vocation. Judas received the lips to recall him to fellowship; Peter received a look with eyes that see us, not as our neighbors see us,

not as we see ourselves, but as we really are. They were the eyes of a wounded friend, the look of a loving Christ.

The final stage is amendment and sorrow.

The Scripture records his amendment or purgation in the simple words, "And *going forth*." All the trappings of sin, the ill-gotten goods, the human respect he won, all these are now trampled under foot, as "he goes out."

But this leaving of the tabernacles of sin would not be enough were there not sorrow. Some leave sin only because they find it disgusting. There is no real conversion until that sin is related to an offense against the Person of God. "Against *Thee* have I sinned," says Scripture, not against "Space-time," or the "Cosmical Universe," or the "Powers Beyond." Given a sorrow that regrets offending God because He is all good and deserving of all our love, and you have salvation. Fittingly, therefore, do the Evangelists write, "And Peter going out, wept bitterly" (*Luke* 22:62). His heart was broken into a thousand pieces, and his eyes that looked into the eyes of Christ, now turn into fountains. Moses struck a rock, and water came forth.

Christ looked on a rock, and tears came forth. Tradition has it that Peter wept so much for his sins that his cheeks were furrowed with their penitential streams. Upon those tears the face of the Light of the World rises, and through them comes the rainbow of hope, assuring to all souls that never again will a heart be destroyed by flood of sin so long as it turns to Him Who is Sun of Salvation, the Love of the Universe.

No wonder Our Divine Lord, Who knows all souls in their inner being, chose as the head of His Church not John who had never denied, and who alone of all the Apostles was present on the hill of Calvary, but rather chose Peter who fell and then rose again, who sinned and who then was forgiven amidst lifelong penance, in order that His Church might understand something of human weakness and sin and bear to the millions of its souls the Gospel of hope, the assurance of Divine Mercy.

Fittingly, then, when Peter came to the end of his lease on life, he asked not to be crucified as was Our Blessed Lord with head upright, but with head downward in the earth. Our Lord had called him the Rock of

His Church, and as the rock He was laid where it should be: deep in the roots of creation. On that very spot where the man of courage was crucified upside down, with his stumbling feet toward heaven, there now rises the greatest dome that was ever thrown against the vault of heaven's blue, the dome of the Basilica of St. Peter in Rome. Around that dome in giant letters of gold, we read the words Our Lord spoke to Peter at Caesarea Philippi: ". . . thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (*Matthew 16:18*).

Many a time I have knelt under that dome and its inscription and looked down below its main altar to the tomb where is buried that Rock who made Rome eternal, because he the fisherman came to live there. No one, I suppose, has ever bent a suppliant knee to that first Vicar of Christ's Church, to whom Our Lord said that a sinner should be forgiven, not seven times, but seventy times seven, without thanking Our Lord for His Church who can look on us as He did on Peter, and whisper to us in hope as our sins are forgiven:

“If you had never sinned, you never could call Christ ‘Savior’ ”.
—God Love You.

PRAYER

O God, from Whose hands cometh the peace the world cannot give, give us the light to see that peace is the work of Justice, and the concord of all nations the fruit of obedience to Thy Law and Thy Commandments. May we seek not so much to be consoled as to console; to be understood, as to understand; to be loved, as to love, that in

pardoning we may be pardoned, and in giving we may receive. We pray for our President, for our Congress, for our homes, our people, our children, our broken-hearted, that we may be reverent in the use of freedom, just in the exercise of power, generous in the protection of weakness, merciful to those who have been our enemies. Not for our worthiness, but because of Thy tender mercy hear our prayer that we may so pass through things temporal as not to lose the things eternal, O Christ Jesus, Our Lord.

PILATE

Address given on March 24, 1946

One of the vital subjects of the day is the relation of politics and religion. Those who have their finger on the pulse of contemporary civilization have probably noted that there are two contradictory charges against religion today: the first is that religion is not political enough; the other is that religion is too political. On the one hand the Church is blamed for being too divine, and on the other for not being divine enough; it is hated because it is too heavenly and hated because it is too earthly.

Particularly significant it is that these were the very two charges for which Our Lord Himself was condemned: the religious judges Annas and Caiphas found Him too religious; the political judges, Pilate and Herod, found Him too political.

Caiphas, the religious judge, standing before his judgment seat asked Our Lord the question: "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us if thou be the Christ, the Son of God" (*Matthew 26:63*). As the question rang out through the marble hall and was succeeded by a silence vibrant with emotion,

Christ finally raised His eyes to the judge and answered: "Thou hast said it" (*Matthew 26:64*).

A gleam of satisfaction lighted the judge's face. At last he had triumphed! But he must not show it, and under the veil of horrified indignation at the insult offered to God's supreme majesty by declaring Himself to be God, he rent his garments from bottom to top, crying out: "He hath blasphemed! . . . He is guilty of death" (*Matthew 26:65-66*). Christ is too religious! too heavenly! too inflexible! too spiritual! too much interested in souls! too Divine!

Because He was too religious, He was not political enough. He was accused of being indifferent to the needs of the people and national well-being. The Romans would not tolerate anyone with such an appeal. He would bring down retribution from Rome. Their armies would come and destroy them. After all, what good is religion, anyway, if it has no part in the political, economic, and social set-up of a country. So Caiphas decided: Better let the one man die rather than the whole nation should perish.

Within a few hours Our Blessed Lord, Who was accused of being too disinterested in politics, is charged with being too interested in it. The mob who had their prisoner bound with ropes stopped outside Pilate's door-sill which marked the confines of a Roman house. Pilate, warned of their coming, goes out to meet the accusers. Jesus and Pilate are face to face. Pilate looked at the Figure before him, silent and unmoved, crimsoned with His own blood, with red livid marks across His face, already the object of gross mistreatment before He had been condemned. Turning to the howling mob, Pilate asked: "What accusation bring you against this man?" (*John* 18:29).

If the mob charged that He blasphemed by calling Himself God, Pilate would have only smiled. He had his gods and each day sprinkled incense before them. What cared he about their divinities. But there was one other lie about Christ that could be hurled, and it was the opposite one, namely, that He was too political; that He was not sufficiently divine; that He meddled in national affairs, that He was not patriotic. And in answer to the question of Pilate,

there was hurled against the balustrade of Pilate's temple the deafening roar of three charges: "We have found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he is Christ the king" (*Luke* 23:2). It was as silly as saying: Christ is a Fascist!

And from that day to this, these two contradictory charges have been levelled against the person of Christ in His Body the Church. His Church is accused of being not political enough when it condemns Nazism and Fascism; it is accused of being too political when it condemns Communism. It is said to be too unpolitical when it does not condemn a political regime which some other political systems dislike but which allows religious freedom; it is said to be too political or Fascist when it condemns a political regime which completely suppresses all religion. Would to heaven that man were forced to give definitions of words! Is the Church Fascist? If Fascism means, as it does, the supremacy of the State or nation over the individual, with consequent suppression of rights or liberties, then the Church is anti-Fascist, as the Encyclical against

Fascism so well proves. If by Fascism is meant anti-Communism and dislike of a system which suppresses the liberties, then the Church is Fascist, but so is every American who loves the democratic way of life. In truth the proper way to handle this confusion of tongues is to speak of all forms of Totalitarianism as Fascism. This divides them into Black, Brown, and Red. Hence we ought to speak of Communism from this time on as *Red Fascism*. There is an essential resemblance between Fascism, Nazism and Communism. Fascism is the subordination of the person to the State, Nazism to the race, and Communism to the classes. The only difference between these three forms of Totalitarianism is the difference between burglary, larceny, and stealing.

It is the second charge that needs specific consideration, namely, that the Church is interfering in politics. Is this true? It all depends upon what you mean by politics. If by interference in politics is meant using influence to favor a particular regime, party, or system, which respects the basic rights and freedom of persons which come from God, the answer is em-

phatically *No!* The Church does not interfere in politics. If by interference in politics is meant judging or condemning a philosophy of life which makes the party, or the state, or the class, or the race the source of all rights, and which usurps the soul and enthrones party over conscience, the answer is emphatically *Yes!* The Church does judge such a philosophy. But when it does this, it is not interfering with politics, for such politics is no longer politics but a kind of religion that is anti-religious.

So long as politics is politics, the Church has nothing to say. It is totally indifferent to any regime. The Church adapts itself to all governments on condition that they respect liberty of conscience; it is indifferent as to whether people choose to live under a monarchy, republic, democracy or even a military dictatorship provided these governments grant the basic freedoms. A human organism can adapt itself to the torrid heat of the equator or to the glacial cold of the North, but it cannot live without air. The Church in like manner can adapt itself to every form of politics, but it cannot live without the air of freedom.

Never before in history has the spiritual been so unprotected against the political; never before has the political so usurped the spiritual. It is not religion that is meddling in politics; it is politics that is meddling in religion. It is Jesus Christ Who suffered under Pontius Pilate; it is not Pontius Pilate who suffered under Jesus Christ.

For the first time in Christian history, politics, which began by divorcing itself from morality and religion, has seen that man cannot live by bread alone. So it has attempted to capture his soul, by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of a Dictator. For the first time in Western Christian civilization, the kingdom of anti-God has acquired political form and social substance, and stands over against Christianity as a counter-Church with its own dogmas, its own Scriptures; its own infallibility, its own hierarchy; its own visible head; its own missionaries, and its own invisible head—too terrible to be named.

In certain countries, religion today exists only by suffrage of a political dictator; without actively persecuting the Church, it usurps its functions, gives bread cards only to those who

conspire against religion, attempts to create an ideological uniformity by liquidating anyone who is opposed to that ideology, and by sheer weight of state-inspired propaganda would effect the mass organization of society on an anti-religious basis. Culture today is becoming politicized. The dictatorial government is extending dominance over areas outside its province, family, education, and the soul; it is concentrating public opinion in fewer and fewer hands, which becomes the more dangerous because of the mechanical way in which propaganda can be disseminated. The lines are becoming dear and clear-cut. The conflict of the future will be between a God-religion and a State religion, between Christ and anti-Christ but in political disguise.

History attests that religion has not encroached upon the temporal sphere, but rather jealous temporal rulers have invaded the spiritual. Sometimes these rulers were kings and princes, even so called "Catholic defenders of the faith"; today they are dictators. But the problem is ever the same: the invasion of the spiritual by the political. If it be objected that religion once made Henry come to Canossa, let it be

stated that it was for exactly the same reason that the world made war against Hitler, namely, because of his usurpation of spiritual freedom. The difference between Henry's time and Hitler's is that when religion had some influence in the world and kings had consciences, it was possible for the Church to inspire them to penance. With that moral authority rejected, now the nations have to spend five hundred and twenty-three billion dollars and millions of lives to impress some of the dictators with the same fact.

Even though Christ Himself would not deliver us from the power of the Totalitarian State, as He did not deliver Himself, we must see His purpose in it all. Maybe His children are being persecuted by the world in order that they might withdraw themselves from the world; maybe His most violent enemies may be doing His work negatively, for it could be the mission of Totalitarianism to preside over the liquidation of a modern world that became indifferent to God and His moral laws; maybe those of us who did not care whether God exists or not, may yet suffer from those whom we taught through Fuerbach and Hegel, to

exile Him altogether. Maybe the very secularism from which we suffer is a reaction against our own spiritual infirmity; and the growth of atheism and Totalitarianism, the measure of our want of zeal and piety and the proof of our unfulfilled Christian duties; maybe as diseases grow in dirt, so Crimson Fascism grows in godlessness.

But whatever be the reason for these trying days, of this we may be certain: the Christ Who suffered under Pontius Pilate signed Pilate's death warrant; it was not Pilate who signed Christ's. Christ's Church will be attacked, scorned, and ridiculed, but it will never be destroyed. The enemies of God will never be able to dethrone the heavens of God, nor to empty the tabernacles of their Eucharistic Lord, nor to cut off all absolving hands, but they may devastate the earth. The bald fact the enemies of God must face is that modern civilization has conquered the world but in doing so has lost its soul, and in losing its soul it will lose the very world it gained.

Politics has become so all possessive of life, that by impertinence it thinks that the only philosophy a man can hold is the right or the left. This question

puts out all the lights of religion so they can call all the cats gray. It assumes that man lives on a purely horizontal plane, and can move only to the right or the left. Had we eyes less material, we would see that there are two other directions where a man with a soul may look: the vertical directions of "up" or "down." Both figured in the Crucifixion of Our Lord. Even those cruel men who crucified knew that these were the directions that counted. So they shouted to Him: "Come down, and we will believe." Somehow or other that echo has been caught up and it is being bruited about the world today. "Down with religion!" "Down with capital!" "Down with Labor!" "Down with Reactionaries!" "Down with Progressives!"

Have we not been tearing down long enough? Can one build a world with the word "down." Is there no other cry in our vocabulary? Did not the Captain Christ give another: "If I be lifted up, I will draw all things to myself."

Lifted up! Who shall lift us up? Crucifying dictators? Maybe! But where shall we be lifted? To the Cross, the prelude of the empty tomb, the Cross of

Christ our Redeemer. Hear ye that word "up," shout it abroad! "Up from class hatred; up from envy; up from avarice; up from war; up beyond the margin of the world; up beyond the 'troubled gateways of the stars' —UP—UP—UP to God!"

PRAYER

O God, from Whose hands cometh the peace the world cannot give, give us the light to see that peace is the work of Justice, and the concord of all nations the fruit of obedience to Thy Law and Thy Commandments. May we seek not so much to be consoled as to console; to be understood, as to understand; to be loved, as to love, that in pardoning we may be pardoned, and in giving we may receive. We pray for our President, for our Congress, for our homes, our people, our children, our broken-hearted, that we may be reverent in the use of freedom, just in the exercise of power, generous in the protection of weakness, merciful to those who have been our enemies. Not for our worthiness, but because of Thy tender mercy hear our prayer that we may so pass through things temporal as not to lose the things eternal, O Christ Jesus, Our Lord.

HEROD

Address given on March 31, 1946

Is it possible for a soul to have too many opportunities for conversion, so that in the end he becomes blinded by the very Light which should have illumined His path to God? Herod, one of Our Lord's judges, gives the answer.

Two episodes lay bare the soul of Herod. The first, his divorce from his wife and his second marriage to Herodias, his brother's wife. As our modern world would put it: "There was incompatibility between Herod and his first wife, but he and Herodias had so many things in common."

The second revealing act of Herod is his treatment of John the Baptist. He had invited John the Baptist into his palace not to hear the truth of his preaching but to enjoy the thrill of his oratory. There are so many in the world that way: they do not want to be better; they want only to feel better. But John was not the type of preacher who toned down his Gospel to suit the paganism of his hearers. Because he condemned Herod's second marriage, he lost his head. Everyone in the world at one time loses his head, but it is

better to lose one's head John's way in the defense of truth, rather than Herod's way, in wine and passion.

Recall that Pilate was the Governor of the Southern Kingdom of Judea while Herod was the Tetrarch of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. During the trial before Pilate, Our Lord was charged with being too political. Pilate, after examining Our Lord went out to the porch of the Temple and said to the Lord's accusers: "I find no cause in this man" (*Luke 23:4*). That should have been the end of the trial. But the multitude shot back: "He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place" (*Luke 23:5*).

Galilee!! How Pilate seized upon that word. If Our Lord were from Galilee, then He was not under Pilate's jurisdiction. It was a diplomatic stroke of political opportunism. As a Galilean He was under the jurisdiction of Herod, and Herod was in Jerusalem that very day for the Paschal season. Off to Herod He must go. It was "good politics",

which means it was expedient, but morally it was down-right dishonesty and knavery.

Our Lord now stands before the man he called a fox, but who was also a traitor, incestuous adulterer, assassin of John, enemy of the people, the most fitting person in the world to condemn innocence. That Babe of Bethlehem Whom his father tried to kill—now stands manacled before Herod: The Gospel tells us: "And Herod seeing Jesus, was very glad; for he was desirous of a long time to see him, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to see some sign wrought by him" (*Luke 23:8*).

Herod was glad! But glad only because he hoped to see a trick. He would compel Our Lord to display some magic to save His life. This is all religion means to some people: a passing delectation to get them over a moment in the intolerable boredom of life. It makes them feel good between satieties.

Herod began by asking Our Lord many questions, not questions of doctrine and discipline as Annas had done, but questions prompted by curiosity. Jaded souls present intellectual difficulties, never pleas for moral re-

generation. Therefore, to all the questions Our Lord answered him nothing.

Why did Our Lord refuse to speak to Herod? Can it be that He Who came to save all men and Who loved them enough to die for them, should still not *even try* to win calloused souls *like* Herod? Why should He who spoke to Judas the traitor, Magdalen the harlot, and the thief, now be silent before a King? *Because the conscience of Herod was dead.* He was too familiar with religion. He wanted miracles, yes, but not to surrender his will, but to satisfy his curiosity. His soul was already so blunted by appeals, including even the Baptist's that another appeal would only have intensified his guilt. He was stone deaf on the side of God. Herod was not offering his soul for salvation, but only his nerves for titillation. Spiritualized sensation hunting is not religion. Christ is no minister to the senses. The capacity for holiness had been killed in Herod. So the Lord of the universe spoke not a word to the worldling. Herod stands as the type of those who have already had enough knowledge about religion, but refused to do anything about it.

The Scripture describes them: "Because they have hated instruction, and received not the fear of the Lord." "Then shall they call upon me, and I will not hear" (*Proverbs* 1:29, 28). Men have spoken of hell in various images but none are more terrible than the image of the silence of God. God sometimes judges in silence. And that silence of Our Lord clamored more in Herod's ear than did the loud rebuke of John the Baptist. Such silence is thunder, for it is the penalty God inflicts on the soul that is not sincere or that looks for a Truth not to embrace but to reject. Probably the worst punishment God can visit upon a soul is to leave it alone. Then no sound, no ruffled conscience, no reproach. Nature speaks to us in the reproachful language of pain when we violate its laws, e.g. break a bone. A toothache proves nature has a tongue bidding us remedy the evil. Conscience too has a voice; it bids us turn back again to God with every remorse. But there are some diseases which kill without the voice of pain—the cancer which destroys in silence. So too with conscience. If it no longer speaks in remorse, think not that

you are healthy. Your soul may be dead.

The dead consciences have only one reaction to religion and it is the same as the reaction of Herod, namely, mockery which seemingly gives them intellectual superiority. By regarding others as beneath one's intelligence, one seems to put himself above their intelligence.

This brings us to the second act in the drama of Herod: the robing of Christ in the garment of a fool and sending Him back to Pilate. In Rome when a man was a candidate for office he clad himself in a white robe—*toga candida*, whence comes our word "candidate"—and went from elector to elector seeking votes. Perhaps by robing Him thus, Herod meant to suggest here was a candidate for kingship and divinity, but a candidate whose claims were receiving little support either from a Procurator or a Tetrarch. It was a good joke. He could trust Pilate to see the humour of it; it would serve a double purpose; it would prove Christ was a fool, and when Pilate and he would laugh over it, they would be friends, for when men laugh together, enmity ceases, even when the butt of the humour is God.

Wicked power cannot stand the vision of an innocent conscience. From the days of youth when bad boys ridicule the good boy, because his goodness is a judgment passed upon them, to the days of maturity when evil men ridicule religion, the moral is ever the same: mockery and religious persecution arise in the world not because religion is corrupt, but because consciences are corrupt.

Our present moment then is something like that in which the conscience of Our Lord stood impotent before Herod. We who hold Christ's truths are being robed in the garment of a fool. We are mocked if we preach Christ's condemnation of divorce; we are called fools if we ask for the restoration of religion to education; fools if we affirm that all political power is from God; fools if we insist that world unity is impossible without a recognition of a universal moral law; fools if we pray, if we fast, if we discipline ourselves. Why this mockery? Because Divinity is the one thing in the world before which men cannot remain long indifferent. Christ in His Church is too big to be ignored, too holy to be un-hated. What the evil spirits said of

Him could be put into the lips of every man who works evil: "What have we to do with Thee Jesus of Nazareth. Art thou come to destroy us?" Evil is too hypersensitive to be indifferent to the challenge of the good. It knows its enemies long in advance. Purely humanistic religions and popular sects founded by emotional moderns are never the object of the world's scorn. No evil force will waste time over trivia; no one will draw swords against weaklings. The instinct of evil is infallible; it knows its enemies. The Church today is paid the beautiful tribute of opposition, the high compliment of hate, for if the world hates the Church then it is unworldly, and if it is unworldly then it is divine.

So long as we are hated, we are worth troubling about. The church that would give only a moral tone to secular movements can die of its own inanition. If the pagan forces of the world left us untouched, if they did not calumniate us, seek to destroy us, set up rival claimants to the soul, it would mean that we would have lost our influence, that our touch was gone, our stars did no longer shine.

Do men shake fists over the

tomb of Napoleon? Do armies storm and rage against the grave of Mohammed? Do forces assault the tomb of Lenin? These men are dead. But they do storm the citadel of Christ; they do rage against His Spouse; they do kill the members of His body; they do try to stifle the young hearts that would breathe His name in school. Therefore Christ must be alive today in His Body which is the Church.

The Church can still make the evil forces of the world angry. It can still inspire persecution therefore Christ is with us. The exhilaration of being counted a foe of evil is the joy of honor. Our heart is warmed by the tribute of enmity from those areas of life, where to be counted friends, or not to be counted at all, would be to stand condemned as salt without savour, and as feeble candles whose lights had gone out. The Church can test the virility of its loves by the fires of resistance which it enkindles in the breasts of all who know Christ's love regnant spells disaster to their evil ways.

The white robe of the fool is a judgment on the world; it is the sign of its evil; the death rattle of its wickedness. Because men mock, a verdict is passed on

them; because the Church is martyred by evil powers, a sentence has been pronounced on those powers. Their deeds are known to be sinful by what they do to innocence. Thus will men who live in the world and do not know where to look for religion, finally find it in the religion which their very world crucified, and in finding it will find peace which the world cannot take away!

True followers of Christ! You can hardly expect a world to be more reverent to you than to Our Lord. When it makes fun of your faith, its practices, abstinences, and rituals, then you are moving to a closer identity with Him Who gave us our faith. Take on the robe of a fool, for a new crime is arising in the world. The crime of being a Christian. An era of sensuality is an era of persecution; an age of unreason is an age of mockery; Wicked powers will not submit to the judgment of truth. We cannot fight God's battles with the weapons of Satan. Repay not sneer with sneer, for under scorn Our Lord "answered nothing." The world gets most of its amusement from a Christian who fails to be Christian, but none from his respectful si-

lence. The answer of Our Lord to Herod was that Our Lord continued to be Our Lord. Dogs bay at the moon all night, but the moon gives back no snarl. It goes on shining. Shine forth in thy white robe of mockery, O Christian! One day, it will be the robe of thy glory!

PRAYER

O God, from Whose hands cometh the peace the world cannot give, give us the light to see that peace is the work of Justice, and the concord of all nations the fruit of obedience to Thy Law and Thy Commandments. May we seek not so much

to be consoled as to console; to be understood, as to understand; to be loved, as to love, that in pardoning we may be pardoned, and in giving we may receive. We pray for our President, for our Congress, for our homes, our people, our children, our broken-hearted, that we may be reverent in the use of freedom, just in the exercise of power, generous in the protection of weakness, merciful to those who have been our enemies. Not for our worthiness, but because of Thy tender mercy hear our prayer that we may so pass through things temporal as not to lose the things eternal, O Christ Jesus, Our Lord.

CLAUDIA AND HERODIAS

Address given on April 7, 1946

One of the most revolutionary and as yet unnoticed changes in the Post-war world is the role assigned to women. There are only two philosophies of life left in the Western world; the Christian, and Totalitarian Red Fascism, sometimes called Communism. Both of them appeal to women, for both recognize that the winning of the world to Christ, or winning it to anti-Christ cannot be accomplished without them.

The Christian appeal to woman was made on October 21, 1945, when the Holy Father published an Encyclical on "Woman's Duties in Social and Political Life." The Red Fascist appeal was made on November 26th, when they moved their international revolutionary set-up to Paris to disclaim responsibility for a double game, called an International Women's Congress in that city.

The Christian appeal outlined a program for the Christian education of women for social and political life under "the standard of Christ the King and the patronage of His wonderful

Mother" in order that they might be the "restorers of honor, family and society."

The anti-Christian appeal as presented in an authoritative pamphlet written by the German Communist woman leader, Clara Zetkin, in preparation for this Congress quoted a statement of Lenin made to her some years before concerning "non-party International Women's Congress." "We must win over to our side the millions of toiling women . . . for the Communist transformation of society . . . the object of which is the seizing of power by establishing the proletarian dictatorship. . . . Just imagine those who will meet with the so-called 'hyenas of the revolution,' and if all goes well, under their leadership—honest, tame, social democratic women; pious Christian women blessed by the Pope, or swearing by Luther; daughters of Privy Councillors; lady-like English pacifists, and passionate French pacifists." How well this succeeded in Paris could be verified by reading the names of those who attended—even

from our own Democratic United States.

Thus it would seem that the women of the world are to be divided as they were in the Gospel times, either for the God of the heavens and the freedom rooted in the spirit, or else for the cause of anti-Christ and the beheading of those who would proclaim the moral law in the palace of the dictators. These two roles were foreshadowed in two women of the Gospels, Claudia and Herodias.

Claudia was the youngest daughter of Julia, the daughter of Caesar Augustus. Julia was married three times, the last time to Tiberius. Because of her dissolute life, Julia was exiled when she bore Claudia to a Roman Knight. When Claudia was thirteen, Julia sent her to be brought up by Tiberius. When she was sixteen, Pontius Pilate, himself of low origin, met Claudia and asked Tiberius for permission to marry her. Thus Pilate married into the Emperor's family, which assured his political future. On the strength of it, Pilate was made the Procurator of Judea.

Roman Governors were forbidden to take their wives with them to the provinces. Most poli-

ticians were very happy about this, but not Pilate. Love broke a stern Roman law. After Pilate was in Jerusalem six years, he sent for Claudia who was more than eager to face the loneliness of life away from the capital of the world and amidst an unknown and alien people.

We may reasonably conclude that Claudia must have heard of Our Lord. Perhaps from the Jewish maid who prepared her bath, or the stewards who brought news about Him. She might actually have seen Him, for the Fortress of Antonia where she lived was near the Temple of Jerusalem and Our Lord was often there. How little did the women of Jerusalem who saw Claudia looking out through the lattice, to catch the flash of gems on her white hands, or mark the pride of her patrician face, ever guess how deep were her thoughts, how intense her sorrow, how profound her yearning.

We must remember that there was almost a Prussian submission to law among the Romans. No woman was allowed to interfere in the processes of law, nor even to offer a suggestion concerning legal procedure. What makes her entrance onto the

scene all the more remarkable is that she sent a message to her husband, Pontius Pilate, the very day he was deciding on the most important case of his whole career, and the only one for which he will ever be remembered—the trial of Our Blessed Lord. To send a message to a judge while he was in court was a punishable offense, and only the awfulness of the deed she saw about to be done could have moved Claudia to it. As Matthew records it: "And as he was sitting in the place of judgment, his wife sent to him, saying: Have thou nothing to do with that just man; for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him" (*Matthew* 27:19). While the women of Israel were silent, this heathen woman bore witness to the innocence of Jesus, and asked her husband to deal with Him in a righteous way.

The message of Claudia was an epitome of all that Christianity would do for pagan womanhood. She is the only Roman woman in the Gospels and she is a *woman of the very highest rank*. There was probably a time when Pilate would have done anything his wife asked. But this time he did not. But the

trial reveals that the political man was wrong, and the unpolitical woman was right, for Claudia better than Pilate caught the portents of the hour. Christ suffered under Pontius Pilate. But to the glory of Claudia, a woman's voice was raised in the name of justice.

Now look on Herodias, the second wife of Herod, who was the son of old Herod the Great who ordered the massacre of the infants of Bethlehem. He put away his first wife, the daughter of the King of Arabia, and stole his half-brother's wife, Herodias, and took her to his palace, the Golden House at Machaerus.

Herod was fond of lionizing strangers and particularly liked to hear great preachers. Accordingly he invited John the Baptist to preach in his court. John was not the kind of man to miss an opportunity of bringing Herod and Herodias face to face with their guilty conscience. Little did they imagine the theme that the man of God would choose as his message in that Golden House. As soon as he stood before the court, he pointed an accusing finger at Herod who had married a divorced woman and thundered: "It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife"

(*Mark* 6:18). Herodias winced; Herod rebelled. Freedom of spirit does not mean the right to judge another man's conscience. Before John knew it there were irons about his arms and the prison door of the underground dungeon closed in the face of the "the greatest man ever born of one whom Our Lord described as woman."

A man sometimes forgets these incidents: a woman never. A short time later came Herod's birthday. The scene is the grim castle of Machaerus, one of the most desolate places in the world, built on the top of an isolated crag of black rock, 3500 feet above the Dead Sea's eastern shore.

A great Baltasaarian feast is planned. In the brilliantly lighted banquet hall, Herod's company is gathered . . . Lords, ladies, military authorities, hangers-on, and rabble that always gathers before a court. The castle is aglow with light; the noise of revelry penetrates into a deep dungeon below where waits the prisoner of Christ.

Finally, Herod has nothing more to offer his satiated guests in the way of excitement. Therefore, let the stimulus of a sensuous dance complete it, and let the

dancer be Salome, the fair young daughter of Herodias by her first husband.

Herod, half drunk with wine, and over-emotionalized by the dance, said to Salome: "Ask of me what thou wilt, and I will give it to thee . . . even though it be the half of my kingdom." And she went out and said to her mother, "What am I to ask for?" And she said: "The head of John the Baptist." And she went with haste to the king, and asked saying, "I want thee right away to give me on a dish the head of John the Baptist" (*Mark* 6:22-26).

What would Herod do? The Gospel said Herod was "grieved" (*Mark* 6:26) . . . but he had sworn to the maiden, and must keep his promise. Some prefer to be unfaithful to God, rather than be untrue to a half-drunken oath.

The guests hear the dungeon door open. . . . A few minutes later the gory head of John the Baptist is brought to the maiden on a silver platter, and she gives the ghastly dish to her mother.

It is amazing the similarity at first glance between the two women. Both were noblewomen, both the wives of politicians; both came in contact with the greatest religious personages of

all times, Claudia with Christ, Herodias with John the Baptist; both sent messages to their husbands, and yet their reactions were so different; one served Christ, the other a totalitarian dictator. Why was religion so distasteful to one, and so dear to the other? Why does one react to the *defense* of religion, and the other to an offense against it? Why does one seek to save a life, the other to take it?

Everyone in life has at least one great moment to come to God. How each of us reacts, depends on whether we have a background of good will or bad will. In some there is a will to sin; occasional good actions being the interruptions to an abiding evil intention. In others, there is a good will and though a bad action may occasionally cut a tangent across it, the will, being good, is ready to make amends and make all sacrifices to follow the directive of conscience and the actual graces of the moment.

Now Herodias had an evil will; Claudia a good will. The one embraced religion, the other rejected it. The good will is like the good soil. When the seed of God's grace falls on it, it sprouts. The evil will is like the rock . . .

it is incapable of conversion. "And other seed fell upon the rock, and as soon as it had sprung up it withered away, because it had no moisture" (*Luke* 8:6).

Claudia and Herodias are the prototypes of all women who have a role to play in the social and political life of the world. Women will either be the daughters of Herodias, wrecking their own homes by divorce, educating their children like Salome in the false wisdom of how to solicit men to do their worst, aligning themselves with any political leader who will further their own interests or pamper their own ambitions, who will never forget the just rebukes of modern Johns, and never scruple at being Beasts of Belchen to behead the heralds of Christ. Or women today will be the daughters of Claudia, challenging politics when it would send righteous men to death; urging the path of highest duty when indecision, cowardice and compromise allure; being to a husband an unfailing preacher of righteousness; his counselor and his saviour; ever braving stern law rather than be unfaithful to conscience; and never scrupling to talk about the just and righteous Christ even

when its penalty might well be the spurning of love.

The level of any civilization is the level of its womanhood. What Claudia was, that Pilate could be; what Herodias was, that Herod was. It is loves that make the world rather than knowledge. Knowledge is broken down to suit the mind to which the knowledge is given. That is why we have to give examples to children. But love always goes out to meet the demands of the object loved. If the one loved is virtuous, we must be virtuous to win it. Hence the higher the love, the loftier must be those who pursue. The nobler the woman, the nobler the world. When the sacred fires of a common tenderness are melting twin souls predestined for their flame, each can often make of the other whatever is ardently desired. The mere buckling of a knight's armor by a feminine hand was not a mere caprice of romanticism; it was the type of an eternal trust. The soul's armor is never well set on a man except by the one whom the man will respect when in danger of losing his honour. Maybe men are always being born of women.

Men we need, yes, strong men like Peter who will let the broad

stroke of their challenge ring out the shield of the world's hypocrisies; strong men like Paul, who with a two-edged sword will cut away the ties that bind down the energies of the world, strong men like John who with a loud voice will arouse the world from the sleek dream of unheroic repose.

But we need women too—who will have pity on the rational stupidities of man, who will hold back those currents which threaten the home, who will take the tangled skeins of a wrecked and ruined life and weave out of them the beautiful tapestry of sweetness and holiness. And if this is the kind of woman you are, we salute you and toast you; not as the modern woman who descended from Herodias, once our superior now our equal, but as the Christian woman—inspired by Claudia—closest to the Cross on Good Friday and first at the Tomb on Easter Morn!

PRAYER

O God, from Whose hands cometh the peace the world cannot give, give us the light to see that peace is the work of Justice, and the concord of all nations the fruit of obedience to Thy Law and Thy Commandments. May

we seek not so much to be consoled as to console; to be understood, as to understand; to be loved, as to love, that in pardoning we may be pardoned, and in giving we may receive. We pray for our President, for our Congress, for our homes, our people, our children, our broken-hearted, that we may be reverent in the

use of freedom, just in the exercise of power, generous in the protection of weakness, merciful to those who have been our enemies. Not for our worthiness, but because of Thy tender mercy hear our prayer that we may so pass through things temporal as not to lose the things eternal, O Christ Jesus, Our Lord.

BARABBAS AND THE THIEVES

Address given on April 14, 1946

I wonder if there is any word more often used by the modern world than the word "*freedom*." It may well be that as men talk most about their health when they are sick, so too they talk most about freedom when they are most in danger of losing it? When is a man free? When he is without law or restraint or when he attains the purpose for which he is made? For an answer to these questions we turn to the Eternal Drama of the Cross.

A prison can house the innocent as well as the guilty. During the rule of an invader it is possible that more innocent than guilty will be imprisoned behind the bars. But without passing on the morality of the prisoners, the low dark prison under Pilate's fortress held many a captive soul. Among them there were three who attract our attention. The name of one we know—Barabbas. The names of the two others we do not know. Tradition has given them the names of Dismas and Gimas.

When the sun arose this particular morning each of them looked with hope for release, for

it was customary on the day of the Passover for the Governor to release a prisoner to the people. Thus the redemption of Israel from Egypt was commemorated by a captive receiving his freedom.

Pilate knew he would be called upon to pick some one for release. The urgency became acute when Herod returned Our Lord to Pilate who called together the chief priests and magistrates and the people and said to them: "You have presented unto me this man, as one who perverted the people, and behold I, having examined Him *before you*, find no cause in this man, in those things wherein you accuse Him. No! Nor Herod either. For I sent you to him and behold nothing worthy of death is done unto Him."

Pilate had Christ on his hands. The problem was how to get rid of Him. His imagination leaped to the prison. He had a great idea, politically! Morally, it was weak and even rotten. He would allow the people to vote on the prisoner who would be released. Pilate probably was anxious to

insure the release of Christ and, in order to do so, chose from among those three men one who was called Barabbas.

Barabbas, the Gospel tells us was "notable," and very likely, as his name indicates, the son of a Rabbi. (*Matthew* 27:16). St. John tells us he was a robber, (*John* 18:40) but that later he was arrested for sedition and for a murder committed during a sedition (*Luke* 23:19). He was in our language a *revolutionist*. When it is recalled that Israel was under the Romans, the term "revolutionist" is to be understood as a "patriot" or a member of "Israel's underground." He was interested in throwing off the yoke of political tyranny. The whole nation had been palpitating for a deliverer from the Roman yoke. Hence they asked of Christ: "Art thou he that art to come, or look we for another?" (*Matthew* 11:3). For two centuries Israel had no Judaeus Macchabeus to lead a revolt against Caesar. Barabbas stepped in to fill this role and in his enthusiasm for the freedom of his people had committed a murder, and, what was more serious to Pilate, was a seditionist.

Pilate sought to confuse the issue by choosing a prisoner who

was guilty of exactly the same charge as Christ, namely sedition against Caesar. In a few minutes two figures stand before the multitude on the pretentious white marble floor of the Praetorium. Pilate sits on a raised platform, surrounded by the imperial guard. Barabbas, on one side, blinks in the sunlight. He had not seen it in months. On the other side stood Christ, already scourged and with perhaps only one friend in the mob below—His own Mother. Here are two men accused of revolution. Barabbas appealed to national grievances; Christ to consciences. Barabbas would release fetters and ignore sin; Our Lord would release man from sin and fetters would cease to be. The trumpets sound. Order is restored. Pilate steps forward and addresses the mob: "Whom will you that I release to you, Barabbas or Jesus. . . ." (*Matthew* 27:17).

The question of Pilate had all the air of democracy and free election but it was only its cheap facsimile. The Gospel tells us the people themselves were not inclined to put Our Lord to death (*Matthew* 27:20). For that reason, some demagogues "stirred among the people and persuaded them that they should ask

for Barabbas." There is always a rag-tag, bob-tail group, careless and thoughtless, who are ready to be at the mercy of that kind of oratory which has been called "the harlot of the arts." The people can be misled by false leaders; the very ones who shout Hosanna on Sunday can shout Crucify on Friday.

Herein is revealed the grave danger to democracy: the danger of the *people* degenerating into *masses*. By the people we mean persons who make their own decisions, who are governed by their *consciences*, who are self-determined by moral purpose and who uphold the right even in the face of demagogues. By the masses we mean the people who have ceased to be governed by their consciences, who are determined in their thinking by a few irresponsible leaders on the outside, who are susceptible to the mental contagion of propaganda and who have therefore a psychological readiness for slavery.

What happened on that Good Friday morning was that through propagandists the people became the masses; a democracy with conscience became a mobocracy with power. May we in America never forget that when

a democracy loses its moral sense, it can vote itself right out of democracy.

When Pilate asked: "Whom will you that I release to you" (*Matthew 27:17*), he was not holding a fair democratic election. He was assuming that a vote means the right to choose between Innocence and Guilt, Evil and Goodness, Right and Wrong. True democracy never votes on Innocence and Guilt. Once Right and Wrong are put on equal footing, the Right invariably goes to a cross, there is no need of counting ballots. To the eternal glory of American democracy when we go to the polls we do not vote on whether we shall have a regime of Justice or a regime of Injustice; we vote rather on relatively good means to a good end. Every democracy is rooted in a theological absolute and political and economic relativities. Our Democracy assumes that there is an absolute about which we do not vote; there are certain truths which are never challenged, e.g. "All men are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights," such as life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. It is because we never question this and other absolutes that we are free to vote. It is

this common, unchallenged faith in right that makes America great.

In answer to Pilate's question the masses thundered back: "Release unto us, Barabbas!" Pilate could hardly believe his ears. Barabbas could hardly believe his ears either! Was he about to be a free man? For the first time he became aware that he might again carry on his revolt. He turned his swollen burning face toward the Nazarene. He meant to measure his rival from head to foot, but his glance no longer dared to rise. There was something about His eyes which read his soul, as if that Nazarene was really sorry for him because he was free.

The Gospel tells us: "And he said to them the third time: Why, what evil hath this man done? I find no cause of death in him. I will chastise him therefore, and let him go. But they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified; and their voices prevailed. And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required. And he released unto them him who for murder and sedition, had been cast into prison, whom they had desired; but Jesus he de-

livered up to their will" (*Luke 23:22-25*).

The majority is not always right. Majority is right in the field of the *relative*, but *not* in the *absolute*. Majority is a legitimate test so long as voting is based on conscience and not on propaganda. Truth does not win when numbers *qua* numbers become decisive. Numbers alone can decide a beauty queen but not Justice. Beauty is a matter of taste, but Justice is tasteless. Right is right if nobody is right, and wrong is wrong if everybody is wrong. The first Poll in the history of Christianity was wrong!

Barabbas was amazed beyond his fondest hopes. He had fought for political liberty. He had procured the names of a few Quislings, had sabotaged Roman works, had organized a few patriotic followers, had gained some prestige by being arrested, for arrest also heightens the prestige of revolutionists. But all that was nothing compared to the deafening shouts for him as their leader, their hero. He was no longer an outlaw, but a free man. It meant death for Christ—but that *was nothing!*

Barabbas was free! He had

four freedoms, in the sense of absence of constraint:

1. Freedom from fear—no more Roman prisons.

2. Freedom from want—no more coarse bread and water.

3. Freedom of speech—he could once more talk revolution.

4. Freedom of religion—he could talk against religion if he wanted to.

Freedom for him meant freedom *from* something. And it was an empty freedom. It was as tasteless as water and he thought it would be red like wine. He noticed that after the voting no one followed him. It was the queerest election in the history of the world. No torch light procession for the Victor; no one hoisted him on shoulders; no mob followed the Victor with cheers. But everyone followed the defeated candidate. To have the mob with him he had to follow the mob that followed Christ. With them unnoticed he moved down to the basement of Pilate's fortress where he watched the scourging of the defeated candidate and saw born the first flag with the three great primal colors.

As the cloak was torn from his shoulders there stood revealed the *white* of innocence; one blow

of the scourge and the *blue* of loyalty was born; another and the flag was *red* with sacrifice. And as the crown of thorns was laid on that field of red and white and blue, it seemed as if it had all been crowned with the stars of heaven to remind us all that perhaps in a great crisis we are saved by other stars and other stripes than those of our flag, namely by the stars and stripes of Christ, by whose stars we are illumined and by whose stripes we are healed.

When the scourging was done, Barabbas followed the defeated candidate up the hill of Calvary—it was still the only way Barabbas could have a following. But lo and behold! His two fellow prisoners were also there. They were not so fortunate as to have been nominated for election. Barabbas said to himself: Too bad they are not free. They were to be nailed on either side of Our Lord, Dismas on His right, and Gimmas on His left.

When finally all the three crosses were unfurled against the dark sky, Barabbas heard Gimmas on His left curse, swear, and ask to be taken down. But he also heard Dismas on His right ask to be taken up: "Remember me when thou shalt

come into thy kingdom" (*Luke* 23:42). To which plea came back the divine promise; "This day thou shalt be with me in paradise" (*Luke* 23:43). What kind of freedom, Barabbas was asking himself, was this with which Dismas was satisfied? Can one be nailed to a cross and still be free? Can He Who is pinned to that Central Tree be the Giver of freedom, Guardian and Saviour of liberty? Then Barabbas saw the freedom which he was seeking was the freedom to be free *from* something, but that the only true freedom is to be free *for* something. Now he sees freedom is not an end, but a means. Freedom is for the sake of doing something worth doing.

a) What good is freedom from fear unless there is someone to love?

b) What good is freedom from want unless there is a Justice to be served?

c) What good is freedom of speech unless there is a Truth to defend?

d) What good is freedom of religion unless there is a God to worship?

Barabbas would now have given anything to have been Dismas. Dismas was free! He was not. Only nailed love is

free; unnailed love can compel and therefore destroy freedom. Hearken ye, revolutionists!

Follow not Barabbas, the revolutionist who would re-make society to re-make man; but rather Christ, the Revolutionist, Who would re-make man in order to re-make society. Believe in violence, yes, but not the violence that draws a sword against a neighbor, a class or race, or color, but rather draws it against self, to cut out lust, envy, greed and hate. Attend ye, believers in violence! Be violent not against fellowman but against selfishness, for "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent bear it away" (*Matthew* 11:12). Learn ye, all who prattle about freedom in a land of freedom, that the only true freedom in the world is the freedom to be a saint!

PRAYER

O God, from Whose hands cometh the peace the world cannot give, give us the light to see that peace is the work of Justice, and the concord of all nations the fruit of obedience to Thy Law and Thy Commandments. May we seek not so much to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved, as to love, that in par-

doing we may be pardoned, and in giving we may receive. We pray for our President, for our Congress, for our homes, our people, our children, our broken-hearted, that we may be reverent in the use of freedom, just in the exercise of power, generous in

the protection of weakness, merciful to those who have been our enemies. Not for our worthiness, but because of Thy tender mercy hear our prayer that we may so pass through things temporal as not to lose the things eternal, O Christ Jesus, Our Lord.

THE SCARS OF CHRIST

Address given on April 21, 1946

The world still wears the scars of war. Forty million displaced persons, wander haggard, haunted, and hunted across the vast expanse of the world and, as they fall, the very earth that should have ministered unto them takes the measure of their unmade graves; calloused hands, weary from a cross of forced labor, look up in vain for Cyrenians to lift their burden; wounded soldiers limp across a world they fought to make free, and yet see not that freedom for which their dead comrades went to graves as to their beds.

While our earth wears these scars, who can bring us hope that better days lie ahead, and that all this pain and anguish is not a mockery and a snare?

One thing is certain. No healing can come to our broken wings from that Liberal Christ invented by the Nineteenth Century which made Him only a moral teacher like unto Socrates and Mohammed or Confucius bound like them in the fetters of death.

The only one who can bring solace to our times is a Christ with scars, Who Himself had

passed through death to give us hope and life, and this is the Christ of Easter Morn. What figures large in the Easter story is the scars of Christ. Magdalen, who was always at His feet, either in Simon's house or at the cross, is there again in the garden; and not until she sees on those feet the red livid memories of Calvary's war does she recognize her Lord and cry out "Rabboni!" Master. Then Christ came to the sceptical, doubting world in the person of Thomas, whose melancholy made him a doubter. When told by the other disciples that they had seen the Lord, Thomas said to them, "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe" (*John* 20:25). Eight days later when the disciples were in the room and Thomas with them, the doors being shut, Our Lord stood in the midst of them and said, "Peace be to you." Then He said to Thomas, "Put in thy finger hither, and see my hands; and bring hither thy hand, and put

it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing." Thomas answered, and said to him: "My Lord, and my God."

The kind of Christ the world needs today is the Virile Christ, Who can unfurl to an evil world the pledge of victory in His own body, the scar-spangled banner of salvation. No false gods who are immune from pain and sorrow can solace us in these tragic days.

Take out of our lives the Christ of the Scars, Who is the Son of the Living God, Who rose from the dead by the power of God, and what assurance have we that evil shall not triumph over good? If He Who came to this earth to teach the dignity of the human soul, Who could challenge a sinful world to convict Him of sin, had no other issue and destiny than to hang on a common tree with common criminals and thieves to make a Roman holiday, then each of us may say, "If this is what happens to a good man, then why should I lead a good life?" What motivation is there for virtue if the greatest of all injustices can go unredressed, and the noblest of all lives can go unvindicated.

What am I to think of a God

Who would look down unmoved on this spectacle of Innocence going to the gallows and would not pull out the nails and put a sceptre there; or would not even send an angel to snatch a crown of thorns and place a garland there?

What am I to think of human nature if this white flower of blameless life is trampled under the hob-nailed boots of Roman executioners and then is destined to rot in the earth like all crushed flowers rot? Would it not send forth the greater stench because of its primal sweetness and make us hate not only the God Who had no care for truth and love but even our fellowman for being party to His death? If this is the end of goodness, then why be good at all? If this is what happens to justice, then let anarchy reign.

But if He is not only man but God, if He is not a teacher of humanitarian ethics, but a Redeemer, if He can take the worst this world has to offer and then by the power of God rise above it; if He the unarmed can make war with no other weapon than goodness and pardon, so that the slain has the gain, and they who kill the foe lose the day, then who shall be without hope

as the Risen Christ shows us His Hands and Side?

What do the scars of Christ teach us? They teach us that life is a struggle: that our condition of a final resurrection is exactly the same as His; that unless there is a cross in our lives, there will never be an empty tomb; unless there is a Good Friday, there will never be an Easter Sunday; unless there is a crown of thorns, there will never be the halo of light; and unless we suffer with Him, we shall not rise with Him.

The Christ of the scars gave us no peace which banishes strife, for God hates an inert peace in those that are destined for war against evil.

The scars are not only reminders that life is warfare, but they are also pledges of victory in that war. Our Blessed Lord said, "I have overcome the world." By this He means that He has overcome evil in principle. The victory is assured, only the good news has not yet leaked out. Evil will never be able to be stronger than it was on that particular day, for the worst thing that evil can do is not to ruin cities and to wage wars and to drop atomic bombs against the good and the living. The worst thing that

evil can do is to kill God. Having been defeated in that, in its strongest moment, when evil wore its greatest armour, it can never be victorious again.

Think not, then, that the Jesus of the scars and His victory over evil gives us immunity from evil and woe, pain and sorrow, crucifixion and death. What He offers is not immunity from evil in the physical world, but immunity from sin in our souls. The final conquest of physical evil will come in the resurrection of the just. But He does teach a noble army of the world's sufferers to bear the worst this life has to offer with courage and serenity and to regard all of its trials as "the shade of His hand outstretched caressingly," and to transfigure some of life's greatest pains into the richest gains of the spiritual life.

With St. Paul then, we cry out in an ecstasy of triumph, "Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation? Or distress? Or famine? Or nakedness? Or danger? Or persecution? Or the sword? . . . But in all these things we overcome because of Him that hath loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor Angels nor principal-

ties, nor powers, nor things to come, nor might, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus Our Lord." (*Romans* 8:35-39).

Over against the Christian faith in the Risen Christ is a materialist philosophy which puts its faith not in God but in man, and principally one man who fulfills the role of the dictator.

Our Western world sees the danger in this new faith but is impotent to oppose it, for its defenses rest only on the vacillating and fluctuating opinion of politicians and leaders who have no convincing standards to offer the people, who themselves are without a faith and, therefore, can never give a faith. What has made the cause of the Western world weaker is its aversion for doctrine, its hatred of dogma, which leaves it without an ideology to oppose an ideology and, therefore, powerless to deal with the enemy except by offering a few indifferent cabinet changes. Because our Western world has turned its back upon those authentic fires that were lighted at the eternal altars of the Living God, it leaves

the people's torches unlit. Now like a moth in the dark, the Western man flutters to a smoky candle of Totalitarianism, flies into it, and is lost. The struggle today is too unequal. The materialistic forces of the world have a philosophy of life; the West has none.

Since basically all quarrels are theological, it follows that if we surrender the faith in Christ that made our Western Christian Civilization, then we can offer no goals to journeys and no hope to a lost generation. You cannot oppose an ideology with an opinion, or a philosophy of life with appeasing compromises. The mere fact that you give your right arm to a bear is no guarantee that he will not take your left. The real case against the new materialism must be a theological one. Doctrine must be invoked to combat doctrine. This is certain. Unless we can give men of the Western world a faith to combat the false faith, the fanatical disciples of world revolution will capture and inflame the loyalty of millions, and we shall be destroyed by what is false within.

If, however, we have faith that in the conflict between good and evil, God still works in history,

then ultimate victory of good can come out of tragedy, as once more eternal love becomes triumphant when sin has done its worst.

If it would seem that the scars of Christ are but small and feeble security against the well-armed powers of evil, then look back to the former conflict between the forces of good and evil in the persons of David and Goliath. Goliath assumed that any champion who would come forth to meet him must himself be a spearman, quite forgetful that the cause of God rests on other arms than those of spears.

David took a sling-shot, a rather harmless looking instrument hewn from the forest, and choosing five small stones from a brook he went out to meet the Philistine.

So hard-set was Goliath's mind that it was to be a battle of armaments that when he sees David coming to him with no armor on his body and nothing in his hand except five tiny stones and a sling, he takes umbrage at the insult and says to David, "Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with a staff?" (I *Kings* 17:43). And David answered and said, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and

with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, which thou hast defied" (I *Kings* 17:45).

Goliath steps forward panned from head to foot and with only his unvisored forehead as a target. With the first shot from his sling, David struck Goliath on the head, the stone being fixed in his forehead as he fell to the earth. Having no other sword than that of the Philistine, David took it and cut off his head.

One day this prefigurement was realized when Christ on Good Friday came to do battle with the Goliath of evil that was supported by the power of all the governments in the world. Taking no other armor than a cross, from the forest, which looked like the sling-shot of David, He picked up from the cascading brooks of the world's hate not five stones, but five scars, any one of which would have been enough to have redeemed the world, and with them slew the Goliath of evil.

If He, Our Leader, wore five scars, then must we His soldiers be prepared on the day of the Great Review when He comes to judge the Living and the

Dead, to show Him the scars we won in His Cause and in His Name. To each of us He will say: "Show Me your hands and your side." Woe then unto us who come down Calvary with hands unscarred and white!

If there is any one of those five scars that we would choose as David chose one of the stones to slay the Goliath of evil, it

would be that scar that was made by the Sergeant of the Roman Army when he ran a lance in the side of the Saviour. Until the day of the final victory we shall march confidently under that great Captain Who wears for the first time in history, the Decoration which humanity pinned on His Breast—the Purple Heart of the All Loving God!

THE PURPOSE OF THE CATHOLIC HOUR

(Extract from the address of the late Patrick Cardinal Hayes at the inaugural program of the Catholic Hour in the studio of the National Broadcasting Company, New York City, March 2, 1930.)

Our congratulations and our gratitude are extended to the National Council of Catholic Men and its officials, and to all who, by their financial support, have made it possible to use this offer of the National Broadcasting Company. The heavy expense of managing and financing a weekly program, its musical numbers, its speakers, the subsequent answering of inquiries, must be met. . . .

This radio hour is for all the people of the United States. To our fellow-citizens, in this word of dedication, we wish to express a cordial greeting and, indeed, congratulations. For this radio hour is one of service to America, which certainly will listen in interestedly, and even sympathetically, I am sure, to the voice of the ancient Church with its historic background of all the centuries of the Christian era, and with its own notable contribution to the discovery, exploration, foundation and growth of our glorious country. . . .

Thus to voice before a vast public the Catholic Church is no light task. Our prayers will be with those who have that task in hand. We feel certain that it will have both the good will and the good wishes of the great majority of our countrymen. Surely, there is no true lover of our Country who does not eagerly hope for a less worldly, a less material, and a more spiritual standard among our people.

With good will, with kindness and with Christ-like sympathy for all, this work is inaugurated. So may it continue. So may it be fulfilled. This word of dedication voices, therefore, the hope that this radio hour may serve to make known, to explain with the charity of Christ, our faith, which we love even as we love Christ Himself. May it serve to make better understood that faith as it really is—a light revealing the pathway to heaven: a strength, and a power divine through Christ; pardoning our sins, elevating, consecrating our common every-day duties and joys, bringing not only justice but gladness and peace to our searching and questioning hearts.

93 CATHOLIC HOUR STATIONS

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