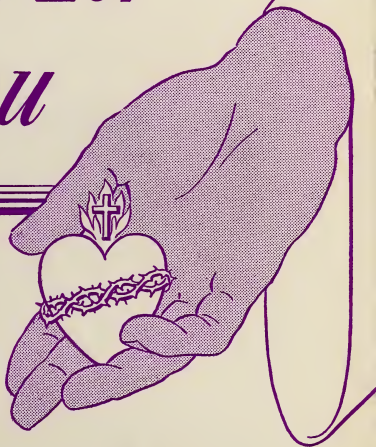


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*The Love That
Waits For
You*



by Rt. Rev. Msgr.

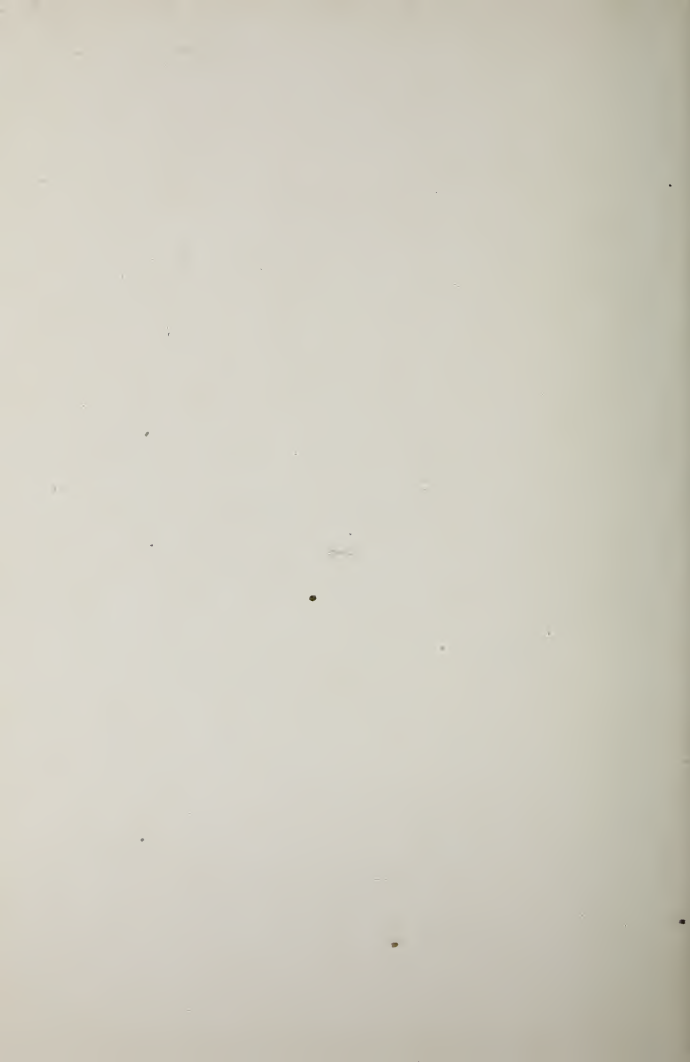
FULTON J. SHEEN



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THE LOVE THAT
WAITS FOR YOU



THE LOVE THAT WAITS FOR YOU

Sixteen addresses delivered over the nationwide Catholic Hour, produced by the National Council of Catholic Men, in cooperation with the National Broadcasting Company, from January 2, 1949 through April 17, 1949

BY

RT. REV. MSGR. FULTON J. SHEEN

of the

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THE TWO TRAP-DOORS OF THE SOUL

Friends:

The most beautiful gifts are invisible, such as air for our lungs, grace for our souls and the devoted friends of the radio. To further that intimate bond between us may these broadcasts flower and blossom in the Eternal Triangle: You and me, in and through God. That is what I mean by "Friends."

Many in our audience know, love and serve God in the fullness of Faith. There are others too who want God, though they deny it with their lips while inwardly craving for Him in their hearts. I start with the assumption that everyone is looking for God. If you go into the world in the belief that everybody is trying to cheat you, it is surprising how many cheats you meet. If you go at the world on the assumption that everyone is looking for God, it is beautiful to find how many really are. It makes no difference whether they be communists or bigots, sinners or libertines, tyrants or weaklings, or the three classes outside of the Body of Christ that divide the

world: the pre-Christians who have not yet heard of the fullness of Christ; the post-Christians of our Western civilization who once possessed, but now abandon Him; or the anti-Christians who would destroy His memory from the earth but whose energy for anti-Christ puts us to shame, verifying the words of T. S. Eliot: "The best lack all conviction, while the worst are full of passionate intensity." All these are actual or potential sons of God and we love them in the charity of Christ and His Blessed Mother, praying that God may use us as His feeble instruments to draw them closer to the fires of Love Divine.

Anyone seeking to bring God to souls ought to start with modern man as he is, not as he ought to be, and not as he was a century ago. Apologetics, or the science of presenting divine truth to unbelievers, is in some instances half a century behind the times; we are beating the dead dogs of rationalism and deism while ignoring the tragedies of the modern soul locked

inside itself—cynical, morose and afraid. The modern soul is not going to God through order in nature, as he did a generation ago, but through his disordered self; he is looking for God not through a search for a cause of the cosmos, but through a yearning for redemption from his own frustration. It is one of the marvels of grace that God can start there, despite the fact that we too often feel that He must work on souls the way we start in our textbooks. I am sure that no member of the Church in the decade following the Ascension of our Lord would have given a Roman penny for the bigoted Paul's chance of conversion. It is very likely that many in the Church were secretly wishing that God would take him out of this life. by sending him a coronary thrombosis, or else they were praying that He would send one to answer Paul. No one in the Church was capable of dealing with his intellect since Stephen, the learned deacon, had been stoned, Paul, himself, holding the garments of those who stoned. And yet in a moment of his greatest bigotry, in the instant of his blood-boiling persecutions, or as he himself said when he was "breathing out

threatenings against the Lord," the grace comes to him and the prayer of the Church was answered. God did send some learned philosopher to answer Paul; God sent Paul!

God's grace can start anywhere, and with any condition of mind or heart. If the modern soul is frustrated, we will start with frustration. Our divine Lord began the conversion of the woman of the well as He found her—a much divorced and therefore frustrated woman in search of a drink of cold water, from which the Saviour led her to the fountains of Everlasting Life. So Paul himself after his conversion started with men as they were in Athens, telling them they were religious because he saw in the streets a statue of the Unknown God, and from that inscription He led them to love God whom they knew not.

And I say to you of the twentieth century what St. Paul said to the Athenians, I perceive that you are religious men, for walking through your streets, I find two statues to your unknown gods. You, too, are looking for God whom you know not. I see a statue to Marx and the brotherhood of man, which he cannot give, because he denied

the Fatherhood of God. I see a statue to Freud and peace of mind, which he cannot give, because he overemphasized sex and left out God and redemption from sin. That brotherhood of man, that peace of soul which you know not, we give you in the Fatherhood of God, the Redemption of Christ.

You are hungry, thirsting, starving, famished souls; so are we all. You may be bigoted, prejudiced, fed up with the world; you may be imprisoned with your fears and anxieties; you may be still full of illusion because young, and at that stage of life where false pleasures have not yet slapped you in the face. It makes no difference what you are. You may even think yourself a god, and that every man must think he is if he denies God, for he makes himself his own creator and his own redeemer. In the face of that kind of a god, I am an atheist. But I care not what you are now.

God can still get into your imprisoned self. There are two breaches in your walls; two cracks in your armor; two hidden entrances to your soul through which God can enter. They are so much a part of your nature that you cannot alter

them. When God made you, He put two trap-doors in your soul, and through them the Love that waits for you breaks in on you, though you may not always recognize Him.

The first of these trap-doors in your soul is your love of goodness. In chasing after the isolated tid-bits of what is good, your soul is really in pursuit of Goodness, and Goodness is God. Your every quest for excitement, your every love of a good friend, your every comparison of good and better, implies some Goodness beyond all good things, and therefore is a want of God. To say that you want good things but not Goodness which is God-ness, is just like saying you like the sunbeams but you hate the sun. We even do evil because it seems to be good in some of its aspects. No one sins except because he longs for goodness; he may be mistaken in his choice of what is good, as the stomach is mistaken in its choice of what is good for health if it lives of a diet of pickle juice. Drunkenness seems good to the alcoholic, money to the miser, and carnality to the Freudian. Everything that God made is good, even fire, though it burns houses, and water though it drowns children. Even

the most perverse atheist can love only because something seems good. Good deeds too are mingled with our evil deeds. Sometimes a sinner is planting a rose, nursing a sick friend, or fixing a neighbor's tire. Because there is something in us that escapes infection, we are not intrinsically wicked, nor incurable, nor "impossible." But even though the will is perverse and enthralled and captivated by a great sinful adhesion, whether it be lust or power, there are some few good commendable acts which cut a tangent across the will as an exception; these good acts are like a clean handle on a dirty bucket; through them God can lift our souls to His Sacred Heart.

The second trap-door by which God enters your soul is your ennui, your satiety, your fed-upness, your loneliness, your melancholy, your sadness. Every libido, every passion, every craving of the body is finite, concrete, carnal, and therefore bores you, but there is still one choice that has never been made, one great chord that has not yet been struck, and that is the infinite. Your ennui means there is still something to be had; you possess, but not all; you know, but not everything;

you love, but not always. Despite all your adhesions to the concrete and the temporal, as the fish needs the water, the eye the light, the bird the air, the grass the earth, so your spiritual soul needs an all-loving God. Because the Infinite has been left out, God has been left out, and because God for whom you were made is left out, your soul feels a boredom with what it has, a loneliness for what it has not. This is the negative presence of God in the soul, as sickness is the negative presence of health in the body, and hunger is the negative presence of food in the stomach. Into this trap-door of emptiness God enters to intensify your dissatisfaction and the loneliness until finally you accept the Love that waits for you, as your Guest and your Eternal Host.

Such are the two secret entrances by which God insinuates Himself into your soul; in the good that is done, and the infinite that is left unheeded; in your craving for goodness and in your emptiness without it. When you do good, God begins to work in you as a gift; when you are bored and dissatisfied, He begins to work in you as a desire. This accounts for the feeling we have that we are not

only pursuing something, but that we are also being pursued; not only seeking the Infinite, but being sought by it.

St. Francis de Sales likens this quest for the Infinite to an interesting fact of the animal kingdom. Partridges sometimes steal the eggs of other partridges. But when the chick which is hatched under the wing of the thievish partridge first hears the cry of its true mother, it immediately abandons its thievish parent and flies to its real parent. As the mother bird put a trap-door in the tiny breast of its young to pull it back to herself, so God put two inclinations and impulses in us, which pull us toward Him: one, our love of Goodness, the other, our reaction from disappointments of life. But we are not guided by instincts like partridges, but by reason and free will; hence the return to God is not a mechanical reaction but the result of a free choice. But whether we respond or not, notice that the first impetus comes from God, not from us. There is God-priority everywhere; we are touched first by Him, not He by us; He knocks before we invite; He loves before we respond just as the mother loves the child before

the child can react to the mother's kiss.

Though the Divine Invader cannot be prevented from entering your soul, He can be prevented from staying. He is a kind of Divine Squatter on the no-man's land of the soul, and can be evicted at our word. It would make no difference to an ignorant person whether he met a teacher or an ignoramus, if he had no will to learn. If, however, he knows he is ignorant, it is likely that he will want to learn. He, therefore, who loves good things will not recognize God until he wills Goodness more than he wants good things; he who is bored with life will not recognize the Divine Physician unless he wills to be healed, even at all costs.

There is not a single soul among you at which God has not knocked thousands of times.

Though you may ignore Him, as you might cross the street to avoid meeting someone to whom you owed a debt, He is still within you like a spiritual law of gravitation drawing you to Himself.

Your discontent, confusion, fear and unhappiness is His way of telling you that you are restless without Him for Whom you were made. Not all, but

many who are mentally sick, are such because they have no faith, and as Dr. Jung the celebrated Viennese psychiatrist said, he never met anyone whom he could say was really cured until he found God.

I have been dealing with souls for many years, and I am more and more convinced, that there are only two kinds of persons in the world: those who have the faith and those who are looking for it—even the persecutors and the hateful. No one is happy who is unloved, but think how many of us would be unloved, if there were no God—we who are so unloveable. Do I hear some saying: "My conscience is at peace; I have no need of religion"? Very well, we will take up that subject next Sunday.

God love you!

The fish will never drown within
the tide,

Nor birds fall from the air on
which they ride.

The flame will not corrode or
blacken gold,

For fire burns clean and the
Hand gives it a mould.

To all His creatures God has
granted

To live according to their nature.
How then could I deny my
breath and bone?

In all things I submit to God
alone,

Who is my father by nature,
Who is my brother by His
humanhood,

Who is my bridegroom by His
love,

And from the outset I am all His
own.

Saint Mechtild of Magdeburg
(1207-94).

THE PERILS OF A FALSE CONSCIENCE

Friends:

This broadcast is dedicated to Escapists: An escapist is one who calls religion 'escapism' because he is too cowardly to give up an evil life to find God. He generally justifies his flight from responsibility saying: "My conscience is at peace." Such an attitude we will now analyze.

There are two kinds of consciences; the one God gave us, and the one we made for ourselves. In the first instance, we recognize that God not only implants in us a desire to make a journey to the Heavenly City, but that He also gives us the map. In the second instance, we deny we have any journey to make, throw away the map and call any road we take the right road, simply because we took it. It is this latter kind of conscience that boasts it is at peace. Now peace is a nice word, but there can be false peace and true peace. False peace is peace of mind; true peace is peace of soul. True peace deepens in sorrow; false peace is shattered by it; true peace has no wants; false peace is restless and covetous;

true peace is humble; false peace lives in fear of inferiority. In brief, the good conscience is given by God; the false conscience is made by us. There are three steps in the making of false consciences:—

1. It is dulled.
2. It is drugged.
3. It is seared or killed.

Let us consider them in relation to stealing. Though they are frequent in all sins, at the first temptation to steal, the inner voice recalls the seventh Commandment: "Thou shalt not steal." The ego answers: "This fountainpen is of no great value anyway, and the owner will never miss it; he has at least a dozen others; furthermore, I will steal this only once." This is the dulling of conscience. Next follows the drugging: The voice of conscience speaks: "You ought not do this. You said you would never do it again. Stealing will become a habit if you do it often enough." The ego answers: "I guess I am built that way. How can I help it? Anyway, I heard one of my professors in college say that we are

not free, but are determined to be the way we are. Since I am inclined to steal, I probably inherited stealing from my grand uncle whom I heard was a horse thief. Then too I may have an inferiority complex due to a repression of my ego when I was an infant, and this is one of the ways I am trying to compensate for it, by the extension of my ego in the acquisition of property." After such a rationalization, the last stage is reached: The searing or killing of conscience. The voice no longer speaks; it only faintly whispers. A worker in a boiler factory can hardly bear the noise at first, but after some time he becomes used to it. The voice of conscience in like manner seems to lose its insistency as it murmurs: "Stealing is wrong." The ego answers: "What is *wrong*? Who decides what is right and wrong except myself? Conscience is only the vestige of infantile dread. How do I know there is a God? Conscience is only a residue of social taboo and totem. I have heard of some primitive tribe that did not consider stealing a wrong; anyway, one has to live his own life; stealing is wrong only if you get caught."

At the end of this trail of

self-justification, in the language of Scripture the "conscience is seared with a hot iron" (1 Tim. 4:2) and a false conscience is born.

Who in the first act of self-indulgence could picture the bloated drunkard? Who at the first stifling of conscience could foresee the calloused thief? The little infractions of youth become the grave rebellions of maturity, as Hannibal if he returned to earth now, would readily switch from crude battering rams to atomic bombs. What crime is inexcusable if one makes his own conscience the standard? If each man is his own judge, who will be condemned? Though such a soul says its conscience is at peace, it is only because it has identified conscience with the ego's interest. Instead of his desires following conscience, he makes conscience follow his desires. When personal interests are involved then his conscience is so keen, so sensitive, so respectable, but when the interests of others are at stake, conscience seems to have evaporated.

If such a conscience were really at peace, it would not boast so much about its peace. The healthy do not go about

thumping their breasts saying: "I am healthy." It is those who have poor health who talk most about health. The right conscience never boasts of its righteousness for its judge is God, not self. As St. Paul said: "For I am not conscious to myself of anything, yet am I not hereby justified." (1 Cor. 4:4) Did you ever notice that people who boast of their consciences being at peace are those who are trying hardest to escape even consciousness? An easy conscience ought to be an enjoyable conscience. Why do these so-called peaceful consciences seek to fly from consciousness through alcoholism, drugs and excitement and the seeking out of charlatans who explain away guilt, if they are so devoid of worries? Pigs do not worry. Cows are contented. But the false conscience worries because it cannot separate its actions from an uncertain future wherein it will have to render an account of its stewardship.

The uneasy conscience of the modern soul tries to cover itself up with three forms of escapism:—1. Hyperactivity, nervous excitement, jitters, impatience, restlessness, so that by being completely occupied on the

outside, it is kept from entering into its own conscience and inner misery.

The man with a true conscience works because of external compulsion, namely the necessity of providing the necessities of life; the uneasy conscience works like a hyperthyroid, because of the inner compulsion of escaping from self or absorbing inner guilt. Each period of life has its nervous exteriorization as a way of escaping the inner voice of God. In youth it can be the restlessness of uncontrolled passion; in maturity it becomes excessive interest in business, profit, styles, fashions, struggles and conflicts. The God-less person who makes sex the goal of his youth, often sublimates in later life to the mad pursuit of the wealth or power. He does not want to make money, for he does not stop when he makes it, but rather that he wants to give himself an external satisfaction to compensate for want of inner peace, and to measure greatness by what he has, rather than what he is.

Another segment of false consciences drown their unhappiness in the pursuit of violence, aggressiveness and Communism. A man who refuses to sub-

mit to the Divine Will, makes up for it by the repressive submission of others to his egotistic will. Inner guilt is always accompanied by a deep sense of inferiority in the face of the goodness. This is compensated for by violently trying to make the neighbor feel his inferiority. Thus do class conflict, bickering, scandal-mongering, hate and persecution become the indirect witnesses to consciences that are not right on the inside.

Another group of false consciences escape from the Voice of God by a false interest in social causes. The interest is true when the individual himself is righteous; the interest is false when the individual is unrighteous. Many a person today develops a passion for defending the rights of others, to take his mind off his inner want of righteousness. Such was the case with David. David stole the wife of Urias and put Urias in the front of his army in battle so he would be killed. He justified it saying: "Someone must die in battle." One day Nathan the prophet told David about a poor man who was robbed of his only ewe lamb by a rich man to entertain a guest. David with a keen sense of political justice

and as a defender of the down-trodden said in righteous anger: "He shall die." But Nathan answered: "Thou are the man." David then saw that instead of reforming others, that he should first begin with self and cried out in the agony of a soul that was beginning to find its peace: "Have mercy on me, O Lord, have mercy on me, O Lord."

All these false interests are but vain flights from Divine Love. Nowhere else is there such a feverish and cowardly escapism as there is in the souls who refuse the embrace of their Divine Saviour. They construct a thousand and one more crucifying crosses than the crucifix; they call religious people "cowards," but they know in their own hearts that they are the real cowards — because they are afraid to give up the evil in their own lives. Not brave enough to put out the flames that devour their own houses, they shout "escapism" at the neighbors who want them to send for the Fire Department. To such false consciences, may we offer these reflections: Did you ever think of it:—Perhaps what you call worry, anxiety, fear, melancholy is really remorse. This can be the starting point for recovery

of true peace. As a broken bone pains because it is not where it ought to be, so a conscience is uneasy because it is not where it ought to be, i.e., in right relation to God. This inner hell, instead of being fled from should be approached. To get away from yourself, you must first of all get into yourself. Remorse is the negative presence of God in your soul, as Grace is the positive presence of God. Remorse is self-disgust divorced from God. Remorse becomes sorrow and hope the moment your soul turns to God. In your uneasiness God is saying to your soul: "Peace is not in the way you are living. If it were, I would not have troubled you." Unrelated to God, the emptiness and loneliness of a guilty conscience begets despair. Related to God, the misery of remorse becomes repentance for sin. Once your soul turns to the Redeeming Saviour, the burden of your guilt will disappear, as a patient forgets his pain, in the joy at seeing the physician who can cure.

Finally, to all false consciences:—Let us stop deluding ourselves, and recall that one day we will all be judged by God, and the judgment will be based not on the conscience we made

for ourselves, but on the conscience God gave us. That will be the conscience of our youth, before it was perverted by sin; the conscience we covered over, or rationalized by a phony education; the conscience which once considered as wrong, the sins we now justify as self-expression; the conscience before it was polluted by license and mixed with selfishness; the conscience before it became "broad-minded" and gave right and wrong as an equal value. This conscience will drag up from our unconsciousness all its hideous, leprous mass of sins in judgment. As a business man at the end of a day takes out from his cash register a record of debits and credits, so the slip of conscience will be pulled out at the end of life for the final reckoning. God will not judge us as much as we will judge ourselves. Our conscience will speak and say: "I am the conscience God gave you! Behold yourself in it as a mirror. What gravitation is to the stars, what atoms are to chemistry, what instincts are to the animal, that I was to you to help you in your course. I warned you; I shouted; I whispered; I murmured; I kept you awake at night; I made you

afraid to awake in the morning. I troubled you in your pleasures; I gave you no rest in your sins; I filled you with a sense of fed-upness and satiety and emptied you of inner peace. To escape me you thought you would find peace in a second, or third marriage, or a fourth or fifth drink; you were analyzed, but never synthesized; you were taken apart, but never put together; you tried to stop worrying when you should have worried; you should have mistrusted yourself when you were most certain you were without blame. But I, thy conscience, wearied not; I would not let you escape though you did fly; I would not desert you, though you deserted me; with remorse, reproach, uneasiness; in shame, disquiet, bitterness, fear, anxieties, I kept you restless."

Let this conscience not be awakened only at the bar of God's judgment, but *now*. Start worrying and begin living! You will discover that the noise in the prison of your conscience is really only the clanging of the keys of the Divine Saviour Who has come to release you. His is a Love that waits for you. Despair not! Not until you begin to be infinitely wicked and God

ceases to be infinitely good may you begin to give up hope. You can have peace, but you will find it not on a couch having your sins explained away, but on your knees or in a confessional box, begging the mercy of God.

Divine Love is calling you! Why is such Merciful love unloved?

Are you afraid? Afraid of God? Yes! Some are! But why? That would be interesting to know. Listen in next week and I will tell you.

God Love You.

With eager heart and will on fire,
I strove to win my great desire.
"Peace shall be mine," I said;
but life
Grew bitter in the barren strife.
My soul was weary, and my pride
Was wounded deep; to Heaven I cried,
"God grant me peace or I must die";
The dumb stars glittered no reply.
Broken at last, I bowed my head,
Forgetting all myself, and said,
"Whatever comes, His will be done";

And in that moment peace was won. Henry van Dyke, 1852-1933. ("Peace" from "The Poems of Henry van Dyke," copyright, 1911, by Charles Scribner's Sons, 1939, by Tertius van Dyke.)

WHAT MAKES US AFRAID OF GOD?

Friends:

No one hates Beauty. Why then are men afraid of God, Who is the Beautiful? Because there is a difference between what is beautiful on earth and what is beautiful in heaven. God's beauty makes moral demands: earth's beauty does not. God's beauty is inseparable from Truth and Goodness, but earth's beauty can be loved even in error and crime. That incidentally is why a decaying civilization develops a cult of the beautiful; because it gives an ideal above the sordid and the ugly, without committing anyone to a change either in his philosophy of life or his morals.

Here we touch on the psychology of those modern souls who are afraid of God or who sometimes call the Divinely Beautiful the God of Wrath. It is because they *fear* Goodness and *hate* Truth.

This seems impossible at first, but after it is explained, let each decide for himself whether either of these reasons is keeping him from God.

1. Fear of Goodness: Why

do we dread having a decayed tooth pulled. Is it not because the permanent good effects will not appear until we have passed through a moment of pain? In like manner, spiritual goodness can be feared because we know it demands an uprooting of what is evil. As some fear and put off dieting which would be good for their health, so many dread fasting which would be good for their soul.

God is feared not because He is not good enough, but because He is too good; because we know His Goodness tolerates no imperfection. As Francis Thompson said, "fearful lest having Him, I might have naught else besides." If the human lover likes to see his beloved perfect in manner, speech and appearance, may it not be more true that the Divine Lover wants to see souls perfect as the Heavenly Father is perfect? As an uneducated, coarse man is afraid to court a refined well-educated lady, so does the unspiritualized soul turn from Goodness Who wants nothing less than the refinement of the soul in virtue

and holiness. Because the violinist loves his violin, he tightens the strings of penitential discipline, until they give forth the perfect note. If endowed with consciousness, the violin would probably protest against the sacrifice it had to make in fear of the perfection it was destined to attain. It was the fear of Divine Goodness that made St. Augustine say: "I want to be chaste, dear Lord, a little later on; not now."

Some justify their flight from Goodness on the grounds that we who are happily members of the Church are not good enough—which indeed we are not. But we beg them to remember that we know it, and we are trying to amend. It is very hard being a good Catholic, but it is so easy being a materialist. Then, too, may we ask such critics how perfect must we be before we could ever inspire them? Have they ever thought that if the Church were as perfect as they want it to be, there would never be any room in it for them?

Another reason why some souls are afraid of God, His Divine Son and His Mystical Body is because of a hatred of Truth. There is a difference between goodness and truth.

Goodness is feared not hated, because in rejecting perfect Goodness, one still loves imperfect goodness, or an evil under the aspect of the good; as the alcoholic loves alcohol which in itself is a good. But truth is not so much feared as it is hated; some souls call it, "the awful truth."

Truth can be hated for any one of three reasons:

Some hate truth because of their intellectual pride or egotism which refuses to admit the truth of any position except their own. Atheists tolerate no God except themselves. They do not want their eyes opened to Truth, falsely believing that then everything will be permitted. This is the tragedy of prejudice and bigotry which blinds the mind to Truth and keeps souls in a constant state of hate and frustration.

Others hate Truth because its acceptance requires giving up their evil ways. Many foolishly believe that if they do not investigate the Divinity of Christ and His Church, that they will not be held responsible for their evil lives. But they will, because such ignorance is deliberate. He who stays away from a doctor because he is afraid that doctor

may discover something wrong with him, dies in his disease. As the alcoholic hates the truth that liquor ruined his health and therefore he ought to give it up, so one can hate a truth which is in the Christ and His Church because it demands a way of life contrary to the present.

Finally, Truth can be hated when we wish that no other mind knew the truth of our sins. An unfaithful husband, for example, will hate the faithful wife because she knows his sin. Often he tries to cover it up in bitterness or cruelty. This explains also why many hate the Truth of the Last Judgment or belief in hell. Have you ever noticed that saints never deny the Truth of hell, but the evil often do; the latter have to calm their uneasy consciences; the saints have no need for escapism.

The penalty for such fear of Goodness and hatred of Truth is terrible for the more souls hide from Truth, the more Truth is hidden from them; the more they fear Goodness, the less beautiful Goodness seems to them.

As St. Augustine said:—"Men love Truth when she enlightens; they hate it when she reproves.

They love Truth when she discovers herself to them, and hate her when she discovers them." But since nobody would ever admit that he feared Goodness or hated Truth, because these are so admirable in themselves, the mind resorts to a rationalization to justify itself. This is what makes all anti-religious people escapists. How often the virtuous and the devout and the religious in offices and factories and at dinner tables, are scoffed at and ridiculed by the escapists. By dragging down the goodness of others, the scoffers feel they justify their own want of goodness. Little do they realize that he who makes fun of Divine Goodness or Truth has already uprooted it from his own soul. Herod still has his posterity, who being confronted with an accusing Truth, balms its conscience by robing Christ in the garment of a fool. To be in sin and to dread sin is the path to goodness, but to be in sin and dread goodness and hate Truth is the demonic.

One wondered if in all literature there is clearer evidence of how men fear Goodness and hate Truth than in the history of John the Baptist. Our Divine Lord praised his Goodness say-

ing "he was the greatest man ever born of woman" (Luke, 7: 28). One day this good man was invited to preach in the court of Herod to an audience that was rich, much divorced and remarried. The sermon was brief. Pointing a finger at the King, the Baptist thundered a Truth: "It is not lawful for thee to live with thy brother's wife." In a minute, John was in chains. A few months later Herod, intoxicated with wine and the sensuous dance of the daughter of his wife by a previous marriage, promised that he would grant her any request. Well-coached by her mother, she said: "Give me the head of John the Baptist." A short time later a slave carried across the dance floor on a silver platter, the head of John the Baptist. Evil will kill or crucify Goodness when it becomes a reproach. That is why the Mindszentys and the Stepinacs, like John, are in chains. Everybody in the world loses his head, and this gospel story suggests it is better to lose it John's way than Herod's

Now that we understand why some are afraid of God, because He is Truth and Goodness, we also have the key to why some say God is the God of Wrath—

it is because of the way they live. There is no wrath in God; what seems wrath is only a projection upon God of one's inner sense of guilt. When a boy is caught stealing jam, his first words to his mother generally are: "Now, Mummy, don't get mad!" There is no wrath in the mother but he attributes wrath to his mother, because he knows that he is deserving of it on account of his disobedience. In like manner, God seems an angry God to the sinner. Living contrary to the Divine Will and the purpose of existence, creates a feeling that we are being opposed and frustrated. This sense of wrath is anticipated hell.

It follows that the way to change our idea of God is to change our behavior. Once Goodness and Truth are sought, the soul by-passes self-accusation and no longer feels the need to project its own self-condemnation on others, particularly God. The moment one leaves off sin, his philosophy of the universe and the psychology of his own soul changes. God Who a moment before seemed Wrath now appears as Mercy. There is no change in God, but only in the soul. The sun which shines on

mud hardens it; but when it shines on wax, it softens it. There is no change in the sun, but only in the object on which it shines. So God appears as Love and Mercy to the penitent and as Wrath to the sinner.

Moses and Cain each hid his face from God. Moses hid his face because he could not bear to look upon such Goodness; Cain hid his face because he could not bear to have Divine Goodness look on him. The sinner cannot bear to have the eyes of God upon Him, for he does not want to know how wicked he is. God cannot change His Nature to make up for our perversity, as the sun cannot change its nature to make up for the mole who chooses to live under the ground. Therefore, we must change our ways.

Everyone knows God—everyone. They know either the God of Wrath or the God of Mercy. The God they know depends on the way they live. As a brown-colored glass makes the water seem brown though it is not, so the Love that waits for us, passing through our sinful lives seems like wrath and anger. A change in our behavior removes all the prejudices against God.

Fear not Goodness! Hate not Truth! The Cross is frightening only at a distance and not up close, as a hill always seems steeper when we look at it from afar. Be prepared to look for Truth where you would least expect to find it:—in a stable, or a Cross, in a Body of Christ the world still hates. How many of us would like to know all there is about an airplane, because knowing the truth about it, we would be free to fly it. So with Life! To know the Truth of what I am: the Truth of why my body and soul are in conflict; the Truth of how they can be reconciled; the Truth of how to find Divine Strength to overcome sorrow and sin, and Divine knowledge to overcome my mistakes, would mean I would be free to live! This is what Our Lord meant when He said: "The Truth will make you free."

O, we thank Thee, O Christ, that Thou hast not scattered that Truth to Galilean winds but hast given it to Thy Body, the Church, on Pentecost so that we may drink deep of it, make sense of life, and be free with the glorious freedom of the Children of God. Thou canst not compel or force, O Christ, as do these

authoritarian systems, based on fear and compulsion for Thou art nailed! Crucified Love can only entreat! What a glorious freedom in the world—the freedom to be a Saint!

Then, too, fear not Goodness because Goodness is Perfect Love. All of us in varying degrees are going about the world drinking from paper cups of paper-pleasures fearful to drink deep of the draughts of the Fountains of Everlasting Love. That Love, of course, costs something, as it cost the woman at the well five husbands and a passing lover, but she so thrilled to the new-found ecstasy of the Spirit that her lips called Him, "Saviour of the World" (*John* 4:26).

Be not disheartened! Those who now hate Truth and fear Goodness are not far from the Kingdom of God. Some of you are fighting against it, and yet knowing that it is a losing battle! The more violently you hate Truth, the more you think about it; the more you fear the Goodness that demands Perfection, the more you know it is what you want. As Our Lord told Paul: "This is a thankless task of thine, kicking against the goad" (*Acts*, 9:6). The goad

was a nail on the end of a shaft which pricked the donkey when he backed up and refused to go forward. So God is making you restless that you may cast yourself to His Divine Heart. It makes no difference what the past is or how many falls or relapses there may have been. When a sheep falls into a mud puddle, it tries to get out and bleats for rescue; when a pig falls in, it relaxes and stays there. We are all in the mud—all of us, for who is clean in the sight of God! If we but take one step from out of that mire to Him, He will advance a mile to us as a cleansing Fire!

What keeps us back most from The Fire of Love? Is it our doubts or is it our behavior? Interesting question! We will answer it next week.

God Love You!

Too late have I loved Thee, O
Beauty

Ever ancient, yet ever new!
Too late have I love Thee!
Behold, Thou wert within
And I searched for Thee
abroad;

Thou wert with me, but I was
not with Thee,

I am a burden to myself;

I feared Thy Goodness because	Thou art the Physician, I the
I wanted	sick!
The spark, not the Flame;	Thou The merciful, I the
I hated Thy Truth,	miserable—
Because it revealed my errors;	Have mercy on me, O Lord!
I hide not my wounds;	Have mercy!

MORAL CONDITION OF FINDING GOD

Friends:

I wonder how many ever realize the importance of behavior on religious belief. It is too generally believed by those who have the Faith, that to bring a person to Divine Love, it is necessary only to cure him of a doubt. They assume that people are irreligious *only* because they are ignorant; that if they read a few good books, or listened to a few arguments in favor of Divinity, they would immediately embrace the Faith. Religion seems to them to be a thing to be known rather than a Personality to be embraced and lived and loved. There is no doubt that ignorance plays a dominant role in irreligion, but it must never be forgotten that Our Divine Lord Who is Truth itself did not convince the Pharisees and certain sinners. They were so intellectually confounded by His knowledge that after one encounter no man dared ask Him any more questions, but they did not believe. Not all Ph.D.'s are saints and not all the ignorant are devils. As a matter of fact, a certain type

of education can make a man a clever devil instead of a stupid devil, and a stupid devil has a better chance for salvation. It is not enough to be intellectual, one must be morally intellectual. It requires more *courage* than brains to know God. God is the most obvious fact of human experience, but accepting Him is arduous. God is easily known; He is loved only with effort.

The point we are making is this: Besides grace and knowledge, there are certain moral conditions necessary for knowing Divine Truth; it is not the way people *think*, but the way they *live*, which constitutes the major obstacle to union with the Spirit. It is not always the *Creed* that keeps some away from Christ in His Church, but the *Commandments*. Among the moral factors affecting belief, we mention two: (1) Good-will and (2) The necessity of living up to the Truth as we already know it.

(1) Good-will: Why is it that when a strong intellectual argument for the Faith is given

to A and B, that A will accept and B will not: Since the cause is the same, the effect ought to be the same, but it is not. There must be some other factor present which makes one embrace, the other reject, as the sunlight striking a wall does not produce the same effect as the sunlight striking a window. This x-factor which makes for the rejection of Divine Truth in one person, and its acceptance in the other is the *will*. As St. Thomas put it in his finely-chiseled way: "Divine things are known in different ways according to the diversity of our attitudes. Those who have good-will, perceive Divine things according to Truth; those who have not good-will, perceive them in a confused way which makes them doubt and feel that they are mistaken." It follows then that what a man intellectually sees, depends to a great extent on what a man *is* or what he wants to be. The will, instead of following the truth presented to the mind, can sometimes get behind the mind and hold it back. This is the case with atheism. I doubt that there is any such thing as *intellectual* atheism. Reason is on God's side not the devil's, and to deny an Absolute is to affirm an Absolute under another

name. But there is atheism of the *will*, i.e., a deliberate decision to live without God or against Him. The Psalmist rightly places atheism not in the intellect, but in desires: "The fool has said in his *heart*, there is no God."

It is therefore not enough to hear the Truth; we must also desire it. The will *not to believe*, is like willing to go through life without opening one's eyes, in order to deny the existence of the sun and escape the necessity of work. On the contrary, the firm resolution to God's Will will bring an understanding of the Faith. We have Our Lord's word for it: "Anyone who is prepared to do the Will of Him Who sent Me, can tell for himself whether such learning comes from God." (*John 7:17*). As the will to be rich makes men rich, so the will to be Christ-like makes us Christians. It might, therefore, be well for each of us to look into his heart and ask if it is his ignorance or his will which is keeping him from peace and joy through union with God.

(2) Another important element in coming to God besides grace and knowledge is the necessity of living up to Divine

Truth as we presently see it. Many know about God, but few act on that knowledge in their lives. I have often wondered why some professors and educated men who know the proofs of the existence of God and the dogmas of the Church never became men of God. The answer is because they never *acted* on the knowledge they had. Since they never dynamized the Truth they knew, even that knowledge became sterile. The corn that is kept in the cribs too long, rots. To such unproductive souls, the Savior orders: "Take the talent away." (*Matt.* 25:28). But the simple soul living up to the moral implications of the knowledge he possesses, is given new knowledge and finally surpasses the intellectuals, as climbing a hill opens new vistas. Our Blessed Lord thanked His Heavenly Father that He hid His Truths from the intelligentsia who were educated beyond their intelligence and revealed them to the little ones who would live up to them.

Christianity is founded on the historical fact of the union of Truth and Deed: "The Word became Flesh." Wisdom became incarnate; God became man; knowledge passed into act; oughtness became is-ness, and

theory became practice. He not only gave the theory that the greatest of all His followers should be the least, but He washed the feet of His own disciples. This order of first the Word of Truth, then the Truth in the Flesh, was changed by Goethe into: "In the beginning was the Deed"—First, you live; then you rationalize. First, you act, then you think of a way to justify your action. First, you seize property; then you write a law to sanction the theft. From this primacy of the act over Truth has come all the moral disorders of the present day, as men no longer fit their lives to a creed, but a creed to the way they live.

Divine Truth, on the contrary, involves *me* uniquely and with an urgency that at first is frightening. It will do no good for me to know the world's theological attitudes, if all the while pride, sensuality, selfishness are allowed their license and anarchy. When a man stands off from religion and admires the Truth from afar, he is full of praise of it and says: "If I ever became religious I would certainly join the Church." He knows very well that such a choice is not like choosing between a rose and a carnation; it

is a commitment, an allegiance, a surrender. Agnosticism, scepticism and cultivated doubt do not represent an intellectual position, for wherever there is a shadow of a doubt there must be the light of Truth. Agnosticism and scepticism represent rather a *moral position* in which a person attempts to make himself immune to Divine Truth by denying its existence, turning his back on it as did Pilate sneering: "What is Truth?" Our Lord said an evil life blinds us to the Truth: "Anyone who acts shamefully hates the light, will not come into the light, for fear that his doings will be found out. Whereas the man whose life is true comes to the light, so that his deeds may be seen for what they are, deeds done in God." (*John*, 3:20-21).

A perfect example of how minds react to Truth, we find in the woman at the well whom Our Blessed Lord met at high noon as she came to draw water. He engaged her on the subject of religion, telling her that *her soul* was thirsty for Heavenly waters just as *her body* was thirsty for the water from Jacob's well. When she *admitted* that Truth, Our Lord brought up the subject of her moral life: She had

five divorces and was living with a sixth man. To her, this was meddling. What right had He to interfere in her personal affairs. In order to avoid the embarrassment of the moral obligations of the Truth, like many of us, she changed the subject and lifted the conversation back to the *abstract* by asking the relative merits of Jerusalem and Samaria as places of worship. Many love religion as a subject of discussion but not as a subject for decision. To the eternal glory of the woman at the well, she finally got down to the moral plane, reformed her life, converted her men-friends, and saluted the Lord for the first time in history as "Savior of the World." (*John*, 4:42).

Three practical considerations follow:

(1) The moral preparation for the Christian life is as important as the intellectual, and both should go together as the Wisdom and Love of God, the Son and Holy Spirit are equal in the Trinity. Those who live a naturally good moral life without the intellectual and dogmatic stiffening, often become narrow kill-joys, critical, Pharasaical or else end in a religious emotionalism which cannot stand up under

shock and storm. On the other hand, those who have the intellectual understanding without the moral, become legalistic, sceptics, cynics and doubters. We can never love anyone unless we know him; but once we know him, our love will increase our knowledge of him. So it is with God. Do His Will and you will know the Truth.

(2) It is not our doubts about religion which explains our behavior, but our behavior which causes our doubts. It is not always our thinking which explains the way we live, but the way we live which explains our thinking.

(3) It is not so important *what* people say about God, Christ and His Church, but *why* they say it. The *what* is said is often only a cover-up of their habits of life. A fallen-away Catholic who says: "I can no longer believe in the Sacrament of Penance" really means "I am leading an evil life and I refuse to break off my habits of sin to find peace with God." What frail mortals we be!

What holds an atheist back from being a believer in God, and a believer in God from accepting the Divinity of Christ

and a believer in the Divinity of Christ from embracing the Divinity of the Church, and a Catholic from shining forth the Truth and Charity of Christ in His life, is not because these truths are a strain on his credulity, but a challenge to his character. As Chesterton so well answered when it was objected that Christianity had been tried and found wanting:—"Christianity has been found hard but not tried." Those who say that Christianity is impractical mean they refuse to put it in practice.

Each of us has lived through the experience of St. Augustine, as we received grace to live on a higher plane and refused it:—"But Thou, O Lord, didst turn me round towards myself, taking me from behind my back where I had placed me, unwilling to observe myself, and setting me before my face, that I might see how foul I was, how crooked and defiled, bespotted and ulcerous. And I beheld and stood aghast; and whither to flee from myself, I found not. And if I sought to turn mine eye from off myself, Thou again didst set me over against myself, and thrustest me before my eyes, that I might find out mine iniquity, and hate it. I had known it, but made as

though I saw it not, winked at it, and forgot it."

That is the cowardly escapist attitude of all of us in varying degrees. The only reason why we are not saints is because we will not to be saints. How good God is to bear with us! Yet how miserable we are without Him! As a baby's cry would be meaningless in a universe without a mother's love; so our restlessness with the way we are would be meaningless without the love of God!

This week do two things:— Live without serious sin and pray to God to reveal His Truth, and you will be surprised how much you will learn. Learn to say *yes* or *no* to God. There are a thousand ways of saying No! but there is only one way to say *Yes!* Do *His Will*. Then you will know:—"Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God." Clean the flute of your soul and God will pipe on it a marvelous tune. His sunlight of Truth is outside

the window of your soul. Clean it and be flooded with light and inner peace.

Next week I will tell you how to be a window cleaner!

God love you!

Lord Jesus, *may* I know myself,
 May I know Thee;
 May I desire nothing,
 Save only Thee;
 May I hate my vile self
 Love Thee and do all for Thee.
 May I be humbled
 And Thou exalted!
 May I think of nothing, but
 Thee alone.
 Die to myself and live for
 Thee.
 May I receive whatever happens
 As from Thou, the Giver.
 May I ever follow Thee
 And to reach Thee be my sole
 desire.
 May I fly from myself, may I
 fly to Thee
 That by Thine Arm defended
 I may deserve to be!
 My Lord! My God! My All!
 (St. Augustine)

SELF-KNOWLEDGE

Friends:

The concluding idea of last week was that God's grace like the sunlight, was outside our window and before it could gladden us, we must clean the windows or reform the way we live. This is done by self-knowledge or the purification of the mind. Self-knowledge is possible because man is the only creature in the universe who can know himself. A stone, a rose, an elephant cannot stand off from themselves and look at themselves as in a mirror. But man can; he can admire himself, be pleased with himself, be angry with himself and even despair of himself; he can be not only a subject but also an object of experience. It is *this* capacity which not only makes him superior to the animal, but also creates the possibility of mental disorders and frustrations, *if* he does not fulfill his high destiny with God.

We are all conscious beings but very few are really self-conscious. We are aware of the existence of objects *outside* of us, but few of us are aware of *our-*

selves. We know ourselves to the extent that we *resemble* other human beings and *conform* to their habits of dress and thinking, but rare are we who ever think of ourselves *personally* and *uniquely*, that is in our *difference* from other persons, and as we stand in our relation to God.

Our modern world is geared to the heresy of action or the lamentable illusion fostered by Capitalism and Communism, that happiness is external to man, that goodness is identical with movement, that inwardness is absence of power, and that apostolicity is propaganda. Hence the popularity of novels which dispense the reader from thinking; of music given to movement not musing; of magazines with a maximum of pictures for sensation, a minimum of text for brains; of art that is impressionistic which blurs colors to avoid both form and substance. The modern man has nothing *inside* his soul which is not *outside* in the world. But since wars, strife, and crimes are outside, he has no thoughts or desires apart from their fever-

ish chaos; he is without retreat, without sanctuary, and without escape. Some resort to alcoholism and sleeping tablets to escape consciousness; others bury themselves in external excitements and pleasures which give little time to think. One wonders if psychologically the contemporary interest in murder mysteries, thrillers, horror stories and movies is not an admission that *great personal* problems must be solved. But instead of solving the problem of self, there is the solving of the problem of others, and by hearing or seeing horrors on the *outside*, one is made for the moment to forget the *horrors* of the hell within.

It must, however, be borne in mind that the self-knowledge about which we are speaking is not the same as psychoanalysis. In psychoanalysis, the self is regarded as a *spectator* of its own mental state; in self-knowledge, the self is viewed as the *creator*, therefore responsible for decisions and choices. In psychoanalysis, there is no moral obligation to change one's habits, because it denies moral guilt; but in self-knowledge, there is a recognition of a *wrong* and the necessity of breaking with it; in psychoanalysis, one enters into himself to stay there, for

there is no recognition of any anchorage outside the human. But in self-knowledge one makes the journey *inward* in order to fly *outward* from one's self to God.

A genuine self-knowledge through power of self-penetration, reveals that we have two selves: a Seeming-self and a Real-self: and outer person and an inner person: a man in common with other men, and a man unlike other men: an ego and a self. The seeming-self is what we think we are; the real-self is what we really are. The seeming-self is the shell; the real-self is the meat. The seeming-self is like the clothes we wear; the real-self is like our flesh and blood. The ego or the superficial-self is so shut-up with its mistaken ideas and feelings that often the real-self is practically suffocated. These two selves cannot be lived simultaneously; the attempt to do so is the cause of much remorse and anxiety and inner dissatisfaction. If true freedom of self is to be found, the superficial-ego or self *must disappear*. This is done by self-examination, for through it we discover the thief in the house which explains all our previous losses. Man is like an onion, in the sense that he is covered

with many layers and coats of self-deceit made up the maxims and prejudices of the world, all of which are calculated to keep him from knowing himself. The analogy even goes so far as to suggest that the tearing off of these outer coats makes one's eyes water—but with tears of repentance.

How begin knowing self? There are two rules:

(1) There must be a standard outside of self, otherwise we become victims of self-deceit. The watch is not right or wrong except by a measurement outside the watch itself. In like manner, if man is to know himself he must use as his standard Our Lord Jesus Christ who becomes to our *mind* what the sun is to our eyes, the Light that tells not only the pitfalls to avoid, but also is the Standard of Right and Wrong.

(2) Self-knowledge must seek to discover what is our *predominant fault*, or the particular defect which tends to prevail in us over all the others, affecting our sympathies, decisions, desires, passions, and which has some intimate relation to individual temperament. The predominant fault does not mean that there is no good quality in us, but rather that good qualities are

possibly ruined by a hidden defect. The quickest way to discover the predominant fault is to ask: "What do I think about most when alone? Where do my thoughts go when they wander spontaneously? What makes me most sad when I have it not: most glad when I have it? What fault irritates me most when accused of it, and which do I deny most vigorously?"

The predominant fault varies from person to person and can be any one of seven: Pride, avarice, lust, anger, gluttony, envy and sloth. Since no one ever calls sin by its right name, and since every sin must have a disguise to be attractive, we will define not only the nature of the sin, but also name the disguise it wears for the Superficial Self.

1. Pride is the sin of making one's self his own law, his own judge, his own morality, his own god. This is sometimes called, "Success," "Popularity," "Progress," "Winning friends and influencing people" or "Fear of an inferiority complex." The modern man's desire to serve the best liquor, or the woman's ambition to be the best-dressed, the college sophomore's studied pursuit of unkemptness in dress; the depression of another's ego in order to elevate one's own;

the habit of back-biting, slander and character assassination which pull others down to our own level, *are all* manifestations of the odious superficial-self which must be purged before real peace can be found.

2. Avarice is the perversion of the natural right to own property into a pursuit of wealth as an *end* without due regard to the rights of others. In times of prosperity, it is sometimes called, Big Business, Thrift, Drive and Security; and in times of adversity, it uses that same wealth to espouse leftism and revolutionary causes in the hope of preserving whatever wealth one has. This accounts for the rich man's support of Communism.

3. Envy is the sin of the *have-nots* as avarice is the sin of the *haves*. It regards anything *anyone else* has as being taken from self, and is sometimes called "my right," "my cause" or "truth." As avarice is the sin of the capitalists, so envy is the sin of the Communists. Every Communist is a Capitalist without any cash in his pockets. He is the involuntary poor man. Envy also prompts ugly women to make slurring remarks about those who are beautiful. Since the envious person will not go up, he pulls everyone else down to

his own level. Thus does envy become enmity, tramples on respect and honor, and refuses to say "Thanks."

4. Lust is to the *flesh* what pride is to the ego and avarice is to wealth. It is perversion or inordinate pursuit of pleasures of the flesh and is sometimes called Sex, The Dizzey report, Freudianism or Self-expression.

5. Anger is temper, vindictiveness, hate, revenge, the clinched fists. It is the external side of a bad conscience. It is sometimes called "Don't let him get away with it!" or "After all, it is not what he did, it is the principle of the thing."

6. Gluttony is the inordinate love of eating or drinking though it is sometimes called, "Will you have another?" or "Health" or "Men of Extinction."

7. Sloth is the malady of the will which causes us to neglect our duties though it is sometimes called Rest, Broadmindedness, Avoiding high-blood-pressure. Because it has not intellectual energy enough to discover truth and follow it, it loves nothing, hates nothing, espouses nothing, condemns nothing, fears nothing, hopes nothing and keeps alive because it has nothing to die for. It

rusts out rather than wears out and refuses to render a service after a whistle blows.

I can think immediately of seven advantages of practicing self-knowledge which purges out these predominant faults.

1. I will root out loneliness and a sense of emptiness, for one no longer understands love as the satisfaction of the ego, but as expansiveness in charity to God and neighbor.

2. It cures moodiness, for your emotional reactions are consecrated on God and living in His atmosphere; thus you become emancipated from life's accidents in which a rainy day or an unwelcome guest determines the way you feel.

3. Self-examination relieves *boredom*, because it orders the real-self to God. Boredom comes from loss of purpose. Life is indeed boring if we do not know why we are here or where we are going.

4. Self-knowledge increases *activity* in the right sort of way, because since excuses no longer have to be made for the Superficial-Self, the Real-Self can begin a life of consecration for others.

5. Self-knowledge banishes *despair*, for one can now face the terrible disease of egotism, be-

cause the soul has found the Divine Physician Who can cure it.

6. Self-knowledge prevents mental abnormality for it is the stupidity of thinking that the Superficial-Self is the Real-Self which causes illusions. Once the Real Self is known the Superficial-Self loses the terrible fear of being found out.

7. Self-knowledge makes room for God-life in the soul. If a box is filled with sand, it cannot be filled with salt, and if the personality is filled with superficial ego, it cannot be filled with God. As the poet put it:

If thou couldst empty all thyself of *self*,

Like to a shell dishabited
Then might He find thee on the ocean shelf

And say: "This is not dead"
And fill thee with Himself instead.

But thou are all replete with very thou

And hast such shrewd activity
That when He comes, He says:
"This is enow

Unto itself: T'were better let it be

It is so small and full, there is no room for me." (T. E. Browne)

O how grateful we should be that Our Blessed Lord in His

Mercy gave us the Sacrament of Penance which enables us to gather up all of the criss-cross, zig-zag sins, defects, prides, egotisms, jealousies, hates and lusts which ordinarily would keep us awake at night, and throw all this rubbish into the Fires of Calvary, there to have it burned and purged away. Some Saturday night enter a Church, walk down the side aisles. There you will see what we call confessionals. Underneath the curtains you will see feet, big and small, male and female, protruding from under them like wriggling little worms. The very fact that all the outsider sees is the lowliest part of them, namely their feet, is a proof that they do not care how they look in the world's eyes, but only in God's eyes. Instead of putting the best foot forward, the penitent puts his worst feet backward. In losing his Superficial-Self he found both his Real-Self and God—And this is the greatest joy in the world.

Your greatest enemy is not outside yourself, but inside you. Look yourself straight in the eye: but in God's light, not yours. It is the ego that causes all the trouble. Take five minutes a day from now on examin-

ing yourself: ask God for the light to see yourself, not as you think you are, nor as you think others see, but as you really are in His Eyes. Begin to be yourself—Start worrying about your egotism and begin living! But that is enough on self-knowledge; next week we will discuss self-discipline! In the meantime you find out your predominant fault, if you have any, and I will dig up my predominant faults, which I have, and may God be merciful to us both!

God Love You!

Lord Jesus,
 By loving myself, I cease to be lovable;
 By loving Thee, I love both my neighbor and myself.
 As I remember only myself; I am forgotten by all.
 If I forget myself, I am remembered by Thee
 The more I fear to restrain my ego,
 The greater my need to do so;
 Lord Jesus, may my only fear Be to be separated from Thee!
 May I distrust myself and trust only Thee
 For without Thee, there is nothing to hope,
 Thou Who art my Savior and My Love!

ASCETICISM

Friends.

From the beginning of time, souls have asked themselves this question—"How can I *love* sin and *hate* it at the same time" or "Why do I *love* alcohol and *hate* being an alcoholic?" The answer is: Every sin has a double element: material and formal. The *material* element is the *good thing* on which sin centers, e.g., alcohol, flesh, wealth. The *formal* element is the *particular* attitude we take toward it, or the *evil way* we abuse these good things. It is man's will which turns love of flesh into lust, alcohol into drunkenness and wealth into avarice.

What the sinner *loves* in sin is the *matter* of sin, which is good; what the sinner *hates* in sin is the unhappiness, remorse, melancholy and sense of defeat which comes from the *perversion* or *abuse* of what is good. He loves the creature God made; he hates himself for turning it from its true purpose to his own selfish pleasure.

The principal *psychological* effect of sin is the constant anxiety in the soul of a sinner due

to the inner contradictions between loving and hating, between desiring and despising at one and the same time. Caught by passion or bad habits, such distraught souls are really in constant agony. Ovid described them: "I see and approve the better things of life; the worse things of life I follow." The soul craves for the Infinite and it gets the finite. It demands gold and receives tinsel. This inherent disproportion between the *anticipation* of a pleasure and its impoverished realization only intensifies the anxiety, for no sin ever realizes its promises. Desires *increase*, but pleasure decreases; compulsion continues, but pleasure degenerates into repetition. Man tries to escape this inner dissatisfaction by more and more pleasures, more and more riches, but these make hungry where most they satisfy. No matter how fast the greyhound runs, he can never catch up with the mechanical rabbit.

This inner tension can be overcome only by resisting and taming our errant impulses and egoistic desires, which is done by

self-discipline. Here one touches on a pathway to peace of soul of which the modern pagan is totally and completely ignorant. Because his god is his own ego, he *cannot* understand why he should *detach* himself from *anything*. But as a great violinist will abstain from ditch-digging because he knows it would spoil his artistic touch, so the man of God will abstain from what is harmful to the art of being peaceful in God. Man's heart adheres more intimately to one thing, the *more* it detaches itself from many things, as a river loses depth the wider its bed. Swamps are particularly broadminded. They hold nothing. The purpose of detachment, therefore is to reduce the many to one, to restrain the body for the sake of the soul, and to seek less instead of more.

Self-discipline does not mean *giving up* anything, for giving up is a loss. Our Lord *never* asked us to give up anything, but to *exchange*: "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark, 8:37). Exchange is based on two ideas: What we can get along without, and what we cannot get along without. We can get along without a dime, but we cannot get along without a loaf of bread, so we exchange

one for the other. In self-discipline we discover we can get along very well without the agony of soul that follows from selfishness, alcoholism, sensuality, but we cannot get along without peace of soul in union with God, so we exchange one for the other. Mortification is therefore only a *means* to an end, and the *end* is love of God. But to be mortified for the sake of being mortified, like sitting on a railroad spike for twenty years is silly egotism. If it does not increase our love of God it is worthless.

The man of God will therefore turn his eyes away from what would harm his love of God, as a man will turn his eyes away from a light so strong it might blind his eyes. His *tongue* will be denied backbiting, slander, gossip because only God knows what goes on in the soul of a neighbor. His *body* will deny itself the extra cigarette, the second cocktail, maybe even the first, lest by giving too much comfort to the body he forget his soul. His love of ownership will be tamed by frugality and generosity, that by loving his neighbor for God's sake, he may love God more. His desire to do things for God's sake will make him avoid publicity and self-

seeking knowing that he must grow less and less and God must become more and more.

As he would not allow garbage served at his table, so he will not allow intellectual filth to be served into his mind, in the form of foolish romances, or the like, lest these false ideas pass into act and he becomes as wicked as his thoughts.

As physical life is the sum forces that resist death, so spiritual life is the result of constant purification of those sinful tendencies that would make us sub-human or abnormal. Unless we are constantly taking ourselves to the cleaners, we become the victims of the new psuedo-religion; the idolatry of comfort, and become obsessed with the fear of doing anything unpleasant.

As St. Thomas says: "Men must have pleasures. If they will not have the joys of the spirit, then they will degenerate into pleasures of the body." Unless there is some other interest to compensate for the loss of pleasure, minds become cynical and bitter, with an increasing desire to be coddled, respected, honored and made the center of attention. This ridding of our egotism and surface loves is not easy, because the modern soul

refuses to postpone satisfaction. Over-fed, over-upholstered, double-chinned, it refuses to close doors, to open bridges, and thus misses joy in this life and an eternal life beyond.

It is about time we abandoned the idea that man becomes better because he lives in time. Time often makes things worse as well as better. Time makes good apples bad apples and young people old and wrinkled. Evolution is not as evident a fact in human life as devolution. Moral progress is not automatic; if we do not go up by an effort of will, we will go down. There are no plains in the spiritual life; we are either going up hill or coming down. We are not the same spiritually this year as we were last; we are either better or worse. If we think we are the same, we are worse because we *ought* to be better; time has created an obligation. There are no shortcuts to spirituality; pain and purification go hand in hand, for sin is not easily discarded. Love feeds on crosses and sacrifices. When one gets down to rock bottom, one soon discovers that the reason why most of us do not come to God is not because we are ignorant, but because we are bad or self-centered. This absence of humil-

ity and sacrificial love stands like a wall between the soul and God, and when it hears the Divine Command to renounce itself, it pleads to the Lord as did the man who bought a farm, "Have me excused, O Lord."

It costs something to come to God, as it costs God something to come to us. Some complain; when a trial comes, they rebel; when temptation assaults, they surrender. Indeed, the service of Our Lord is a yoke, as He said, but a yoke that is sweet and the burden light.

We have the purchase price of inner joy in our hands, in the agony and misery and boredom and ennui of our hearts. But like a child before a store window with a penny in his hand and the delirious vision of the candy within, he misses the delirium of the sweets because he refuses to give up the coin. We cannot have both the coin and the candy, our self-will and peace of soul, our sinful pleasures and the joy of union with God.

It is our studied belief that many weary souls in the world today would come to God, if we presented the faith to them, the *hard* way instead of the easy way, that is by an appeal to self-sacrifice. There is a *greater* readiness for sacrifice on the

part of the modern mind, than even members of Christ's Mystical Body perceive. Perhaps, some of us shrink from that appeal, not because we fear they would not understand it, but because we are not sufficiently mortified ourselves. We would be suprised at their favorable reaction, if we showed them the pressed Hands and Feet of Christ and asked: "How did They get that way?"

There is a greater potential for sacrifice in the hearts and minds of men *now*, than at any time in the last four hundred years. Whence come the devotees of Totalitarianism of the last thirty years, the fanaticism, the burning zeal and the blazing devotedness of Communism, if it be not that these souls have become sick and tired of the milk and water Liberalism that denied there was a Truth worth dying for and therefore one worthy of *living* for? Whence came the sacrifice of soldiers during the war, and at a time when we're supposed to have softened by luxury and ease, if it was not because a tremendous reserve for sacrifice was in the depths of their hearts? The world is fed-up with broadmindedness which is cold as a miser's heart and as spineless as a filet of sole; it

wants to catch fire, to feel the burning heat of its passions and above all to love even to the point of death. We of the faith are often frightened away by the sight of ashes and the clinkers in the furnace of the faithless, little suspecting that beneath them are flames that like Paul could enkindle a world, and like Magdalen set fire to penitential hearts. What greater proof is there of this, than the fact that when these modern pagans receive the gift of Faith, they often surpass us in self-denial and therefore love of God. In some instances, what keeps them back is a want of correspondence on our part between light and heat, or the divorce between our knowledge of Divine Truth and the self-renouncing *love* which that Truth *should* inspire.

Because the joys of union with God cannot be experienced without sacrifice, and because the modern souls without Faith has a capacity for it, we believe that Divine Truth should be presented to them as the Saviour did, namely, by a *Summons to Sacrifice*, by an appeal to sell the field to gain the pearl of great price, and to leave nets and boats to become fishers of men.

Everyone today is in pain, either mental or physical. Where

there are no *broken* bodies, there are agonized minds, restless, fearful, anxious. Our generation may well be the most unhappy that has lived in the history of Christianity. All this adds up to the fact that suffering is universal. But suffering is not far from sacrifice. There is no quantitative difference between the two, for a toothache in a saint is no different from a toothache in a Stalin. There is no material difference between a Carmelite *fasting* from meat and bread, and a fat lady *dieting* from the same. What makes the difference between suffering and sacrifice, between fasting and dieting, is the love of God. Sacrifice without the love of God, is suffering; suffering with the love of God, is sacrifice. The Trappist monk who gets out of bed at two o'clock in the morning to pray for sins of the world is undergoing the same discomfort as the milkman, or baker or the victim of insomnia who gets up to take a stiff drink; but what a difference in the attitude of the soul! It may very well be then that modern souls are suffering enough—probably too much; but it is all wasted, either because they do not turn it into merit by knowing God or because they complain with defiance and re-

bellious protests: "Why should God do this to me?" What we have to do is to drive a wedge between their actual pain and their potential sacrifice, by bringing to them some understanding of the Love on Calvary Who suffered first and everything, that man might never say: "He does not know what it is to suffer."

Here we are, presumed followers of Our Lord and His Mystical Body, the Church, and *those* who are looking for it, without knowing it. We are like crude blocks of marble. Over there is our Exemplar Christ, who models the Christian life which lives only by dying to evil. We are our own sculptors. With our eyes often on Him, we take the chisel of our will, and cut off in mortification huge hunks of selfishness, envy, jealousy, hate, until finally the Image of Our Lord soon begins to reveal itself. It is not as hard to do this as we think; it is *harder* to go on living the way we are, unsundered, unloveable, unhappy on the inside.

But you say you cannot do this alone—your will is weak; your mind is dark! How right you are! We need God's Grace—and

what that is we will talk about next week.

God love you!

A new crime has risen in the world—The crime of believing in God! Knowing this, a few years ago when Cardinal Mindszenty was given the colors of his office, the Holy Father said to him:—"You will be the first to see these blood red colors turn to red blood."

Two years ago when Cardinal Mindszenty was in America, he said to me: "I am going back to be crucified."

That hour has now struck! The minions of Stalin, have cruelly tortured and drugged him. Only the Communist version of the trial is allowed to reach the newspapers. Believe it not! Our American Government and press are denied admission to that mock trial, that the sons of the Father of Lies, may take away not only his holy life, but even his good name.

Perhaps nothing can save his body and blood, for long ago he offered it to the Lord saying:

"This is My Body: This is My Blood." But there are three things we *can* save:—By our prayers and protest (1) We can save the memory of another

Christ, suffering under Pontius Pilate.

(2) We can save our beloved America from Communism: — by being Americans by resisting all who are working to take the *innocent white* and the *loyal blue* out of our American flag, to leave there only the red, which would then stand for our servitude to Red Slavery.

(3) We can save the world by raising again in the United Nations the question of Poland, Hungary and all Eastern Europe, that fell from the frying pan of Nazism into the more terrible fire of Communism. By doing this we will make ourselves what we have been in our past, the defenders of the right-

eous, and what we will be in the future, Heaven's secondary cause in the liberation of the world!

America! Arise! Awake! If the new crime be to believe in God, let us all be criminals! If the new treason be to betray Red Nazism, let us all be traitors!

If the new revolutionists be those who revolt against the Red Revolutionists— then onward to the Revolution!

You have nothing to lose but your chains!

I beg you bend your knees to God and you will never have to bow your necks to tyranny. So help us God.

THE NEED OF GRACE

Friends:

One does not often hear the word grace anymore, and few there are who know its meaning. Grace is related to the Latin word "gratis," and means free. It is a gift of God which illumines our intellect, strengthens our will and enables us to become something we are not, namely, the sons of God and heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Man is like a clock whose main-spring is broken; he has all the parts but they do not work. Just as a main-spring must be applied from *without* by a watchmaker, but applied *within* the clock itself, so too, man needs a new energy supplied from outside by His Lord and Savior but applied *within* his soul.

Perhaps these three considerations will help you realize how much you need God's grace. (1) You have a capacity to be more than you are. (2) This capacity can be realized and actualized only by God. (3) But since you are free, you must cooperate with this Divine Energy before it is effective.

(1) You have a yearning for self-transcendence, or the desire to get beyond and outside yourselves. Your restlessness is born of an inability to completely satisfy yourselves within the limitations of space and time. You know certain infinities such as Beauty, Goodness, Justice, Life, Truth. Being spiritual, they solicit you beyond *any* concrete realization of a *good* meal, or a *just* cause, or a *truthful* saying or a *beautiful* rose. You are open at the top like sightseeing buses which look up to the heavens while moving on earth. An elephant must always be an elephant, a primrose must be a primrose, but you have a capacity to become something that you are not. If you refuse to realize this capacity you hurt your mind and heart. An acorn cannot *will* to be a sapling, but you can *will* to stunt yourself, and thereby become frustrated or a mystery to yourself. Instead of tending toward Perfect Life, Truth and Love Which is God and therefore happiness, some seek a substitute in the form of an unlimited passion for more and

more pleasure, more and more money, more and more self-will.

Because one wife fails to satisfy his craving for the infinite, a man deludes himself into believing that five wives will do what one will not. He thinks that because \$5,000.00 could not make him happy, that \$5,000,000.00 could. But in the end he discovers that all he has been adding are zeroes. Because one gulp of salt water does not satisfy, certainly a barrel of it will not. In such a case, man's desire for self-transcendence becomes perverted by mistaking where true happiness is, just as a man who knows food is necessary, ruins his health if he lives only on a diet of caviar. The prodigal son was right in being hungry—that is the nature of man; but he was wrong for living on husks.

No man could build up false infinities, if he were not made for the true infinite. Only a being made for God can make himself God. This infinite inflation of one's ego independent of God, is like bubble gum that one blows up with pride until it finally splatters on his face. No wonder so many modern souls are saying: "I would like to get away from myself." But whenever they try to get out of them-

selves, they get hit with the very boomerang they throw. The self which they thought they could lose in anything from inordinate pleasure to dope, is thrown back on itself, because of the unsatisfying character of the subject of the pursuits, just as a golf ball rebounds when hit against a tree. This throw-back upon themselves after satiety, sin and excesses causes hatred of self.

As you were made to breathe air, and therefore cannot live under water, so *you* who were made to live on the Spirit of God, cannot satisfy your passion for being more than you are by living on flesh or wealth. You need help from God.

(2) This brings us to our second point:—you cannot be all you could be, unless God comes down to you to lift you up, to illumine your dark intellect and to strengthen your weak will. There is no such thing in the chemical order as spontaneous generation. No combination of chemicals automatically produces life; babies cannot be manufactured out of the contents of chemistry bottles. There is an X-quality in life which is not in its chemical antecedents; life must come from life. As you must be born of human life to be human, you must be born of

Divine Life to be Divine. This superhuman life is *not* the result of *development* of your human nature, as the oak is the development of the acorn. There is no such thing as a man becoming more tolerant, more broadminded, more interested in social justice, less hateful and less avaricious until he reaches a point where he finds himself a Christian. It is a law of physics that a body continues in a state of rest or uniform motion in a straight line, unless compelled by outside forces to change that state of direction. Man, too, remains *natural* or as he is, unless changed from the outside. Stones do not become elephants. Men do not become children of God, unless they are born of God. You need *not* a *change of direction* but an *elevation*; you need not only development, but generation. When an old man went to Our Lord to ask what he must do to be saved, Our Lord said: "Amen, amen I say to thee, unless a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." (John, 3:3) The aged Nicodemus thought that meant entering again into his mother's womb, until Our Lord informed him that being born of the flesh only made a man flesh, but that to be of the spirit, one has to be born

of the spirit, which is done by Baptism.

That brings up the question of how anything lower can be elevated into something higher. Obviously, only by the higher coming down to the lower, and the lower in its turn submitting itself to that higher power. As the moisture, sunlight, carbon, must surrender themselves in order to live a higher life in the plant; as the plants immolate themselves and are torn up from the roots, before they can live in the animals; as the animal surrenders its life before it can live in man's body and become part of a thinking, willing, kingdom, *so* God must come down to us, and we must surrender our lower life to Him, before we can go up to God. God came down to us when He became man in the Person of Jesus Christ. But this infinite wealth of Divine Life does not lay hold of you forcibly, as the plant does the sunshine, or as the cow the clover which it devours. We humans are *persons*, which the lower creation is not. We remain free in the face of the Divine Life. It is within our power to accept or reject this Divine Life. As God did not become man without consulting the Virgin Mary; neither does Our Lord make us partak-

ers of His Nature without our free consent and that brings us to the third fact:

(3) The cooperation of the human will. Because the Christ-life is a gift, we have the power of response. Our dignity before the Eternal is something like the dignity of bride and groom at the altar, where love presenting itself as a gift, answers professed love with the sweet words: "I will." Sunlight is outside the house, but we must open the blinds; the Physician can cure, but we must *know* we are sick and want to be cured. God calls: we can either pretend we do not hear, or we can accept or reject. Over 140 times Sacred Scriptures emphasized the free acceptance of God's grace. Hence such appeals as: "Be converted, and do penance for all your iniquities; and iniquity shall not be your ruin." (Ezechial, 18:30).

Once there is a coincidence and cooperation between God's grace and your will, as there is between your lungs and the air outside, your whole life changes. You will realize then that your education depends not on a mere mechanical substitute of one theory or set of statistics for another, but rather in the unfolding of deeper and deeper insights into truth and the pur-

pose of life. Your reason becomes stronger, for faith becomes to it as sunlight is to the eyes. Your morality ceases to be a duty or obligation, and becomes a by-product of love's intimacy with God, as the husband's fidelity to the wife is a consequence of his love, rather than obedience to a law.

This Grace of Christ is poles apart from human *ideals* which can only be conceived, but are without power to aid us or draw us or to pour into us an energy we do not have of and by ourselves. Our moral endeavors still remain ours, but under grace they are transformed into *responses* to Divine *summons* and *contacts* with God. Thanks to this influx of Divine Energy, your character changes not through your temperament, your environment, your ethics, your reason, or your will alone, but thanks to God's power.

How wonderful is the Divine Action in the soul of a sinner, for how else could a sinner turn from his evil ways? It is just as impossible for a man living a deliberately sinful life to reverse his Godlessness under his own power, and truly love God, as it would be for him to stop himself in mid-air after he throws himself off a bridge, or

to lift himself back onto the bridge unless some Higher Power intervened. How merciful, too, is God's action, particularly, for those who have lost their moral sense, or who have plunged into sensuality, drunkenness and evil. Their passions might one day leave them, but they would not leave their passions unless a Higher Power intervened. The bigoted would become more bigoted, the sinful more sinful, the greedy more avaricious, the hateful more cruel. But thanks to the Divine Energy of God-man which acts on their souls and in it, they can be turned completely around and begin life all over again. They cannot do this under their own power alone, for when evil habits have become ingrained, when the love of the good has been lost and when melancholy sits in one's soul as on a throne, there is not power enough within to change. There would never be Augustines becoming saints, Magdalens becoming penitents, Peters returning to a crucifixion and Paul's abandoning hate, were not the Spirit of God sweetly yet strongly putting man on his own feet, setting him on a new path and holding before his eyes a new city on the everlasting hills.

What hope would there be for perverted souls which like dead birds fall to earth, were there no Heavenly Finger to touch and give healing to their wings? How explain a thief who at one moment curses a Man on a nearby Cross, at another asks Him for forgiveness and Paradise, unless in some way the robber was robbed of his hate by the Divine Who said: "This day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise." (Luke, 23:43)

Never despair! Only when you begin to be infinitely wicked and God ceases to be infinitely good may you give up, and that would never be. If now you are strong in your pride, God seems weak; but once you admit your weakness, God appears in His Strength. It could even be that God in His Mercy might make some souls weak by suffering. At first they will cry out: "Why did God do this to Me?" If they reflect, they will discover that unless the earth rotted the outer covering of the seed, it would never spring forth to life.

Our poor egos are too cramped and sordid a place in which to dwell. We just have to get out of them, not deeper *down* in them. If you try to find new dimensions in your unconsciousness, as a substitute for self-transcend-

ence, you will become increasingly psychotic. It is like looking for the stars at the bottom of a swamp.

Give up trying to live on your own moral fat. If true goodness were dependent wholly on your will, would you not have been good a long time ago? Most of us are like men locked in airtight compartments, breathing in the same air we breathe out; we are suffocating, because we are trying to live on our own exhalation. Such is the fallacy of Humanism; flat tires cannot fix themselves; no analysis of a rotted acorn can make an oak. As your eyes need light to see, as your ears cannot hear without waves of sound, and your lungs cannot breathe without air, so neither can you be all we could be, unless you receive the Grace of God.

You can be happier than you are now; you can be peaceful, even in your sorrows. You can be joyful amid trials; you can

overcome your temptation; you can master your evil habits; you can make your marriage happy; but, you cannot do it alone, nor under your own power.

Pray then daily, hourly, for God's grace, and if you are interested in its effects on your soul, then listen in next week and I will tell you.

God Love You

Be not foolish, O my soul,
For the Savior calleth thee to
return.

All the love thou hast on earth
Is but a spark from the flame of
Love Divine.

All Thy truth, O soul, is but a
broken syllable of the Word
Divine.

Seek then O soul what you
seek,

But not where you seek it now.
Wouldst thou ever want God
If thou were not once with Him?

Come then, O God of Love
Who will not let me go!
I'll rest this weary soul in Thee.

ACTUAL GRACE

GOD'S FIRST IMPACT ON THE SOUL

Friends:

The religious experience I am to describe today is common to everyone in search of God. Such a soul has two great moments: The first is negative and passive, and the other is active and Divine. The first is a sense of emptiness; the second, a Divine Presence. The first is a discontent, a disgust, a fedupness with life; the second is a consciousness that God is making an impact on the soul. The first is psychological emptiness or the *negative* Presence of God in the soul; the second is God's actual grace, or His *positive* Presence or influence.

Everyone who is not in union with God has this emptiness, as an empty stomach has its gnawings. But not every person is conscious of the emptiness. The consciousness of it is the first moment in a God-ward movement of the soul. It is, a feeling of tension resulting from a desire for the Infinite, and on the other hand, an ennuï and a boredom because we were mistaken

in our idea of the infinite. Instead of striving for the Infinite, which is God, we erect the false infinite of our own ego, of wealth, of power, of pleasure, and since none of these can completely satisfy, we are thrown back upon ourselves more miserable than before.

As Pascal has said: "The greatness of men is so evident that it is even proven by his wretchedness, for what in animals is called nature, we call wretchedness in man: for who is unhappy at not being a king, except a deposed king? Who is unhappy at having one mouth, and who is not unhappy at having only one eye? Probably no one ever ventured to mourn at not having three eyes, but anyone is inconsolable at having none." This is another way of saying that our restlessness is a proof that we were made for something more than earth. Why does a hot coal placed on our hand burn it? Because the coal contradicts the hand; the coal is the "not" to our hand, its negation and frustration. If the

nature of our hand was the same as the nature of coal, there would be no burning, because there would be no contradiction. In like manner, a man made to the Image and Likeness of God, who aspires by every word, deed and prayer to be identical with God's Will, has no contradiction in his nature; therefore he is at peace. But the man who, "nots," or negates his nature, develops anxieties, fears and mental disorders. This sense of emptiness and unhappiness with its cortege of the emotions of fear and melancholy, is the negative and passive condition for discovering and knowing God. If we may coin a name for it, it is, "black grace"; it does not impel the soul to God, but it does make the soul realize its emptiness without Him and therefore the need of Him.

The second moment is not the emptying, but the filling, not the "black grace," but the, "white grace." It is a moment in which the soul becomes not conscious of the inner contradiction, but rather receives an impetus, a thrust, or a power which comes from God, enabling it to see truths which before it did not know, and to do things which before it had not the moral courage to do.

If you have felt first impulses of God's actual grace summoning you away from misery to union with Him, I hope you did not shrug your shoulders and say: "This impulse is really not from God, but from my nature itself." No! Because if it were from nature, it would not advocate a break with it, for grace inspires discipline, mortification and a giving-up of the occasion of sin. If it came from nature alone, nature would not lift the knife against itself. Say not either that it comes from your unconsciousness, for there is nothing in the unconsciousness which was not once in consciousness, and here the soul is in the presence of a great Inexperience, the Divine Novelty, something absolutely new. Furthermore, once the impulse of God strikes us, we travel in a different direction than either our consciousness or our unconsciousness has been moving. To do this, there had to be a force from without stronger than ourselves, and yet one with which we cooperate. There is no need to multiply an answer to these false objections, for there will always be perverse souls in the world, who when a friend offers them a rose to smell will say the perfume is really not from the rose, but is

the scent of a distant soap factory.

To convince you that the impact of God on your soul is not psychological, but Divine, let me contrast three differences between any human appeal to be better and the action of God's grace.

The first difference between the two is, that all human appeals and arguments and psychological coaxings toward moral betterment are *external to the person to be reformed, i.e., their action is from without like a flashy advertisement trying to catch the eye*. All that a reformer can do is ring the doorbell, he cannot get inside of the house. It is conceivable that the alcoholic knows that he is doing wrong, but he also knows that by *his own power*, it is extremely difficult to relieve himself of his vice. Precisely because of their extrinsic character, most people regard humanistic and legal reforms as an interference with their personal lives.

Divine action on the soul, on the contrary, is *internal*, in fact so much that the person sometimes feels that it is his own. Actual Grace lights up the soul, as light shining through a Gothic window suffuses it with a brilliance; it occupies no space, any

more than the natural truth that two and two make four, takes up space. Grace strikes the soul sometimes with such a terrific impact, as to be catastrophic, demanding a complete break with a sinful past. We can turn a deaf ear to the reformer's pleadings, but it is not within our power to *prevent* God from invading the soul that He has made. As the sun rises without asking the night, so does Divine life invade without asking the darkness of our minds. He establishes His beachhead in the most unsuspecting moments, almost in secret, without us ever being aware of His coming. He comes like a sudden thought into the mind, or like an intense desire in the will. Because His entrance is imperceptible, aye even unconscious in the sense that we do not know that it is He in the beginning, there is no resistance built up against Him, for we have no sense of interference. We may even think that the sudden upsurge of our spirit is our own, not even suspecting that it comes from God, just as we often think that our eyes do all the seeing, without being conscious of the role the sun plays in vision. It is only later on, after complete conversion, that we become conscious that the

initiative was Divine and Eternal. The Divine Thief may come to steal away our unhappiness in a moment of satiety with sin, as it was with Leon Bloy, or at the sight of death as it was with St. Francis, or at the closeness of the stars in the desert as it was with Ernest Pschari, or at the moment of reading a book as it was to Jaques Maritain, or at the sound of church-bells as it was to Paul Claudel. These and a thousand other external circumstances are of no importance. These are only the occasions on which we meet God, but God can be met anywhere. Though God has reserved Himself the right and power to act in the soul soliciting it to virtue and distracting it from evil, nevertheless He has left with man the alternative to shake the Hand of God once he finds Him in his soul, or else to order Him out. But enter He does, stirring the soul, making it restless, shaking the grates of the heart to get rid of the clinkers and ashes of sin, that the faint sparks of grace may blaze and burn. One can turn a deaf ear, indeed, to a plea of goodness from a voice *without*, but this Voice within does not argue. Our choice is not to agree or disagree, it is only to embrace or reject.

A second difference between humanistic, ethical and psychological aids to betterment and the grace of God, is that the former are impersonal while grace is personal. The sinful, the selfish or intemperate man is apt to say to the reformer with a book of rules: "Try it on someone else, not me." A mother once tried to get her boy to eat spinach and she argued with him: "I know a million boys in the United States who would love that spinach." To which he retorted: "Name three." Behind the boy's retort was a consciousness of personal dignity and the realization that we are not peas in a pod nor are we saved by the barrel load. The individuality of the soul demands a specific remedy. The one sheep that is lost in the brambles cries out for its own unique salvation.

God calls His sheep by name: He leaves the ninety-nine that are safe to find the one that is lost; on the Cross He addresses the thief in the second person singular: "This day, *thou* shalt be with *Me* in Paradise." God never sells His Bread of Life wholesale. He tempers the wind of the individual cheek and is healing to the particular soul. Once the soul becomes conscious of the Divine Presence, it feels

itself under a Divine Imperative and whispers to itself: "This applies to me and to no one else." That is why a soul responding to grace never blames its guilt on insufficient playgrounds or Oedipus but strikes its breast saying: "Mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa." At least, there is the consciousness of the two great personal realities, the soul and God.

What God does to the soul personally, brings out the third difference between human action and Divine action. The former lacks the power to heal. It is *external* to the patient, and even though the mind might be convinced, it still nevertheless is too weak to put the suggestions into practice. How often a mother will say of a delinquent daughter: "If I could only get inside of her," the implication being that not all the emotional pleading in the world can cause an inner regeneration. All the false remedies for poor, weak humanity such as a little more tolerance, an increased indifference to right and wrong, a new love to replace the old one, all of which are supposed to give peace of mind, only makes the last condition of a soul worse than the first. The lock that opens the door to the healing is on the

side of the *wounded*, not on the side of the reformer or the ciple and source of energy from psychologist.

Here is where Divine Grace proves its worth, namely in its power to heal. If man is to be made better, there must be the introduction of a new life principle without. Man has not the physical power to grow a new leg when he loses an old one, but thanks to Divine Grace, he has the power to become a new man when he has spoiled the old one. There can be healing where there was disease, resurrection where there was death, and joy where there was anxiety. Man can throw that Divine medicine out of the window if he chooses, but then man must blame himself and not God for his misery. The external reforms can influence to a certain point just as an orchestra leader can inspire the musicians under him, but he cannot give the power to play to one who has not the ability. But God's Grace can do just that! He can infuse the ability into the soul which is not there originally and which cannot even be acquired naturally.

The actual graces of God have come to every person who ever lived, Jew, Christian, pagan, idolator. God is always acting on

the soul. As the sun is always illumining, so God is always shedding forth His Graces and His healing powers. It would be difficult to give any mathematical calculations of how many actual graces we receive but certainly they would run into thousands for each soul each year.

Resist not the grace of God! It can come to us in remorse after sin, in shame after drunkenness, in satiety after excesses, in seeing spiritual contentment of a nun's face, or in a sudden realization that we do not *know* everything and we cannot lift ourselves by our own bootstraps. It can come in an impulse to pray, in a desire to study religion, or to live more closely with God. It is woven so imperceptibly with the fabric of your life, that you may not recognize it. I believe there are many who receive actual graces to come into the fulness of Christ in His Mystical Body, but who having failed to act on that belief, afterwards lost it. An unused grace in the soul is like undigested matter in the stomach. Instead of nourishing, it spoils. Graces that are not acted on, because of a fear of the world—which is the principal reason—are not often given again. As St. Francis de Sales says: "God did not

deprive thee of the operation of His Love, but thou didst deprive His Love of thy cooperation. God could never have rejected thee, if thou hadst not rejected Him." God cannot help us if we refuse to be helped.

Just remember that God often uses things, accidents, books, and even human beings as instruments, not the causes, to pour His Grace into souls. If you already have, "The black grace," or a sense of the emptiness of life and a vague need for something more than human, it is conceivable that God might now use about the poorest, weakest and most unworthy of all His instruments to give you at this moment a "white grace." I mean, if He used a stupid ass for His triumphant entry into Jerusalem, then may He use this poor broadcast to ride triumphant into your souls! Then I will be happy because He used me; you will be happy because you received Him! In that happiness—

God Love You:

Lord Jesus; Thy Love I know is
not for sale,

Why then am I suspicious of
what is free?

We pay for everything in life—
save Thee.

But Thy Love once had can be
sold,

As Judas did for thirty coins.
My soul is empty as a nest,
Fill its black void then with Thy
white grace,
For none but Thee has loved me
from the first.

But what shall I give Thee,
Who art the Lord of all?
There is but one thing Thou has
not—
I'll give Thee my sins!

SANCTIFYING GRACE

Friends:

Do you remember that the burden of the last few broadcasts has been the idea that *over and above* our natural, human life there is a supernatural, Divine life which is a gift of God; that nothing lower is ever elevated to anything higher unless the higher *comes down* to the lower and lifts it up, as the chemicals are taken up by plants, and plants by animals, and all three by man. Hence, if man is ever to be elevated to the Divine Order, God must come down to man; which was done in the Incarnation of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, while man in his turn by a free act of his will must surrender his lower sinful nature to be one in Jesus Christ. As in the natural order, life does not come from crystals, but must be begotten by life; as to have human life we must be born of humans; so to have Divine Life we must be *born* of God.

There is a world of difference between making and begetting: we *make* something that is unlike us, for example, a carpenter makes a table; but we *beget* that

which is *like* us, e.g., a mother begets a child. Inasmuch as we were *made* by God we are just the creatures of His Handiwork, but inasmuch as we are begotten of God by grace, we *become* His children.

This gift of God, or grace which enables us to be partakers of the Divine Life, and to be begotten of God, is called the supernatural, i.e., above the natural. If a dog suddenly began to quote Shakespeare and to answer our questions and to reason about politics, that would be a "supernatural" act for a dog, for it does not belong to the powers and capacities of a dog to do these things. If we in like manner who are just human beings, suddenly began to partake of the Divine Nature so that the life that is in God as the Vine runs through us as the Branches; so that we become sons of God and heirs of Heaven—that would be a supernatural act for a man; something to which we would be more entitled by nature than this microphone can bloom.

The tragedy of life is that so

few ever avail themselves of this gift of God which is called, "Sanctifying Grace."

Every human can live on three possible levels, which might be compared to a three-story house. The first story is the sensate life, in which the pleasures and the thrills of the flesh are the supreme goal and destiny of living. The second floor of the house is better ordered and may be likened to reason, whereby man is guided solely by his own intellect and the choices of his own will. But even when the mind does know the truth, the will is often too weak to follow it. The third floor is the supernatural, which is the floor of peace and joy. This corresponds to living the Christ-life, thanks to the illumination of our intellect and the strengthening of our will by grace.

It is so hard to convince people who live in the sub-human level of animality to move to the floor above, and it is hard to convince those who live a good human life to move to the third floor of union with God. Most people are living *below* their possibilities and their lives become the tragedy of what might have been. They become like the two tadpoles who under the water are discussing the possibility

of a more rarified atmosphere above. One said to the other, "I think I will stick my head above this water." The other tadpole said, "Don't be foolish! You do not mean to say that there is anything else in the world besides water." Perhaps then the greatest tragedy in life is not so much what people suffer, it is rather what they miss.

I know you are interested in finding out how this Divine life comes into your soul. The normal way of receiving the Christ-life into your soul is through the seven Sacraments, beginning with Baptism which gives you both in Him in time, and ending with Extreme Unction which prepares you for death in time and birth with Him into Eternity.

But because of the limitations of time, we shall tell you what grace does when it gets into your soul. When you see what added power it gives, you may take ways and means to receive it. It does not effect your emotions, for religion has nothing primarily to say about your feelings. What makes you human and different from the animal is the fact that you have an intellect which can know truth, and a will which can choose: hate evil and love goodness. But they

cannot carry you very far unaided, or without great difficulty and only with some admixture of error. But when God's sanctifying grace is infused by the Sacraments, it gives a tremendous thrust to both your reason and your will. It elevates your *reason* with faith; it *energizes* your *will* with *hope* and *charity*. Consider each in turn.

(1) Your Reason:—Just as the sun illuminates your senses, and the light of reason illumines your human acts, so grace infuses the light of Faith to illumine your reason to perceive Truths beyond its power, and to accept them because they are revealed by God. You have the same eyes at night as you have during the day, but you cannot see at night, because you lack the light of the sun. Let two individuals having the same intellectual endowments, but one having Faith and the other not, look at a host on the altar: one sees Emanuel or God in the Eucharist, and the other sees only bread. This is because one has a light which the other lacks.

This new light of faith is to your reason as the telescope is to your eye. The telescope does not destroy your eye, nor does it create new worlds, but it enables your eye to see realities

which were already there, but which it could not see under its own power. To a person who does not believe in the power of the telescope, it would seem that the astronomer was *imagining* that he saw distant stars, as those who lack the gift of faith sometimes attribute belief of Christians to imagination, myths and fiction.

Reason is always stronger with Faith than without it. Just as reason is the perfection of the senses, so Faith is the perfection of the reason. A drunkard who has lost his reason still has his senses, but though he is now like an animal, his senses do not function as well as the animal. He stumbles, falls, sees double images and pink elephants. This is because his senses need reason to function well. In like manner, man's reason needs Faith to function well. That incidently is why the highest development the world ever saw in philosophical wisdom was in the days of Faith of the Thirteenth Century, and inverseely why our own Godless age which has abandoned Faith is the age of anti-reason with the emphases on ids, sex, determinism and despair.

(2) Your will:—When Sanctifying Grace operates on the

intellect it gives us Faith: when it operates on the will it gives us hope and charity.

Hope is the supernatural side of security. As some men have hope in their future because they possess material wealth, so a Christian has hope in the eternal future, because he possesses Divine wealth, which is the certitude of God's Love and care. Because hope makes us trust and confide in God *despite* all of the adversities, it roots out of the soul a fear of failure. Obsession of failure or despair vary in direct ratio with our egotism and pride. Our melancholy generally results from a failure to realize our own ambitions and under our own power. But once God becomes our all encompassing hope, the fear of the hostility of others in a competitive society, completely evaporates as we no longer trust in ourselves, for our sufficiency is from God. Not even the abundance of our past sins will make us despair, for a contrite and humble heart the Lord will not despise. Thanks to supernatural help, we can say with St. Paul: "I can do all things in Him Who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13). Fear of failure now gives way to increased effectiveness, because the added dynamism is from God

and not from a consciousness of our own power. We cease to be the hand, and begin to be the tool, and as a tool of God we can do more when He guides our hand.

Hope will finally beget confidence and therefore tranquilize your heart as the Lord becomes everything to you. How often we judge people by the way they act on a particular occasion. Later on when we come to know them better and love them, a complete change in outlook takes place. Instead of judging their personality by a particular act, we judge a particular act by their personality. If they do something which we do not understand, we attribute it with our own ignorance of their intention rather than to their perversity. So it is with God, when our ego is supreme, we judge God by the way He seems to act in a definite circumstance, e.g., in the sudden death of a son or daughter, and we complain. But later on when we understand the nature of God as Love and Mercy, then we judge what happens in the light of His Goodness, we even reach a point where like Job, we say: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in Him" (Job, 16:33). As true Christians we also under-

stand that Our Lord never promised us immunity from suffering in this world: "In the world ye shall have tribulations" (John, 16:33). But He did promise that we would never be overcome by them. Never will we complain against Him for, looking at the Cross on the Hill of Calvary, well indeed might He ask us: "What have I done to deserve this?" Through His example, therefore, we have patience and resignation to the momentary trials knowing that God never permits an evil to happen except that eventual spiritual good may result.

Finally, Charity. By Charity is here meant the indwelling of the Blessed Trinity in the soul of those who are in the state of sanctifying grace. To be in the state of grace means not *having* something; it means *being* something, namely being the temple in which God dwells. Many baptised souls are ignorant of this mystery and remain unaware of it throughout their lives. It is possible for some people to live under the same roof and never commune with one another; it is likewise possible for God to be in the soul and yet there is little intimacy between the soul and its Divine Guest. The more holy souls are

detached from the world the greater this intimacy becomes. One could indicate four steps in the way men come to God:

I am,
I ought,
I can,
I will,

In the first stage, I am, there is only a consciousness of our own existence, which is egotism. In the second, I ought, there is a dependence of the soul on God through conscience, in which God is felt as a duty. In the third stage, I can, there is a recognition that thanks to God's grace we can become something that we are not, namely, His adopted Son. The fourth and final stage is an identification of our own will with His Will—and this is our peace.

We read in the life of St. Catherine of Sienna that one day she was attacked by very violent temptations against the virtue of purity. When finally the storm had passed, Our Lord appeared to her and she said: "Lord, where were you when my heart was filled with such impure thoughts?" The Lord answered: "I was in your heart." St. Catherine said: "Yes, Lord, you are truth itself and I bow before you but how can I believe this when my heart was filled

with such detestable thoughts?" But the Lord answered: "These thoughts, these temptations—did they cause you joy, sorrow, pleasure or pain?" St. Catherine responded: "Terrible sorrow, terrible pain." The Lord then responded: "Know then, my daughter, that you suffered because I *was hidden* in the midst of your heart. Had I been absent, the thoughts that penetrated there would have given you pleasure. It was my presence which rendered them insupportable to you. I was acting in you. I defended your heart against the enemy. Never have I been closer to you."

This would seem to indicate that the very resistance that saintly souls put up to evil, is not just because they hate evil, but rather because of the consciousness of Divine Goodness within. It may be psychologically true that souls that are devoid of a sense of Divine Love, more readily fall into temptation and sin because they have less to lose by that sin.

This Divine Charity is so deeply entrenched in the soul that as in romantic love, it considers as traitorous any enjoyment apart from the beloved. As sometimes a dog will not take

food from anyone except his master, regardless of how much he wants food, so the soul in the state of grace turns from all worldly or indifferent pleasures in which God could not have a part. This is extremely difficult for the worldly to understand because they have no one to please except themselves, and since their pleasure is practically always outside themselves, it is a mystery to them why anyone should be looking for happiness within.

The tragedy of life therefore is the fact that so many people remain diminished, unfinished and undeveloped because they will not be elevated to the Divine order by death to sin and life in Him through His Sacraments. Many are called, but few are chosen. Just as in the material universe, there is an upward evolution but not everything realizes it. There are many chemicals and minerals in the world that do not pass into the higher life of the plant. There are many plants who die to themselves but never live in animals, and there are many animals who never find their way into man. So there are many men who do not die to themselves by an act of their own will to live with Christ. In the

universe, quantity is decreasing
and quality is increasing.

If I told you where there was
a buried treasure, you would
seek it. Why then not seek the
Christ-life which will make you
happy in this life and in the
next. Now is a good time to
begin, Lent starts Wednesday.
If you are Catholic go to Mass
everyday and receive Communion;
but everyone, Jew, Protestant
and Catholic can spend an
Hour a Day in prayer. Just ask
God for two gifts: To know His
Truth and the Strength to follow
it.

God Love You!
Lord Jesus,
What doth it profit Thee

To be born in a thousand stables
If Thou art not born within my
stable

Where beasts too often dwell?
Why didst Thou make Thyself
the Wine of Life,

If I were not to taste or drink?
If Thou art the Light of the
World

Then shall I see only by sun?
If a poor man to me a gift would
bring

How would I cling to him?
Come then, O Saviour, besiege
my heart!

My love shall be the shortest
route to Thee:

I'll *drive* out myself! and let
Thee In!

HOW TO BUILD CHARACTER

Friends:

There is not one of us who is not defeated in some particular area of life. Some fall away from grace and high ideals; others bemoan their failure to marry, or having married failed to realize all its hopes and promises; others experience a decline of virtues, a gradual slipping away into mediocrity or a slavery to vice; while others are subjected to frustration, bad health or economic ruin. All such defeats are generally summed up in the mournful regret: "If I only had my life to live over again." It is of utmost importance that in facing these defeats and failures that there be no discouragement, for discouragement from a spiritual point of view, is the effect of wounded self-love and therefore is a form of pride.

Our failings can become the basis of character development, for as education takes hold of what is *best* in a person, e.g., a talent for music, character training on the contrary, takes hold of what is worst in us, and by uprooting it and fighting against it, finally perfects personality in

the virtue contrary to the previous vice.

There are three steps in the development of a Christian character. The first step is to discover what is worst in us. This is done by an examination of *that* sin to which we are most frequently tempted. It is very wrong to think that simply because we are tempted, that therefore we are wicked. The blessedness of temptation is that it only reveals the weak spot in our character, thereby providing the raw material for victory, but it is also when resisted an occasion for merit. Self-examination reveals this basic defect in our character, for every person has what is known as a predominant fault. The predominant fault is the one which prevails over all other faults and to some extent inspires attitudes, judgments and sympathies. Some are inclined principally to sensuality, others to laziness, avarice or pride, others to anger; others have a tendency to allow gentleness to degenerate into effeminacy, or force into cruelty. The hidden evil must be *dug up* from the remote corners of the heart,

brought out into the light, and laid before God. Until the position of the enemy is known, he cannot be attacked.

This hidden fault must be called by its *right* name, otherwise we miss seeing our pride under fear of an inferiority complex, or our perverse love of the flesh under the disguise of dabbling in Freudianism. Judas missed salvation because he never called his avarice by its right name, but covered it up as love of the poor, as moderns cover it up under the name of security.

The second step after the discovery of the master-adhesion through self-examination, is to *combat* the interior defect in cooperation with God's grace. This requires a daily and even an hourly struggle. There are generally four ways of overcoming the predominant fault: (1) We must ask for God's grace to overcome the sin. Though our own will has proven itself too weak to conquer it, it becomes strong enough to do so when infused with the Power of God. As the Church tells us in the Council of Trent: "God never commands the impossible; but in giving us His precepts, He commands us to do what we can, and to ask for the grace to accomplish what we cannot do." (2) By daily ex-

amination of conscience, particularly at night. As a person counts the money in his pocket daily to determine whether the current expense of the day can be met, so we balance our consciences to see if they are going in debt morally and spiritually, and how we can get out of it. (3) By imposing on oneself a penance every time we succumb to the predominant fault, e.g., saying a prayer for the absent person against whom we bore false judgment, or giving five times the amount of a cocktail to the poor everytime we are tempted to intoxication by the first drink. (4) By turning the predominant fault into its opposite virtue.

Since this is too often ignored, it is the one upon which we concentrate. Strength of character is a knowledge of our weakness and the ultimate mastery of it. The storm reveals the weakness in the house, but the part of it that was damaged and repaired, is apt in the end to be the strongest. Kites and airplanes rise against the wind, not *with* it. Earth does not reveal its harvest without plowing, nor the minds their treasure without study, nor nature its secrets without investigation. Goodness is not to be confused with passivity, but with activity in an

opposite direction. There are a number of people who are considered to be good, when really they have not enough courage to do a very good act or a very evil act. The icebergs that float in the cold streams of the North deserve no credit for being icebergs. They cannot help being icebergs, but let those icebergs get down to the warm gulf streams of the South and remain icebergs—they have character. In like manner, character depends not on our want of energy to do wrong, but on the use of energy to do right when tempted to do wrong. That is why the greatest sinners sometimes make the greatest saints. A Saul who hated became a Paul who loved: a sensuous Magdalene became a spiritual Magdalene. The convents and monasteries are full of *potential* devils, potential in the sense that these saintly souls would have been very wicked if they had not corresponded to God's grace, because they were so full of energy. The Little Flower says that if she had not been responsive to God's mercies, she would have been one of the most wicked persons who ever lived. On the contrary, the great prisons of our country house *potential saints*. The energy they used in sin was not wrong, it

was the direction that their energy took that was wrong. Lenin was probably a St. Francis in reverse. If the same energy he used in violence towards others was used in violence towards self, and in the cultivation of love, he would have become the St. Francis of the 19th Century.

No saint ever found it was easy to be good. This is the great mistake most people make in judging them. It is often said: "It is easy for him to be good." The fact is, if it were easy for him to be good, he would not be *truly good*, and much less would he be a saint. The law running through heaven and earth is that no one shall be crowned unless he has struggled. The Church never canonizes anyone unless he shows a degree of holiness which is called heroic. The virtues of the saints therefore were the opposite of the natural weaknesses they had to overcome. In other words, the peculiar quality of soul which made someone else a devil, made them saints. The moral quality always associated with Moses is meekness, but Moses was not born meek. He probably was very hot-headed, quick-tempered and irascible. He killed an Egyptian, and that was not the mark of a meek man. He was the first one

to "break" the Ten Commandments. Coming down from the Mount where he had spoken with God, he found his people adoring the Golden Calf, and in a fit of anger smashed the Tablets of the Law. Apparently, the weak spot in Moses was hot-headedness. But he took hold of the worst in him, and later on, in his attitude toward the fickleness of Pharaoh, the ingratitude and waywardness of those whom he delivered, his patience to his sister and brother, and his final disappointment at not entering the Promised Land, we find him described in Sacred Scripture as, "a man exceedingly meek" (Numbers, 12:3). He acquired meekness by fighting ill temper. He rooted out the worst in him, and with God's help became one of the best of men.

John the Evangelist who is praised for his charity, once induced his mother to use political influence, and on another occasion, when the city of the Samaritans rejected Our Lord, he and his brother, James, asked Our Lord to rain down fire from the heaven and destroy the city. This was not charity. In fact, there must have been a tendency to hate in John, for not without aptness did his Master call him who wanted to send down light-

ning, a Son of Thunder. But sometime or other in John's life, he seized upon the weak spot in his character, namely, want of kindness to fellowman, and through cooperation with grace, he became the great Apostle of Charity.

The temptations of the saints were for them opportunities for self-discovery. They revealed the breaches in the fortress of their souls which needed to be fortified, until they became the strongest points. This explains the curious fact about many saintly people, that they often become the opposite of what they seemed to be. When we hear of holiness of certain souls, our first reaction is: "I knew him when. . ." Between the "then" and the "now" has intervened a battle, in which selfishness lost and faith won.

Because the development of character requires constant vigilance, occasional failures must not be mistaken for the desertion of God. There are two classes of people in the world: Those who fall down and get up: and those who fall down and stay there. Because a child falls, it does not give up trying to walk. Sometimes the mother gives the most attention to the child who falls the most. Incidentally, I think Our

Blessed Mother does that too. I always liked the detail in the life of St. Mary Magdalene de Pazzi:—One day while dusting a small statue of Our Lord in the chapel, she dropped it on the floor. Picking it up unbroken, she kissed it, saying: "If you had not fallen, you would not have gotten that." Sometimes in the case of continued weakness, it is well not just to count the falls, but to count also the number of times a temptation to do wrong was overcome. The reverses in the heat of battle can lead to strengthening of purposes. It is worth something to discover whether a wish-bone is where the back-bone ought to be.

Realize then that there are two "me's in each of us: the "possible me" and an "actual me." The "actual me" is what I am now as a result of letting myself go. The "possible me" is what I can be if I unite my will to God's Will by sacrifice.

No character or temperament is fixed. To say "I am what I am, and that I must always be" is to ignore freedom, Divine Action in the soul, and the reversibility of character through discipline. No person regardless of the depth of his vice or intemperance is incapable of being transformed through his cooperation with God's grace into a

holy and peaceful person. Dope-fiends, materialists, sceptics, sensualists, gluttons, thieves—all can make that area of life in which they are defeated, the area of their greatest victory. The time-element is not as important as it seems, for it does not require much time to make us saints; it requires only much Love.

The third step in character development is: Concentrate not on the eradication of evil, but on the cultivation of virtue. The difference in the two techniques of fighting evil and loving goodness is illustrated in the ancient story of the Greeks. Ulysses returning from the siege of Troy, knew the danger of listening to the sirens tempting many a sailor to his doom. So Ulysses put wax in the ears of his sailors, strapped himself to the mast of the ship, so that even though he wished to follow the appeal of the sirens, he would not be able to do so. Some years later, Orpheus, the divine musician passed by the same sea, but refused to plug up his sailor's ears or bind himself to a mast. Rather he played his harp so beautifully that the song of the sirens had no appeal. It is not a hatred of evil but a love of Our Lord and His Blessed Mother which

crowds out evil, for hate is useless unless we love something else more.

Evil is never to be attacked directly, but indirectly. Evil is *not driven out*, but crowded out. Sensuality is not mastered by saying: "I will not sin," but through the expulsive power of something good. When the soul begins to love God it no longer has such morbid fears that it drowns them in vice. The joys of the spirit alone can crowd out the pleasures of the flesh. We must have happiness, and he who will not have it on the high road of the spirit, will pursue it in the low road of carnality.

Not until a nobler, finer love is found, will man master either his own vices or overcome his mediocrity. In *complete conversion* souls which were formerly addicted to vice, like Augustine, no longer feel any desire for it, but rather a disgust. As the eye blinks at dirt, so the soul now blinks at evil. It is not so much that sin is fought; it is rather it is no longer wanted. The great tragedy of life is that so many have no one to love. A man in love with a noble woman will give up all that displeases her, and a soul in love with God

gives up all that wounds that Love.

Oh! How much better the world would be, if we who are Christ's ministers in the Sacrament of Penance, Christ's ambassadors in the world of unbelievers, and Christ's Shepherds among the erring and the lost sheep, would lay hold of what is best in people; look for the gold instead of the dross; there is something good in everybody. It is recorded that after the death of a street cleaner who had the reputation of being dissolute, unfaithful, cruel to his wife and children, most of his fellow street cleaners recalled all his wicked deeds, except one companion who said: "Well, whatever you say about him, there was one thing he always did well. He swept clean around the corners." Help souls back to peace by searching for what is good in them.

Here are two rules for character building: (1) In dealing with *yourself*, look always for what is worst, and make it with God's grace the occasion of the opposite virtue. (2) In dealing with *others*, look for what is *best*, that by showing mercy to others, God may show you the Mercy of His Forgiveness.

God Love You!

God strengthen me to bear my-
self

That heaviest weight of all to
bear,

Inalienable weight of care.

God harden me against myself

This coward with pathetic voice

Who craves for ease, and rest
and joys.

Myself, arch-traitor to myself;

My hollowest friend; my dead-
liest foe;

My clog whatever road I go.

Thou alone dear Lord can curb
myself,

Can roll the strangling load
from me,

Break off the yoke and set me
free.

(Christiana G. Rossetti, 1830

1894)

THE SANCTIFICATION OF THE NOW-MOMENT

Friends:

It is sad how many people today are frustrated. The cause is generally two-fold: First, a realization of the chasm that exists between the obstacles they have to meet on the one hand, and the feebleness of their own resources on the other. 2) Because of the absence of love which is essential for happiness, either because they are not loved, or because their own triviality and egotism makes it impossible to love others. Their lives become like the householder who is more and more depressed because of the enormity of the bills that come in, and the absence of money to pay out. This frustration increases in direct ratio and proportion to the realization that there is no one who cares and tomorrow will be worse.

If we tried to pin down the ground of all our anxieties, it would probably have to be blamed on *time*. Man is the only creature who can bring not only the past up to the present, so that it weighs on the present moment with its accumulated heritage; but he can bring the

future *back* to the present, and imagine it as happening now. No animal ever says: "I have suffered this pain for six years and it will last until I die." But because man can unite the past to the present by memory, and the future to the present by imagination, we try to *distract* him in his sufferings in order to break up that continuity. The unhappiness of most people stems from excessive concentration on the *past*, or extreme pre-occupation with the *future*. The major problems of psychiatry revolve around the analysis of despair, pessimism, melancholy and complexes which are inheritances of what *has been*, or with fears, anxieties, worries which are the imaginings of what *will be*.

Outside of cases of insanity and mental aberration when scientific psychiatry is essential, there are many cases in which this despair of the past and worry of the future has a moral basis, namely because the conscience is burdened with the guilt and therefore fears a Divine judgment.

God in His Mercy has given us two remedies from such unhappiness: One is the Sacrament of Penance, which not only blots out the past by remission of sins and thus cleanses the memory; but it also eliminates anxiety, by reassuring the *future* through hope in His Mercy and continued repentance and amendment of life.

The second remedy for curing the ills of time—and it is this we wish to emphasize here—is what might be called: *The sanctification of the now-moment or the spiritualization of our state of life*. Our Lord emphasized it in these words: "Do not fret, then, over tomorrow; leave tomorrow to fret over its own needs; for today, today's troubles are enough" (Matt. 6:34). This means each day has its trials. Do not worry about tomorrow, because it will have its cross, too. Leave the *past*, after confession and expiation, to Divine Mercy, and the future, whatever be its trials, to His Loving Providence. Each second of life has its peculiar *duty* regardless of the *appearance* that moment takes. The now-moment is the moment of salvation. Each complaint against it is a defeat; each act of resignation to it is a victory.

There are three characteristics of the now-moment: First, it is one of the ways in which God's will comes to us. God's will is made clear to us in several ways: In His Commandments, in His Incarnate Life in Jesus Christ Our Lord, in the Voice of His Mystical Body the Church, in the duties of our state of life, and in a more particular way, God's will is manifested for us in the now-moment with all its attendant circumstances, duties and trials. The now-moment refers to things *not only* over which we have *control*, but over things we *cannot control*, such as a business failure, a bad cold, rain on picnic days, an unwelcome visitor, a fallen cake, a buzzer that doesn't work, a fly in the milk and a boil on the nose the night of the dance. We do not always know *why* things happen, e.g., sickness, accidents, etc., for our minds are too puny to grasp God's plan, just as a mouse in a piano cannot understand why it must be disturbed by someone playing Chopin. When Job suffered, he asked God many questions such as, why he was born, and why he suffered; God appeared, but instead of answering Job's questions, He began asking

Job some questions about the universe. And when the Great Scientist got through pouring queries into the head of the little science student, Job realized that the questions of God made more sense than the answers of men.

To sanctify the now-moment, we need not have a knowledge of God's plan in order to accept it. When St. Paul was converted he asked merely: "Lord, what wilt thou have me *do*?" We can be warmed by fire without knowing the chemistry of combustion, and we can be cured by medicine without knowing the theory of medicine. The Divine Will pouring into the soul of a simple cripple resigned to suffering, will give him a far greater understanding of God and His Goodness, than a professor will get from a lifetime of theoretical curiosity about religion. That is why the Faith of the Church seems so silly and stupid to those who have only the will to ridicule it. The good and bad thief on the cross did not have *different* things to do in order to be saved, but the *same* thing, namely, to spiritualize the brief moment of suffering. But only one sanctified the now-moment. Thus, some souls become peaceful and happy through the very same trials

which make others rebellious and nervous wrecks.

The second characteristic is that the now-moment is *personal* and *individual*. Books, sermons and broadcasts have the appearance of being for everyone. But nothing is more individual and personal than the now-moment, and for that reason it is an occasion for knowledge which can come to *no one* else. It is *my* school, *my* textbook, *my* lesson.

The University of the now-moment has been built uniquely for me, and in comparison with the revelation God gives me in it, all else is vain! This Wisdom we never forget! It is part of our character, our merit, our eternity. Those who sanctify the now-moment and offer it up in union with God's will, never become frustrated; never grumble or complain. They overcome obstacles, making them occasions of prayer; what were obstacles are made opportunities. But the modern pagan who has no practical knowledge of God, no trust in His Providence, no assurance of His Love, lacks the shock absorber of Faith and Hope and Love and very quickly his mind disintegrates and goes to pieces.

The third characteristic of the now-moment, is that it is not opaque and meaningless, but is

transparent, i.e., reveals the Person of God Who comes to me this instant. It is peculiar how differently we accept a misfortune, or even an insult, when we know who did it. Perhaps the reason why otherwise kind and charitable persons become sensitive, critical and nasty to others when driving a car is because they feel that in the car, their personality is unknown to the other driver, and therefore a dirty look or a biting word is allowable. A bobby-soxer would probably curse with a torrent of scorn, a well-dressed young woman who accidentally stepped on her toes in a streetcar. But if that same bobby-soxer recognized that the one who violated her constitutional rights to stand unmolested on her own feet, was her modern "saint," or what is sometimes called in the lower constellations "a movie star," she would probably be thrilled with joy and would hurry to tell her friends: "Did you know that Miss Starry Starlight, the blues singer, broke my big toe!" What is once received in horror, is at another time received with joy, because there is a person *recognized whom we love*. In like manner, it makes all the difference in the world when we recognize God's will and purpose behind

the illness, the shocks and disappointments of life.

As the swaddling clothes of an Infant hid the Son of God in Bethlehem, as the appearance of bread and wine hides the Reality of Christ dying again on Calvary, so our sorrows and pains are seen as "The shade of His Hand outstretched caressingly." Many good souls are hungry to do great things. They complain they have no opportunities for virtue and apostolate. They would be martyrs! But when a meal is late, the bus is crowded, the theatre is filled, the dance postponed, the bacon is overdone, they are upset for the day! When opportunities for loving God in the little things present themselves, they fail. Our Lord said: "He who is trustworthy over a little sum is trustworthy over a greater" (Luke, 16:10). The Divine Beloved speaks to the soul *in whispers*, but because the soul is waiting for the trumpet and the loud speaker, it misses the message. Each of us wants to make his own cross so it will fit perfectly; tailor-made trials, as it were. But we do not want the crosses that God sends us. But in their acceptance lies the possibility of holiness. The incessant grumbling of a husband, the almost intoler-

erable nagging of a wife, the boss' habit of smoking a pipe while he dictates, the noise of the children with their soup, the unexpected illness, the failure to find a husband, the inability to be rich, the unsuccessful tooth paste that did not make our smile beautiful, the memory of wrong doing in the past—all these can become occasions of merit and made prayers, if borne in patience and love for One Who bears so patiently with us, despite our shortcomings, our failures and sins.

It is not hard to bear with others when one realizes how much God has to bear from us. There is a legend to the effect that one day Abraham in the desert was visited by an Arab, who complained of the food, the lodging, the bed, and the wine which his generous host offered him. Finally, Abraham became exasperated and put him out. God appeared to Abraham at that moment and said: "Abraham, I have put up with him for forty years; can't you put up with him for one night?"

The key word for the sanctification is "Thy Will be done"—*this* instant, and as it reveals itself to me under these circumstances. Did we but make this act of resignation, we would

escape the accidents of life, i. e., those things which we regard as happening outside our ordered existence, or contrary to our wishes. It is a psychological fact that people who have inner worries and frustrations have *more* accidents than those who have a clear conscience and a Divine goal in life. Some people complain that they "never get a break," that the world is against them, that they always have bad luck. But I have never heard a person resigned to God's Holy Will utter such a complaint.

The difference between souls who never get the breaks and those who make the now-moment an occasion for thanking God, is that the latter is in an area of love which the other is not. A waif on the streets has misfortunes which the child in a loving family has not. In like manner, to be in the area of God's love with its attendant trust and confidence, is to escape the accidents of life, for then everything is seen as *willed by Love*. God does not show Himself equally to all creatures, not because He is unfair, but because it is impossible to show Himself to certain hearts. The sunlight has no favorites, but it cannot be reflected back in a dusty mirror as it can in a polished one. In

the order of Divinity, there is nothing accidental—when the human will sees that God wills even the fall of a sparrow or a hair. There is never a collision of blind forces, but rather the meeting of a human will with a Divine Will in a perfect awareness that *ultimate good is intended*, though it may not be known until eternity. The human will becomes like a baby in the arms of its loving mother who sometimes administers medicine. The baby cries, but the saint in the arms of God does not, because he knows God knows what is best. Thus the bitter and the sweet, joys and sorrows as they come with each moment are the raw-material of sanctity. As St. Paul tells us: “Meanwhile, we are well assured that everything helps to secure the good of those who love God, those whom he has called in fulfillment of his design” (Romans, 8:28).

Sanctify every moment of your life. Each task, or duty is like a blank check; the value it possesses depends on whose name is signed to it, or for whom it is done, i.e., either for your sake or God’s sake. Sanctification depends not on geography, i.e., where we are. Some imagine that if they were in another

place, married to a different person, or had a different job, or had more money, they could do God’s work so much better. The truth is that it makes no difference *where* we are; it all depends whether *we are doing God’s will*. Hence, the typist at her desk working on routine letters, the streetcleaner with his brush, the farmer tilling the field, the doctor bending over patients, the lawyer trying his case, the student with his books, the sick in their isolation and pain, the teacher patient with her pupils, the mother dressing the children—every task, every duty can be ennobled and spiritualized in prayer. As a dirty drop of water in the gutter of a city street once kissed by the sun, can be made a flake of immaculate snow on a mountain top, so our routine, hum-drum, work-a-day life can be ennobled, sacramentalized, providing we bring to it the inspiration of the fixed flash of that instant and intolerant Enlightenment — the Lightning made Eternal as the Light.

This is the Will of God—your sanctification, here and now! *Consider this moment!* It is God’s Will that I broadcast! That is the present duty of my state in life.

It is not God's Will that you
enjoy this broadcast!

But it is God's Will that at
least you offer it up as a Sunday
trial for the salvation of your
soul!

GOD LOVE YOU!

My soul, sit thou a patient look-
er-on;

Judge not the Play, before the
Play is done;

Her plot has many changes;
Every day speaks a new scene;
The last Act crowns the Play!

(Frances Quarles)

"Trust Him when dark doubts
assail thee;

Trust Him when trust is small,
Trust Him when simply to trust
Him

Is the hardest thing of all."

Anonymous

MEDITATION

Friends:

This is probably the most talkative age in the history of the world. We have come to defy talk as a means of solving all problems. There are few listeners and yet St. Paul tells us that is the way Faith comes—through hearing. The more anxious a mind is on the inside, the more nervous it becomes on the outside. That is why expectant fathers in the waiting room of maternity hospitals perambulate before they have perambulators. The rocking chair, it has been said, is a typical American invention: It enables man to rest as he is restless, to keep moving as he sits still.

One of the powerful remedies against the externalization of life is Meditation. Meditation is something like a daydream or reverie with these two exceptions: In meditation, we think about God, not about the world or ourselves; and instead of the imagination which is used in day-dreaming to build castles in Spain, we use the *will* to make resolutions about obeying the

Father's Will. Meditation is beyond the stage of "saying prayers," and may be likened to a child who breaks into the presence of a mother saying: "I'll not say a word if you will just let me stay here and watch you." Or, as a soldier once told the Cure of Ars: "I just stand here before the tabernacle; He looks at me and I look at Him." Meditation is not an asking for things, a petition, a using of God, but rather a surrender and a begging that God use us; a finding of God not in the cyclones of activity but in the zephyrs of self-awareness, for God never shouts, but whispers. Meditation uses three powers of the soul: The memory, intellect and the will. Memory recalls God's Goodness and our blessings; the intellect strives to know Him in Christ Our Lord; the will yearns to love Him above all else. When I study, I know about God; when I meditate I know God, and God knows me. God knows me, that is why I exist; but when I know God's Presence in me, then I capture the heart of my very existence. There are three mo-

ments in the forward progress of meditation: Hearing, acting and Sacrificing.

(1) Hearing. Meditation is not only a speaking to God but a listening to the Voice of God in our soul. In meditation, the ear of the soul is more important than the tongue. Most people commit the same fault with God as with their friends, they do all the talking. Our Lord warned against these: "Who think to make themselves heard by their eloquence." (Matt. 6:7) One can be impolite to God too by absorbing the conversation, by changing the words of Scripture from "speak Lord, thy servant heareth," to "Listen, Lord, thy servant speaketh." No one would think of rushing into a physician's office, rattling off all the symptoms and then dash off without waiting for a diagnosis. It is rather stupid to ring God's doorbell and then run away. The Lord hears more readily than we suspect: "Your heavenly father knows well what your needs are before you ask Him." (Matt. 6:9) It is the listening side Our Lord emphasizes: "If any man *listens* to My voice and opens the door, I will come in to visit him, and take My supper with him, and He shall sup with Me." (Apoc. 3:20) It may very

well be that when people complain that their prayers are not heard by God it is really the other way round: God hears, but they don't.

Prayer is not a monologue, but a dialogue. It is not a one-way street, but a boulevard. The child hears a word before he speaks it. His tongue is trained through the ear. So our soul is trained through the ear of the soul. If our tongues are crude in their petitions, it is because our ears have been dull in the hearing of the faith. One of the important details of the Sacrament of Baptism is the opening of the ear. The priest touches it and says as Our Lord did to the deaf man: "Ephepheta—be thou opened," implying that once a soul is in the state of grace, deafness now gives way to the hearing of the Word of God. There is a more sublime philosophy than we suspect in saying we learned our prayers from our mother's lips. We *heard*; and if we never forget how to pray, we *listen*: Prayer is intolerable when a monologue, but it is a joy when self-absorption gives way to humble listening.

The best example of what happens in meditation is revealed in the disciples of Emmaus. Sad and depressed they began talk-

ing about Our Lord to a traveler whom they met by chance on the road. This is the first stage of meditation: the putting ourselves in the presence of God without ever feeling that Presence, or knowing that He is there. Next, Our Lord begins to unfold to them the meaning of His Passion and Death. This is the *listening* side of Prayer. Finally, there comes a stage of communion, signified by the breaking of bread where the soul is united to God and God to the soul—a moment one reluctantly abandons even when the day is far spent.

Secondly, Action: —*Meditation influences our behavior*. It is often stated that it makes no difference what you believe, it all depends on how you act. This is sheer nonsense because we act on our beliefs. Hitler acted on the theory of Nazism and produced a war; Stalin acts on the ideology of Marx and Lenin and begets slavery. If our thoughts are bad, our actions will be bad. Our Lord said: "Nothing that finds its way into a man from the *outside* can make him unclean; what makes a man unclean is what comes *out* of a man." (Matthew 7:15) The problem of impure actions is basically the problem of impure

thoughts; the way to keep a man from robbing a bank is to distract him from thinking about robbing a bank. Political, social and economic injustices are first psychic evils, that is, in the *mind*, then physical evils. The fact that they become social proves the intensity of the thought.

Nothing ever happens in the world that does not first happen inside a mind. Hygiene is no cure for immorality; if the well springs of thought were kept clean there would be no need to care for the evil effects on the body. When one meditates and fills his mind an hour a day with thoughts and resolutions about loving God and neighbor above all things, there is a gradual seepage down to the level of what moderns are fond of calling the subconscious, until finally these good thoughts come out as good actions. Everyone has verified in his own life a thousand times the ideo-motor character of thought. How often, watching a football game one sees a beautiful opening around right end which the player with the ball does not see. The spectator will twist and turn his own body more than the runner because he has an idea of where an opening is; the idea was so

strong that it influenced his bodily movements. Thoughts of fear produce what are called "goose pimples" and at certain times make the blood run to the extremities, as if to indicate that God intended that in those circumstances we should either fight or run. What our desires are, that our life will be. Our dominant desire is our predominant destiny. "Where your treasure-house is, there your heart is too." (Matt. 6:21) Our character is in our thoughts and our meditations. Since we act upon our desires it follows that as the soul becomes flooded with Divine Promptings, it becomes less a prey to the suggestions of the world. Happiness increases, because since not all external wants can be satisfied, the elimination of some of them makes for less anxiety. A complete revolution takes place in our behaviour. If in our morning meditation we thought of God becoming a humble servant of man, we will not lord it over others during the day; if we meditated upon Him redeeming all men, we will cease being a snob or showing hatred to a certain class or color or race; if we thought about Our Lord taking our sins upon Himself in the Garden, we will seek to take on the burdens

of our neighbor, even though his faults were not our making, as the sins the Lord bore were not of His making. If our meditation dwelt on the Merciful Saviour Who forgave those Who crucified Him, so we will forgive those who injure us that we may be worthy of forgiveness. These thoughts come to us not from ourselves, for we are incapable of them, nor from the world, for they are unworldly thoughts, but from God alone. It does no good to make a resolution not to do certain evil deeds, unless we have something to put in their place. Otherwise we may beget within ourselves the empty house described by the Gospel, in which after one evil spirit was driven out, seven others worse than the first came to dwell there. Evil preempts when there is nothing good to take its place. But in meditation one does not drive evil out of his life, rather he crowds it out with love of God and neighbor. Thus life is built not on the principle of avoiding sin which is a tiresome job, but rather in living constantly with Divine Love. Meditation in a word prevents defeat where defeat is final—in the mind. In that silence where God is, all false desires fall away. If we meditate before we go to bed,

our last thought at night will be our first thought in the morning. Gone will be the dark brown feeling that faces him who begins a meaningless day, and in its place will be the joy of living another day to work in Christ's Name, to learn in His Name, and to love in His Name. A distinguished psychiatrist J. D. Hadfield speaking of the influx of Divine Power to heal our weakness says: "I attempted to cure a nervous patient with suggestions of questions and confidence, but without success, until I had linked these suggestions on to that faith in the power of God which is the substance of the Christian's confidence and hope. Then the patient became strong."

Thirdly, Sacrifice:—*New insights into the life of union with God are possible only as we become increasingly detached from the evil.* Everyone has the power of meditation though in most of us it is unused, as the power of seeing and hearing are inactive when we are asleep. The reason so few commune with God is the price is too high—namely, the surrender of egotism and selfishness. We want Him to give us the temporal instead of the Eternal. We want to be imprisoned in our little egg shell,

kept cool and comfortable, but well below that point of warmth and love necessary for incubation into Divine Life. The result is we remain totally undeveloped. Our aim is to please ourselves without displeasing God. We avoid deliberately provoking Him, but at the same time we never deliberately love Him. We raise our heart and mind to God not to find out what He wants, but to tell Him what we want. We *use* God.

Meditation is on the level of our conduct. If our behaviour is Godless, prayer will seem stupid, as indeed it is. Bad living causes doubts more than doubts cause bad living. When anyone says: "I doubt the value of prayer" it is not the value of prayer that he doubts, but the *value of praying* while he still has the will to sin. When such a man gets down on his knees, he feels very much like one who is paying a compliment to one whom he does not love, or flattering a superior whom he suspects may possibly know his own insincerity. When Adam sinned, he hid from God. God always seems so far away from a sinner, when actually it is not God who hid from us, but we who hid from God. Once we decide to approach God in our con-

scious mind we must be ready in our unconscious mind, in our habits, in every nook and cranny of our body to separate ourselves from that which is anti-God. It will do a drunkard little good to pray unless he makes an effort to give up drink. Nor will it be a sign of love to say to God: "Dear Lord, to show you how much I love you, I will give up Coca Cola for Lent."

If we pray on the level of conduct, it follows that the nobler the conduct the more worthy the prayer. To mount to a higher form of prayer our conduct must change. If we live only for self our prayers will be almost exclusively prayers of request and petition. If we live on the higher level of service and love of neighbor, our prayers for the most part will be for mercy and intercession. But if every thought, word and deed is dedicated to God, then our prayers become a petitionless affirmation that God's will be done in all things, and this will include prayers for self and neighbor but in the framework of God and not ourselves.

Would you like to improve your character? Then pour good thoughts into your mind by meditation. Would you like to smash your hyper-critical atti-

tude? Then meditate on your own faults and your need of the Mercy of God and you will be surprised how much better everyone seems by comparison? Would you like to know how to escape moodiness? Then meditate! As the earth carries its own atmosphere with it as it revolves about the sun, so you will carry the presence of God with you despite the turbulent revolutions of the world outside.

Do not say you have *no time* to meditate! The less you think of God the less time you have for Him! The time you have for anything depends on how much *you think of it*. It is our thinking that determines our time: not the time our thinking. I have had time for you because I love you in Christ Jesus, Our Lord. Love Him and you will have time for everything—except to burn here or in eternity.

God Love You!

Dear Lord!

What power is this that bids the world go hence;

That sweet perfume that steals through my clay-shuttered doors;

That makes my life seem as wine spilled on thirsty sand:

It be not Thy Voice within

which thunders in silence, Stirring life within this clod,
Points to Wounded Hands and And thrusting me to Thee, O
Open Heart, God!

REPARATION FOR SINS

Friends:

If you have never done anything wrong in your life, or if you deny there is any such thing as personal guilt, or that it is to be blamed on Oedipus or Electra, then shut off this broadcast immediately! This broadcast is not for saints or angels but for penitent sinners. I will give the saints two seconds to shut me off.

Hello, Fellow-Sinners! This problem of what to do with our guilt is serious, for we are not animals living only in the present. Both the *past* and the *future* are involved in this moment. The *past* is with us in our habits, our consciousness of guilt, and the debt we owe for our sins; it is in our blood, our cells, our brain and even in the very expression of our faces. The *future*, too, is with us in our anxieties and fears, our dreads and preoccupations and in the insecurity of our lot. A cow lives for the present without remorse or anxiety, but man is not only *behind* himself in the sense he drags the past with him, he is also *ahead* of himself because he is worried about

his future. If then we wish to develop our character three tasks are incumbent upon us:

1. We must blot out our own *past* sins by penance.

2. We must protect ourselves against *future* sins by a strong, practical resolution to avoid them.

3. We will pray and sacrifice not for ourselves alone, but for the offenses of the world against the Lord of Love.

Consider first the past! Here we touch on a very important distinction between forgiveness and reparation for sins. Some people who have done wrong think that they need only forget it, because it is past and done with; others believe falsely that once a wrong is forgiven, nothing else need be done. This is not true. As soon as a soul comes in contact with Our Lord its first response after being forgiven is that of Zacheus: "I will repay all." Hence Our Lord in instituting the Sacrament of Penance made it clear that there is a difference between forgiveness and the making up for the past. In the confessional one moment you con-

fess your sins; the next moment the priest says to you: "For your penance . . ." then he tells you prayers to say, or good actions to perform or sacrifices to make to atone for your sins.

How much sense this makes! Suppose I steal your watch! When my conscience pricks me, I come to you and say: "Will you forgive me?" There is no doubt that you will, but I am absolutely certain that you will also say: "Give me back the watch." Is not the return of the watch the best proof of the sincerity of my sorrow? Many a school boy while playing ball broke a neighbor's window; once forgiven, he would add: "But I'll pay for it." Even children know there must be a restoration of the balance or equilibrium disturbed by sin. Suppose every time a child sinned, he was told to drive a nail into a board, and every time he was forgiven he was told to pull out a nail. He would soon discover that the board was full of holes which were not there at the beginning. So sin leaves its mark. We cannot go back to innocence and goodness after sin as if nothing happened. In turning our backs upon God, we burned our bridges behind us, and they now have to

be rebuilt with penance. A business man who has contracted debts which resulted in bankruptcy, cannot start life afresh until the old debts have been acquitted or settled.

What reparation for sins does it make God's pardon available to us. God's mercy is always present, but it does not become operative until we prove that we *really* want it, and we *prove* we want it by amendment for sin. The father of the prodigal son always had forgiveness in his heart, but the prodigal son did not make himself open to it, until he was prepared not only to ask to be forgiven but even to do penance by offering himself as a servant in the father's house. Attachment to evil makes forgiveness impossible, as living in a cave makes sunlight unavailable. Pardon or forgiveness is not automatic—we *have to make ourselves pardonable*. If therefore you have done wrong in the past do penance for the words of Our Lord are unmistakable: "You will all perish as they did, if you do not repent" (Luke, 13:3).

Associated with this amendment for the past is the resolution about the *future*. We must not merely *wish* to avoid evil, but we must *will* to do so. There

is a world of difference between the desire to be better, and the determination to be better. Pilate *wished* to save Our Lord, but he did not *will* to save Him. Remorse often is the *wish* to avoid the anguish after sin providing it does not mean giving up what is pleasurable in the sin. Repentance has no "ifs" and "buts," but implies a rooting up of what is evil. We cannot be like the dying sinful woman who, when asked to renounce the devil, answered: "But do we have to make enemies unnecessarily?"

The fact that we have fallen before into the same sin does not exclude a firm purpose against it for the future, but this resolution must be made with a strong trust in the Mercy of God Who will not suffer us to be tempted beyond our strength. Those who have never been to confession and never tried to amend their lives, must not be too hard on souls who are trying. Evil people who give in to every sin and temptation, have no idea how hard it is to resist sins which have been committed before. If one wants to find out how bad he is, just let him try being good. One finds out how strong the current of a river is

not by flowing with the current, but by fighting against it. Bad people know nothing about goodness; they are always floating downstream with the current of badness. They must not be too critical of Our Lord for forgiving "seventy times seven" or with His Mystical Body the Church, for prolonging that Mercy to sinners who really are trying.

Penance for the past and resolutions about the future are never inseparable from love! The very hatred we have for sin is a sign of the deepness of our love. God would not be good, unless He hated evil. To love a fellow creature we must know him, but in the case of God, it is the reverse: To know Him intimately we must *love* Him. And to love Him means to separate ourselves from all that is harmful to that Love. This art of pleasing the Divine can be reduced to simple rules:

- a. Toward God — meditation and adoration.
- b. Toward self—penance and detachment.
- c. Toward neighbor—service and charity.

That brings us to a higher theme of repentance in which we do penance not only for our sins

but the sins of others. Here the soul is conscious of its unity with mankind and takes on the guilt of others as its own. Its mission in life is not only to make pardon available to self but also to others. If you were the only person in a family who was well and everyone else was injured, would not you bind up their wounds? If love in the face of misery takes on the burdens of others, then shall not love in the face of sin take on the guilt of others? This is what Our Lord did in Gethsemane as He took the iniquities of us all into His Hands, as if they had wrought them; into His Blood as if He had experienced them, until the horror of it all burst into a sweat, in which drops of blood like beads in a rosary crimsoned the olive roots of the Garden.

We see this idea in a lesser degree in the Blessed Mother who claimed no immunity, no *noblesse oblige*, from the vocation of Redemption, but stood on the Battlefield of Calvary, as the first Gold-Star Mother of the world. She, too, in Her own limited way would share the world's guilt as Her own. We see it, too, in the contemplative orders of the Church, in the

Trappists, Carmelites, Poor Clares, and dozens of others with gifted souls who enter into a life of reparation, not because they want to save *their own* souls, but because they want to save your soul and mine. They are the spiritual blood-banks who store up the red energy of salvation for those anemic souls who sin and do not atone, for those who blaspheme and persecute the children of God but do not repent. How foolish to think that the only good one can do in the world is by physical contact, or to think that these souls are useless because they gather no statistics about sex or crime or because they are not *seen* doing good. It is possible that these souls are holding back the Arm of God's Wrath from a rebellious and blasphemous generation. As ten just men could have saved Sodom and Gamorrah, so enough of these consecrated victims could save a nation or the world. Their prayers and sacrifices overflow to others who made no contribution to goodness, as the blessings of electricity come to many of us who never put even a screw into a dynamo. This doctrine of the communicability of reparation in the Communion of Saints is one of the most beautiful and consoling teach-

ings of our Holy Mother the Church. Satisfaction then operates not on a horizontal plane of one person with another, but like a triangle; a sacrificial prayer on earth is lifted up to Our High Priest, Christ in Heaven, Who makes intercession for us; then it comes down to earth again to enrich the sinful soul in need. As it is possible to graft skin from one part of the body to another to cure a burn, so it is possible in the Church to graft prayer; as it is possible to transfuse blood from one healthy person to another to cure him of his weakened condition, so it is possible to transfuse sacrifice.

Because sacrificial souls love God, there is a difference in their attitude toward other people. Contrast for example, the difference between a policeman and a saint in the face of guilt. When some cops catch you speeding, they try to intensify your guilt; to make you feel as small as the nut in the steering wheel. A saint, however, sees the guilt, as it were, as his own, and immediately begins to make up for it. Tolerance says: "He is as good as I am." Charity says: "He is better than I" or even "I am no good." By this, the saint means that if the other man

knew God's love as he did, he would be more saintly. God-dedicated souls live in such a dimension of love that they feel constantly in need of Divine Mercy, and to merit it they overflow in mercy and kindness to others.

The world is in chaos, war-fears and madness today because the scales of humanity are weighed down on the side of evil. If enough souls with a sense of spiritual responsibility for the world would, launch a crusade of prayer, recitation of the rosary and put on a spirit of sacrifice, the scales would begin to weigh down in favor of Love, and peace would come to the world. This world is too mad to be saved by political and economic thinkers, but it is not beyond redemption to be saved by saints. What a tremendous revolution would take place in this country, if our big city churches would begin all night adoration of Our Blessed Lord in the Holy Sacrament! There are a million men in our country and in our Faith and those outside of it, who would be willing to break their sleep one hour a night, just to intercede to God for Russia and the sins of the world. The potential for sacrifice is greater than we suspect!

As an example of how reparation works, let me tell you that some years ago in Paris an ordinarily good Catholic girl was married to an atheist and anti-clerical doctor by the name of Felix Leseur. He forgot his marriage promises and tried to destroy her Faith, but he worked too quickly. Seeing the fallacies behind one of Renan's works which he gave her to read, she decided to study her Faith; aye more! she began to sacrifice for his soul. In 1904, she asked Almighty God to permit her to suffer enough to purchase the soul of her husband. There is a purchase price on every single soul in the world, but few of us love these high priced sinners enough to purchase them as *redeemers* with a small *r* as Christ is *Redeemer* with a capital *R*!

From 1904 to 1914, she tossed on a bed of constant pain, which she bore not only with ineffable sweetness, but even utilized the time to correspond with sinners to bring them back again to God. In May, 1914, she died, saying to her husband: "Ten years ago, I asked Our Lord to suffer for your soul. On the day I die, you will have been bought and paid for. Greater love than this, no woman hath, that she lay

down her life for her husband. Shortly after my death, not only will you become a Catholic, but also a Dominican priest."

During my university days in Europe, I made a retreat in the Dominican House in Belgium, where four times each day, and forty minutes each time, I made my retreat under, and received the spiritual direction of Father Leseur, Dominican Catholic and priest who told me this story.

This is our ideal! Love God, wanting nothing apart from Him, so that His Heart is your Heart. A lover once knocked on the door of the beloved. She said: "Who is there!" "It is I!" he said. "Go away! I love thee not!" was her reply.

Years later, but more spiritualized, he returned: "Who is there?" she asked as he knocked.

"It is another Thou!"—"Come in, Beloved! Now I am Thine for Thou art Mine!"

This is the way we ought to love God.

GOD LOVE YOU!

Love tells its secrets to the one loved;

That is why God revealed Himself in the Scriptures.

Love seeks to be one with the one loved:

That is why God became man in
the Incarnation.

Love seeks to suffer for the one
loved:

That is why Our Lord died on
the Cross.

Love hates whatever wounds the
one loved:

That is why we avoid sinning
against Our Lord.

Love never feels it can do
enough for the one loved:

That is why we feel the pain of
our imperfections.

So help us Love Divine to be
loving,

For what is there in us that is
loveable, except

Our love of Thee, O God!

TASTE AND SEE THAT THE LORD IS SWEET

Friends:

Here is a mystery! Why is it that everyone can understand how one person can fall in love with another, but few can understand how a person can fall in love with God! They can see the appeal of a human heart, but not the pull of the Sacred Heart; they consider it normal to love the spark, but abnormal to love the Flame; they think it reasonable to admire the sunbeam, but a mark of madness to go into ecstasies about the Sun. The answer is that those who have never had any experience of intimate union with Divine Love are inclined to deny the reality of the experience. He who is passion's slave thinks a lover of the spirit mad. There are some things which have to be experienced in order to know them thoroughly, e.g., the joy of world-travel which has no substitute in the study of geography. The thrill of falling head over heels in love with God belongs in this category of experience. As there are two ways of knowing chastity, by studying about it from a book and by living purely, so

there are two ways of knowing God; by studying about Him and by living His Truth in our lives.

As Cardinal Newman puts it: "Not all the possible descriptions of headlong love will make me comprehend the delirium of love if I never had a fit of it; nor will ever so many sermons about the inward satisfaction of strict conscientiousness create in my mind the image of a virtuous action and its attendant sentiments, if I have been brought up to lie, thieve and indulge my appetites." That is true! If people knew how much what they say reveals their character they would never say that a religious life must be dreary and unhappy and morose, for in saying so they betray that they cannot think of any other affection except the erotic or carnal. They call a deeply religious life a pretense, as those whose only interest is music which imitates the tom-tom of the barbarian regard the love of classical music as hypocrisy. After all, the music we love is the music we already have in our souls. There is a certain rhythm in our spirit,

a blue-print of what we like and desire, and the reality we care for is the reality that corresponds to our inner loves. There are some things we learn only by loving them. There are, for example, many who love such classical musicians as Bach, but who once considered him a bore. When it was first suggested to them that they listen, they rebelled despite pleas for patience. All the best things of life must be won and conquered. Pride probably had something to do with ridicule, because what one does not have, or what one refused to make an effort to acquire, is often **maligned and despised**. But with a little humility, they *expose* themselves to the good music; they make an intellectual effort to grasp it; they try and see in it that which the so-called fanatic sees; finally with knowledge there comes love and with love sympathy, joy. The love of the truly beautiful requires effort. Even the taste for God is acquired.

Let not then those who have never read Virgil or Sophocles say that the interest the man of culture has in them is a sham. When one reads the testimony of a convert who describes his transition from sin to grace, as from prison to the light, it must

not be dismissed as an illusion or due to a disappointed love affair, or old age or a change of life, or an Electra complex. The honest scientific reaction should be that there is a reality corresponding to this love, as there is a reality to the love life of a devoted husband. Souls miss so much by denying the reality of God in daily experience. Would that I could convince them to be scientific and open-minded about it. Suppose that everyone in the world was blind except three persons. These three not only see the sun, but also things under the sun. This unique claim becomes a very interesting problem to a group of blind psychologists who investigate their claims of vision. These psychologists start with the assumption that since they are blind, therefore everyone else is blind. Prior to the development of their explanation of the fact of vision, their minds are already made-up. When the three with vision claim that they see the sun and roses and lilies under the sun, the psychologists now have to invent an explanation to justify their anti-vision prejudice. They divide themselves into three groups: the first holds that belief in the objective existence of the sun is an illusion, a Mazda-

complex derived from the Persian mythology and in this enlightened scientific age no intelligent man should believe in myths. The second group of psychologists suggest that their belief in the sun is due to a projection of a dream. During waking hours they wished they could see. At night this suppressed idea rose from the unconsciousness or *id*, as a dream about the light in which the illusion is mistaken for reality. This the psychologists call a 'sun-complex'. The third group of psychologists stretch the persons out on three couches and tell them that they have a hidden sex libido for their mothers who secretly believed in a legend that once upon a time people had eyes. This stupid belief escaped the Censor at the Door of Consciousness, overrode totems and taboos and now comes up as a belief that they too had eyes and could see. The poor, silly fools!

The psychologists assume that because they were groping in the dark, therefore, everyone must also be in the dark, just as those who live in sin, unhappiness and agony attribute the love of God to a superstition and a myth. It has been suggested in this story that one of the persons who did see, was so ridiculed by those

who did not, that he finally plucked out his eyes. This is what corresponds in theology to losing one's Faith because of being scorned by the world as a lover of the Divine Savior and His Church.

Rid yourselves of prejudices! Be experimentalists! Taste and see that the Lord is Sweet! Attribute grace not to emotionalism or sentiment—though I admit there is much so-called religion which is just pietistic mush. But that is not our concern any more than a stamp-collector is interested in imitations. Even if the intimate union with God through grace and the Sacraments were an illusion,—which it is not—the people who live under it are happier than those who call it an illusion. But the experience of God is not an illusion! No myth or illusion inspires sacrifice, purity of morals, humility, sublimity of knowledge, the increasing war-fare against every thought, word and deed that would separate the soul from God, and finally the ability to guide and direct others with unflinching accuracy in the way of peace.

Change your way of living and God's grace will flood your souls! Empty out pride and egotism which so coats the

tongue of the soul so that it hates anything that is non-ego! Why do people go through life continually defrauding themselves of Divine Love? They have never really lived! They have never really loved! They love themselves, but there is no joy in throwing one's arms around his own ego; it is too squalid and cramped a place in which to dwell. What some call love is only a projection of their own ego into other persons; their enjoyment is not the *Thou* of the other person, but their own *Ego* in the *Thou*. They marry not to love but to be loved; they are in love not with a person but with a nerve-ending. That is why as soon as the other person ceases to give them pleasure, they leave that person and marry again and again. Carnal experience is replaceable, but not persons. If it were a person that is loved, the person would *always* be loved because persons are unique. No one can replace your mother! No one can replace God!

Taste and see the Lord is sweet! His Love has three characteristics: (1) It is inexhaustible. Human love can be touched, tasted and run down to its source like a little mountain stream to a tiny spring in the rocks. Divine Love on the con-

trary is infinite. You start with the Stream, maybe in Holy Communion or in prayer, and traveling in the opposite direction, you discover it runs into the Ocean of inexhaustible delights. This is Real Love! How silly to think that what we know about love is contained in the compass of our lives! Love existed before we began; it will exist after we go; it exists not in fragments, as in a Romeo or a Juliet, a Dante or a Beatrice, for these are but rays of the Infinite Sun of Divine Love. If you have hit bottom in human love begin to love God and all humans will become loveable again.

(2) Love in the Lord is greater in realization than in desire. Thus it differs from worldly love which is always greater in anticipation than in realization. Did you ever notice how all the love songs are about "How happy we *will* be!" They are always in the future. But when do you hear a song about what happened to these same couples even five years later?

Divine Love, on the contrary, does not look enchanting or ecstatic before we have it; the Cross frightens us; the sacrifice of selfishness and sin seems like death; non-sensate love appears as lovelessness. So we make ex-

cuses for not embracing God, saying we doubt, when really we mean we misbehave. But after one makes the surrender, one is possessed of a joy that is ineffable, that beggars all description; you act so differently that your friends think you have lost your mind, but that love you would not give up for anything in all the world. Faded is the distance between lover and beloved. God is there! We are with Him without either ceasing to be self, in what Thompson has so beautifully called a "passionless passion and wild tranquility."

(3) The Love of Our Lord is not affected by sufferings but even increases with contact with it, while human love sometimes breaks under pain! He who loves the Tremendous Lover sometimes finds that suffering adds fuel to the Flame; even the tears that are born in pain become a sign of the spirit within; tears are the body's angels. Sorrow remarries the soul to God. St. Teresa called each trial that came to her "a little present from God."

I could tell you of thousands of whom I know personally who have transcended pain and found the Lord is sweet. For example the elderly mother with arthritis, her limbs twisted like old olive trees in the Garden of Gethsem-

ane, never complaining, always rejoicing as she says fifty rosaries a day for Russia; a young bride writing in her diary: "Keep me, O Lord, close to Thy Kingdom that I may sanctify the flesh and make it the chariot running its course to the supernal crown of the spirit"; Bishops in China pushing wheelbarrows through their diocese, preaching in one city and another as the Communists burn their churches and schools, but always like the Apostles whom they succeed, rejoicing that they can suffer for their Lord; a young husband with an unfaithful wife, who in consecrated and dedicated continence, eats daily of the Bread of Life, that the bride may one day return to both home and Faith; religious women in convents offering prayers of thanks to God when told they had an incurable disease, throwing themselves on their knees and offering their suffering in reparation for the sins of the world; soldiers returning from the battles of a World War entering the Trappists to spend their lives in silence and prayer in the great battle against the powers of darkness; a young woman, heroine of war, rescuing soldiers, feeding the diseased and then after contracting it, writing to

me saying: "All I want really— *is to love God more!*; a Jewish psychiatrist leaving a good practice to enter one of the strictest orders in the Church to pray for his own people in the world; a brilliant woman fasting for life from meat and fish, if need be, in order to bring "fallen-aways" back to the embrace of the Master.

Boundless love alone can explain these surrenders! Yes, it is a pleasant thing to be religious! I grant religion does seem unpleasant to those who have never climbed high enough by renunciation of selfishness to enjoy its eternal vistas. But a Divine Religion with the Holy Eucharist is much more pleasant to those who experience it, than the world is pleasant to those who sin in it. It would be very hard to convince a bird in flight to the heavens, that the pig really enjoys the mud. It is possible that a true lover of God may have tasted both the mud and the flight, having been first a sinner. But he who lives only for the flesh, pleasure and profits has no experience whatever of the thrills of the spirit. Since he has never tasted, he never can know. But let him not call all men blind because he has plucked out his own eyes.

Some know the anxiety of a bad conscience; let them begin to know the peace of a good conscience! If God's Displeasure is so terrible that it keeps us awake at night, think of what joys there are in His Pleasure! If it is misery to be under His Wrath, then it is ecstasy to be under His Love! He is the Way! Follow Him and enchanting will be your adventures!

He is the Truth! Know Him and you will be wise with the Wisdom hidden from the intelligentsia for Christ *is* education!

He is the Life! As the soul is the life of your body, so He is the Life of your soul! In that Mystical Marriage, there shall be dancing and joy!

Those who tried the world found that it failed; those who tried the flesh, found that it sated; those who tried pride, found that it collapsed! Why not give God a chance! Taste and see that the Lord is Sweet!

God Love You.

"But what do I love, when I love Thee, O God? not beauty, of bodies, nor the fair harmony of time, nor the brightness of the light, so gladsome to our eyes, nor sweet melodies of varied songs, and not limbs acceptable to embracements of flesh,

None of these I love, when I love my God; and yet I love a kind of light, and melody, and fragrance, and meat, and embracement, when I love my God, the light, melody, fragrance, meat, embracement of my inner man: where there shineth unto my soul, what space cannot con-

tain; and there soundeth, what time beareth not away; and there smelleth, what breathing disperseth not, and there tasteth, what eating diminisheth not, and there clingeth, what satiety divorceth not. This it is which I love, when I love my God."—*St. Augustine.*

FOR THOSE WHO HAVE THE FAITH

Friends:

This broadcast is dedicated particularly to Catholics; it is concerned with the spirit they should have for their separated brethren throughout the world. Very simply, it is this: They who are Christ's must be intolerant about Christ's truths, but they must be charitable, loving and sacrificial to those who share it not, and even to those who hate it. The Christian vision of the Truth must never be separated from the Christian love of the adversary.

To cultivate this spirit of charity we offer five suggestions: (1) Learn to see that all religions in the world, all sects, all ethical systems have a segment of the circle of Truth. Buddhism, Confucianism, Zoroastrianism, for example, express certain yearnings of the human race toward the infinite; they stress at least a note on the keyboard of Divine religion. Because every religion has a segment of the circle, one should not argue that it is in error because it is incomplete, but rather starting with what is good lead

them to the completion of the circle. We should not try to prove that they are wrong, but rather that wanting Truth, they ought to pursue it in its fulness.

When a stomach is hungry, one need not prove that the hungry man should avoid poison; one need but give bread, and the body will do the rest. When souls are starving too, it profits not to dwell on evil, but by kindness and mercy to break to them the Bread of Truth, and Divine Grace will do the rest. St. Paul adopted this approach when addressing the Athenians. He did not condemn all the pagan deities, but complimented the people for being religious because he found on their streets a statue to the Unknown God; starting with it, he preached to them the God Whom they knew not. In a future day, some wise man of the Church may use Confucius as a natural stepping stone to Christ, as St. Augustine used Plato, and St. Thomas used Aristotle. There is some fine raw material in world religions that can be used in cooperation with grace for building in East-

ern countries the fulness of Christ Which is His Church. The sense of solidarity of the Chinese is a good natural foundation for the Mystical Body of Christ; the Indian emphasis on asceticism will make it easier, in their fulness of time, to accept Redemption through the Cross. As St. Paul told the Corinthians: "What we make known is the wisdom of God, his secret, kept hidden till now" (1 Cor. 2:7). Nothing human is foreign to Christ, Who is the fulfillment of history. Followers of half-truths are not in error because they have only a sect or a section, but rather because the section is taken in isolation, and therefore creates disproportions. It is wrong to condemn anyone for having a passionate interest in the fragment they possess; it is Christ-like however to add to their possessions, and enrich their tiny savings by incorporating them into a higher synthesis of His Divine Life in His Mystical Body, the Church.

(2) Secondly, it is a great error on our part who have been illumined by the Faith, and who see the fulness of Christ in the Church, to think that others are stupid or perverse because they do not see it our way. We flatter ourselves that we know Christ

in His Fulness because we are smart; we sometimes assume that they are the way they are, because they are dumb. This amounts almost to a heresy on our part, particularly if we believe that by our own human reason alone, and not by God's grace, we came to an understanding of the Truth. We did not create the sun which enables our eyes to see, nor did those who are blind deliberately put out either their eyes or the light of the sun. The attribution of ignorance to the unbeliever is not a mark of our own intelligence, but of our contemptible pride. If we see what they do not see, it is because God has given us the gifts of faith. Humble then we ought to be, recognizing our own unworthiness and realizing that if we were without that gift, we would possibly be more ignorant than anyone; and that certainly there are millions in the world more deserving than we are of the glorious faith we enjoy.

(3) There is incumbent on us a duty of special benevolence and kindness toward bigots who believe every lie they hear about the Church. When I receive letters from them with their fantastic lies, I answer: "If I believed the same lies against the

Christ that you believe, and if I had the same anti-religious training you have had, and had been equally isolated from opportunities to learn the Truth, with my own peculiar temperament I would hate the Church a thousand times more than you do. You are right in hating the Church if it were as you mistakenly believe it to be. I would hate it to. But you do not really hate the Church; you hate only what you erroneously believe to be the Church." Their very hatred proves they are thinking about Our Lord and His Mystical Body. The intensity of their bigotry is often a concealed jealousy, a suspicion that it may be right and they wrong, for all hatred is love in reverse. Then, too we must not forget that Our Lord chose the greatest bigot to be His Apostle for the Gentiles, knowing that the energy he spent in hate would be most effective when turned in the opposite direction of love. I have a suspicion too that when the time comes to rebuild a Christian world, that the greatest Apostles of Christ will be recruited from the land that is now most dedicated to the anti-Christ. Thus will God be glorified even by His enemies.

(4) Everyone need not come

to the Faith the way we study it rationally in our manuals. Too often it is assumed that all we have to do to bring souls to Our Lord is to master the arguments for the existence of God and the proofs of the Divinity of Christ from prophecy, miracles and consonance of Christ's doctrine with the aspirations of the human heart, then shoot them like bullets against the opposition and lo, it will fall dead before the machine-guns of our syllogisms. Cardinal Newman has rightly said that syllogisms make but sorry rhetoric with the multitudes. Many of our manuals are written from the point of view of those who have the Faith. Looking back they outline the logical steps by which one may approach it. But taking the first step to the Faith is not always a matter of logic; sometimes it is because of detachment from sin. These proofs are *absolutely necessary* for instruction and understanding, but not for the desire to take instructions. The proofs are reflex knowledge, the conversion is immediate knowledge. A person drinks water a long time before he knows it is H²O. Souls can come to Christ and His Church through a thousand doors. If there was ever a philosopher

whom one would think naturally should never have come to a belief in the Divinity of Christ and the Church it was Henri Bergson. Here was a thinker who repudiated the intellect, who scorned its first principles, who made God a God of becoming, and yet at the end of his life, he asks that a priest be called before he dies. A soul can come to God not only through a hatred of reason as was the case with Bergson, but even through a series of disgusts as the case of Leon Bloy. It is not difficult to understand why this should be, for the cause of conversion is the grace of God, at first actual, then sanctifying. If the intellectual arguments alone brought the soul to the sheepfold, then anyone who hears the arguments should be convinced. But when A and B hear them equally well, and A accepts and B does not, there must be other factors involved, namely, the cooperation of the will with the grace of God. There are myriad ways in which God can call. There is only one fold and one Shepherd, but the sheep can come from the valleys of despair, the heights of knowledge, the caves of desperation and even from the thorns and brambles of sin. Peter and Andrew can come by way of the

nets, Matthew can come from the counting table, Paul can come on his way to persecute and Magdalen can begin her conversion at a dinner party.

(5) Our charity will increase if we start with this assumption: There are only two classes of souls in the world; those who have found the Faith and those who are looking for it. It is amazing how different the world and souls look, when one starts with the first principle that as the eye needs light, and the stomach food, so does the soul need God. There is not a single person in the world, regardless of the passion with which he seeks out sin, who has not in the depths of his soul a craving for the infinite. As St. Thomas says: "The whole is loved before the part, and the part is loved only because of the whole." The tumult of human love is in some way a pursuit of the Divine. As Pascal put it: "There are two kinds of reasonable people, those who love God with their whole hearts because they have found Him, and those who search for God with their whole hearts, because they have not found Him." When the Apostle goes out into the vineyard of souls knowing everyone is looking for God, he is *bound* to have a kindlier ap-

proach than if he assumes that no one is interested, or that some are rebellious. It is true that as a man can be hungry and live on the wrong kind of food, so a man can be yearning for the infinite and yet mistake the nature of the infinite. It is the business of the Apostle to straighten out this point, and to declare to him the Unknown God even while the sinner is searching for idols.

The believer will never feel hopeless about any soul regardless of its present state, whether it be sinfulness or animosity. The man who boasts he is in the service of anti-Christ must at least breathe the name of Christ. As the creative power of God is shown by drawing the world from nothingness, so His Redemptive Power is shown in drawing souls from sin. The disciple who despairs of the conversion of any soul is trusting only in human powers and not in God's grace. To approach a sick man with the idea that he will never get out of his bed, will probably do much to keep him there longer, as to approach the sinner with a sense of hopelessness and despair is to drive him deeper into despair. The very fact that the sower in the Gospel sowed his seed among thorns and

the rocks, indicate that at least he placed some hope in a harvest there. These poor souls who are frustrated and melancholic, living in second and third marriages, or seeking escape from life in alcohol and sleeping tablets, are more anxious to receive grace than we suspect, and those who approach them with that assumption make greater progress in bringing them to God than those who do not. There are of course some perverse souls with an evil will which we must leave to the Mercy of God. We can do nothing with them and of them Our Lord said: "Do not cast your pearls before swine, or the swine may trample them under foot, and then turn on you and tear you to pieces" (Matt. 7:6). It is an absolute rule that we ought never to argue or discuss religion with those who know the Truth and reject it, but rather to prove the Truth to those who are ignorant that with good will they may follow it. But perverse souls are easily recognizable and they are few in comparison to the rest who are seeking, groping, searching, catching at the straw, that happily they may find. Most spiritually blind persons want to see, and so do hearts who are restless with time and flesh clamor

for the peace of the Sacred Heart of God.

Too often the Apostle bemoans that he cannot bring a soul to Our Lord because he is ignorant. It does not take wisdom to convert a soul to God: It takes love—love of God and love of neighbor. Wisdom is necessary for instruction, but it is not necessary for inspiration. Eloquence is not only unnecessary but could even be a handicap. To convert a man to the Communist party, one needs to be a *proselyter*, i.e., he must work from the outside of the mind by propaganda; to convert a man to God, one needs to be an *Apostle*, i.e., he must work inside the man by the power of Truth. When one man tries to win another to a certain ideology or party he never has the grace of God working with him. But whenever an Apostle tries to bring a man to Christ, God is illumining that mind while the Apostle is working. The proselytizer converts to a party or an idea; the Apostle converts to a Person—the living Christ. If the believer is on fire with God, he will shoot sparks; if he brings no one to Our Lord and His Church, it is because he does not love enough.

What are we to do? (We must begin by realizing that the world

is the way it is because we are the way we are; the remaking of the world must begin with the remaking of me; that we are living Christ's way simply because we hate the Communists who are enemies of Christ's way; it is our duty to condemn Communism and it is also our duty to love the Communists, to pray for them, to sacrifice for them, until we bring them to the feet of the Lord Himself.) The largest share of the burden weighs on us who boast that our Bread is the Bread of Life and Our Wine is the Wine that germinates Virgins. If we had half the zeal for spreading the love of Christ's Mystical Body as they have in destroying it, the world would long ago have had peace. How many of us are worthy of the proud name we bear; of our glorious heritage of nineteen centuries; of our being privileged watchers of Jesus in His Tabernacle?

Be worthy of the gift of Faith! Save a soul and save your own! Never before in 500 years have souls been nearer to finding God than they are in this hour! Emptied of vanity, they know they must either go upward to Our Savior, or down to despair and insanity. Modern souls without faith are not *dumb* souls;

they are *numb*! Bring to their misery the Mercy of God, and they will have peace! But know ye that Our Lord has no other tongue with which to tell of His Love in the environment in which you live, than your own.
DO NOT FAIL HIM!

God Love You!

“While Earth wears wounds, still must Christ’s Wounds remain,
Whom Love made Life, and of Whom Life made Pain,
And of Whom Pain made Death.
No breath,

Without Him, sorrow draws; no feet

Wax weary, and no hands hard labour bear,

But He doth wear

The travail and the heat:

Also, for all things perishing,

He saith,

‘My grief, My pain, My death.’

O Earth, seek deep, and gather up thy soul,

And come from high and low, and near and far,

And make Christ whole!”

(Laurence Housman)

EASTER

Friends:

As a soldier may return from war wearing the ribbons of victory, so Jesus rises from the dead wearing the scars of battle against sin!

Everywhere in the Easter scenes we meet a Great Soldier with His Scars! Mary Magdalen who had anointed His Feet for His burial just a few days before, and then once again knelt at His Feet on Calvary's Hill, now on Easter morn recognizes Him to be, not the Gardener but the Risen Savior, as clinging to His Feet she sees there the livid red memories of riven steel.

As the ten Apostles and their companions gathered around the evening lamp, in conversation with the travelers of Emmaus, suddenly, silently, without shadow, sound, without the lifting of a bolt, or the stirring of the latch, Jesus appears in the midst of them, saying: "Peace be upon you; it is myself, do not be afraid." Cowering in terror, He reassures them, saying: "Look at my hands and my feet, to be assured that it is myself; touch me, and look." And as

He spoke thus, he showed them His Hands and His Feet (Luke, 24:39, 40). Hands that had lifted up blind eyes to the sight of God's sunshine; Feet that climbed the mountain's stairs to a midnight holy of Holies to pray—but now Hands and Feet that show like luminous stars!

Later on Thomas, the individualist, who was not with the other Apostles when the Savior appeared—missing spiritual opportunities may cause doubt—when he was told by the disciples: "We have seen the Lord," answers: "Until I have seen the mark of the nails on his hands, until I have put my finger into the mark of the nails, and put my hand into his side, you will never make me *believe*" (John, 20-25).

There are two kinds of unbelief: Those who say something is not true, *because they wish* it were not true; and those who say something is not true, *because they wish that it was*. This latter kind is curable. After eight days of the gloom that comes from doubt, the Savior appears to the Doubter and says:

"Let me have thy finger; see, here are my hands. Let me have thy hand; put it into my side. Cease thy doubting and believe" (John, 20-27). Thomas casts himself at His Feet, saying: "My Lord and My God" (John, 20-28).

O Captain of the wars!

Why wear ye these scars?

First, to prove the law of Christian life that no one shall be crowned unless he has struggled; that no crowns of merit rest suspended on those who do not fight; that unless there is a Good Friday in our lives there will never be an Easter Sunday; that no one ever rises to a higher life without death to a lower one; that God hates peace in those who are destined for war.

Secondly, to prove His Love. True love seeks not its own good, but the good of the other. As human love relieves the physical pains of others, so Divine Love relieves the moral evils of others. True love is proven not by words but by offering something to the one loved, and the greatest offering one can give is not what one *has*, but one's very life. Every scar tells the story: "Greater love than this no man hath."

Thirdly, to solicit our love; He rose not with wounds for

those would betoken a weakness after battle, but with scars, glorious medals of victory on Hands and Feet and Side. As a little child may say to a wounded or scarred soldier: "How did that happen?," so Our Lord shows us His scars, that by our childish questioning, He might tell us: "I did this all for you!"

There are some who would have an unscarred Christ; they would have the Christ on the Mount of Beatitudes because they love beautiful sayings, but not the Christ on the Mount of Calvary because they deny they have ever sinned. They would have the Son of Man, but not the Son of God; the cowardly Christ Who shuns sacrifice; Who would have a victory without a battle, a glory without a struggle, a heaven without a hell; a broad-minded Christ Who is indifferent to virtue and vice, Who knows no good sublime enough to die to espouse; and no evil wicked enough to condemn; the Tolerant Christ Who never made scourges to drive charlatans out of the Temple, Who never bade us cut off hands and feet and pluck out eyes rather than sin, Who never mentions hell or the devil or divorce.

Take your tawdry, cheap Christ Whom you call a moral

teacher and ethical reformer, a social planner; Whom you put on the same plane as Buddha, Confucius, Laotze and Whom you call a good man. He is not *just* a good man, for good men do not lie. If He is not what He claimed to be, the Son of the Living God, then He is the greatest liar, charlatan and deceiver the world has ever known! If He is not the Christ, the Son of the Living God, then He is anti-Christ, but He is not just a good man. A good man does not drive others to despair, but this is what He does, if the noblest life that ever the world has known can promise virtue no other reward than to hang on a gibbet to make a Roman holiday. If your weak, tolerant Christ be right, then wrong must be right; then what matter if we be saints or devils, if Christ on a tree or Judas on a halter must both taste eternal death!

Take your human Christ Who cannot save the Truth He preached, but drowns with Him for Whom He risked His life. Take your soft Christ, you polluters of Divinity, Who make Him just a man! Ye sculptors, writers, dramatists and poets, ye so-called men of God! Take your weak Christ Who could bless the seed that died to live

again, but was not strong enough Who called Himself the Seed of Life once dead to rise again! Look to the flowers and grass and herbs that wake from winter's death! Will you deny that He Who made the blossoms break for April's sake, cannot Himself awake and move the stone from out of the tomb?

1) We need the Risen Jesus of the Scars for our times!

The only language we speak today is "blood, sweat and tears." A God without scars cannot understand our times: In this midnight hour of hopeless longing where even rivers run blood, and all the just of earth are a broken brood, when men are broken in heart, alone, and impotent, and where all men stand unmasked—to us no soft Christ can speak! Who can speak to those behind an Iron Curtain except a God on Whom it was once pulled down! Who can solace the Mindszentys, the Ordas, the Stepinacs, except Him Who alone has suffered under Pontius Pilate! Who can give courage to Poles, Lithuanians, Hungarians and the other dwellers in the catacombs of Eastern Europe, except Him who was once in the underground to give to this earth its greatest wound—AN EMPTY TOMB!

Hold up your hands, ye people of Siberia; ye whose sides have been dug with a sickle and ye whose hands have been beaten with a hammer! Who can give you hope but Him Who can match your wounds with His Scars? Ye 194,000,000 good people of Russia, who are crucified by a minority of 6,000,000, where shall you find courage except in Him Whose life reveals that though the devil has his hour, it is God Who wins the day!

2) Only a Jesus of the Scars can speak to those who sorrow! Take your soft Christ; He is alien to our tears and broken hearts! What answer is there for the wounded, the sick and the dying; the unpitied, unheeded and alone; the veterans of wars, the children starved for lack of bread, for all who in their agony shout: "Does God know what it is to suffer? Did He ever go without bread for forty days? Was He ever betrayed? Was He ever abandoned? Was His Body ever racked with pain and what did He do?"

Jesus of the Scars knows what pain is. And if He Who is God took pain upon Himself it must be that somehow or other it fits into God's plans, therefore He

could promise your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

Jesus of the Scars assured us that evil will never have an ultimate victory. The worst thing that evil can do is not to bomb cities, but to kill Goodness itself. But being defeated in its mightiest moment when evil used its strongest arms by His Resurrection from the dead, we may be sure that it will never be victorious again. Well, indeed, may the nail-torn Christ say: "I have overcome the world."

Jesus of the Scars knows what death is for He is the only one Who ever came to this world to die. Everyone else comes to live; death was a stumbling block to Socrates; it interrupted the teaching of Buddha. But to Christ, it was the goal of His Life, the gold that He was seeking. Breaking those bonds of the grave, by His Resurrection, He has taught us to say: "O death, where is thy victory? O grave, where is thy sting?" No longer can men say there are no tears in the eyes of the Eternal, no pain in the heart of God. Take then your Christ with lily-white Hands, with uncrimsoned robes and unpierced brows, and Eyes undimmed by sorrow! Take Him from our

midst! He is too soft for these hard days!

Scarred men come for healing only to scarred Hands! Only a Risen Jesus with scars can understand our hearts. This is not an age of wars, but an age of scars! We all have scars! Everybody! Scars on bodies—the wounds of war; scars on souls—the wounds of godlessness. Scars of hate, fear, anxiety, melancholy, bitterness! Either scars fighting against Thee or scars fighting with Thee! Scars born of the offensive against Love; Scars born of the defense of Love!

Come Jesus of the Scars, I am not strong, until Thy pierced Hand clasps my own; I am not brave till I see the pledge of victory on Thy Heart; and I am not free, till Thou dost bind me to Thy Scars! Too long have we been hard on Thomas! He is now our spokesman—greater than all the rest! Since the world has scars, death surrounds and evil

is strong, we too say: "Until I have seen the mark of the nails on his hands, until I have put my finger into the mark of the nails, and put my hand into his side, you will never make me believe" (John, 20-25).

"If we have never sought, we seek Thee now;
Thine eyes burn through the dark, our only stars;
We must have sight of thorn-pricks on Thy brow,
We must have Thee, O Jesus of the Scars.

"The other gods were strong;
but Thou wast weak;
They rode, but Thou didst stumble to a throne;
But to our wounds only God's wounds can speak,
And not a god has wounds, but Thou alone."

(Edward Shillito No. 737
(James Dalton Morrison
(Masterpieces of Religious Verse

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.

127 CATHOLIC HOUR STATIONS

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