


# THE ETERNAL GALILEAN



FULTON J. SHEEN

THE CATHOLIC HOUR



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# The Eternal Galilean

by

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- I. The Infinity of Littleness
- II. Shepherds and Wise Men
- III. The Artisan of Nazareth
- IV. The War with Temptation
- V. The Way, the Truth, and the Life
- VI. The Light of the World
- VII. The King of Hearts
- VIII. God's Bridge Builder
- IX. Divine Intimacies
- X. The Depths of Simplicity
- XI. Gambles on Calvary
- XII. The Crosses of Hate and Love
- XIII. The Cross and the Crucifix
- XIV. Hope for Sinners
- XV. The Eternal Galilean.

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Mary Immaculate Mother of God  
Advocate of Sinners at the Triune Throne  
Daughter of the Father, Mother of the Son, Spouse of the  
Ho'y Spirit

## THE INFINITY OF LITTLENESS

Address delivered on December 24, 1933

This is Christmas eve! In tens of thousands of homes tonight there is gaiety and gladness; gardens come to the windows in the form of wreaths, and forests into parlors in the form of trees; the children's long advent is ended as they jump with joy about their toys; the very atmosphere is changed with cheer; love sparkles, gifts abound, greetings exchange, hearts soften. Everywhere there is a new spirit, a new life, a new hope, a new joy!

But what is it all about? Why are people making merry? Why call this a season of joy? There must be some reason for it. I can understand why we shoot off firecrackers on the Fourth of July, because that is the day we celebrate the shot of liberty that was heard 'round the world; I can understand why we are silent for a few moments on Armistice Day, for that is the day we pay tribute to the heroes of our battlefields. I can understand a man making a great feast because he has come into a fortune. But I cannot imagine him doing so if his fortune is only a joke.

Now if this is not the day on which our Saviour was born, then why are we making merry? If this is not the day of Christ the King of Hearts, then our fun is only a fuss. If you saw a man on the street laughing hilariously, tears of joy running down his cheeks, and all the while no reason for his laughter, you would think the man was out of his head. He would be rejoicing without a reason for rejoicing, which is a sign of insanity. And so I say, if this is not the day on which God left the heavens to remake the hearts of men, then there is no more

reason for being glad on Christmas eve than there is for being glad on the first rainy Monday after the first sunny Sunday of the vernal equinox. If Christmas does not mean Christ, then why are we merry on this day any more than on the *fifth* of July? If Christmas does not mean God amongst men, then we are absurdly having the feast without the festival, decorating the town for a victory which never took place, and bringing gifts to a marriage festival which is really only a divorce.

I know why I am glad today; I know why millions of others are glad. It is because we are celebrating a marriage—a marriage so solemn and permanent as to be the only one the world will never cease celebrating; the Divine Nuptials of God and man in the Incarnation of our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

That great mass of people in our land who are being merry because it is a fashion rather than because it is a marriage, have confused Yuletide with Christmas and log-burning with an Incarnation. In varying degrees we all miss the full import of the feast. There is only one way to discover the meaning of Christmas—and that is by being little, which is another word for being humble. There is only one way in which we deliver anything big, and that is by being little. There is only one spirit by which we can discover the immense God, and that is the spirit of little children. Verify this law in experience and see how much it is the law of Christmas.

In the physical order have you ever noticed that to a child everything seems big: his father is bigger than any other man in the world, and his uncle who is standing near the window is taller than the great



oaks down in the valley. Every child loves the story of Jack and the bean stalk, because for him every bean stalk towers up to the very skies. Now, as a matter of fact, bean stalks do not scrape the stars; but to a child they do, because the child is so small that in relation to himself everything is big—even the bean stalk. It is only when the child grows big that bean stalks become small. It is only by being little that we ever discover anything big.

To take another example: Every child loves to play horse with a broomstick. He straddles it and by some peculiar magic its one wooden leg changes into four beating hoofs, and its straws into a mane whistling through the wind. Now broomsticks are not horses, and their straw is not a mane; but to a child they are, because he is so small that in comparison to himself everything else seems big. Even his giants that trample down forests like grass are creations of humility. It is only when he grows to be a big, big man that the giants die and his fairy tale becomes nonsense. It is only by being little that we ever discover anything big.

To take a final example: In many a home to-night a child is playing with little tin soldiers no more than three inches high. He lines them up, under the commands of lieutenants, majors, and generals and sends them out to fight the foe. To him these soldiers are not tin, they are flesh and blood; they are not three inches high but six feet high; they are not carrying toy guns, they are firing machine guns; they are not standing still, they are going "over the top." He can smell the smoke of battle, hear the bursting shells, feel the breaking shrapnel, and see men falling in death beside him. Why, the very red of the carpet is the blood of the

battlefield as the long range guns turn the poppy field into Haceldamas of blood! It's a real war, and there will be no peace until it's over! When he gets bigger he will stop playing, and the soldiers will only be broken tin toys, as they shrink from six feet to three inches and are gathered into a waste basket and carted away with the boyhood joys which never come back again.

What does it mean to be a child? "To be a child," someone has said, "is to be something far different from the man of today. It is to have a spirit yet streaming from the waters of baptism; it is to believe in love, to believe in loveliness, to believe in belief; it is to be so little that the elves can reach to whisper in your ears; it is to turn pumpkins into coaches, and mice into horses, lowness in loftiness and nothingness into everything, for each child has its fairy Godmother in its own soul; it is to live in a nutshell and count yourself the king of infinite space. The universe is his box of toys. He dabbles his fingers in the day-fall. He is gold-dusty by tumbling amidst the stars. He makes brief mischief with the moon. The meteors muzzle their noses in his hands. He teases the growling and kennelled thunder, and laughs at the shaking of its fiery chair. He dances in and out of the gate of heaven. His floor is littered with broken fancies. He runs wild over the fields of ether. He chases the rolling world. He gets between the feet of the horses of the sun. He stands in the lap of Mother Nature, and twines her loosened tresses after a hundred wilful fashions to see in which way she will look most beautiful." That is what it means to be a child. That, too, is why it is only by being little that we ever discover anything big.

Now there is a close relation between physical littleness, which is childhood, and mental littleness, which is humility. We cannot always be children, but we can always have the vision of children, which is another way of saying we can be humble. And so the law remains ever the same: if a man is ever to discover anything big, he must always be making himself little; if he magnifies his ego to the infinite, he will discover nothing, for there is nothing bigger than the infinite; but if he reduces his ego to zero, then he will discover everything big—for there is nothing smaller than himself. How then shall man discover God at Christmas time? How shall he find the reason for the joy behind the joy? Just as it is only by being little that he discovers anything big, it is only by being humble that he will find an Infinite God in the form of a little child.

To grasp this truth imagine two men entering the cave where the Babe is born—one a proud man, the other a humble man. First, let the proud man, intoxicated with pride, and full of a smattering of knowledge gleaned from some handy Wellsian history of the world, enter the cave of Bethlehem. Do you think he would ever discover the immense God? Why, he is so big that he thinks there is nothing bigger than himself, and so wise that there is nothing wiser than himself, and so self-sufficient that nothing could ever add to his sufficiency. He is so big mentally, that to him everything else is little. To him what is really bigger than the universe is only a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and what is really a King is no bigger than the head of an ox, and what is really eternal Wisdom is only a speechless organism. He smiles at the credulity of the

shepherds who believe in angels, and at the ignorance of the Wise Men who believe in the Providential guiding of a star. He lifts his eyebrows at the Virgin Mother, vaguely remembering an Egyptian legend about Krishna. He condescends a glance at Joseph, the man of rags, to whom the inn-keeper rightly denied entrance. He thinks of all that science has done to master the earth, and then how foolish it is to think of that Babe as a Creator; he dwells on Relativity, and then on the absurdity of calling a glorified amoeba the Lord of Heaven and earth; he recalls how much Birth Control has done to keep the poor from bringing children into the world, and then how foolish was the Mother of that Child who could offer Him only a stable and a few straws from a threshing floor. He misses the infinite because he is proud; he misses discovering God because he is too big. For it is only by being little that we ever discover anything big—even God.

Now let a humble man enter the cave. I mean a man who believes he does not know everything, a man who is teachable, a man who is simple. He looks at exactly the same spectacle the proud man looked at, and yet he sees something different. He looks at the roof of the stable and sees the great canopy of stars; he looks at a Babe, and sees the One Whom not even the heavens or earth could contain; he looks at a manger, and sees that God became man to be our food. To him baby eyes see through hearts and read secrets unto judgment. To him swaddling bands which now bind life, are those which later on will be broken, for life cannot be holden by death. To him ruddy lips are those whose kiss gives immortality and whose articulation car-

ries the message of peace and pardon. To him, tiny hands are those on which is poised all the nations of the earth as the least grain in the balance. The date is December twenty-fifth, but to this humble man, it is Christmas; the manger is a throne; the straw is royal plumage; the stable is a castle; and the Babe is God. He finds Wisdom because he is foolish, Power because he is weakness, and the Infinite, Immense, and Eternal God, because he is little—for it is only by being little that we ever discover anything big.

Only the humble man, from another point of view, realizes he stands in need of help from above. Hence only the humble man understands the meaning of the Incarnation. It will be recalled that the word "incarnation," derived from the Latin, means "in the flesh." Sometimes when we wish to emphasize a virtue in a man, e. g., kindness, we say in an exaggerated manner, that he is kindness incarnate. By that we mean that the Ideal of Kindness has taken on in him a human form. Now when we speak of the Incarnation we really mean that the Life, the Truth, and the Love of the Perfect God took on a visible human likeness in the Person of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The faith of the humble man tells him: this Child is the Incarnate Word of God; true God and true man; He is the Creator of the human race become man; he needs milk to nourish Him, but it is by His hand that the birds of the heavens are fed; He is born of a Mother, but He is the One Who pre-existed His own Mother and therefore made her beautiful and sinless, as we would have done for our own mother if we but had the power; He lies upon

straw on earth and yet sustains the universe and reigns in Heaven; He is born in time and yet He existed before all time; maker of the stars under the stars; ruler of the earth an outcast of earth; filling the world, lying in a manger. And yet the proud man sees only a Babe. The humble man, illumined by faith, sees two lives in this Babe in the unity of the Person of God. Between these two lives of Christ—the Divine which He ever possesses by His eternal birth in the bosom of the Father, and the human which He began to possess by His Incarnation in the bosom of a Virgin—there is neither mingling nor confusion. The divine in Him does not absorb the human; the human does not lessen the divine. The union is such that there is but a single Person, the Divine Person, the Person of the Word of God. There is no human analogy for it—not even the union of our body and our soul in the unity of our person tells us the depths of the mystery of a God Who became a man, in order that man might become once more the image and likeness of God.

Only the humble, simple souls, who are little enough to see the bigness of God in the littleness of a Babe, therefore, are the ones who will ever understand the reason of His Visitation. He came to this poor earth of ours to carry on an exchange; to say to us, as only a good God could say: "You give Me your humanity and I will give you My divinity; you give Me your time and I will give you My eternity; you give Me your weary body and I will give you redemption; you give Me your broken heart and I will give you love; you give Me your nothingness and I will give you My All."

Christmas, then, if it means anything, means the

exaltation and glorification of the spirit of the child, which is just another word for humility. The world, which is so bent on power, never seems thoroughly to grasp the paradox that just as only little children discover the biggness of the universe, so only humble hearts ever find the greatness of God. The world misses the lesson because it confuses littleness with weakness, child-likeness with childishness, and humility with an inferiority complex. It thinks of power only in terms of physical force, and of wisdom only in terms of the vain knowledge of the spirit of the day. It forgets that great moral strength may be hidden in physical weakness, as Omnipotence was wrapped in swaddling bands; and that great Wisdom may be found in simple faith as the Eternal Mind was found in the form of a babe. There is strength—strength before which the angels trembled, strength before which the stars prostrated, and strength before which the very throne of Herod shook in fear. It was the strength of that Divine and Awful Love which shrank from nothing.

But His law must be our law. We must begin our eternal work as He was pleased to begin His, namely by beginning at the lowest and the humblest as the starting point for the highest and the mightiest. As He who is God descended even to the lowliness of childhood, as the first step to His everlasting triumph, so must we descend from our ignorant pride to the level of what we are in his eyes. “. . . unless you . . . become as little children,” is His characteristic word, “you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt. 18, 3). To become as little children means nothing more

than humility or truthfulness in judgment about ourselves, a recognition of the disproportion between our poor life and the eternal life before us, an acknowledgement of our weakness, our frailty, our sin, the pooriness of all we are doing now, and yet the power and wisdom which is to be ours, provided we are humble enough to kneel before a Babe in a manger of straw and confess Him to be Our Lord, Our Life, and Our All.

And so Christmas is the children's day, in which age, like a crab, turns backwards, in which the wrinkles are smoothed by the touch of a recreating hand, in which the proud become children, and the big become little, and all find their God. Hence I speak to you not in words of learned wisdom, but in the words of a child. On this Christmas eve I go—we all go—stooping into the cave; we put off our worldly wisdom, our pride, our seeming superiority, and we become as little ones before the incalculable mystery of the humiliation of the Son of God. As such we creep to the knee of the loveliest woman in all the world, the woman who alone of all women wears the red rose of motherhood and the white rose of virginity, the mother who in begetting Our Lord, became the Mother of Men; and we ask her to teach us how to serve God, how to love God, how to pray to God. And in the language of Mary Dixon Thayer we say to her:

Lovely Lady dressed in blue—  
Teach me how to pray;  
God was just your little Boy  
Tell me what to say!  
Did you lift Him up sometimes  
Gently on your knee?  
Did you sing to Him the way  
Mother does to me?  
Did you hold His hand at night?



Did you ever try  
Telling Him stories of the world?  
O—And did He cry?  
Do you really think He cares  
If I tell Him things—  
Little things that happen? And  
Do the angels' wings make a noise?  
Can He hear me if I speak low—  
Does He understand me now?  
Tell me, for you know!  
Lovely Lady dressed in blue,  
Teach me how to pray!  
God was just your little Boy,  
And you know the way. \*

And then, when we have asked Mary how to pray, we go to Jesus on this Christmas evening, and if we have not lost anything of that littleness by which we discover the secrets of the Infinite, we shall ask Him one of the most important questions in all the world. We shall not ask Him how the atoms behave, nor if space is curved, nor if light is a wave, but we shall ask Him how it feels for the God of Heaven to live as a Child on this poor earth of ours.

Little Jesus, wast Thou shy  
Once, and just so small as I?  
And what did it feel like to be  
Out of Heaven, and just like me?  
Didst Thou sometimes think of there,  
And ask where all the angels were?  
I should think that I would cry  
For my house all made of sky;  
I would look about the air,  
And wonder where my angels were;  
And at waking 'twould distress me—  
Not an angel there to dress me.  
Hadst Thou ever any toys,  
Like us little girls and boys?  
And didst Thou play in Heaven with all  
The angels that were not too tall,  
With stars for marbles? Did the things  
Play 'can you see me?' through their wings?  
And did Thy Mother let Thee spoil  
Thy robes, with playing on our soil?

\* **Lovely Lady Dressed in Blue, by Mary Dixon Thayer.**

How nice to have them always new  
In Heaven, because 'twas quite clean blue.

Didst Thou kneel at night and pray,  
And didst Thou join Thy hands, this way?  
And did they tire sometimes, being young,  
And make the prayer seem very long?  
And dost Thou like it best that we  
Should join our hands to pray to Thee?  
And did Thy Mother at the night  
Kiss Thee, and fold the clothes in right?  
I used to think, before I knew,  
The prayer not said unless we do.  
And didst Thou feel quite good in bed,  
Kissed and sweet, and Thy prayers said?  
Thou canst not have forgotten all  
That it feels like to be small;  
And Thou know'st I cannot pray  
To Thee in my father's way—  
When Thou wast little, say,  
Couldst Thou talk Thy Father's way?  
So, a little child, come down  
And hear a child's tongue like Thy own;  
Take me by the hand and walk,  
And listen to my baby talk.  
To Thy Father show my prayer  
(He will look, Thou art so fair)  
And say: 'O Father, I, Thy Son,  
Bring the prayer of a little one.'

And He will smile, that children's tongue  
Has not changed since Thou wast young. \*

If we are little enough to do these things about a crib where then there clashed and thundered "un-thinkable wings around an incredible star," then we shall discover the Infinite; if we are humble enough to go to one Who has no home, then we shall find our home; if we are simple enough to become children by being reborn in our old age, then we shall discover the Life that abideth when time shall be no more. And so on this Christmas eve, Christ comes. To some He comes when their hearts are empty of the world; to others He comes when their hungry

\* Ex Ore Infantium, by Francis Thompson.

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stomachs testify to the hunger of their spirits; to others He comes when joy possesses them as really as an embrace; to others He comes when the world on which they leaned as a staff has pierced their hands; to others He comes only when tears stream their cheeks; that He might wipe them away. But to each and every one He comes in His own sweet way; He—Christ; at Christ's Mass; on Christmas. Merry Christmas!

## SHEPHERDS AND WISE MEN

Address delivered on December 31, 1933

Any mind which thinks about religion at all asks itself such questions as these: Why do so few souls ever find Christ? Why are so many seeking Him, and so few finding Him? Why do the passing fads of the day win so many adherents and the Divine Saviour so few? Many there are who know Christ as a genial preacher of good fellowship, or as a social reformer of humanitarian leanings, but few there are who ever find Him as God among men, the Light and the Life of the world.

Why should such an attitude exist toward One Who came to remake a world by remaking a human heart? The reason is that the minds who seek Him are either not simple enough or they are not learned enough. From the beginning Our Blessed Lord has been found only by two classes: those who know, and those who do not know—but never by those who think they know. Divinity is so profound that it can be grasped only by the extremes of simplicity and wisdom. There is something in common between the wise and the simple, and that is humility. The wise man is humble because he knows that regardless of how deep he digs, Divinity is always deeper; the simple man is humble, because he knows Divinity is so deep there is no use of him digging. But that self-wise inquirer, with a sophomoric mind stuffed with the pride of his little learning, is so convinced of his knowledge that he will not dig because he thinks nothing can be deeper than himself.

As it was in the beginning, so it is now and

ever shall be: Our Lord is discovered only by the simple and the learned, but never by the man with one book, never by the mind that thinks that it knows. Go back in your mind's eye to that night when Divine Light, in order to illumine the darkness of men, tabernacled Himself in the world He had made, and you will see that only the simple and the learned found Him; namely, the Shepherds and the Wise Men. The angels and a star caught up the reflection of that Light, as a torch lighted by a torch, and passed it on to the watchers of sheep and the searchers of skies. And lo! as the shepherds watched their flocks about the hills of Bethlehem, they were shaken by the light of the angels saying to them: "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, that shall be to all people; for this day is born to you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord, in the city of David." And lo! as wise men from beyond the land of Media and Persia searched the heavens, the brilliance of a star, like a tabernacle lamp in the sanctuary of God's creation, beckoned them on to the stable where the star seemed to lose its light in the unearthly brilliance of the Light of the World. Like moths to the flame came the shepherds and wise men to a throne that was only a stable and a God that was only a Babe. And as God in the form of a Babe looked up from His crib, He saw the types of the only two classes of people who found Him that night, and who will find Him unto the end: the shepherds and the wise men—the simple and the learned.

The shepherds were the simple souls who knew nothing of the politics of the world, nothing of its

art, nothing of its literature. Not one of them could recite a single line of Virgil, though there was hardly an educated person in the Roman Empire who was ignorant of his poetry. Into their fields and simple lives, there never came a rumor of the scandals of Herod's voluptuous court, nor even a word about the learned Gamaliel, who sat in the temple counting out the seventy weeks of years. The great broad world of public opinion ignored them as of no account in the progress of men and nations. And yet these simple shepherds, whose early kings were shepherds, *did know* two very important things: the God above their heads, and the sheep about their feet. But that was enough for simple souls to know, and on that night when the heavens were so bright that they burst to reveal their radiant minstrelsies, an angel announced that He for Whom they yearned with breathless expectancy was now born among common people in a common stable, in the common little town of Bethlehem. And gathering one of the things they knew, a little lamb, they brought it and laid it at the feet of the only other Thing they knew—the God of the Heavens Who came to earth as the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world. And so at last the shepherds had found their Shepherd.

The other class who found Him were wise men—not kings but teachers of kings, not mere diletantes in knowledge, but searchers of the heavens and discoverers of the stars. In both science and religion they held first rank in their nations, the kings consulting them before they went to war, and the peasants before they tilled their land. One

night a new star appeared in the heavens. Thousands besides them saw its brilliant light, but these thousands were not wise with the wisdom of the Wise Men; they were wise only in their conceit. They saw only a star, but these first scientists of the Christian age saw a star and envisaged a God. To the proud man the star is only a star; to the wise men the star is a handiwork of God. To them it is a telltale and a revelation of something beyond. And so they followed the light of the star, but instead of leading them over the mountains beyond the sun and the shining chandeliers of the Pleiades to the hid battlements of heaven, it rather led them along the sandy courses of earth to the end of the trail of the golden star, where the wise men bent on the voyage of discovery made the great Discovery of God. These wise, learned, and mighty men, kneeling in pontifical robes upon a bedding of straw, before a Babe Who could neither ask nor answer questions, offered their gifts and themselves as pledges of the obedience of the world. Their gifts were three: gold, frankincense, and myrrh—gold, because He would rule as a King; frankincense, because He would live as a priest; and myrrh, because He would die like a man. At last the wise men had discovered Wisdom.

Only the shepherds and the wise men found Christ, but think of the thousands who did not. The world in those days, as in our own, was full of worldly wise, but none of them discovered God. There was many an agnostic in Rome telling a young Pilate that there is no such thing as truth; there was many a sophist in the market place of Athens teaching that man could dispense with the gods; there were vain poets glorifying license

under the name of liberty, and injustice in the name of progress; but to none of these souls did there come the vision of an angel or the light of a star. And why? Because treasures of wisdom and knowledge, of healing grace and salvation, are reserved only for the extremes, in the intellectual order as well as in the moral. When God was a Babe only the intellectual extremes of simplicity and wisdom found their way to the crib; when God was a Man only the moral extremes of sinfulness and innocence found their way to His feet.

The innocent, like John, came to Him because they did not need to be cleansed; the sinners, like Magdalene, came to Him because they felt the need of being cleansed. But that middle group of Pharisees, who reprimanded His apostles because they did not wash their hands before eating, hypocrites who were like whitened sepulchres, outside clean but inside full of dead men's bones; the self-righteous, who were half-depraved and half-intact, who were never hot with love or cold with hate—these never knelt before the uplifted hand of the Sacred Heart. They are the kind that Scripture says shall be vomited from the very mouth of God.

As the arches of the centuries mark the pathway of history, the crib became the Church which Our Blessed Lord grounded upon Peter. It is, indeed, remarkable that only the same two classes of people who found their way to the crib find their way to the Church. Only the heirs of the shepherds and the descendants of the wise men ever enter its sacred portals. This is just another way of saying that the Church has room only for two extremes: those who think, and those who do not



think; but it has no room for those who think that they think.

The Church, I say, is found first by the simple: that great mass of men and women whose ignorance is more illumined than the doctrines of learned men—simple souls who because of their ordinary routine labors, like shepherds on Judean hills, have no time for learned study, or who, if they do have time, prefer like those same shepherds to be instructed by the angels or the ambassadors of God. For this great army which does not think, there is the authority of the Church, which they accept with the same loving obedience with which a child accepts the dictates of its parents. They do not want to know why the Church calls the eternal birth of the Second Person of the Trinity a generation, and the procession of the Third Person a spiration; they do not want to know how the accidents of bread and wine can exist without the substance of bread and wine, any more than a child wants to know the details of the city government under which his parents vote. They want only to know *what* the Church teaches—that is enough. They want only to know what the Vicar of Christ says—this satisfies them. The world calls them fools, and says the Church is filled with the ignorant. Yes, the Church is filled with millions of simple souls who obey authority for no other reason than because it is authority but that does not mean they are fools. It is only another way of saying the cave of Bethlehem was filled with shepherds.

But the Church takes care not only of those who do not think, but also of those who do think: and by those who think I mean the profound and

the real seekers after truth. From the days of the learned Paul down to our own, the Church has had to take care of the learned, the profound, and the wise men. There have been those who wanted to know not only the authority of the Church, but the reason behind authority; not only that the Church is infallible, but why the Church is infallible; not only that there are three Persons in the Blessed Trinity, but why there are not four. The Church has to take care of them as the crib had to husband the Magi, and to those minds who would drink deep of the Pierian spring, who would take soundings of the Infinite, and would search with the telescope of faith those unexplored regions of thought which the eye of reason cannot attain, the Church throws open the deep wells of philosophy and theology, in comparison to which all our higher mathematics and astral physics are but the shallow streams of the prairies and the playthings of the human mind. The world says that such learning of the Church is vain; that theology is not profound. Aye! that it is foolish! But that is only another way of saying that the Wise Men were vain enough to follow a star until it led to God.

But between the extremes of the simple souls who live by faith, who are content to be children all their spiritual lives, and the learned souls like Augustine and Aquinas whose torches of wisdom, lit at the foot of the crucifix, continue to illumine a darkened world—between these extremes there is no mean. The simple shepherds heard the voice of an angel and found their Lamb; the wise men saw the light of a star, and found their Wisdom. But Herod the Great, who lived within a dozen

miles of the shepherds and was visited by the Wise Men *en route* to the crib, never found God—not even in his massacre. And all the race of proud Herods from that day to this have missed God either because they are too complicated to understand the simple reports of the shepherds, or too filled with useless learning to grasp the only useful truth which the Wise Men bring. They cover up their pride, heaping scorn and ridicule upon the Church as antiquated and behind the times. The world really should turn a deaf ear to their attacks because they have not earned the intellectual right to attack it—they do not know anything about it.

And so I repeat what I said at the beginning that humility, which is common to the simple and the wise, is the condition of discovering Wisdom. If our age lacks any quality at all, it is what might be called teachableness, or what the Latins called docility. Minds today rely principally on what they have obtained by their own thought or reading. Some fancy they can find out truth entirely by themselves and disdain the idea that God might add to their knowledge by revelation. Others believe that Wisdom is synonymous with a smattering of facts about science, or the book of the month, or the new skull dug up in Peking. Even University education has become so impregnated with the research of useless facts, that it forgets research is only a means to an end, which is the discovery of truth. It is well to remember that Herod is what many of our universities would have called a man of research, for he inquired diligently where the Child was born. But the Wise Men understood education far better. They were men

of research too, for they searched the skies—but they were humble enough to know that research was only an instrument, and so they followed their science of the stars until it brought them to the Maker of the Stars, the Wisdom of the World, and the Light of Men, Who is Christ Our Lord.

Only the teachable find the Teacher, only the docile find the Doctor, only the humble find the Exalted. The simple souls, like the Shepherds, find God because they know they know nothing; the really learned souls like the Wise Men find God because they know they do not know everything. And from that day to this the great mass of converts to the Church is made up of simple souls like the poor old woman who wanted to be a Catholic because she would like to say her beads before Our Lord in the tabernacle, and the really learned souls like Chesterton, Dawson, Maritain, who know so much history, philosophy, and literature that they could not resist the irresistible grace of God. That too is why God sends into each age of history the saint conspicuous for the virtue the world needs most. And so in these days of pride and self-conceit, He raised up the Little Flower, who, although possessed of the Wisdom that saves, was as simple as a child, and who although living in a day when men judged power by the great things they could raise up on earth, rather judged power by the roses she would let fall from heaven. Through her intercession hundreds of thousands of converts have been brought to the Wisdom of the Crib and the Strength of the Cross. Through her the extremes of simplicity and learning meet in the Church. Through her the ignorant peasant and the university professor find

a common ground: they know what each must believe. And so the Church may be defined as a place where we can stand responsible for one another's opinions. The learned know what the simple must believe, and the simple know what the learned must believe, namely, that there is no other name under the heavens given to men whereby they may be saved, than the name of the Babe in the Crib. But the Herods of the world never find the Church as they never find Christ—not even in their attempt to slaughter it; and the reason is that men never feel a tug toward the Church until they have ceased to pull against it. They must treat it with an open mind—even when they fear that it may be right—but that is just another way again of saying we must be humble.

Our Lord was not born under an open sky, under which men might walk erect, but in a cave entrance to which can be gained only by stooping. The stoop is the stoop of humility. Some minds are too proud to stoop and so they miss the Joy that is inside the cave. The Shepherds and Wise Men were humble enough to stoop, and when they stooped they found they were not in a cave at all, but in another world where there lived a beautiful woman with the sun above her head, the moon beneath her feet, and in her arms the Babe in Whose tiny fingers was poised the very earth in which we live. And as Shepherds and Wise Men knelt in adoration, I wonder whether the wise envied the simple, or the simple envied the wise. I believe the Wise Men envied the Shepherds, because their way was quicker—they were not so long in discovering that Wisdom, which is God.

## THE ARTISAN OF NAZARETH

Address delivered on January 7, 1934

In the past man talked less about living his life, and more about saving his soul. But in our age the emphasis has shifted from the religious and the moral, to the political and the economic. The attraction toward heaven has decreased, and the gravitation toward the earth increased. The single quest for God has given way to the double quest for Power and Wealth. The modern man isolated from God and uprooted from the great spiritual patrimony of the ages, craves to satisfy the egotism of his mind by commanding, and the egotism of his body by enjoying. Hence the successful man of our day is the man who has Power and the man who has Wealth.

But running counter to these modern ideals is a double force seeking to destroy them: the force of Anarchy and the force of Bolshevism. Anarchy contends that all Power is wrong, and hence would throw all governments into the dust. Bolshevism holds that all Wealth is wrong, and hence would confiscate private fortunes to swell the coffers of the State.

In the face of these two extremes: the one glorifying Power and Wealth, and the other condemning them, the earnest soul seeks a sane solution. He asks himself such questions as these: Are Power and Wealth absolutely vicious? Is a man wrong in wanting to be a Master, or in desiring to be rich? Is the Anarchist, on the contrary, justified

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in condemning all Power, and the Communist right in destroying all Wealth?

There is only one yardstick by which these ideals may be measured, and that is the Life and Doctrine of Him Who walks across the modern stage as Time shifts its scenery from Nazareth to New York and from Genesareth to the Thames. The Hidden Life of Nazareth is the eternal answer to the problem, and the answer is: that Power and Wealth are legitimate ambitions and ideals, but—and here Our Lord breaks with the modern world—*no man has a right to Power until he has learned to obey, and no man has a right to Wealth until he has learned to be detached.* This is the double lesson of Nazareth contained in the only two simple facts we know about His hidden years: firstly, that He was subject in obedience to His Parents, and secondly, that He was a poor village carpenter.

Nazareth is not a trite story about the beauty of slavery and subjection, as some enemies of Christianity would have us believe. If Our Lord were merely a human child without any Divine prerogatives, then the Carpenter Shop might reveal the lesson that Power was wrong. But obedience is only half the lesson of Nazareth. Our Lord was obedient—yes. He was a servant—yes. He was subject—yes. But He was more than that! He was a Power Who became obedient, a Master Who became a servant, and a Lord Who came not to be ministered unto but to minister. His Power in the human order reached back through forty-two generations to Abraham, and in the Divine order to the eternal generation in the bosom of the Eternal Father; His Power at birth was saluted by the harping sympho-

nies of Angelic Glorias; His power at twelve confounded the Wise Doctors of the Temple as He unraveled to them the Wisdom of a Son on the business of His Heavenly Father; His Power at thirty made the unconscious waters blush into wine and the seething sea hush into calm; and His Power at thirty-three reminded a Pontius Pilate about to execute his authority as governor and ruler that the real seat of his power was not in Rome, but in the heavens above where he would one day have to render an account of his stewardship. And yet He Who had all this Power and Who said that to Him "all power is given on heaven and on earth," passed practically the whole of His life in a despised village and degraded valley, with no flash of outward pomp and circumstance, subject to a Virgin and a just man, whom He knew before they were made, and who after they were really His Own children. What was all this but a lesson to the world which misunderstands Power, either by glorifying it, or by overthrowing it: namely, that no man has a right to command until he has learned to serve, and no man has a right to be a master until he has learned to be obedient?

Why has so much of the Power in the history of the world degenerated into Tyranny? Why has so much of the Authority of governments in the history of the world corrupted into Force? It is because those who had Power did not know how to obey, and those who had Authority did not know how to be subject. Now if those who have Power, whether it be the heads of governments, the leaders of nations, or the masters of political influences, recognize no Power above them whose laws they must obey and whose judgment they must fear, then where shall



they learn that obedience without which no man can justly govern? If there be no King or Kings, then what shall stay Power from degenerating into Tyranny? What was Pilate but the Power of Rome, without the obedience of Nazareth? What is social snobbery, but royal birth without Nazarene simplicity? What is Pride, but a Palm Sunday without the sobering prelude of a Carpenter's shop? Our Lord came into this world not to condemn Power: For what is Power but the Law of God in the hearts of men, as well as in the kernel of the seed? Our Lord did not come to take away Power. He came to teach us how to use it. He came to tell us that no man shall exercise his Power in the pomp of Jerusalem, until he has learned to serve in the servitude of Nazareth; that no man shall be a general until he has learned how to serve in the ranks, and that no one shall be a lord until he has learned to be unlordly. Salvation in a world crisis lies, therefore, not in revolutionary attempts to upset governments, nor in the anarchist's attempt to subvert authority, nor in the demagogic democracy which would suffer no other head to mount above one's own—rather does salvation lie in all powers, political, social, and economic, becoming subject to a Power above them. If they do this, then they can say they are entitled to obedience because they are obedient to the Power above them; than they can say they must be respected as an authority, because they have learned to obey their Author; then they can say they must be revered, because they are reverent to their God.

Nazareth has yet another lesson to teach, and that is that no one is entitled to Wealth until he has learned to be detached. In other words, Nazareth is not just a simple glorification of poverty, a

fatalistic resignation to squalor, a calm indifference about hardship and hunger. Neither is to a condemnation of wealth. In Nazareth Our Lord was poor—yes. He was a needy village carpenter—yes. He worked for the mere necessities of life—yes. But He was more than that! He was not just a Poor Man. He was a Rich Man Who became poor, just as He was a powerful Man Who became obedient. His wealth was the treasure of Heaven which rust does not eat, moths consume, nor thieves break through and steal; His wealth was the wealth, not of a carpenter of Nazareth, but the wealth of a Carpenter Who made the universe with its canopy of glittering stars and its carpet of lilies which toil not, neither do they spin. His wealth was the mansions of His Father's House which He had seen, the beauty of which the human eye hath never seen, nor the ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived. And yet, with all the wealth of God, He became poor; for He chose to be born in a shepherd's cave, work as a tradesman, preach as a vagabond, with nowhere to lay His Head, die on a poor man's cross, and be buried in a stranger's grave. The world before had heard of wealthy men giving away their wealth to be philanthropists. The world had heard Buddha ask his disciples to renounce wealth, had seen Crates of Thebes give his gold to the poor, and heard the Stoics eulogize poverty at rich banquets; but the world before had never heard of poverty being not an ascetic rule, not a proud disguise for ostentation, not a philosophical ornament nor a mystic mood, but a step to higher perfection which is union with the Spirit of God. Others had said, "Sell all you have"; but only He added, "Then come follow Me." His life and doctrine are not those of

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many of our social reformers who, seeing the abuses of wealth and the excesses of capitalism, provoke class conflict and demand the division of wealth even though it was honestly earned. The Communists who harangue the rich find no support in the simple Nazarene. *No one has a right to despise the rich until like Our Blessed Lord he has proved he is free from the passion of wealth.* That is why He could be as hard as the selfish rich and say to them that it was easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. The poverty of Nazareth was not a condemnation of wealth; neither was it a glorification of wealth; neither was it a canonization of poverty as such. It was the preachment of the beautiful doctrine of detachment, by which men free themselves from the passion of wealth for the glory of God and the salvation of souls—even though that wealth is only their own will and a few fishing boats and tangled nets.

Why has so much of the Wealth of the world ended in wars over wealth? Why have so many of the rich been greedy, and so many of the wealthy been misers? Why have so many of the poor been bitter and so many of the needy communists?

It is because they do not know what it means to be detached. It is because they never learned the lesson of Nazareth, which is to have all things and possess nothing. If they understood Nazareth aright, there would be no occasion for saying with Professor Joad of Cambridge University that God is cheaper than a living wage and the governing classes have found it expedient to exploit Him to the utmost.

Our Lord never sought to keep the poor satisfied with their poverty, nor the miserable satisfied with their misery, just because they were poor or because they were miserable. He glorified not the Poor Man, not the Rich Man, but the Poor Man who was not always poor; the Poor Man who once was rich; the Poor Man who by the law of detachment possessed everything, because He desired nothing; the Poor Man who became poor, not by giving away His Wealth, but by exchanging it for the incommensurable riches of heaven. And all this is only another way of saying, not Blessed are the Rich, not Blessed are the Poor, but Blessed are the *Poor in Spirit*.

When He who was rich became so poor that He could complain: The foxes have their holes, the birds of the air have their nests, but the Son of Man hath nowhere to lay His Head; and when He to Whom all Power was given in Heaven and earth, girded Himself with a towel and on the night before He died humbled Himself by washing the feet of His own Apostles, He taught us how to be poor without being communists, and how to be obedient without being revolutionists. He reminded us that poverty and slavery no more entitle a man to the kingdom of heaven than do Wealth and Power, but that the rich man would enter heaven if he would be poor in spirit and the powerful masters would enter heaven if following His example in the Upper Room they would act as the servants of God. The carpenter's shop, therefore, is not a truism about the beauty of poverty and the holiness of slavery. It is a paradox about the richness of the poor in spirit, and the power of the Masters who serve. As a matter of fact, Our Blessed Lord is the Only One

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Who ever walked this dreary earth of ours of Whom the Rich and the Poor, the Masters and the Servants, the Powerful and the Slaves, could say: *He came from our ranks! He is one of our own!*

## THE WAR WITH TEMPTATION

Address delivered on January 14, 1934

The great characteristic of our age is not its love of religion, but its love of talking about religion. Even those who would smite God from the heavens make a religion out of their irreligion, and a faith out of their doubt. On all sides—from a thousand pens, a hundred microphones, scores of university rostrums—we have heard it repeated, until our very heads reel, that the “acids of modernity” have eaten away the old faith and the old morality to suit the new spirit of the age.

This new religion, we are told, must be absolutely different from anything that ever existed before. It must be just as fresh and modern as the brilliant age in which we live, with its new hopes, new visions, and new dreams. When we inquire diligently into the characteristics of this new religion, we are told it must be social, it must be political, it must be worldly.

By social they mean it must dedicate itself, not to the illusory pursuit of the spirit, but to the practical needs of the body. The religious man of the new era will be the one who gives bread to hungry stomachs, clothes to naked backs, and roofs to unsheltered heads. Better milk for babies, better play grounds for children, better bread for the poor—these, and not faith, grace, and sacraments, are the things on which man lives; and that religion which gives these social necessities is the religion of the future.

Next, we are told that the new religion must be political, and by that is meant that it should cease talking about the Kingdom of God and begin talking about the republics of earth. All its energies and zeal must be directed to support governmental policies such as liquor control, gold standards, and labor codes; there must be a swing away from the stress on eternity, prayers, and the communion of saints; for the world problems in need of a solution are not religious, but economic and political.

The final characteristic of the new cult will be its worldliness. Too long, we are told, has religion emphasized responsibility to God, and dwelt on duties to Him, instead of service to our fellowmen. The new religion has no time for the thought of responsibility to God, for the modern man, George Bernard Shaw tells us, is too busy to think about his sins. It makes man the master of all he surveys, the lord of his own life and therefore one who may shuffle off by his own hand if he chooses; for who is there who will dare say Nay?

Now let us ask the new prophets: How old is their new religion? Is it really a new thing or is it merely an old error with a new label? Let us go back two thousand years to the Eternal Galilean and learn not only that the new religion is just an old temptation, but also that resistance to it is the pledge and promise of Life Everlasting.

Go back to the picture of Our Blessed Lord as He stood in the untenanted wilderness which stretches southward from Jericho to the Dead Sea. There His forerunner John, with bronzed countenance, unshorn locks, leather girdle, and mantle of camel's hair, whose drink was the water of the river and whose food was locusts and wild honey, saw the

heavens open and the Spirit of God descend in dove-like radiance over his Master's Head, as there rang out over the Jordan river a voice which to unpurged ears was like thunder: "Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased." Thus Christ's first public act of self-abasement, in coming to John to be baptized, was followed by the first solemn declaration by the Father that He was the Son of God. Because He humbled Himself, God the Father exalted Him.

With the waters still dripping from His noble head, Our Lord went out into the solitude to put a desert between Himself and humanity. For forty years the Jewish people wandered in the desert before entering into the kingdom promised by God. For forty days Moses remained close to God to receive His law on tablets of stone. And now, before announcing His Kingdom, to which Moses and the chosen people had pointed, Our Blessed Saviour retires for forty days into the lonely mountains where no human face was to be seen and where no human voice was to be heard. And after forty days of fasting He was tempted by Satan. Tempted He could be, for He had taken the armour of human flesh, not for idleness, but for battle. Oh! Do not mock the Gospels and say there is no Satan. Evil is too real in the world to say that. Do not say the idea of Satan is dead and gone. Satan never gains so many cohorts, as when, in his shrewdness, he spreads the rumor that he is long since dead. Do not reject the Gospel because it says the Saviour was tempted. Satan always tempts the pure—the others are already his. Satan stations more devils on monastery walls than in dens of iniquity, for the latter offer no resistance. Do not say it was absurd that Satan should appear to Our Lord, for Satan must always



come close to the godly and the strong—the others succumb from a distance.

But in what did Satan tempt Christ? Here is the remarkable side of that temptation, and one which has a bearing on our own day. Satan tempted Our Blessed Lord to preach another religion than that which He was about to preach. Our Lord was about to preach a divine religion. Satan tempted Him to preach a religion that was not divine, but the religion which the modern world calls new: a religion which would be social, political, and worldly.

Satan first tempted Our Lord to make religion social: to make it center about the materialities of life, such as bread for starving bodies like His own. Pointing from the top of the mountain to the stones whose shapes resembled little loaves of bread, he said: "Command that these stones be made bread." It was Satan's challenge to God to make religion center around the materialities of life. But the answer of Our Blessed Lord was immediate: "Not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God." By that response, Our Lord declared that religion is not social, in the sense that its primary function is to give food to the body, but rather divine in the sense that it must give food to the soul. Men must have bread! There is no disputing that point. Our Lord taught us to ask the Father to "give us this day our daily bread"; He even went so far, when men were in dire need of it in the desert places, to multiply bread even to excess. But beyond that He told the thousands at Capharnaum He would not go. "You seek me . . . because you did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but

for that which endureth unto life everlasting." Religion then is not purely social. If salvation were only economic relief, if religion were only to give bread to hungry stomachs, then dogs would be invited to its banquet. No! Man has a higher principle than that of the beasts, and a higher life than that of the body. We come into this world not just to sit and rest, to work and play, to eat and drink. Hence the religion which would make the procuring of bread its chief object in life, and would seek no divine food, would starve with hunger in the midst of plenty—and that is why modern religion is dying. There must come dark hours when God must be trusted, even in hunger. There must even come moments in starvation when bread must be refused, if it means the sacrificing of a principle that endangers the soul.

It is no justification to say we *must* live, because bodily life in itself is not necessarily the best thing for us. It is better for us not to live, if we cannot live without sin. For it is never right for us to starve our spiritual nature to get bread for our bodies. Sometimes the best thing that we can do with our life is to lose it; and the best thing we can do with our body is not to fear those who would kill it, but rather those who would cast our soul into hell. Religion need not neglect sociology; the priest at the communion rail need not forget the bread lines; the minister in the sanctuary need not forget the playgrounds. The earthly, the human, and the social, are part of religion, but not primary, as Satan would have us believe. Rather, in searching for higher things, do we find the lower: "Seek ye therefore first the kingdom of God, and his justice, and all these things shall be added unto you."

Satan next tempted Our Lord to make religion political by exchanging the Kingdom of God for the kingdoms of earth. "And the devil . . . showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And he said to him: To thee will I give all this power, and the glory of them; for to me they are delivered, and to whom I will, I give them. If thou therefore will adore before me, all shall be thine. And Jesus answering said to him: It is written: *Thou shalt adore the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.*" By this answer Our Lord declared to all future ages that religion is not politics, that patriotism is not the highest virtue, that nationalism is not the highest worship, and that the State is not the highest god. Devotion to the State there must be; loyalties to the kingdoms of earth there must be; tribute to Caesar there must be. Man is social, and living in society he must govern and be governed; he must be a patriot not only by supporting the just policies of those who rule, but even to the extent of laying down his life in just warfare for the common good. These things are self-evident. But Satan would have Christ adore the kingdoms of earth, convert the pulpit into a platform, and the Gospel into a national anthem. Our Lord would have us know that earthly kingdoms are but scaffoldings to the Kingdom of Heaven, that patriotism towards country is but the nursery to the adoration of God, and that it profits us nothing if we gain the whole world and lose our immortal soul. Politics and religion are related something like the body and the soul. Both have their rights and their duties, but one is superior to the other. The primary concern of religion, then, is not the rehabilitation of the kingdoms of earth; for Our Lord came not to re-

store the politics of the world but to make a new Kingdom which needs neither armies nor navies, soldiers nor monies, slaves nor judges, but only renewed and living souls. I repeat, He did not say religion must not be concerned with social injustice or with political graft. Our Lord loved His own country so deeply and warmly that, as the first Christian patriot, He wept over it. *But he also loved the Kingdom of Heaven so much more that He was willing to be put to death by the very country that He loved.* While time endures, Satan will always tempt religion to be wholly political, but until the end of time the due order must be preserved: "Render therefore to Caesar, the things that are Caesars; and to God, the things that are God's."

Satan's last assault was an effort to make religion worldly. The Gospel tells us Satan "brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and he said to him: If thou be the son of God, cast thyself from hence. For it is written, that *he hath given his angels charge over thee, that they keep thee: And that in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest perhaps thou dash thy foot against a stone.* And Jesus answering said to him: It is said: *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.*" What a lesson is hidden in that answer for those who would make religion worldly by emptying it of all responsibility and by making God merely a passive spectator of our falls and our suicides. The plea to cast Himself down from the pinnacle was not a sign of trust in God, but disbelief in God. It was an appeal, not to a natural appetite, but to a perverted pride which assumes that God is indifferent to our actions and disinterested in our decisions. The answer of Our Lord was a reminder that religion centers about

responsible persons, and not about falling bodies; that man is endowed with free will and is therefore responsible for each of his actions down even to the least; and that the universe in which he lives is moral, and therefore one in which we mount by making our dead selves stepping stones to higher things. That worldly religion which denies responsibility, sin, and judgment, would reduce us all to mere stones falling from the giddy heights of stony pinnacles; it would make us merely material bodies obeying the law of gravitation which pulls us to the earth, instead of spiritual beings which, like fire, mount up beyond the stars to the Light of the World. Real religion does not say: "Cast thyself down," but "lift thyself up"; for we are destined not to be stones of earth, but immortal Children of God. Heaven and not the world is our final destiny. And so, instead of casting Himself down like a cheap and vulgar magician, Our Lord casts Satan down, and then goes out to another mountain top to give from its heights the Beatitudes of God, which lead to beatitude with God in the everlasting glory of heaven.

Thus the so-called new religion proves to be an old religion which Satan would establish on earth. There is no new birth in this new faith, but the same old spirit in the same old Adam, full of selfishness, envy, and sin. By vanquishing temptation the Eternal Galilean has trumpeted to all nations and to all time the supreme truth that religion is not primarily social, or political, or worldly. Rather its function is to minister Divine Life to society, Divine Justice to politics, and Divine Forgiveness to the worldly. The world today is really seeking such a divine religion and is near starvation, as

modern sects bring to it only the husks of humanism. The minds of today are beginning to see that our problems are not primarily economic and political, but religious and moral; that society will not and cannot be reformed from without, but only from within. It is only by the spirit of Christ and the spirit of prayer that the freedom of man, won by bloodshed and national sacrifice, can be safeguarded and preserved. The shattering of all our material illusions during the World War and during the present economic recession has made the clear-visioned minds of our day see that apostasy from the principles of the Saviour, the abandonment of the spiritual life, and the transgression of the commandments of God, have led of necessity to our ruin and confusion worse confounded.

There is hope for us, and a glorious hope it is, in the Victory of Christ over Satan. By permitting the Prince of Darkness to tempt Him, even though it was wholly exterior and did not touch His sinless soul, He proved that He is not insensible to our difficulties, our sorrows, and our temptations. We cannot say to Him what Satan said to God about Job: "But put forth thy hand, and touch his bone and his flesh, and then thou shalt see that he will bless thee to thy face." Our Lord does know what it is to be tempted away from divinity and the primacy of the spirit; His bones, His flesh, were touched unto scourging and crucifixion, and His answer was greater than Job's. Job answered: "The Lord gave, the Lord taketh away, so praise be the Lord." But the Saviour answered: "Not my will, but thine be done." Our King then is One Who knows what it is to have His armor assailed by temptation for, in the language of Paul: "We have not a high

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priest, who cannot have compassion on our infirmities: but one tempted in all things like as we are, without sin. Let us go therefore with confidence to the throne of grace: that we may obtain mercy, and find grace in seasonable aid." In Him we will find One Who feeds us not on earthly bread which perishes, but on the heavenly manna which endures unto life everlasting; in Him we find One Who vanquishes Satan, who would have us exchange an immortal soul for the perishable cities of the world; in Him we find One Who asks us, not Satan-like, to cast ourselves down as stones from temples, but to lift ourselves up as souls into heaven. He was born to change the world, to make its religion unworldly, its worship divine, and its food and Eucharist; He lived to teach us that life is a struggle, and that only those who persevere unto the end shall be saved; He was tempted to remind us that as there was a flash of archangelic spears when His Father closed the gates of heaven on the back of Satan, so shall there be a flash of spears and arrows of heaven-directed prayer as His Church closes the gates of earth upon him who would make himself like unto God; for Christ, the King, the Saviour, was born, lived, and died, and rose to drive Satan from earth as His Father had driven him from heaven.

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## THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE

Address delivered on January 21, 1934

There is a general tendency in our day to frown upon the belief that Our Blessed Lord is different from other religious leaders and reformers. Hence it is not uncommon to hear one who prides himself on his broadmindedness—which gives offense to no religion, and a defense of none—fling out a phrase in which Buddha, Confucius, Laotse, Socrates, and Christ, are all mentioned in one and the same breath; as if Our Lord were just another religious teacher instead of religion itself.

It is my purpose to prove that Our Blessed Lord is unique in the religious history of the world, and as different from all other teachers and reformers as God is different from mine. This can be done, firstly, by considering three important revelations in His life: when He said he was the Way, when He said He was the Truth, and when He said He was the Life; and secondly, by contrasting them with the sayings of all religious teachers whoever they be.

The first scene is in Nazareth, which is a kind of backwater, a nowhere, a hermitage off the beaten track of life, where seemingly no man would live who loved the world and whose ambition rose above that of a village carpenter or a tiller of the soil. To that city, which nestles in a cup of hills, surrounding it like the petals of an opening flower, and which is called "His Own city," Our Blessed Lord returned shortly after the opening of His public life. When everyone was assembled in the synagogue Our Lord unrolled the scroll of the Prophet Isaias at the well-known sixty-first chapter which foretold



the great day of Mercy when One sent by God would fathom the depths of contrition, break the chains of the slavery of sin, and bring solace to a wounded world. In slow clear tones which thrilled the hearts of everyone in the synagogue that memorable Sabbath morning He read: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me: he hath sent me to preach to the meek, to heal the contrite of heart, and to preach a release to the captives, and deliverance to them that are shut up." He stopped reading and restored the scroll to the *chazzan* or clerk. A moment of silence followed, which seemed like an Eternity. The silence was broken as the Eternal seemed to step out of His eternity and let ring out over that little group of His townsmen the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaias: "This day is fulfilled this scripture in your ears."

For the moment they did not catch the full import of His words. Then it dawned upon them that the most precious tradition and hope of their people was verified; that the Messiah for Whom they had yearned for these four thousand years, was now actually standing before them; that He to Whom Isaias pointed seven hundred years before and about Whom David sung on his prophetic lyre, was now really standing in full gaze of them all: for He was the One in Whom all scriptures were fulfilled: He was the Expected of the Nations: He was Emmanuel: He was God with us: He was the unique way of Salvation.

When Our Blessed Lord sat down, it was like the dropping of a stage curtain which suddenly throws us back to ourselves and away from the drama which but a moment before absorbed our every thought. Now as they looked at one another,

their old tones revived. Instead of thinking of Him as the unique Way of Salvation, they remembered Him as a poor carpenter just around the corner from the synagogue. For the village to submit to such a man, for the elders to be taught by a carpenter, was not to be endured. A prophet is without honor in his own country. On one side were His own words that He was the Way, on the other side was the fact that He was one of their own; and the remark passed from mouth to mouth, "Is not this Jesus, the Son of Joseph?"

A cry of execration rose up and filled the synagogue, a protest against His intolerance, a cry against His narrowmindedness, a complaint against His assertiveness, and even His blasphemy, for saying that He was the Way of God. In their excitement they rushed to Him, hustled Him out of the synagogue and into the street of the bazaar outside. With time their fury gathered strength. They hurried Him down through the village past the door in which thirty years before His Mother had received the word of an angel, round the curve of the valley below the town and up the gentle slope which ends abruptly over the Valley of Esdraelon. Not only should He be driven through the village, He should be thrown over the precipice beyond and meet the death that He deserved! They reached the peak of the mountain which drops precipitously like a yawning chasm at the far end of the village. They called to one another to push Him over, but something strange had happened. Their cries of revolt seemed hollow. They looked at their Victim, and no man who ever saw Him ever forgot it to his last hour. As if they were smitten by God, the Nazarenes fled before the Nazarene. He left their city

and never made His home there again. The wound had gone too deep. But in their eyes He had deserved death because He claimed to be the very Way of God, and He *was* the Way of God; for the Way of God is to slip from the fingers of men who would dare thrust Him over a rock.

The second scene is in the city of Jerusalem, during the Feast of the Tabernacle, which was at one and the same time a harvest festival and a commemoration of the journey of the Hebrews through the desert. The evening came and found Him seated in the court, where, on either side of Him, were two gigantic candelabra, fifty cubits high and sumptuously gilded, on the summit of which lamps were lit which shed their soft light over the temple. As our Lord sat between those two great lights which illuminated the kindly faces of friends and the sinister faces of enemies, they seemed to shine upon Him as on no one else, throwing a beautiful golden aureole about His majestic head. In the color of their imagery, in the flaming brilliance of their light, on the very threshold of the Holy of Holies, the *Holy of Holies* proclaimed that the light of God had come to the darkness of men: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light. . . ."

There was no mistaking His words. He did not say He was *like* a light; He did not say He was something like those candles now illuminating the darkness; He did not say that He was the light of any particular people—but the very Light which is identical with Truth and which illumines every man coming into the world. To make such a statement He had to know all things. But to their memory,

in none of the great schools of Jerusalem had He ever studied, nor did He ever sit at the feet of their learned teachers. And so His auditors turned to one another saying: "How doth this man know . . . , having never learned?" And when they asked Him: "Who art thou?" they were stunned with the declaration that He Whose Truth was the Light of the world possessed it from all eternity. And "Jesus said to them: The beginning, who also speak unto you. . ." His hearers, not grasping the great truth that He was the Light of the world, asked: "Art thou greater than our father Abraham, who is dead?" The response of Our Lord was an affirmation of His Eternity: "Abraham your father rejoiced that he might see my day: he saw it, and was glad." They therefore said to him: "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" Jesus said to them: "Amen, amen I say to you, before Abraham was made, I am."

"I am." *Jahve*. It was terrific! This Man of Nazareth now made Himself equal to Light, equal to Truth, equal to God. To be the son of Abraham was to be their light; to be the Son of God was to be the Light of the World. It is Our Lord's battle-cry to an erring world, a tocsin sounding to slaves to be liberated in the name of the Truth which makes men free. But just as the midday sun is too strong for weak eyes, so the Light of the World was too brilliant for minds yet accustomed only to the candle light. And so, in their fury against One Who claimed to be the unique Truth of the world, the Light of Life, and the Wisdom unborn in the agelessness of eternity, they picked up stones to throw at Him. But as their arms drew back for the sling, He had hidden Himself, proving once more that He was the Truth,

for Truth always hides from those who seek to kill, and do not search in simplicity and humility of heart.

The third scene took place in the countryside of Capharnaum. It was the day after He had fed five thousand who had followed Him into the desert, and from whom He hid, lest they make Him king. They were bent only on earthly life and kingdoms of this world. He would now make one last effort to bring them to an understanding of His mission: "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto life everlasting which the Son of man will give you, for him hath God the Father sealed." They said to Him: "Lord, give us always this bread." And Jesus answered: "I am the bread of life . . . the bread that I will give, is my flesh, for the life of the world." The last words were clear and emphatic. As He had before said that He was the Way and the Light, so now He was saying that He was the Life of the World. To believers and unbelievers alike it came as a shock. He was now identifying Himself with Life as He had identified Himself with Truth. Impossible or not, He had said it.

His Person *is* Life. And so on the night before He died, He did that which no man else on dying was ever able to do. Others leave their property, their wealth, their titles. But He on dying left His Life; for otherwise how could men live—without Life which is God?

These three scenes and the great lesson in each were repeated the night before He died. Our Blessed Lord giving His last discourse to His followers was interrupted by Thomas asking: "How can we know

the way?" To which Jesus answered: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life."

Now go back to any other moral teacher the world has ever known and find a similar message. Take any of them, Buddha, Confucius, Laotse, Socrates, Mohammed—it makes no difference which. Not one of them identified himself either with the Way of Salvation or with Truth or with Life. They all said: "I will point out the way"; but Our Lord said: "I *am* the Way." They all said: "I will tell you how to possess truth or how to discover light"; but Our Lord said: "I *am* the Truth—I *am* the Light of the World." They all said: "I will help you attain undying life"; but Our Lord said: "I *am* the Life." Every reformer, every great thinker, every preacher of ethics in the history of the world pointed to an ideal outside himself. Our Lord did not. *He* pointed to *Himself*. Every founder of a world religion asked men to look to their system which was apart from their persons. Our Lord did not. He pointed to His Person. Alcibiades, for example, asked Socrates what he should ask of the gods. And Socrates told him "to wait for some greater teacher who would tell us how we were to conduct ourselves before God." Socrates did not say, "Look to me, I am the way." Rather, he said, "Look after me, and beyond me, and outside me." There was a distinction between the master and his system. What is true of Socrates is equally true of Buddha. In the Book of the Great Decease, Ananda tries to obtain from Buddha, when his end is near, direction and consolation and health. Buddha did not say, "Believe in me" or "Live by me" but answered, "be a lamp unto yourself and a refuge unto yourself." He was practically saying "I am not the Light, I am not

the Truth." It was something outside him. Confucius, the great reformer of the Orient, repeatedly disclaimed any special excellence in himself. "How dare I," he said, "rank myself with the sage and the man of perfect virtue?" He was practically saying, "The Life is not in me. These ideals are distinct from my historical existence."

What is true of the past is true of the present. There is no reformer or preacher today who believes that he is the incarnation of the ideal. At best, most of them would say that they were sign posts pointing to a heavenly Jerusalem, but in no case that they were the city itself.

But there was no ideal outside the historical life of Christ. He *is* the ideal. There was no system outside His person. His person *is* the system. There was no way apart from His Way, no truth apart from His Truth, no life apart from His life. There was nothing outside or beyond Him, for in Him all the scattered ways and truths and lives found their center and source. Mohammedanism is not Mohammed; Buddhism is not Buddha. These religions would be what they are without the founders. But Christianity *is* Christ. The Moslem on his deathbed does not kiss an image of Mohammed and die breathing his name; the dying Chinaman does not whisper Confucius as his soul goes to God. But the Christian does whisper the name of Christ. And why? Because he desires only "to be dissolved and to be with Christ. . ."

Such is the Person of Our Blessed Lord Who alone of all men combines the Ideal and the Historical in His own Person; or better still He is the only Romance that was ever Historical. Because He is the Ideal, there is the Romance of Love about His

History; because He is an Historical Person there is the Truth about that Romance. Everyone else *told* a Romance. But Our Lord *lived* it. Everyone else was as trite as history. But the Historical Christ was as Romantic as Love. And the more deeply we think about the matter, the more we see that if God is good, we should look for His Way, His Truth, and His Life, not merely way, way up there in the heavens, but down here in the dust of our poor lives. After all, what have all people been hoping for at all times except an Ideal in the flesh. They could not go on dreaming dreams and painting symbols. Frozen abstractions cannot satisfy a heart for a heart cannot live on a system about Truth, or a theory about Love, or a hypothesis about Life. The human heart can live only on love. And there is only one thing a human heart can love—and that is a person. Make that person one with the Way to be followed, one with the Truth to be known, one with the Life to be lived, and that Way, that Truth, and that Life, will pull at a thousand heart-strings, drawing from them the sweet symphony of love.

Such is the Person of Christ: the embodiment of our dreams—the flesh and blood of our hopes—the Romance of Love which is as True and Real as History. That is why He is loved; that is why He is adored; that is why He is God. He has many titles but there is one title dear to all who find in Him the Way, the Truth, and the Life, a title which confesses His Divinity, which gives the creature a ready access to the Creator, the sinner an easy approach to the Holy, and our broken hearts an open door to the mending Love of the Divine; and that title which brings the Infinite to the human in most beautiful, loving, sweet familiarity is: *The Sacred Heart*.



## THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Address delivered on January 28, 1934

There are three great roles played by the Eternal Galilean, each of which is a revelation of His Divine Character: He is a Prophet or Teacher, a King or the Center of Hearts, and a Priest or the Redeemer of the World. The first of these roles, that of Teacher, we shall consider today, our purpose being to set in relief just how opposed are the teaching methods of Our Lord and those of the world. Only a God could use such unworldly methods and still be successful in impressing His message on all ages and all types of mind.

First of all, a word about the world as a teacher. The world has always had prophets, but it was reserved for our day to be surfeited with them. Never before in history has there been so much thinking and so little coming to the knowledge of truth, so many schools and so little scholarship, so many wise men and so little wisdom, so much talking about religion and so little prayer. There is no one point on which any of these teachers is agreed, there being as many opinions as there are heads. But there is great unanimity in the method of their teaching. All are agreed that a successful message must possess three qualities: it must be smart, it must be modern, and it must be liberal.

By smart, the world means the message must be sophisticated, so as to appeal to the intelligentsia and to frighten away the uninitiated. The modern prophet astounds us with his outpouring of quaint scientific facts; he dazzles us with a deluge of high sounding names in which sin is called a form of

Oedipus Reflex and religion is defined as a projection into the roaring loom of time or a unified complex of psychical values; he hints at vast authorities in the background, dwells on prehistory rather than history; always trying to convince the man in the street, not how simple a truth is, but how complex it is.

Secondly, the twentieth century prophets agree that the message must be liberal. By this is meant that it must reduce law to a few social virtues, substitute hygiene for morality, patriotism for piety, and sociology for religion. The ideal must never surpass an approximate justice approved by public opinion; there must be a minimum of restraint and inhibition, no mention of mortification, but endless repetition of catchwords such as "evolution," "progress," "relativity," and "service." In this way the message will attract the self-righteous, and at the same time not offend those who believe that ethics must be suited to unethical lives, morals to immoral ways of living.

Finally, the present day prophet seeks not only to be smart, but also to be modern. Above all things else he wants to convince his hearers that his doctrine is suited to the age; that we have outgrown other codes of morals and religion; that, after all, we do live in the twentieth century and not in the thirteenth; and that the primary reason why the world should accept his teaching is not because it is true, but because it is up-to-date—it belongs to our times.

Now turn back the pages of history to a Great Prophet Whose message has been more successful than that of any teacher who ever lived. We discover that His method was just the opposite. He

upset all worldly standards of teaching with the same beautiful serenity with which He overthrew the tables of the money changers in the temple. He did the very things any other prophet would have called foolish; He chose the very method the others labeled unsuccessful. He did not make His message smart, but simple; not liberal, but transforming; not modern, but eternal.

In contrast with modern prophets the message of Our Blessed Lord was not smart and sophisticated, but plain and simple. There is nowhere an attempt to impress His auditors either with His Omniscience or with their nescience. He is never complex. There is no trick of rhetoric, no appeal to the intelligentsia, no pomp of demonstration, no monotonous deserts of laws and precepts such as are found in Buddha or Mohammed. On most occasions His sermons were given under the open sky, by the hillside, alongside the lake, or in the roadway. His words flowed as sweetly to single listeners as to enraptured crowds, and could be caught up just as well by the learned inquirer in the lonely midnight, as by the frail woman at the noonday well. His phrases are taken out of common life and common experience which makes them plain to every age. His lessons were drawn from the very incidents of life before Him at the moment. On one occasion, speaking to poor workmen on a street corner, He made use of their patched clothing, their old bottles and new wine, to bring home to them the truth of His Kingdom. On another, standing in the entrance to the temple, ablaze with lights, and its pinnacles flaming torches, He said to His disciples: "I am the light of the world." One day on a hillside near the Lake of Galilee He saw on the opposite hill a man going out

to sow his seed, and pointing His finger said: "Behold the sower went forth to sow"; and as His disciples watched the man they heard the parable of the sower and his seed. He sees the Fishermen gathering in their nets and calls them to be Fishers of Men. He sees a man whose name is "Rock," and makes him the rock upon which He builds His Church.

He spoke of everyday joys and sorrows: of the salt on the table; of the village perched on the hill; of the candlestick on the window sill; of their sheep and their goats; their camels and the eyes of needles; their daily bickerings before the local judge, and their coarse language which He overheard on the street; the hot sun beating down on them; the lightning flash from east to west; the ditch over there between the fields; thorns and thistles; the sheep and wolves which they knew only too well; the reeds shaken by the wind, and burning weeds; eggs and serpents; nets and fish; pearls and pieces of money; corn and oil; stewards and gardeners; kings and shepherds; the raven hovering above them; the daily wages hidden at home in money-bags; the cottage near the lake built on sand which had fallen to ruins, and the one built on rocks which survived the flood; courtiers in soft clothing, brides in nuptial robes, and the stones on the hillsides with snakes and scorpions beneath them.

And who shall ever forget the day that He stood on the plain, when His eye was first caught by the flight of a bird overhead, and then by a lily at His feet, which He took in His hand with the remark that it works though it labors not, neither does it spin. Suddenly He elevates the minds of His hearers from that important flower to their national heroes

and the flamboyant colors of their palaces: "Not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these"; and then finally, by a third thought, shrivels it to nothing with a gesture of one who might fling it away: "And if the grass of the field, which is to-day, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, God doth so clothe: how much more you, O ye of little faith?" It was like building a great tower by magic and then suddenly crumbling it into dust when it had made us look up into the sky. There was nothing smart or sophisticated about it; it was a thing so simple that no worldly-minded person would ever think of it if he wished to impress us with his wisdom. Smart men say smart things to convince of their smartness. It remained for a God to say simple things to convince us of His Wisdom.

The second difference between the modern teacher and Our Lord is that the former believes that the message should be liberal, broad, and free from restraint and mortification. Our Blessed Lord said it should not be liberal. But in opposing a liberal doctrine He was not narrow; He was not revolutionary; He was not making an innovation. Rather He was renovating. His doctrine was transforming. He begins a recast race of Adam. Socrates reformed the mind, Moses the law, and others altered codes, systems, and religions; but our Lord did not alter a part of man, but the whole man from top to bottom, the inner man which is the motive power of all his works and deeds. He therefore makes no compromises or concessions. He has a real contempt of that broadmindedness which is synonymous with indifference. He tells us that if we do not believe, we shall be condemned, and that if we despise His ambassadors, we despise Him. Unprofitable ser-

vants are to be cast into utter darkness where there "shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Sodom and Gomorrah shall be more tolerated on the Day of Judgment than the city which rejects the Apostles. Capharnaum which was exalted to the heavens shall be thrust into hell. Add to all this His attacks on the Pharisees, which suggest anything but a gentle, liberal, broad-minded enthusiast, too mild even to criticize his bitterest opponents: "Ye foolish . . . you blind guides . . . whitened sepulchres . . . you serpents, generation of vipers, how will you flee from the judgment of hell."

Neither are there any inanities about loyalty—He never once used the word co-operation. There were no broad inoffensive statements like "Leave life better than you find it"; or truisms such as the "Joy of Service," the "Gospel of Work," or "a Good Deed a Day." Rather He said that if the festival of happiness is ever to be celebrated again, we must be the opposite of what we are; we must conquer our animal instincts instead of satisfying them, pluck out our eye rather than let it scandalize us, cut off our hand rather than let it drag us into hell, refuse to answer fight with flight, which is fear, but show the enemy the other cheek and make a friend of him; we must not take thought of tomorrow for sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof; we must not exalt but humble ourselves; we must rejoice when we are persecuted and bless when we are reviled; seek the lowest place at table; rejoice in the hatred of men; become simple like children; and above all take up a daily cross. And why? Because man was not born to wriggle in a worm heap eating his particle of earth as if he had only a stomach and two hands; he must remember he has a heart and

soul, the salvation of which is more important than the gaining of the whole world—"For what shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his soul."

This ideal was new. No one before ever said it, because no one before ever came to transform the old Adam, which is nature, by creating a new nature, a super-nature, made to the image and likeness of God. Every one else who ever lived told us how to reform the world; Our Lord told us how to reform ourselves. In a word the world can be made better only by making ourselves better. Every one else told us how to make the road smoother. Our Lord told us to turn straight around and take a new road, to renounce what seemed good, pick up what had been thrown away, worship that which was burned, learn that which seemed foolish, crucify not our enemies but our lower selves, purge our hearts, hate hatred, love executioners, transform our souls. and answer the strong "No" of Christ to the foolish "Yes" of the world.

Because it was a transforming doctrine, it could be expressed only in paradoxes. Everything humanity in its baser vision held dear, he set at naught; those things it sought He condemned; that which is put first He put last; that which is called death He called life. How express this turning upside down of human nature except in a paradox in which what is true for time is false for eternity, and what is good for the body is bad for the soul, and what is wisdom for the world is weakness with God? And so there runs through this Preacher the tremendous paradoxes about the first being last, and the last first; that the humble shall be exalted and the exalted humbled; that by saving our life we lose it,

and by losing our life we save it; that the scorned shall be revered, and the revered scorned; that the master shall be as the servant and the servant as the master; that tears shall be turned into joy, and those who laugh shall mourn; and above all that the harlots and publicans will enter the Kingdom of Heaven before the Scribes and the Pharisees. These paradoxes constitute the only language in which God can talk to man, the Sinless to sinners, and the Eternal to the temporal. Man can talk to man in simple language without paradoxes; but when a God comes to this earth as man, to set at naught our cheap liberal morality, to create new values, to transform hearts by making them see how foolish the ways of men are to God, then He must speak on the two levels of time and eternity which is the language of paradox.

Finally, modern prophets, it was said, would rather be up-to-date than right, rather be wrong than behind the times. Our Blessed Lord upset this spirit by dwelling not on timely topics, but on eternal truths. He taught in such a manner as to disprove forever that His ideas were suited to His time, and therefore unsuitable to any other. He never used a phrase that made His philosophy dependent on the social order in which He lived; He never made His morality dependent on the existence of the Roman Empire, or even the existence of the world: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away." He did not get His argument against divorce from the Mosaic Law, or the Roman Law, or Palestinian custom. It was an ideal outside time; difficult in all times; impossible at no time. And because He did not adapt Himself to past times, nor to present time, nor to future times,



He never fell into a platitude. Platitudes are the heritage of the time, but not the eternal. For example, there are no platitudes about war, about its waste, about its hate, about its slaughter. What there is, running through His teaching, is a little phrase which is a mighty phrase; a phrase which separates time from eternity; a phrase which began a new system of education: the simple phrase, "But *I* say to you." In the Sermon on the Mount, He begins every example with the words: "ye have heard it said . . ."; and then He purifies the so-called timely, the platitudinous, with an eternal command: "But I say to you. . . ." It recurs like an antiphon in his preaching. "You have heard that it was said to them of old: Thou shalt not kill. . . . But I say to you, that . . . whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire." "You have heard that it was said to them of old: Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say to you, that whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart." "You have heard that it hath been said: An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I say to you not to resist evil: but if one strike thee on thy right cheek, turn to him also the other." It was better according to His logic that the face should suffer, rather than the soul. And enlarging the doctrine of charity He gave a new law in which hate is transformed into love: "You have heard that it hath been said: Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thy enemy. But I say to you: Love your enemies: Do good to them that hate you: and pray for them that persecute and caluminate you." There is only one way of driving enemies from the earth, and that is by loving them.

There is nothing in any one of these statements which suited His times or suited any other times. And the reason He was never concerned about being up-to-date was because He is beyond date, in the sense that He is outside of time. Everyone else who ever lived came from a certain people, and bore the imprint of his hour. How else could legislators govern unless their laws suited their times? How else could poets and philosophers write unless they had their finger on the pulse of their civilization? In the rhythm of their poetry is the cry of their epoch; in the dreams of their philosophy is the aspiration of their century. Name the great ones of the earth: Homer, Job, Aeschylus, Isaias, Socrates, Phidias, Sophocles, Plato, Virgil, Tacitus, Dante, Michelangelo, Shakespeare, Milton, Corneille, Bossuet, Washington, Lincoln. What are they but the incarnation of Greece, Arabia, Judea, Rome, Italy, Spain, France, England, and America? The greater they are, the more incarnate the genius of the humanity in whose hour they lived. The great Pelsagion is Homer, the great Greek is Aeschylus, the great Arab is Job, the great Hebrew is Isaias, the great Roman is Tacitus, the great Italian is Dante, the great Frenchman is Bossuet, the great Englishman is Shakespeare, the great American is Washington. But Who is Our Blessed Lord? He is neither Greek nor Roman, Jew nor Gentile, ancient nor modern. He is a Man outside of time; *the* Man; the God-Man. In others you never find humanity in all its entirety, you touch only the hem of the garment; but in Christ you touch all humanity. This universality of Our Lord, this overflowing the limits of time and space, this peculiar property of belonging to all times because He belongs to no time—whence does

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it come? Whence that tremendous Personality? Whence the source of His independence? He depends not on the multitude who acclaim Him, not on the customs of His country, not on the century when He lived. If we are to find the secret of His Timelessness, the simplicity of His Wisdom, and the transforming power of His Doctrine, we must go out beyond time to the Timeless, beyond the complex to the Perfect, beyond change to the Changeless, out beyond the margin of the world to the Perfect God, Who in the form of a humble Nazarene carpenter one day calmly and without emphasis, like one picking up a flower, looked over His shoulder and in one great and tremendous paradox revealed the secret of His ageless eternity in the strangest words this aging earth had ever heard: "Before Abraham *was* . . . I *am*."

## THE KING OF HEARTS

Address delivered on February 4, 1934

Every man is passionately fond of liberty, but there is one thing he craves even more, and without which existence and even liberty is painful—and that is happiness. It is one of the greatest of life's paradoxes that as much as man seeks to be free, he still wishes to be a slave. Not a slave in the sense that his liberty is denied him, but in the sense that he yearns for something he can worship, something which will solicit his will, pull at his heart strings, tempt his energies, and command his affections. He wants to be free to choose between the various kinds of happiness, but he does not want to be free from happiness. He wishes to be its slave.

There are two ways of responding to this soul hunger and this heart thirst. One is the way of the world, the other is the way of Christ. The difference between the two is that before we have the pleasures of the world they seem desirable and all that we need to make us happy. But after we have them, they are disappointing and sometimes even disgusting. The contrary is true of the pleasures of Christ. Before we have them they are hard, unattractive, and even repulsive. But after we have them they are satisfying, and all our heart could ever crave.

The problem then is this: Will the heart seek its happiness in the pleasures of the world, or will it seek it in the Kingship of Christ? I would plead for the Kingship of Christ, by showing in the language of Thompson, firstly, how the pleasures of the world fail, and secondly, how the Kingship of Christ pleases.

What kind of happiness is offered by the world? What solution does it give to the problem of joy? Happiness, says the world, is to be found in the pursuit of three things: Humanism, Sex, and Science.

The first panacea is Humanism, or the sufficiency of man without God. Man finds satisfaction in his own mind without the aid of faith, and in his own will without the aid of grace. There is no need, according to this philosophy, to seek a God outside of man, but only the man inside of himself, with his thoughts and imaginings. And the Humanist, in the language of Thompson, says the escape from God is in the joys of one's own mind, in psychology, in human emotions, in sentiments, in natural mysticism:

"I fled Him, down the nights and down the days;  
 I fled Him, down the arches of the years;  
 I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways  
 Of my own mind: and in the midst of tears  
 I hid from Him, and under running laughter.  
     Up vistaed hopes I sped;  
     And shot, precipitated,  
 Adown Titanic glooms of chasmed fears,  
 From those strong feet that followed, followed after."<sup>1</sup>

And yet Humanism is not a success but a failure, for man cannot live by himself, any more than he can lift himself by his own boot-straps or live on his own fat. He has a soul as well as a body, and the spirit clamors for its food more unhesitatingly than the stomach. And as there floats over his soul the truth that perhaps there is a God outside of and beyond man, he hears the beat of the Feet of God Whom he was told he would never need:

<sup>1</sup>. *The Hound of Heaven*, by Francis Thompson.

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“But with unhurrying chase,  
 And unperturbed pace,  
 Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,  
 They beat—and a Voice beat  
 More instant than the Feet—  
 ‘All things betray thee, who betrayest Me.’”<sup>2</sup>

Driven from self, the modern man next flies to the Freudian philosophy of Sex, opening the little casements of the heart, so narrow and tiny, which contrast with the great wide portals through which Love enters. Influenced by the economic order in which he lives he begins to judge love like gold, and hence the more tempestuous and violent it is, the more real it is. He feels the need of religion, and since he would starve his soul, he makes a religion out of the instincts which he has in common with the beasts of the field. Pleading outlaw-wise, as one cut off from all human sympathy, he drinks of sex, which makes hungry where most it satisfies. Somehow deep down in his heart, he knows that God is pursuing and will enter if He can; but his weak soul is afraid that if he admits the spirit he will have no room left for the flesh. Ah! so forgetful that if he has the Flame he can forget the spark.

“I pleaded, outlaw-wise,  
 By many a hearted casement, curtained red,  
 Trellised with intertwining charities;  
 (For, though I knew His love Who followed,  
 Yet was I sore adread  
 Lest, having Him, I must have naught beside).  
 But, if one little casement parted wide,  
 The gust of His approach would clash it to.  
 Fear wist not to evade, as Love wist to pursue.”<sup>3</sup>

Finally the modern man, finding that Humanism and Sex both fail to satisfy, seeks his happiness in Science, as he becomes enthralled by the glory of the

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<sup>2</sup>. Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>. Ibid.

midnight sun, the soft beauty of the moon, the splendor of a thousand stars. Since earth fails, he will play truant to earth, slip through the gate of fancy into the very meadows of the skies. The beauties of the planets dazzle him as he runs wild over the fields of ether. Science, it seems, is the only thing which will answer his call to happiness and be more than an echo dying on the winds. More than that it will explain the universe without God. And so he cries:

Smiting for shelter on their clanged bars;  
 "Across the margent of the world I fled,  
 And troubled the gold gateways of the stars,

I said to Dawn: Be sudden—to Eve: Be soon;  
 With thy young skiey blossoms heap me over  
 From this tremendous Lover—

Drew the bolt of Nature's secrecies.  
 I knew all the swift importings  
 On the wilful face of skies;

I was heavy with the even,  
 When she lit her glimmering tapers  
 Round the day's dead sanctities.  
 I laughed in the morning's eyes.

I triumphed and I saddened with all weather,  
 Heaven and I wept together,  
 And its sweet tears were salt with mortal mine;  
 Against the red throb of its sunset-heart  
 I laid my own to beat,  
 And share commingling heat."<sup>4</sup>

But science fails too, for it is something more than a knowledge of matter the soul craves. There is no room for beauty in that science which would botanize even on a mother's grave. And so the modern man, after wandering over the universe with a telescope in his hand, returns with bleeding

<sup>4</sup>. Ibid.

feet and aching heart. The world has lied again! What it called a successful road to happiness was a failure. And so there wells up from his heart the sad and painful truth that joy is not in nature:

“In vain my tears were wet on Heaven’s grey cheek.  
For ah! we know not what each other says,  
These things and I; in sound I speak—  
Their sound is but their stir, they speak by silence.  
Nature, poor stepdame, cannot slake my drough;

Never did any milk of hers once bless  
My thirsting mouth.

I tempted all His servitors, but to find  
My own betrayal in their constancy,  
In faith to Him their fickleness to me.  
Their traitorous trueness, and their loyal deceit.

To all swift things for swiftness did I sue:  
Clung to the whistling mane of every wind.

But . . .  
Fear wist not to evade as Love wist to pursue.  
Still with unhurrying chase,  
And unperturbed pace,  
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,  
Came on the following Feet,  
And a Voice above their beat—

‘Naught shelters thee, who wilt not shelter Me.’”<sup>5</sup>

And this story is re-lived in a thousand times ten thousand lives. The soul craves happiness. The world says: I have the successful secret. It is Humanism, it is Sex, it is Science. And yet all these fail! Humanism is too inhuman; sex is too remorseful; science is too cold.

Where then find happiness? Where find that one thing whose slave we love to be, and yet be free? Who is it Who calls to us after each of our failures: “All things betray thee, who betrayest Me . . . Lo, naught contents thee who contents not Me?” Where

<sup>5</sup>. Ibid.



seek that haunting voice which seems to call to us from every burning bush of the foibles of earth?

May it not be that since the world does not give happiness, we must seek it in something unworldly? May it not be that since what the world called success failed, we must seek the successful in what the world calls failure? But there is only one thing in all the world which is unworldly enough to be divine; and only one thing which was enough of a failure in the eyes of the world to be a success with God. That is the Person Who brought to this old earth of ours a Love which cries out: "Come to me, all you that labour, and are burdened, and I will refresh you." And that is Christ the King.

But did He ever call Himself a King? Recall that terrible day which we call Good Friday, to mask its heinousness and to declare our *felix culpa*. Our Lord is led before the Roman Procurator in the name of Tiberius Caesar. To have some idea of Pilate's personality and his vision of the world worldly, make a mental picture of him in terms of one of our modern intelligentsia—a reader of Mencken, Bertrand Russell, and Shaw, with Swinburne and Wells of his bookshelves, one whose emotional life is dictated by Havelock Ellis and his mental life by Julian Huxley, who says there is no such things as truth. Standing between the pillars of his judgment seat, touched somewhat with the nobleness of the Divine Prisoner, Pilate asks with pitying wonder: "Art thou a King?" The very way he said it was meant to imply: Art thou, whom the world receives not, who art a poor, worn, outcast, in this the hour of thy bitter need—art thou a King; art thou, pale, lonely, friendless, wasted man in poor peasant garments and tied hands—art thou a King;

art thou who fled when the crowd attempted to make thee a worldly king, and who only last Sabbath entered the palm-strewn streets of this Holy City amidst pompous splendor—art *thou* really a King? And there came from that beaten figure, rising to its full stature, expressing kingship in every gesture despite ropes and chains: “Thou sayest it.” I am. “My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would certainly strive that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now my kingdom is not from hence.” “For this was I born, and for this came I into the world; that I should give testimony to the truth. Every one that is of the truth, heareth my voice.”

As Pilate listened to this King of Truth, he felt rising within the impulse for higher things. But the thought of an unworldly King was too much for him; and as the first Pragmatist of Christian times, turning his back, he sneered the question of the 20th century: “What is truth?” And with those momentous words the worldly rejected the unworldly, which is God. And so Christ became the only King in the whole history of the world Who ever stumbled to his throne. The world was certain that no King could be a success who was such a failure. But such are the ways of God. Many times during His public life He said that those who loved Him would be hated by the world; that He would draw men to Himself by being lifted up on a cross in seeming defeat; and that the greatest love man can show is to lay down his life for his sheep. Now the solemn hour had struck. For a crown He wore a wreath of thorns, for a sceptre, an iron nail; for a throne, a cross; for royal purple, His Own Blood; for His army, those who shouted: “If he be the king of

Israel, let him come down from the cross"; for His courtroom the Hill of the Skull; for His courtiers, thieves; and for His battle cry: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

And when the King was enthroned, those who expected a worldly king and not an unworldly God Who loves to the folly of dying, saw an inscription above the cross painted on wood in huge red letters. It was written in three languages of which at least one was known by every single man in that multitude—in the official Latin, the current Greek, and the vernacular Hebrew—informing all that this Man Whom the world rejected and Who loves when hated—this Man dying between two common thieves in the sight of the world was "The King of the Jews."

The mob rushed back to Pilate swearing they would not have Christ rule over them, and they said to him: "Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am the King of the Jews." Pilate's courage which had oozed away so rapidly at the name of Caesar, now revived, and the Procurator cut them short with the last words ever recorded of him—"What I have written, I have written." Pilate had written, and it would stand. The royalty of Christ must be promulgated in the Hebrew which is the language of the people of God, in Greek which is the language of the doctors of philosophy, and in Latin which is the language of the world. It was not the King Who was unworthy of His Kingdom, but the kingdom that was unworthy of the King.

And when evening came and the scene was darkened and the cry of thirst rang out over the hills, splitting the rocks and opening graves, its echo rang down the corridors of time—until it comes knocking

at the portals of our own heart in this very day and this very hour. It comes to the men of our day who have tried to be human without God, and who found that if they lived without God, they were not men, but beasts; it comes to the disillusioned bodies who made a religion out of sex and reminds them that the soul as well as the body must have its joys—its “passionless passion and wild tranquilities”: *Jesu voluptas cordium*. It comes to those whose religion is science, and makes them shift uneasily as they try to explain law without a Lawmaker and order without Mind—which is God.

But it is one thing to recognize the insufficiency of the world, and quite another thing to acknowledge that the King of hearts and wills and nations is One Who brings a cross and the dull hard lesson of mortification. Face to face with One Whose Kingdom is within, the entrance to which can be gained only by carrying a cross like the King with the Cross, there is a dreadful fear lest having Him we can have nothing else. Can it be that His Love is like a bitter weed which suffers “no flower except its own to mount?” Can we be courtiers in the service of a King Who wears purple robes and is cypress crowned? Must all His harvest field of love “be dunged with rotten death?” Must the charcoal of our lives pass through fire before He can trace His portrait on our soul? Must the sun spend itself to light a world, and the glory of the cloud die in passing showers before they can spring forth fruit or flowers? Must the seed die before it can bud forth life, and must the Cross be the condition of the crown; and the three hours’ crucifixion with the King be the prelude to an eternal glory with Him in Heaven?

As we turn these questions over in our minds,

there comes to us the Voice of the King like the bursting sea:

“Lo! all things fly thee, for thou fliest Me!  
 Strange, piteous, futile thing!  
 Wherefore should any set thee love apart?  
 Seeing none but I makes much of naught’ (He said),  
 ‘And human love needs human meriting:  
 How hast thou merited—  
 Of all man’s clotted clay the dingiest clot?  
 Alack, thou knowest not  
 How little worthy of any love thou art!  
 Whom wilt thou find to love ignoble thee,  
 Save Me, save only Me?’”<sup>6</sup>

The human heart now begins to see the light. He is not just a king who failed—He is a King Who failed in the eyes of the world, to win eternal victory in the eyes of God. Hence if we are to reign with Him in heaven we must begin our reign with Him on earth, as He began His, namely, on a Cross. It is the unworldly thing to do—yes. The world first feasts, and then has its fast; it gluts itself and then loathes its excesses; it laughs and then weeps. But the King of the Cross reverses the order: the poor shall not always be poor; the crucified shall not be always on a cross; the poor shall be rich; the lowly shall be exalted; those who sow in tears shall reap in joy; those who mourn shall be comforted; and those who suffer with Christ shall reign with Him. The solution is clear: what we call pain, sorrow, and crucifixion, is “but the shade of His Hand outstretched caressingly.” At last the soul is conquered by the Beauty of the King so lately known, so lately loved, as that Divine King whispers gently the secret of His seemingly hard way with us:

“All which I took from thee I did but take,  
 Not for thy harms,

<sup>6</sup>. Ibid.

But just that thou might'st seek it in My arms.  
All which thy child's mistake  
Fancies as lost, I have stored for thee at home:  
Rise, clasp My hand, and come.'"<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>. Ibid.

## GOD'S BRIDGE BUILDER

Address delivered on February 11, 1934

If the modern mind were asked what thing in all the world it would like most to discover, it would probably answer: the missing link. Every now and then we hear of its discovery—but it is only a rumor; for the most annoying feature of the missing link is that it is missing.

There is nothing wrong in seeking the missing link, but it does seem to be a rather absurd emphasis on the wrong thing. Why should we be so concerned about the link which binds us to the beast, and so little concerned about the link which binds us to God? Why should the deep secrets of man's being so sought in the slime of the earth, rather than in the rarefied atmosphere of the Kingdom of Heaven? Even though the link were found, it would only tell us the source of that lower part of our nature, which we have in common with beasts; but it would tell us nothing about the higher part which we have in common with God. A thing is to be judged not by that which is lowest in its makeup, but by that which is highest and noblest. And so I plead not for the quest of the link imprisoned in the dust which binds us to an animal, but for the link suspended from heaven which binds us unto God.

A link or bond there must be between God and man. Man is sinful, God is holy; and there is nothing common between the two. Man is finite, God is infinite; and there is nothing common between the two. Man is human, and God is Divine; and there is nothing common between the two. By my own power I am not able to touch the ceiling of this studio, but the link of a ladder would effect a union

between the two. In like manner if there was ever to be a real communion between heaven and earth, between God and man, there would have to be a link between the two. Those who seek the missing link between the man and the animal say that link must have something common to both. In like manner, we who seek the link between God and man, say that the link between God and man must be both human and divine.

And where seek that link? In a cave? Yes! The world is right in seeking the Cave Man, but it is seeking him in the wrong Cave. If we are to find the prototype of man we must seek it not in the cave of Moulin, but in the Cave of Bethlehem, and the name of that Cave Man is not Pithecanthropus but Christ; and the light shining in his eyes is not the light of a beast coming to the dawn of reason, but the light of a God coming to the darkness of men; and the animals in the case are not wild beasts shrieking at one who came *from them*, but the ox and the ass bowing down to one who came *to them*; and the companions in the Cave are not wild creatures with lifted clubs as a sign of war, but Joseph and Mary with folded hands as a symbol of peace. In a word Christ is the *link* between the finite and the infinite, between God and man, because finite in His human nature and infinite in His Divine, and one in the unity of His Person; *missing*, because men have lost Him; Pontiff, because the Bridge-BUILDER—for such is the meaning of Pontiff—between earth and Heaven; Mediator, because the High Ambassador of God amongst men. And all these names are only other ways of saying that which we forget: that which above all things else was the life of Christ—namely the life of a Priest.



What is a Priest? A Priest is an intermediary or link between God and man. His mission is to do two things, to bring God to man by the infusion of Divine Life, and secondly, to bring man to God by freeing man from sin. This Our Lord declared was the double purpose of His coming to this world: "I am come that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly"; and, "The Son of man is not come to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a redemption for many."

The first purpose of the Priesthood of Christ is to bring God to man, Divine Life to human life. We have no right to say there is no higher life than ours, any more than the worm has a right to say there is no higher life than its life. Man is never satisfied with his mere earthly life. Like a giant imprisoned bird, his wings beat uneasily against the gilded cage of space and time. He has always sought to be more than he is: that is why he has ideals; that is why he has hopes; that is why the Roman emperors called themselves gods; that is why man, when he forgets the true God, adores himself as god. But man can never acquire that higher life by his own power, any more than he can change a stone into a serpent. If he is to be possessed of a higher life it must be given to him from above. If the animal is to live the higher life of the man it must surrender its lower existence and be reborn in man, who comes down to it to take it up as food. And if man is to live the higher life of God, he must die to his lower life of the flesh and be reborn to the higher life of the Spirit, Who comes down to him with that Divine Life. This is the message Our Lord gave the carnal-minded Nicodemus who hearing it said: "How can a man be born when he is old?"

Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born again?" The Saviour replied that He meant not the fleshly birth, but that spiritual regeneration of water through which man was reborn as a child of God.

This was the purpose of the life of Christ—to bring the Life of God to man. This Divine Life is so different from human life, that no man could ever live it unless the Heavenly Father bestowed it; it was so priceless that if the woman at the well knew of it, she would have forgotten the water at Jacob's well and have asked for the living waters of everlasting life; it was a life which God wished so much to give man; that at the very beginning of His Public Life it drew from Him the sweet complaint: "And you will not come to me that you may have life. . . . I am come in the name of my Father, and you receive me not."

The second function of the priestly life of Christ consisted not only in linking the life of God to man, but also in reconciling man to God by redeeming him from sin. Many of the emasculated Lives of Christ today picture Him merely as a moral reformer, a teacher of humanitarian ethics, or a sentimental lover of birds and beasts. Our Lord is primarily none of these things. He is first and foremost a Redeemer. In that He breaks with all reformers and preachers who ever lived. Take any of them: Buddha, Plato, Confucius, Socrates, Laotse—why did they come into the world? Each and every one of them came into this world to live. But why did Our Lord come into this world? *He came into the world to die.* It was the supreme business which engaged Him from the day of His Birth:

"The Son of man," He said of Himself, "is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Socrates came into the world to teach. Hence the greatest tragedy in his life was the cup of hemlock juice which interrupted his teaching. Death was his greatest stumbling block, the one supreme obstacle and annoyance which spoiled his conversations about truth. But the Cross was not to Christ what the hemlock juice was to Socrates. It was not the interruption of His Life—it was the very beginning. His teaching was not stopped by His death. It was His death that proved His teaching true.

Buddha came into the world to preach the philosophy of renunciation. He was a philosopher and only a philosopher. His supreme business in life was solely and uniquely to explain defeat—in a certain sense, fatalism. Death spoiled his preachments about renunciation. But death to Christ was not what death was to Buddha. Both preached renunciation. Death was the end of Buddha's preaching about renunciation. Death to Christ *was* the renunciation. Death was the end for Buddha. But for Christ it was only the beginning.

Our Lord did not walk about the earth forever telling people platitudes about truth. He was not just explaining truth, defeat, resignation, sacrifice. Everyone else did this. The gold He was seeking was death. From the beginning to the end, only one vision was before his eyes—*He was going to die*. Not die because He could not help it, but die because He willed it. It was not an incident in His career; it was not an accident in His plan—it was the one business He had to do—to die. All during His Redeeming Life He looked forward to His Redemptive Death. He anticipated His blood-shedding on Cal-

vary by His circumcision at eight days of age. At the beginning of His Public Ministry His Presence inspired John to cry out to his disciples at the Jordan: "Behold the Lamb of God." He answered to the confession of His Divinity by Peter at Caesarea-Phillipi that He "must suffer many things, and be rejected by the ancients, by the high priests, and scribes, and be killed: and after three days rise again"; the leaden-weighted days caused Him to cry out in beautiful impatience: "I have a baptism wherewith I am to be baptized: and how am I straitened until it be accomplished?" To the member of the Sanhedrin who would seek a sign He foretold His death on the Cross. He answered: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him, may not perish; but may have life everlasting." To the Pharisees who were as sheep without a shepherd, He spoke: "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep. . . . And I lay down my life for my sheep. . . . No man taketh it away from me: but I lay it down of myself, and I have power to lay it down; and I have power to take it up again. This commandment have I received of my Father." And to all men of all times who would forget that He is come as Our Redeemer and Saviour He speaks the most tender words that were ever caught up on this sinful earth: "For God so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting. For God sent not his Son into the world, to judge the world, but that the world may be saved by him."

But why did death play such an important role

in the Divine plan? How did death bring man to God? Death brought man to God by blotting out the debt of sin. "Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Man was a sinner. He could no more restore himself into the favor of God than a man who owes a million can pay it with a cent, or a soldier who is mortally wounded can bind up his own wounds. Our Lord willed to pay the debt of man by suffering for man, for death voluntarily undergone is the supreme proof of love. How could a satisfaction be made, save by one whose intrinsic worth might tender some worthy offering from a boundless love to a Perfect Justice? How was a real reconciliation between God and man possible unless the reconciler had the capacity for mediating, unless he could represent God to man no less truly than man to God? In other words he had to be a priest—a link between God and man because true God and true Man. Being man He could freely suffer and freely die but being God His sufferings would have an infinite value. Sacrifice from the beginning of time has been through the shedding of blood, for sin is in the blood. Our Lord therefore, as man, resolved to pour it out, even to the last drop, to express at one and the same time God's hatred of sin and God's love of man. Only the righteous can adequately pay for injustice; only the perfect can discount the crimes of the brute; only the rich can cancel the debts of great debtors; only a God in His Infinite Goodness can expiate the sins which man has committed against Him. They who wrought the crucifixion were only obeying the will of the One they crucified. No groan escapes Him, no expression of physical pain; the wants of the body are forgotten in the wants of love.

Why the darkened heavens? Why the rent veil in the temple? Why the shattered rocks? Why do the dead come from their graves and walk the city of the living? Why did the sun hide its face? If Nature could have been given a tongue she would have answered that her Lord was crucified. But her convulsive homage before the cross of Christ is as nothing when compared to a moral miracle of which the only sensible symptoms are a promise of pardon to a repentant sinner at His right. Not when Christ raised the dead, not when He rebuked the seas and the winds, not when He shone in His glory on Thabor, but when He was crucified, pierced with nails, insulted, spit upon, reproached, and reviled, had He strength to change the heart of a thief, draw to Himself a soul that once was harder than the rocks, and in an embrace of love promise: "This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise." That promise was the revelation of the depth and height of His Redemptive Power—a flash of the Eternal Lightning of the Godhead, illumining the true meaning of His humiliation as man.

And so Christ is Priest. The day the Holy Spirit poured out the ointment of Divinity on his human nature in the sanctuary of the Virgin Womb was the day of His ordination; His teaching in Galilee and Judea was his seminary—for what is a seminary but a place where seed is sown? The surrender of His Will in constant obedience to the Will of His Father for the Redemption of the world was the offertory; the mount of Calvary where He performed the last and solemn act of His priesthood, was the Cathedral of that priesthood; the cross suspended between heaven and earth, in reconciliation of both, was His altar; the crimson that poured out from the

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precious wardrobe of His side, was the royal vestments of sacrifice; the sun turning to red at the horrors it saw, was the sanctuary lamp; the Body which He gave as Bread, was the host; the blood which He poured out like water, was the priceless wine; the separation of both by the crucifixion and the act of His will, was the consecration; His last words commending His soul unto the hands of the heavenly Father, was the *Ite Missa est*. And He Who is upright like a Priest, and yet prostrate as a Victim, is Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Would that our civilization would cease turning over the dust of the primeval jungles in search of the link that ties us to the beast, and begin to kneel before the uplifted cross on the rocks of Calvary in search of the link that binds us to God; for if we are made to the image of beasts then we can be expected to act like beasts, but if we are made to the image and likeness of God—then it shall be our glory to act like other Christs—or Christians.

## DIVINE INTIMACIES

Address delivered on February 18, 1934

At times some people feel that Divine Love is so very far away while the love of creatures is so very close and real. And yet this is not the truth; it is the love of God which is burning, and the unsteady devotion of the love of creatures which is cold and bitter. To prove this we need only go into the sanctuary of our own heart, and distil out of it the intimacies of love, and we will see how God has satisfied them far beyond our wildest dreams and most ardent hopes. In other words, God reveals His love in terms of the human heart.

Love enters the human heart with the establishing of a relation of person with person. But there are various degrees of relationship, or various kinds of intimacy. The first intimacy of love is speech. We would never know anyone loved us unless he told us so. Speech might be called the summation of a soul; all that it has been, all that it is, and all that it will ever be—we need only to hear a person speak and we can say: "he is a proud man"; "he is a humble man"; "he is a cruel man"; "he is a charitable man." Even the written words of those who lived and spoke centuries ago reveal their characters, their passions, their failings, and their ideals. One need but open the books of the ancient past and there we see the heart of a Socrates, the heart of a Caesar, the heart of a Cicero, revealed in every word that dropped from their lips. Speech then is the first form of the intimacies of love.

Now if God reveals Himself to us in terms of the human heart, then He should show His love for us



by speaking to us. And God has spoken! The speech of God is Revelation. Open Sacred Scripture at any page and you will find written down the voice of God speaking to us with such messages of love: "Yea I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore have I drawn thee, taking pity *on thee*" . . . "If your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow; and if they be red as crimson, they shall be white as wool."

And so on throughout the pages of the revealed word of God. But is that all love can do? Is there not yet another intimacy of love beyond speech? Does not the human heart crave for other communications beside the sense of hearing? Does it not also want to *see* the one who speaks the words of love? Does it not want to see words born on human lips, see the earnestness of a visage, the flash of an eye, the sincerity of a heart written on the openness of a face? Not long can love be satisfied with words behind a veil, or words in a book. As intimacy grows love also demands vision. Love wants to be present with the one loved. Hence if God is to exhaust all the intimacies of love, and speak to us in the language of the human heart, He must not only be heard, He must also be seen. And God was seen. That was the Incarnation of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He Who dwelt in inaccessible light was seen by Shepherds and Wise Men under the light of a Star. He Who made the universe and its myriad of dancing suns and whirling planets was seen fixing the flat roofs of Nazarene homes; He Who lived in the inexhaustible riches of the Kingdom of Heaven was seen as a poor village tradesman in the little town of Nazareth; He Who is the very Word of Wisdom of the Godhead was seen in the compan-

ionship of fishermen whose knowledge rose no higher than the low country of Galilean lakes.

Men heard God say that He was love. Now they saw Love in action. Men had heard God say He would forgive sins; now they saw Him confer that power on His Apostles unto the end of time. He was so often seen in attitudes of love and pardon that it is embarrassing to choose among them. One of the most touching certainly is that when He pardoned the woman taken in sin. The Scribes and Pharisees were surrounding a woman who was prostrate on the ground, with a veil drawn about her to hide her from the accusing fingers. The woman was an adulteress. The Scribes and Pharisees were her self-righteous judges. Each of them held a stone in his hand prepared to cast it at the poor defenseless creature. Occasionally one of them would reach to the hand of his neighbor, take from it his stone, weigh both, and then return the lighter stone, that he might cast the heavier one upon the woman. Just as they were about to execute judgment, they saw our Blessed Lord approaching, and resolved to catch Him and ensnare Him to His speech. Either He had to condemn the woman, or He had to release the woman. If He released her He would be disobeying the law of Moses, which was the law of God, according to which any woman guilty of adultery was to be taken outside the city gates and stoned. If he condemned her, He would not be merciful, and He said that He *was* merciful. In either case, they thought, He was trapped.

But the dilemma of Justice or Pardon was no great dilemma to Him Who solved it in the Incarnation. Our Lord detested adultery; but He also detested the hounding of merciless hypocrites. And

so He stooped over and with His fingers wrote in the sands. And what did He write? He probably wrote on the sands of that hillside the sins of the woman, and as He wrote the winds blew them away. Then He probably drew back a few paces and wrote again as He saw the sins of the Pharisees—but this time where the winds would not blow them away. And as He wrote He spoke: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." Upon hearing this the Scribes and Pharisees began to leave, but not all at once. Some few remained. Our Lord looked up at one of them with one of those deep, calm, penetrating looks, then stooped over again and wrote in the sands; and ancient tradition says He wrote the word: "Thief"; and the Pharisee dropped his stone and fled. Then he looked at another and wrote in the sands the word: "Murder"; and another dropped his stone and fled. Finally, looking at the sole survivor with a look that pierced his heart and anticipated the terrible judgment, He leaned over and wrote in the sands the word: "Adulterer"; and he dropped his stone and fled. None of the actors in the scene remained but two—the criminal and the Judge. Contrast of sin and Divinity!

No longer was any voice crying for her blood, nor any hand uplifted for her death. There was now no one with her but Innocence—the only One Who had a right to throw a stone, but Who threw none. Lifting His eyes from the sands He said to her: "Woman, where are they that accused thee? Hath no man condemned thee?" And she answered: "No man, Lord." "Neither will I condemn thee. Go, and now sin no more."

Strange verdict it was that Day passed on night,

and Virtue passed on vice! At last men *saw* the Love of God at work, saying to penitent sinners of that day and of our own: You are black, but I send you to the sun; you are unworthy to live, but you shall live to be worthy; I despise your sin, but I love you, the sinner; I condemn you, I forgive you; I blame your rotten past, I wipe it out forever. Go now and sin no more. Oh, she might have wished to have murmured a word of thanks, but as she looked upon the Love of God visible to men, she saw Him with His head lowered, the silky waves of His hair shining in the sun, as His finger traced in the sands the outline of a bleeding heart.

Love wishes to hear the speech of the one loved; love also wishes to see the one loved; but is that all that love can do? Does there yet remain even one other intimacy by which love can betray and reveal itself to the human heart? There still remains one other intimacy of love—an intimacy so profound, so delicate, so personal, so complete that the greatest insult anyone can offer us who knows us not, is to make use of it—and that is the intimacy of touch. Anyone may hear the one loved; anyone may see the one loved; but only the intimates may touch the one loved.

If God is to exhaust all the intimacies of love, then He must not only speak to us, He must not only be seen by us, but He must also touch and be touched. And He was touched. The children were touched by the Hands that made them; the woman suffering from an issue of blood touched the hem of the garments of God. Thomas too touched Him as he put fingers in hand and hand in side to be cured of his doubt. But one of the most significant of these in-

cidents was that which took place in the home of Simon the Pharisee.

Simon was that type of man who was fond of lionizing strangers. Not because he was a devout follower of Our Lord, but because of the great fame of the Galilean teacher, he invited Our Lord to his rich table. Some little ceremonies, such as the host kissing his guest and anointing his hair, were omitted from the occasion. Simon probably felt that since Our Lord was only a rustic Rabbi, not too familiar with the best society, there could be some deficits in etiquette.

The guests reclined at table according to a custom recently introduced into Palestine from the East each leaning on his left elbow, leaving the right hand free to eat at table. As the bronzed servants were bringing in the precious viands, an untoward incident happened. Simon looked up to the far corner of the room, and what he saw brought a blush to his cheek. He would not have minded it, if anyone else had been there—but the Rabbi! What would He think of it? He was just about to order the intruder removed, but a look from the Master deterred him.

The intruder was a woman. Her name was Mary; her city, Magdala; her reputation, a sinner. She moved slowly through the silk purple curtain which hung about her, as her luxuriant hair fell across her eyes. She did not attempt to brush it away, for it acted as a screen against the gaze of the Pharisee. The room had now grown quite still. Suddenly a sad, little sound broke the quiet. It was a sob. The woman was weeping. Standing now over the Feet of the Divine Saviour, she let fall upon

the sandaled harbingers of peace a few tears like the first warm drops of a summer rain. She tried to wipe them away with her hair, but the fountain flowed on, as if answering to the deepest misery of life.

Then she remembered she had concealed under her veil a vessel of precious ointment pressed from the best of God's creation. But what did she do with it? She did not do what you and I would have done. What would we do? We would take the vessel of precious ointment, pour it out, slowly, deliberately . . . resolutely . . . drop . . . by . . . drop . . . as if to indicate by the very slowness of our giving the generosity of our gift. Not so with Magdalene! Not so with those who really love! She broke the vessel and gave everything, for love knows no limits. She saw nothing and felt nothing except an inexpressible delight in which joy is pain and sorrow is joy; in which tears, the common fount of joy and sorrow, unite in one mighty ecstatic emotion.

All the while Simon was thinking the vile thoughts of that endless cemetery of whitened sepulchres who are outside clean and inside full of dead men's bones. And so he muttered to himself; "This man, if he were a prophet, would know surely what manner of woman this is that toucheth him, that she is a sinner."

And Our Lord reading his thoughts said to him: "Simon, I have somewhat to say to thee."

"Master, say *it*."

"A certain creditor had two debtors, the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And whereas they had not wherewith to pay, he forgave

them both. Which therefore of the two loveth him most?"

"I suppose that he to whom he forgave most."

"Thou hast judged rightly. . . . Many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much. . . ."

"Because she hath loved much!" Mary seemed to have heard these words between sighs. But she could not believe her ears. Did He really speak to her—she who summoned up within herself forty centuries of sin; she the type of woman who gave away her body without giving her soul; she who seasoned her jests with sins; she whom women envied and detested; and whom men desired and defamed? Could it be that He was kind? She looked up at Him for some assurance that she had heard aright. His eyes became illumined like two altar fires; his lips fine and keen with feeling began to move. Then came the silence that always precedes the speech of God . . . "Thy sins are forgiven thee . . . Go in peace."

The Shepherd was happy—He had found the lost sheep. The lost sheep was happy, for in sounding the depths of love, she had touched the very feet of God.

There is nothing more that love can do; there is no other tongue by which the heart may speak. Love has three and only three intimacies: speech, vision, and touch. These three intimacies God has chosen to make His love intelligible to our poor hearts. God has spoken: He told us that He loves us—that is Revelation. God has been seen—that is the Incarnation. God has touched us by His grace—that is Redemption. Well indeed therefore may He say: What more could I do for my vineyard than I have done? What other proof could I give of My love

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than to exhaust Myself in the intimacies of love? What else could I do to show that My Own Sacred Heart is not less generous than your own?

If we answer these questions aright, then we will begin to repay love with love. Then we will not ask, "How much must I do?"; but "How much *can* I do for love of Him?" Then we will return speech with speech which will be our prayer; vision with vision, which will be our faith; touch with touch, which will be our communion. And then one day when we think the chalice of our poor hearts has been emptied of the last drop of love for Him, He shall take us to Heaven where they shall be filled unto overflowing with the fountain of joy and where there shall be no speech but the song of angels, no vision but the Lamb of God, and no touch but the embrace of the "passionless passion" and "wild tranquility" of the Everlasting Love—which is God!



## THE DEPTHS OF SIMPLICITY

Address delivered on February 25, 1934

The world has one supreme test for character, and that is the possession of a virtue in a high and eminent degree. Many generals, for example, in our national history are ranked as great characters because of their valor, scientists are ranked as great characters because of their wisdom. Some are judged noble because of their love of peace, others because of their bravery in war; some because of their majesty, and others because of their gentleness; some because of their wisdom, others because of their simplicity.

But this is not the real way to judge character. The possession of one virtue or a quality in an eminent degree no more makes a great man than one wing makes a bird. Just as the eagle's power is measured by the distance from the extremity of one wing to the extremity of the other, so a man's character is to be judged, not by the possession of one extreme virtue but by the expanse between that virtue and the opposite one which complements it. Christian duty is nothing more nor less than the reconciling of opposite virtues. It is very easy to cultivate single virtues; just as it is easy to walk down a road. It takes much more skill to walk a fence on either side of which there are dangerous extremes to be avoided. In other words, a really great character is not just a brave man, for if a man were brave without being tender, he might very easily become cruel. Tenderness is what might be called the 'other wing' to bravery. In like manner,

majesty alone does not make character, for majesty without gentleness might very soon degenerate into pride. Love of peace alone does not make character, for without the opposite virtue of courage, peacefulness could very easily slip into a spineless cowardice. Wisdom without simplicity makes a man proud; simplicity without wisdom makes a man a simpleton. A real character therefore does not possess a virtue on a given point on the circumference without, at the same time, possessing the complementary virtue which is diametrically opposed to it; for what is character, but the tension between opposites, the equilibrium between extremes. Thus St. Paul exhibits in his life the beautiful tension between zeal and gentleness; St. John the tension between overflowing love and uncompromising devotion to truth; and Moses the tension between firmness and meekness.

Just as every engine must have its flywheel, every springtime its harvest, every ocean its ebb and its tide, so every really great character must have its pendulum so delicately adjusted that it can swing between the extremes of the magnanimous and the humble, the lofty and the plain, without ever once being detached. Character then is the balanced tension between opposite virtues.

It is in this sense that the character of Our Blessed Lord rises above all men and makes Him the Perfect Exemplar of goodness and the Paragon of virtues. One might show how He combined Majesty and Gentleness, Peacefulness and Force, Magnanimity and Humility; but for the sake of brevity we limit ourselves only to the two extreme virtues which He recommended to His Apostles at the be-

gining of His public life: "Be ye therefore wise as serpents and simple as doves."

Our Blessed Lord did not make this recommendation without possessing it in an eminent degree Himself. He was wise with the Wisdom of God; He was simple with the simplicity of a Child. That is why He came to us as the world's God-Child. But what is more remarkable still, He never used His Wisdom before the simple, but only before those who thought themselves wise. He was Wisdom before the so-called wise, but He was Simplicity before the simple. He exceeded the worldly wise with His wisdom and the simple with His simplicity.

Firstly, He outdid the worldly wise with His Wisdom. Take for example the scene in the Temple at the beginning of His Public Ministry. The Pasch was drawing near and pilgrims from Galilee began to gather into Jerusalem. Our Lord came with the throng and entered through the Golden Gate into the Temple. As He passed beneath the arch, and came into the Court of the Gentiles, the open space before the steps that led up to the Holy Place, a busy scene lay before Him. It was more than the mere jostling of crowds paying their yearly tribute of half a shekel to the Temple Treasury. Rather here was a bedlam of confusion. In the steaming heat of Palestine on that burning April day were hundreds of merchants and shopkeepers mingling the cry of their wares with the bleating of sheep and the bellowing of oxen. There were little men with big wicker cages filled with doves, and under the very shadow of the arcades sat the money-changers wrangling in the most dishonest of trades, their greedy eyes aflame with the lust of gain. Everywhere there was huckstering, quarreling, bar-

gaining, and the clanking of money to be heard above the chants of the Levites and the prayers of the priests. And all this at the entrance to the Temple of the Most High.

When Our Blessed Lord entered a righteous indignation laid hold of Him, for what is character but a beautiful tension between force and meekness. An anger divorced from meekness is but unsanctified passion, and meekness which cannot kindle into indignation is closely allied to moral collapse. And on the occasion, Our Lord's swift indignation was just as much a part of His Perfect Sanctity as His silent meekness in the hour of the Passion. He could not, being Justice Itself, be silent before an offence against God. His eyes burned with a controlled anger; His firm face set in commanding scorn. His hands reached to some bits of binding cord lying on the floor beside Him. With His fingers, rapidly yet calmly, He knotted them into a whip. The traffickers stood still; the merchants eyed Him with growing fear; then they stepped back from Him as One Whom they had reason to fear.

Then quietly but firmly He began to move His tiny whip of knotted cord. The frightened crowd yielded and sheep and cattle broke and fled. With His foot He overthrew the tables of the money-changers, as they rushed to the floor to gather up their jangling coins from the filth and pollution. Before those who sold doves He stood still, for the dove was the offering of the poor, and there was less desecration in their lovely emblems of innocence and purity. To these He was more gentle. He did not scatter them; He did not break the baskets and release the doves; to them He spoke tenderly but

firmly: "Take these things hence and make not the house of my Father a house of traffic."

And His disciples seeing this transport of inspiring and glorious anger, recalled to mind what David had written of Him in prophecy: "The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up."

And if we ask why the greedy traffickers did not resist, as their oxen were chased into the street or the money flung on the floor, and attack the young Galilean, the answer is because sin is weakness; because there is nothing in the world so utterly abject and helpless as a guilty conscience; because nothing so invincible as the sweeping tide of God-like indignation against all that is base or wrong; because vice cannot stand for a moment before Virtue's uplifted arm. Base and low as they were, every one of them who had a remnant of his soul not yet eaten away by infidelity and avarice knew that the Son of Man was right.

All the while there was standing on the marble steps that led up to the Holy of Holies, a group of Levites, Scribes, and Pharisees, who knew what a heavy loss that stampede would cause the merchants and themselves. They looked for the cause of the commotion and saw that He Who provoked it all was a carpenter from lowly Nazareth, with no mark of office about Him, no scrolls, no ensigns of dignity, but only an uplifted hand. They were indignant. How dare this obscure working man with a few ill-smelling fishermen as companions arrogate authority to himself within the Temple precincts, in which they alone were masters? They moved down the steps to Him, as He stood alone with the whip cord in His hand, and asked: "What sign dost thou show unto us, seeing thou dost these things?"

He might have pointed His finger at the panic-stricken crowd as a sign that all men fear the Justice of God. But these were learned men, skilled in the Scriptures, and wise in their own conceits. And before those who thought themselves wise, Our Blessed Lord was wiser. He would show to them a Wisdom so deep, so profound, so revealing the truth of this Scripture, that not even they, the wise men of Israel, would understand. In fact, what He said was so deep it would take them almost three years to understand it. Firmly and solemnly with a gesture centered on Himself, He said something beyond their comprehension, something which in its apparent meaning filled them with perfect stupor and angry amazement because they understand not its depth. The words were over their heads, at the same time they stole into their hearts: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

Destroy this temple! This temple on which Solomon had lavished his wealth! This temple on which ten thousand workmen enrolled as they brought the Cedars of Lebanon to its walls. This temple with its fragrant woods, embroidered veils, precious stones, glittering roofs! This temple which was forty and six years in the building and was far from finished! And this obscure Galilean youth bade them destroy it and He would rebuild it in three days! Such was the false construction they put upon His words, because they were not wise enough to understand the Wisdom of God.

Our Blessed Lord did not mean that earthly temple before them, but the temple of His Body. But why call His Body a temple? Because a temple is the place where God dwells. He was therefore equivalently saying: The real temple in which God

dwells is not that place of stone but this tabernacle of living flesh which I have taken from My mother, for I am the Holy of Holies; I am the Son of the Living God.

Such wisdom was too profound even for the wise of this earth. It was not until almost three years later that it began to dawn upon them, when the Temple they destroyed on Good Friday was rebuilt by the Power of God on Easter Sunday in the Glory of the Resurrection; and even that truth too is so deep and profound that some of our wise men today have not yet begun to understand it even after 1900 years.

Our Blessed Lord told His Apostle not only to be as wise as serpents, but also as simple as doves. And what He told them, He lived. He was not only wise with the Wisdom of God—He was simple with the simplicity of a child. This might be proved by His fondness for children whom His disciples one day forbade to come near Him. These Jesus reproved with "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not. For of such is the Kingdom of God." And when He had folded them in His arms, laid His hands upon them and blessed them, He added once more the warning that we must have simple faith like little children, and that their ignorance is more illumined than the doctrines of wise men: for only a clear and untarnished mirror can reflect the image of His Revelation. "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall not enter into it."

But His Simplicity is better indicated in His attitude to those grown-up children of whom He said: "I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven

and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones." A case very much in point is the Simplicity of Our Lord to the Syro-Phoenician woman. In the middle of His Public Life Our Blessed Lord driven from Galilee, driven from Judea, made His way as a wanderer on the earth to the coast of Syria where stood the cities of Tyre and Sidon fast falling into ruins. No sooner had He come into these cities, than a poor, infirm woman approached Him. She was a Gentile, and therefore what a Jew proud of his noble ancestry would call a contemptible Canaanite, what a Roman, whose subject she was, would call a Syro-Phoenician or a more or less degenerate Greek. She had a daughter, now growing up, who was suffering from an unclean spirit and quite mad. This shame obliged her to live rather apart from her neighbors.

But when she heard the great Wonder Worker had come into her city, she must go and see Him, even though He was a Jew and she a Gentile. She ran to Him and at a distance noticed He was kindly, gentle, and above all, simple. She heard her Jewish friends call Him Lord: and others Son of David. She would call Him both and throwing herself at His feet with a piercing petition she cried: "O Lord, thou son of David, my daughter is grievously troubled by a devil."

Our Lord did not look displeased but He answered her not a word, He walked on, testing her faith and her perseverance. But she walked on too, pleading, begging, and praying. The disciples bade her leave, but she refused. Becoming indignant at her annoying plea, they besought Our Lord, saying, "Send her away for she crieth after us." Our Lord



looked down at her sweetly, but what He said seemed to approve His disciples. "I was not sent," He told her, "but to the sheep that are lost of the house of Israel." She seemed to sense it was not a rebuke, otherwise He would have sent her away as His disciples had bidden Him to do. He had not said He would not cure her daughter. He had only said His mission was first to His own people. She would try again—so she threw herself at His sacred feet in adoration and with more appeal than ever, looked into His eyes saying: "Lord, help me."

Could He remain untouched by that sorrow? Would He leave her to a life-long agony of watching the paroxysms of her demoniac child? Calmly and coldly there came from those lips that never yet left unanswered a suppliant's prayer words which reminded her that she was not of the house of Israel: "It is not good to take the bread of the children, and to cast it to the dogs."

But not all the snows of Lebanon could quench the fires of love and hope which burned on the great altar of her heart, and prompt as an echo came, not an answer, but a glorious retort: "Yea Lord, for the whelps also eat of the crumbs that fall from the table of their masters." If a self-wise Pharisee had made a retort of that kind, Our Lord would have withered him with His Wisdom, but when a simple soul makes a retort against Divinity and says she is only a puppy begging for a crumb, then He becomes so simple as to be seemingly vanquished by her simplicity. He Who exalted Himself amidst the proud humbles Himself before the humble, He who was wise with His profound meaning of the word "Temple" before those who thought themselves wise, is now simple before a Syro-Phoenician with her sim-

ple turn of the word "dog." His heart expands, His lips move: "O woman, great is thy faith: Let it be done to thee as thou wilt."

Wonderful Wisdom! Wonderful Simplicity! Such is the Character of Christ. A God and a Child. Oh, will our world ever learn to imitate that beautiful tension between opposites? Will it go on dividing itself into the two classes of the educated and the uneducated, the literate and the illiterate, heaping praise on the so-called wise who reject the Wisdom of God and pouring scorn on the simple who accept it? Or will it some day under the magic touch of Christ, discover that the truest wisdom is in being simple and the truest simplicity is in being wise with the wisdom of God. It is easy to be one or the other, but it is difficult to be both; just as it is easy to have nothing, and easy to possess everything, but it is difficult to live having nothing and yet possessing everything. That is why it is easy to be anything but a good Christian. It is hard to grow wiser and still be simple enough to want to be taught, and yet that is the condition of entering heaven. No old people enter it—using old in the sense of those full of the conceits of years. "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall not enter into it." There are only nurseries there!

## GAMBLERS ON CALVARY

Address delivered on March 4, 1934

The most tragic words ever written of Our Lord are those which St. John sets down in the beginning of his Gospel: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." Bethlehem had no room for Him when He was born; Nazareth no room for Him when He lived; and Jerusalem no room for Him when He died.

What happened then is happening today. The curtain never goes down on the great abiding drama of Calvary. In every century the same leading role is played by the Eternal Galilean, but new characters play the other roles. The story is always the same—the age old story of indifference struck on a new key, in new hearts, and in new times.

Note the parallel between the indifference of some men on Calvary and the indifference of some men of our day. Recall that day when the Hosannas hushed, when palms withered and turned into spears, and the summer friends of victory made their flight with the winter of seeming defeat. The moment came when the King took possession of the only Kingdom He would ever have upon this earth—the royal kingdom of the cross. Crowned not with the gold of the Magi, but with the thorns of man's impenitence, He begins the royal procession to an empire which was no wider than a beam of wood, but from which, to a dying thief, He could promise a Kingdom which was His even before the foundations of the earth were laid.

To the Roman executioners it was just another Roman holiday. Under a festal sky they led the pro-

cession to the Hill of the Skull where tradition marked the grave of Adam, and where the New Adam would now lay down His Life to take it up again. When their job was finished, and the last nail driven into His Throne, as a word of forgiveness bore into their hearts, they rested and divided the garments—for the Man on the cross had no further use for them. This was the perquisite of the executioners and it came to them by law. The soldiers divided the spoils, leaving only the tunic, or the seamless robe. It would be a sin to cut it, for after that it would be of no use to anyone; but one of them, an old gambler, took out his dice, threw them, and the tunic woven by His sinless Mother was awarded by luck to sinful men. Then in those terrible, simple words of the Gospel, "They sat and watched Him."

And what did they think of the Man Whom they sat and watched? As the shadow of the cross fell about their dice they joked, gossiped, and gambled the hours away; they engrossed themselves in their own favorite topics of conversation, in mutual banter, and trifling little games. Now and then they glanced up with curious interest. Once they looked up at Him as He promised pardon to a thief—but it was only a passing glance. Once again they gazed at Mary, and wondered how anyone crucified could have such a beautiful Mother, and then how the Crucified could be even more beautiful than His Mother—but it was only a passing glance. Back to their games they went as "they sat and watched." They talked about the latest cock fight in Jerusalem; about a wrestling match one of them had seen in Antioch; about the great chariot race that was to be run in Rome the coming Ides of May; about the gambling gains of a soldier in their garrison;

about the possibility of Rome some day stamping Jerusalem under her heel; about the new dancing girl in the court of Herod; about the thousand and one indifferent things such individuals would talk about; everything, in a word, except about the one thing that mattered. And yet there, within a stone's throw of them—they might even have thrown their dice at Him!—was being enacted the tremendous drama of the Redemption of mankind; and they *only sat and watched*. There they were in the presence of the most stupendous fact in the history of the world, actors in the supreme event for which all creation groaned, and they saw nothing. They watched, but their minds were fixed on other things, on worldly pleasure, on reward, on money, on wine, on travel, on everything but the Mystery of the Cross.

And the Three Hours slipped by—opportunities soon pass. The young and Divine Body which suffered so much because it had so great a Soul, was now turned into a funeral pyre of suffering where all the suffering of the world burned together. As the executioners watch passively, He commends His Soul to His Heavenly Father, His friend at the right to Paradise, His Mother to John; and they *only sat and watched*.

The scene changes—but the lesson remains ever the same. Divinity is still in the world and the world receives it not. Note the indifference in the field of education and international politics.

Go into the world of education, enter into the university classroom and everywhere you will hear such wild ideas as these: The universe is due to chance; man is a mere accident in the evolution of the cosmos; the soul is a survival-belief of the

Middle Ages. This is the type of talk which is just as much pure nonsense as the gamblers on Calvary spoke—not a single idea of which will outlive the professors who teach them. And as these so-called learned men while away the precious moments given to discover the Truth which is God, there stands in the midst of them—why they even have thrown their books at it, as the soldiers might have thrown their dice—an institution which has been educating for two thousand years, preserving for our age the best culture, art, and philosophy of the past, and they *only sit and watch*. The suggestion that Truth may be in the Church is as absurd to them as the suggestion that Truth is pilloried to a Cross—so they only sit and watch.

Enter now into the broad field of international politics. Year after year in Washington, London, Geneva, and Lausanne, the representatives of the great nations gather together in a really earnest desire to bind all people together in the bond of unity and peace. But year after year their treaties fail—and why? Because they have nothing outside the nations themselves to bind them. A man cannot wrap up a package if he is part of the package, a man cannot pack his valise if he is one of the articles that goes into the valise. In like manner nations cannot tie themselves into a league if they are parts of the league. And if they are parts of the league their treaties mean merely obeying some one else's politicians, and if we will not obey our own politicians, then heaven knows we will not obey some one else's politicians. There is only one thing in the world which can tie together all the nations of the world in the bond of peace, and that is something outside the nations themselves. But there is

only one thing in the world which is not only international but also supra-national, and that is the Church whose Vicar is the Spiritual Father of all Christendom, and whose only force is the moral force of the Justice and Righteousness of Christ.

And yet what is the attitude of nations in the face of this moral force which is above the nations because it is concerned with the salvation of souls? Year after year the nations meet on the Calvary of the world's battlefields, throw the dice of international politics, discuss gold standards, long range guns, and trade balances. And all the while there stands in the midst of them some one who came to bring peace on earth and who might be the arbiter of nations, because the spiritual force outside the nations—and they only sit and watch.

To suggest to our international politicians that the Vatican State is the only true moral Court of International Justice, would be just as absurd as to have suggested to the gamblers on Calvary that the Man on the Cross is the Moral Force of the World—but the truth still remains. Salvation for nations resides in that which men so ignore that in the presence of it they play their games of intrigue—as they only sit and watch.

And so, as Calvary is prolonged through time and space, we find men are as indifferent to Divinity now as they were the day it was born in a crib and suffered on a Cross. Oh, for a love of Truth the eradication of that spineless indifference which makes men play the games of earth on the very altar steps of Redemption! Too long have we sat and watched with the gamblers and idlers of Calvary. It is now time to stand and adore, and to revive the spirit of the days when men believed in

Truth. I know the old age had its defects; I know it had its spirit of persecution, of narrowness; but these were only the excess of *real* virtues—such as love of Truth. Instead of purifying them, we have taken them away root and branch and all, and now are indifferent to right and wrong, to good and evil. Anything is better than such torpor of a materialized people to whom God and eternity are as if they never existed. Anything is better than the fear of the responsibilities of Truth which allow a restlessness, an ennui, a loathing, and a doubt to creep into their souls until it grows into a boredom.

Truth is all important. *Error is serious*. Hence before darkness settles over our lives let us see, that since Christ will not come down, we will have to get up, lest perchance while we play our games and throw our dice we may miss the real lesson of the great Drama of Truth. There is one game that is true, and that is the gamble of Christ, Who took His life in the palm of His Hands, rolled it out in the blood red drops of Redemption—and before the sun had set He knew that He had won. We can be gamblers like Him, for we can take the dice of this world, with its tinsel, its rusting treasures, its passing joy, and throw them for the everlasting crown of glory with Christ the King, and in that hour of our crucifixion when we have thrown away all our lower self, and we may think we have lost all, it shall prove to be, like the Saviour's—the hour of our Greatest Victory.



## THE CROSSES OF LOVE AND HATE

Address delivered on March 11, 1934

It is my good fortune to belong to a Church which is hated. Truly indeed it is loved by those who know its divine character; but it is also hated by thousands who regard it as antiquated, as behind the times, as superstitious and ignorant. It is spoken of as a Mother by those who receive its spiritual benefits, but it is so despised by others that it has been driven from some counties, has been tolerated by others, and regardless of how much other sects may differ among themselves, it is frequently considered their one common enemy.

A parallel of the attitude of the world to the Catholic Church is to be found in its attitude toward Christ. He too was loved; but He also was hated. We do not find such love toward any other person as we do toward Him; neither do we find such abiding hate. It is therefore fitting to answer such questions as: Why is Buddhism not hated and why is Catholicism hated? by asking, Why is Buddha not hated, why is Christ hated?

Firstly, a word about the love and hatred toward the person of Christ, and then about His Church. There are two great passions which entwine themselves around the life of Our Lord as they do about no other person who ever lived: the passion of love and the passion of hate. He said He would be loved. He said He would be hated. He said He would be adored; He said He would be scorned. He said He would be loved unto folly; He said He would be hated unto fury; and the duel would go on until the end of time. Hate would

lift Him up on a cross, but once on it He would lift all lovers unto His Heart which is Love. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to myself."

He said He would be loved more than fathers and mothers love children and more than children love father and mother. This did not mean *not* loving parents, or *not* loving children. It meant only loving them *in Him*. He did not say we should love one another less, but only that we must love Him more. And is not this reasonable? Should not the whole be loved more than the part; should not the fire be preferred to the spark; should not the circumference be loved more than the arc; the temple more than the pillar; should not the Creator be loved more than His creatures, God be loved more than men, and Love loved more than the lovely?

Open the pages of history and name one single man who has ever been so loved after his death to a point of sacrifice and prayer. His cross has been deluged with tears of love in every age and century. To it all generations as enthusiasts of love, have come crying out in the language of Paul: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulations? or distress? or famine? or nakedness? or danger? or persecution? or the sword? . . . But in all these things we overcome, because of Him that hath loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor might, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Napoleon saw this as all great men saw it before him. In his isolation at St. Helena, he reflected upon the vanity of his own life and that of Louis XVI of whom he said: "That great king is not yet dead, and even now he is alone in his room at Versailles, abandoned by his courtesans and perhaps the object of their scorn. He is no longer their master, he is a cadaver, a coffin and a horror. Not long now and it shall be my lot too. That is what will happen to me. What an abyss between my profound misery and the reign of Jesus Christ, preached, loved, adored, and living in all the universe."

If you would prove it further, go lay your hand over certain hearts that receive Him in daily Communion, and you will feel the flame that His love has kindled. Go knock at the portals of the Carmelites, the Poor Clares, and the hundred other retreats of the saintly, and ask the question the world always foolishly asks such saintly souls. "Did you enter into this place of prayer because you were disappointed in love? And the answer that will flash back to you will be, "No, I am not here because I was disappointed in love. I was never disappointed in love. My first love is my only love—the Eternal Love of My Lord and My God."

There is no need of multiplying witnesses. Even your very thirst for perfect love is a thirst for Him for Whom you were made and without Whom you cannot be happy. He sought love in poor, weak, frail hearts like our own, and unlike any other heart that ever beat, His Sacred Heart has been loved above all things else, even life.

There is only one conclusion we can draw, in the language of Pascal: "Jesus Christ wished to be loved. He is loved. Therefore He is God."

Now, let us turn to the other fact about the life of Our Lord which proves He is divine; and that is hate. Hated He said He would be, by the world until the end of time—not the material universe, not by people in general in it, but hated rather by what His Own apostles have called the spirit of the world.

Recall some of the incidents of His life and you will see how the world hated Him from the very beginning. When only eight days of age the venerable old Simeon told His mother that He was a sign to be contradicted, which was just a paraphrase of John's tragic note that He came into the world and the world received Him not. When still under two years of age the soldiers of Herod drew swords to slaughter the Innocents in a vain attempt to kill Innocense. Then later on in the full bloom and blossom of life, picture this Humble Artisan with His apostles on the very night before He died, looking down the corridors of time and saying to all future generations that He would be hated by the world. That hatred would be so personal He went on to say, that anyone who loved Him would in turn be hated by the world. "If the world hate you, know ye, that it hath hated me before you. If you had been of the world, the world would love its own: but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember my word that I said to you: The servant is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you. . . . All these things they

will do to you for my name's sake; because they know not him that sent me."

He shall be hated! What a peculiar prophecy! What had he ever done to be hated? He was meek and humble of heart, His life He offered for the redemption of many. His Gospel was the Gospel of love, even for His enemies. His last act was pardon and forgiveness for those who put Him to death. It was all a hatred, as He said, "without cause." There was a terrible perversity in it all. He healed their wounds, and they wounded Him. He brought back their dead to life, and they took away His life. He called men from evil to good, and yet evil men nailed Him to a cross. He brought Divine Life to make all men friends, and enemies gave Him an ignominious death.

Neither was there any reason for hating Him in those who loved Him. There were to be poor as He was poor, they strove to be perfect as their Heavenly Father was perfect, and humble like Him Who washed their feet. Even when persecuted, they rejoiced; when cursed, they blessed, as if the insult of wicked men was the consecration of their own goodness, and the mud thrown at them by the impure a pledge of their own purity.

There is nothing to hate in such a life, nor in such a doctrine. We must look outside of Him and His Gospel then, if we are to find the reason for the immortality of that hatred. Can it be that He was an impostor as Communist Russia believes and that His religion is an imposture? But if He is an imposter as the Soviets believe then our love for Him is false, and their hate for Him is true. But if their hatred is true, then it ought to renovate their society and transform the hearts of men. If

our love for Him has done so much to remake men, and our love is a vain dream, then what great things their hatred should do which overthrows such an idol. But name one thing that their hatred for Our Lord has done. Where are the good works of their hatred? What peoples have they drawn from vice and corruption? What souls have they consoled? What hearts have they sweetened? Where are their Sisters of Charity? Where are their Sisters of the Poor? Where are their martyrs, their white robed virgins, their happy marriages? There are men dying in sorrows. There are souls crying out for the bread of everlasting life, and there are sinful hearts pleading for forgiveness. Where, oh! where—O, Hatred of Christ, is your consolation, your mercy and your peace for such souls?

No, the hatred of Christ is not to be found in the fact that He was an imposter, for hatred is a negation, and the negation is an assertion of His existence. There are too many minds in all ages who have studied and bent their knee, to admit He was an impostor. Where then find a reason for the hatred?

There must be some reason peculiar to Him and Him alone which accounts for hate. In no one else in all history do you find an abiding, an immortal hatred except against Our Lord. No other founder of a world religion ever said he would be hated, and no one ever was hated. Mohammed is not hated, Zoroaster is not hated, Buddha is not hated. Some men while they lived were hated. Nero was hated while he lived, even by his own countrymen. Aghis Khan was hated by a great mass of humanity. Bismarck was hated by many of his own coun-

trymen. But who hates any of them today? There are no fists uplifted in desecration against Nero. There are no oaths of bitterness against Khan. There is no hymn of hatred sung over the tomb of Bismarck. Hatred died with them. Not even the Kaiser, who was hated by part of the world and by some of his own people after the World War, is hated today.

Now why has hatred died against everyone else and still endures against Our Blessed Lord? Here we come to the real reason. What causes hatred? Hatred is caused by that which annoys or creates an obstacle to something we desire. Why was Nero hated when alive? Because his vices were an obstacle to social justice for which the Romans yearned. But now that Nero's vices are corrupted with his flesh, no one hates him. No one today hates Tiberius, Domitian, Ivan the Terrible, or Nestorius. Even the word contempt is too strong for them. They have ceased to be objects of hatred because they have ceased to be obstacles. But with Our Lord it is different. The hatred against Christ has never weakened even after twenty centuries, as modern Russia and Mexico and Spain so well testify; and the reason it still endures is because He is still an obstacle—an obstacle to sin, to selfishness, to godlessness, and to the spirit of the world. The Spirit of Christ still lives in those who love. He is still a hindrance to nations who would forget God; still a stumbling block to those who cease to pray; still a reproach to those who sin and atone not; still a Divinity refusing to step down from the cross to win the plaudits of an hour; still a Voice calling uneasy hearts away from the spirit of the world to the glorious liberty

of the children of God. Hatred still endures, because He still lives. But if He still lives He is Divine. If He is Divine then until the spirit of the world dies, there shall be distress for His followers. But when it dies, Victory. "In the world you shall have distress; but have confidence, I have overcome the world."

Here is the key to the hatred of the Church—Our Lord was intensely loved and intensely hated because He was Divine. Only the perversion of the sovereign love of God could ever explain such hate. Only that which continues that Divine Life could ever be the object of such a hate.

As Cardinal Newman has said: "If there is a form of Christianity now in the world which is accused of gross superstition, of borrowing its rites and customs from the heathen and of ascribing to forms and ceremonies an occult virtue; a religion which is considered to burden and enslave the mind of its requisitions, to address itself to the weak-minded and ignorant, to be supported by sophistry and imposture, and to contradict reason and exalt mere irrational faith; a religion which impresses on the serious minds very distressing views of the guilt and consequences of sins, sets upon the minute acts of the day, one by one, their definite value for praise or blame, and thus casts a grave shadow over the future; a religion which holds up to admiration the surrender of wealth, and disables serious persons from enjoying it if they would; a religion, the doctrines of which are to the generality of men unknown; which is considered to bear on its every surface signs of folly and falsehood so distinct that a glance suffices to judge of it, and that careful examination is pre-



posterous; a religion such, that men look at a convert to it with curiosity, suspicion, fear, disgust, as the case may be, as if something strange had befallen him, as if he had had an initiation into a mystery, and had come into communion with dreadful influences, as if he were now one of a confederacy which claimed him, absorbed him, stripped him of his personality, reduced him to a mere organ or instrument of a whole; a religion which men hate as proselytizing, anti-social, revolutionary, as dividing families, separating chief friends, corrupting the maxims of government, making mock at law, dissolving the empire, the enemy of human nature, and a 'conspirator against its rights and privileges'; a religion which they consider the champion and instrument of darkness, and a pollution calling down upon the land the anger of heaven; a religion which they associate with intrigue and conspiracy, which they speak about in whispers, which they detect by anticipation in whatever goes wrong, and to which they impute whatever is accountable; a religion, the very name of which they cast out as evil, and use simply as a bad epithet, and which from the impulse of self preservation they would persecute if they could; if there be such a religion now in the world, it is not unlike Christianity as that same world viewed it, when first it came forth from its Divine Author."

If you would find Christ today, then find the Church that does not get along with the world. Look for the Church that is hated by the world as Christ was hated by the world. Look for the Church which is accused of being behind the times as Our Lord was accused of being ignorant and

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never having learned. Look for the Church which men sneer at as socially inferior as they sneered at Our Lord because He came from Nazareth. Look for the Church which is accused of having a devil, as Our Lord was accused of being possessed by Beelzebub, the Prince of Devils. Look for the Church which, in seasons of bigotry, men say must be destroyed in the name of God, as men crucified Christ and thought they had done a service to God. Look for the Church which the world rejects because it claims it is infallible, as Pilate rejected Christ because He called Himself the Truth. Look for the Church which is rejected by the world as Our Lord was rejected by men. Look for the Church which amid the confusion of conflicting opinions its members love as they love Christ, and respect its voice as the very voice of its Founder, and the suspicion will grow that if the Church is unpopular with the spirit of the world, then it is unworldly, and if it is unworldly, it is Divine. If it is Divine, then it must be infinitely loved and infinitely hated as was Christ Himself. But only that which is Divine can be the object of infinite hate and love. Therefore the Church is Divine. Therefore it is the life of Christ among men. Therefore we love it. Therefore we hope to die in its Blessed Embrace.

## THE CROSS AND THE CRUCIFIX

Address delivered on March 18, 1934

The first question ever asked in the history of the world, and the one which brought us pain and woe, was the question, "Why?" It was Satan, the first sceptic, who asked the question, "why hath God commanded you, that you should not eat of every tree of paradise?" From that time until this, our poor little minds have asked many "whys," but I suppose none more often than, "Why is there pain in the world?" "Why does suffering exist side by side with luxury?"

This problem of pain has a symbol, and the symbol is the cross. But why is the cross typical of the problem of suffering? Because it is made up of two bars, one horizontal and the other vertical. The horizontal bar is the bar of death, for death is prone, prostrate, flat. The vertical bar is the bar of life, for all life is erect, upright. The crossing of one bar with the other signifies the contradiction of life and death, joy and sorrow, laughter and tears, pleasure and pain, our will and God's will. The only way a cross can ever be made is by laying the bar of joy against the bar of sorrow. Or, to put it another way, our will is the horizontal bar. God's will is the vertical bar, as soon as we place our desires and our wills against God's desires and God's will, we form a cross. Thus the cross is the symbol of pain and suffering.

If the cross is the symbol of the problem of pain, the Crucifix is its solution. The difference between the cross and the Crucifix is Christ. Once

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Our Lord, Who is Love Itself, mounts the cross, He reveals how pain can be transformed through love into a joyful sacrifice, how those who sow in tears may reap in joy, how those who mourn may be comforted, how those who suffer with Him may reign with Him, and how those who take up a cross for a brief Good Friday will possess happiness for an eternal Easter Sunday. Love is, as it were, the joint where the horizontal bar of death and the vertical bar of life becomes reconciled in the doctrine that all life is through death.

Here is where the solution of Our Lord differs from every other solution of the problem of pain, even those solutions which mask themselves under the name of Christian. The world meets the problem of pain either by denying it, or by attempting process of self-hypnotism which would say that pain is imaginary and due to want of faith; it is made insoluble by an attempt to escape or flee it, for the modern man feels it is better to sin than to suffer. Our Lord, on the contrary, does not deny pain; He does not attempt to escape it. He faces it, and by doing so proves that suffering is not foreign even to a God become Man.

Pain has, therefore, a definite part to play in life. It is a remarkable fact that our sensibilities are more developed for pain than for pleasure, and our power for suffering is in excess of our power for joy. Pleasure increases to a point of satiety, and we feel that if it went beyond that point, it would become a positive torture. Pain, on the contrary, goes on increasing and increasing, even when we have cried "enough"; it reaches a point where we feel we can bear it no longer, and

yet it unburdens itself until it kills. I believe the reason why we have greater capacity for pain than pleasure is because God intended that those who lead a sound moral life should drink the last drop of the chalice of bitterness here below, for there is no bitterness in heaven. But the morally good never quite sound the depths of pleasure here below, for greater happiness awaits them in heaven. But whatever the real reason, the truth still remains that on the cross Our Lord shows that Love can take no other form, when it is brought into contact with evil, than the form of pain. To overcome evil with good, one must suffer unjustly. The lesson of the Crucifix, then, is that pain is never to be isolated or separated from love. The Crucifix does not mean pain; it means sacrifice. In other words, it tells us, first, pain is sacrifice without love; and secondly, that sacrifice is pain with love.

Firstly, pain is sacrifice without love. The Crucifixion is not a glorification of pain as pain. The Christian attitude to mortification has sometimes been misrepresented as idealizing pain, as if God were more pleased with us when we suffered than when we rejoiced. No! Pain in itself has no sanctifying influence. The natural effect of pain is to individualize us, center our thoughts on ourselves, and make our infirmity the excuse for every comfort and attention. All the afflictions of the body, such as penance, mortification, have no power in themselves to make men better. They often make a man worse. When pain is divorced from love, it leads a man to wish others were as he is; it makes him cruel, hateful, bitter. When pain is unsanctified by affection, it scars, burns up all our finer sensibilities of the soul, and

leaves the soul fierce and brutal. Pain as pain, then, is not an ideal: it is a curse, when separated from love, for rather than making one's soul better, it makes it worse by scorching it.

Now let us turn to the other side of the picture. Pain is not to be denied; it is not to be escaped. It is to be met with love and made a sacrifice. Analyze your own experience, and do not your heart and mind say that love is capable of overruling, in some way, your natural feelings about pain; that some things which otherwise might be painful are a joy to you when you find they benefit others? Love, in other words, can transmute pain and make it sacrifice, which is always a joy. If you lose a sum of money, is not your loss softened by the discovery that it was found by some very poor person whom you loved? If your head is racked with pain, your body wasted and worn from long vigils by the bed-side of your child, is not the pain softened by the thought that through your love and devotion, the child was nursed back again to health? You could never have felt the joy, nor had the faintest idea of what your love was, if that sacrifice had been denied you. But if your love were absent, then the sacrifice would have been pain, vexation, and annoyance.

The truth gradually emerges that our highest happiness consists in the feeling that another's good is purchased by our sacrifice; that the reason why pain is bitter is because we have no one to love and for whom we might suffer. Love is the only force in the world which can make pain bearable, and it makes it more than bearable by transforming it into the joy of sacrifice.

Now, if the dross of pain can be transmuted

into the gold of sacrifice by the alchemy of love, then it follows the deeper our love, the less the sense of pain, and the keener our joy of sacrifice. But there is no love greater than the love of Him Who laid down His life for His friends. Hence, the more intense we love His holy purposes, the more zealous we are for His kingdom, the more devoted we are to the greater glory of Our Lord and Saviour, the more we will rejoice in any sacrifice that will bring even a single soul to His Sacred Heart. Such is the explanation of a Paul who gloried in his infirmities and of the Apostles who rejoiced that they could suffer for Jesus Whom they loved. That, too, is why the only recorded time in the life of Our Lord that He ever sang was the night He went out to His death for the love and redemption of men.

No wonder saints have always said that the best and greatest gift which God could ever give them would be the privilege He gave His Son, namely, to be used and sacrificed for the best and greatest end. Nothing else could ever so much please them as to renew Christ's life in theirs; to complement His work in their own; to fill up in their body the sufferings which were wanting to the passion of their Lord. The world would take away pain. The Crucifix would transform it by love, by reminding us that pain is from sin and sacrifice from love, and nothing is nobler than sacrifice.

The cry of earth's anguish went up unto God—

“Lord, take away pain,—

The shadow that darkens the world Thou hast made,

The close coiling chain

That strangles the heart, the burden that weighs

On the wings that would soar,—

Lord, take away pain from the world Thou hast made

That it love Thee the more."  
 Then answered the Lord to the world He had made,  
 "Shall I take away Pain?  
 And with it the power of the soul to endure  
 Made strong by the strain?  
 Shall I take away pity that knits heart to heart  
 And sacrifice high?  
 Will ye lost all your heroes who lift from the flame  
 White brows to the sky?  
 Shall I take away love that redeems with a price  
 And smiles through the loss,—  
 Can ye spare from those lives that would climb unto Mine,  
 The Christ on His Cross?" (1)

No, the world cannot spare the "Christ on His Cross." That is the reason the world is sad. Having forgotten Him, it is in pain. And oh! what a waste of pain there is in the world! How many aching heads there are which are never united with a Head crowned with thorns for the Redemption of the world; how many lame feet there are whose pains are never softened by a love for those other Feet which climbed the great hill of Calvary; how many bruised bodies there are which knowing not the love of Christ for them, have no love to soften their pains; how many aching hearts there are who are in pain because they have no great love, such as that of the Sacred Heart; how many souls there are who look at the cross instead of the Crucifix, who have the pain without the sacrifice, who never seem to learn that just as it is through want of love that pain arises, so it is later on through want of love that hell arises; how many souls there are who have missed the joy of sacrifice because they have never loved! O how sweet is the sacrifice of those who suffer because they love the Love Who sacrificed Himself for them on a cross. To them alone comes an understanding of the holy purposes of God, for only those who walk in darkness ever see the stars.

(1) Anonymous



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## HOPE FOR SINNERS

Address delivered on March 25, 1934

One of the most beautiful paradoxes in the Life of Our Lord is that He Who was sinless was the friend of sinners; that He Who was Purity cleansed the impure; and that He Who was Justice come not "to call the just, but sinners." He hated sin, but He loved the sinner; He abhorred dishonesty, but he called Judas a friend; He despised adultery, but He forgave the adulteress. He moved among the impure with the natural simplicity of the pure, and with the strength of a healthy man among the sick. He had not the fear of sinners that a man converted from sin must necessarily have, namely the fear of contagion and the danger of falling again. In this world when a servant becomes a master, he is no longer on familiar terms with his servants. In like manner, converted sinners are not always friends of sinners. They often dwell on their own fall, on their liberation, and set themselves up as perfect examples of the sweetness of salvation. But there is nothing of this in the life of the Eternal Galilean. Never does He even suggest that sinners must find hope in Him because He left sin behind. Never is He the proselytizing penitent. His love for the shipwrecked is not that of one who has been shipwrecked, but of one who traveled the seas in calm. His love for sinners then is a pure love, a love like that of His Immaculate Mother lifted to the infinite, a "love we fall just short of in all love," a love which will be found again only in those saintly other Christs to whom He gave

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the power to forgive sins, a love which is Divine, God's love, Christ's love—just sheer *love*.

Recall, first of all the mercy of Our Lord to the thief; and secondly, the special love Our Lord shows to sinners in the parables.

There were two thieves crucified with Christ—one who was a sinner but refused mercy, the other a sinner who begged it. The thief on the left, the symbol of the goats who shall be on the left hand of Christ on the day of Judgment, began to vomit a challenge which was also to be hurled at Our Lord from the Pharisees beneath. "If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." He cried for salvation—but only for salvation from nails and a cross, not for salvation from sin and hell. The world is full of those who think suffering is a greater evil than sin.

The good thief who had been listening to Him and the raging voices shrieking below, turned to His companion, reminding him to fear lest God punish him for insulting an innocent man: "Neither dost thou fear God, seeing thou art under the same condemnation. And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeps; but this man hath done no evil." Then when enough dry fuel had gathered on the altar within him, a spark from the central cross fell upon it, flaming it into a glorious illumination. As if invoking the crimson stream that poured from Guiltless Hands, he said to Jesus: "Lord, remember me when thou shalt come into thy kingdom." And He on the central cross Who was crucified between thieves, became the Divine Thief and, turning to the quivering life beside Him that was twisting on a tree, said that before the sun would set He would steal his soul to

Eternal Life: "This day thou shalt be with me in paradise."

Mark that man on the right: What he is—a thief; where he is—on a cross; when he speaks—on dying; to Whom he speaks—the dying Christ; what he received—Paradise. It was the thief's last prayer—perhaps his first. He asked once, sought once, knocked once, and was saved on the last day of his life—the brand plucked from the burning. And in a certain sense the thief died a thief—for he stole Paradise.

Now turn to the parables and let your hearts soften at the proof of Our Lord's words that those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are ill. Recall that St. Luke recounts in succession three parables of Our Blessed Lord: the parables of a hundred sheep, the ten pieces of money, and the two sons. Note in each of these parables how much joy Our Divine Saviour manifests at the saving of sinners.

First of all, a man has a hundred sheep. When he loses one he leaves the ninety-nine in the desert and goes after the one which was lost until he finds it. When he does find it, he carries it home gently on his shoulders, brings it into his own house, calls together his friends and neighbors, and says to them: "Rejoice with me, because I have found my sheep that was lost." But the ninety-nine sheep which were never lost were left in the field.

In the parable of the ten pieces of money the woman loses one. And she lights a candle, and sweeps the house diligently in search of it. When she does find it she calls together her friends and neighbors saying: "Rejoice with me, because I have found the groat which I had lost." but there is no

record that she ever called her friends and neighbors to rejoice over possession of the nine pieces of money which she never lost.

Finally, in the parable of the prodigal, a father has two sons. The younger son takes his share of the substance, leaves home, spending his fortune sinfully and wastefully. When he returns home the father puts a ring on his finger, a cloak on his shoulder, and gives him the banquet of the fatted calf, saying: "Let us eat and make merry: Because this my son was dead, and is come to life again: was lost, and is found." But the elder son who remained at home was never so much as given a goat to make merry with his friends.

In these parables Our Lord seems to put a certain premium upon repentant sinners. And is it not easy to understand? The satisfaction of finding a lost object, even though it be valueless, is greater than that of possessing other and more valuable objects which have never been lost. Does not a nation rejoice more in a reconquered province than in those which were never separated from her? Does not a child who has been away from his father receive a welcome and a love which otherwise he would not have received? Does not a mother rejoice more in the recovery of her sick child than in the health of all the others?

There is a story told about an Italian saint who, while one day dusting the convent chapel, accidentally dropped to the floor a small statue of Our Blessed Lord. Picking it up she kissed it and said: "Jesus, if You had not fallen, You never would have got that." And Our Lord revealed to her heart that such was his attitude to sinners.

Affection always emerges renewed after the

eclipse it suffers. A reconciliation is always sweeter than an unbroken friendship. What else can be the meaning of those tender words of Our Lord: "There shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance, more than upon ninety-nine just who need not penance.

Hence I believe that the reason why Our Lord chose Peter who fell, rather than John who fell not, as the rock upon which He built His Church, was in order that the Church might always sense the great need of mercy and pardon for sinners. Peter is a proclamation to the world that is hope for the most hardened sinners. Peter's triple denial and triple protestation of love is a tocsin sounding to all ages that if we had never sinned, we never could call Christ "Saviour."

But let us not be deceived! The mercy of God is not to be made an excuse for greater sinning; presuming on His Pardon is one of the greatest sins of all. And what is more—a life of sin is forgiven only on condition that we prove our sorrow, and there is only one way to prove it, namely by doing penance. Hence Our Lord in speaking of the joy in heaven at the return of a sinner, added "a sinner that doth penance." As a matter of fact, the more truly penitent we are, the less we hope to escape punishment. Not even the penitent thief is an apology for that un-Christian attitude that God is indifferent to our sins, and that in the end all will be well, regardless of how we live. The thief was saved, not because he was a sinner but because he was a penitent. Not even his was a death-bed conversion for he did not die in bed—but on a cross doing penance for his sins. Our Lord's answer to him was a revelation of the con-

ditional nature of pardon—a sorrow willing to atone for sin. When that is present Our Lord always gives more than is asked: The thief asked for remembrance. Our Lord gave him Paradise.

As we enter into this week called Holy, when the flood-gates of Divine Mercy are opened to the world, where is that mercy and pardon to be found? There is a story about a mysterious box the contents of which no one knew. One day it was opened and found to be the treasure home of the merciful heart of a giant. Such is the confessional box where I trust hundreds of thousands of my listeners will go this week to commune with the Giant Heart of the Merciful Christ as revealed in the absolving hand of His priests. But you say—by what right do they forgive sins? Recall this incident. Our Lord once said to the Apostles of His Church, which He said was founded on Peter and would endure to the end of time: “Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them; whose sins you shall retain they are retained.” Now reflect: If it were not for the confessional box of the Catholic Church, these words of Our Lord would have no meaning today. And I cannot believe that words which give us sinners hope, pardon, and mercy, faded away on the Galilean air, floated meaningless into space. I prefer to believe, as over 300,000,000 others believe, that Our Lord meant what He said; and that is why the sweetest words our ears ever heard are the words of the giant in the little box: “I absolve thee from thy sins.”

## THE ETERNAL GALILEAN

Address delivered on April 1, 1934

As the Church chants today her Alleluias and the dead things rise to life in token of the Resurrection of Our Lord and Saviour, there is but one thought I would leave with you; and that is that *what we call life is only death*, and that the only life is the Life of the Risen King of Easter Day.

What do men call life? They call life that temporary endowment of vital forces which animates their bodies, sees in their eyes, hears in their ears, and thrills in their hearts. Its opposite men call death. Death is the cessation of all those processes which made living a joy, a muffling of the heart beats, which like a drum on a funeral march becomes silent at the grave. That is what men call death. And it was in the light of such a narrow concept that men judged the majestic Person of Christ. They thought His Life ended in Death.

In the beginning of His Public Life, in the first flush of Apostolic success, they left their nets, boats, and custom tables, and flocked to Him as the restorer of the Kingdom of Israel. Judas saw it as a successful financial venture, James and John saw in it an opportunity to sit at His right and left hand in earthly glory; the others jealous of their brethren quarreled for the first places at table. The power to cast out devils, the thrill of daily companionings with such a noble Personage, the peace which stole into their hearts as His words took the wings of angels, and the glory of His triumphant entrance on Palm Sunday into Jerusalem, made His death seem remote enough to be almost impossible. Even

though at the very beginning they heard Him speak of His Resurrection saying that He would in three days rebuild the temple of His Body which men would destroy; even though they had heard Him say that like another Jonas He would be in "the heart of the earth three days and three nights," they still adhered to a narrow, human, and worldly outlook on life and death. That is why Peter was scandalized at the very mention of His death. That too is why, when Holy Week came, and death began to raise its menacing hand against His holy Life, they dispersed like sheep when the Shepherd is struck. Their Master was about to die! It would be the end of their hopes! Judas felt that since death would *end* His Life, he might even profit by His death, as he had profited by His Life; and so he sold his Master for thirty silver coins—a sign that divine things are always bartered away out of all relation to their true worth. Peter, James, and John, who saw their Master when His face shone like the sun and His garments were as snow, now slept in a garden while His face was beaded with crimson drops and His garments were dyed red as wine. In the four trials before the Jewish and Roman judges there was not a single Apostle to speak a word in His defense. As these trials made history by their injustice against Justice, Peter warmed himself by a fire, and cursed and swore that he never knew the Man!

At the foot of the Cross, only the Apostle John was present. James, his brother, was not there! Neither was Peter! And they were not there, because they thought all was lost. As the last drops of redemption spilled out from the Broken Chalice of Redemption, they were convinced that it was only a



matter of minutes until His Life would end. In the unearthly darkness when the sun hid its face at the passing of Light, the friends at the foot of the Cross whispered that He was dying. A moment later they sighed that He was dead. All seemed lost! The grave was about to demand its tribute. Death had won its victory.

And as the lengthening shadows of three crosses cast their sinister brooding sadness over the re-treating figures, many a man and woman in Jerusalem that day took away sweet memories of Him, for more flowers are scattered at our death than at our living. They loved Him—there was no doubt of that; but it was with that kind of love which shrinks from showing itself in the sacrifice of a cross.

The Apostles kept the memory of a beautiful kingdom which like Moses, it seemed, they were to see with their mind's eye, but never to enter. Now that death had come and life had gone, back to their nets and their boats they would go. Three years before the Great Master had called them away from fishing to be fishers of men. Now that His flame had died away, at the moment they were about to be lighted by it, they would once more become fishers of fish. What more had they to hope for? Had not He Who they hoped would restore the throne of David died on a tree, with only thorns for a crown, nails for sceptre, and His Own Blood for royal purple? There was just one word to express their attitude, a human word with a human implication, and with a horizon no broader than that on which the sun sets: Christ is *dead!*

Now let us contemplate another scene some days afterwards—possibly a week. Many things had happened in the meantime. The high priest had

returned to his Judgment Seat, Pilate to his basin of water, and the fishermen to their nets. It was evening; the lake was flecked with white as the stars danced upon it, and the moon sent down its rays like silver grappling hooks to move its tides and all the surges of the seas. Seven followers of the Lord who never could forget the Unforgettable gathered about the little harbor of Capharnaum. Their boats with their slanting sails, worn seats, and high red rudders, were to them like another home. It seemed as if fishing might be good, now that they had turned from men to fish and from earth to sea for things to catch. Simon, who was named Peter the Rock by the Master, called down the shores to Thomas, Nathaniel, James, John, and two others, and said: "I go a fishing." And they answered back, and the hills echoed it again: "We also come with thee." They went into the boat, put off, labored all the night and caught nothing. At early morn, as the sun began to crimson the Galilean mountain, they started to row to shore. And as they came near they saw a man standing on the shore who seemed to be waiting for them, but they knew not who it was. His voice rang out like a silver trumpet as He called them: "Children, have you any meat?" And they answered: "No."

"He saith to them: Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and you shall find." They cast their net and instantly were scarcely able to draw it in began to tremble as the memory of other days awoke became of the multitude of fishes, and they all within them. "It is the Lord," whispered John to Peter; and instantly the warm-hearted enthusiast, tightening his fisher's tunic round his loins (for he was naked) leaped into the sea, swam across the

hundred yards which separated him from Our Lord, and cast his dripping self at the feet of the Master. And the others, following in the boat, brought their strained but unbroken net filled with 153 fishes.

A wood fire was burning on the strand, lighted by the Light of the World. Near it was some bread, and on its glowing embers some broiling fish—a meal prepared by the Creator of the Universe in the midst of His creation. Jesus said to them: “Come and dine. And none of them who were at meat durst ask him: Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord.”

“When therefore they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter: Simon, *son* of John, lovest thou me more than these? He saith to him: Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith to him: Feed my lambs. He saith to him again: Simon, *son* of John, lovest thou me? He saith to him: Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith to him: Feed my lambs. He said to him the third time: Simon, *son* of John, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved, because he had said to him the third time: Lovest thou me? And he said to him: Lord, thou knowest all things: thou knowest that I love thee. He said to him: Feed my sheep.”

The ordeal was over. For the triple denial the night of the trial, Our Lord drew forth the triple promise of love. But that was not all. He would remind Peter that love is the key to the meaning of death and life, by foretelling the kind of death Peter himself would undergo: “Amen, amen I say to thee, when thou wast younger, thou didst gird thyself, and didst walk where thou wouldst. But when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy

hands, and another shall gird thee, and lead thee whither thou wouldst not."

Briefly, Our Lord was telling Peter love is not a love of earthly life, but a love of death; that is, he would love the Cross as the Master had. In effect, He was saying: "Because I love you they killed me; yet for your love of me, they will kill you. The reward of your labors will be two crossbeams and four nails as I had—but also life eternal." Many years would pass before Peter would be so girded, and before he would recognize himself as so unworthy of his Master that he would ask to be crucified upside down; but from now on Peter understood something. Mary Magdalene, Mary His Mother, the other Apostles understood it too. It was the tremendous lesson of the Resurrection that every follower of Christ would understand until the end of the world, the lesson that meant unlearning all the wisdom the world ever taught and ever will teach; and that lesson, which still thrills our hearts today, is that: *It was not Christ Who died—it was Death.*

The Resurrection was a fact. He said He would rise again, and He did rise again! *Resurrexit sicut dixit!* Oh, think not Peter and the apostles were the victims of a delusion; think not they had an hallucination and mistook their subjective ideas for the manifestation of the Conqueror of Death. All those who saw the One Whom they thought dead, walk in the newness of life, had to be *convinced*. They were not even expecting a resurrection. The absence of the Apostles at the crucifixion and the other facts I have mentioned prove they thought death ended all. On Easter morning the women went to the sepulchre not to meet the Risen Christ, but to embalm the body; the greatest worry was who would

roll away the stone from the door of the sepulchre; even when they found it rolled away, they did not suppose a resurrection, but only a shameful theft of the body. The message of the angel inspired them not with faith, but with fear and horror.

The Apostles had the same state of mind—the one thing they were afraid of was an hallucination. Hence when the women announced the resurrection, instead of being impressed, they regarded their words as “idle tales and believed them not.” Peter and John verified the empty tomb, but still not knowing the Scripture about the Resurrection. Why, they were so far away from the idea of seeing Him upset the human concept of death that when they first saw Him thereafter they thought they had seen a ghost; Mary Magdalene thought He was the gardener, and the disciples on the way to Emmaus did not recognize Him until the breaking of bread—and when they told the other disciples, they were not believed. When He appeared in Galilee, Matthew tells us that some doubted. The very evening of the Resurrection some of His Apostles would not even believe their own eyes until they saw Him eating. Thomas even then doubted and would not be convinced until he put his finger into His hand, and his hand into the divine side, to be cured of his doubt and made the hope and healer of agnostics until the end of time.

If the followers were expecting Him, they would have believed at once. If they did finally believe, it was only because the sheer weight of external evidence was too strong to resist. They had to be convinced, and they were convinced. They had to admit their views on death were wrong—Christ was

not dead. Life then does not mean what men call life. Hence the world and its ideas had to be re-made—for here was a force greater than nature! Nature had not finished her accounting with Him, for nature received the only serious blow it ever received—the mortal wound of an empty tomb. Enemies had not finished their accounting with Him, for they who slew the Foe found they had lost the day. Humanity has not finished its accounting, for He came from a stranger's grave to show the breast where a Roman spear had forever made visible the Heart which loved men enough to die for them and then live on in order to be able to love them *eternally*. The human mind had not finished its last accounting, for it now had to learn that what men call life is only death, that bodily life is not true life, that he who gives up his soul ruins also the flesh which houses it, that if we are to save our life we must lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life for His sake shall find it. . . In a word, *it was not Christ Who died—it was Death.*

Think for the moment on the conduct of the Apostles before the Resurrection, and the way they acted when the Spirit gave them the fulness of belief in the Risen Saviour. What new force so transformed their souls as to make the abject the venerated; the ignorant, masters; the egotists, devoted; and the despairing, saints? What power was it that laid hold of Peter who once said he knew not the man, and who now, before a learned audience of Parthians and Medes and Elamites, of Mesopotamians, of Phrygians and Egyptians and Romans, arises to startle their hearts and thrill their souls with the message: "The author of life you killed" "Do penance, and be baptized every one of you in

the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins?" What hand was it that laid hold of Saul, the bitter enemy of Christians, converted him into a Paul and the preacher who counted all things as naught save the glory of the Risen Christ? What new spirit entered into that crude, fish-smelling group of Galilean fishermen, which compelled them to go to the capital of the world, that only brushed them aside with disdain, and there preach the seemingly grotesque creed that He Who was executed as a common criminal by a Roman Prosecutor was the Resurrection and the Life? Why that idea was more absurd to the Romans than the idea of a Perfect Supreme God is today to H. G. Wells, or the ideal of purity to Bertrand Russell. Some new dynamic, some new colossal power, had to enter into such simple souls to disrupt a Jewish world, and impress itself in twenty years on the entire shore of the Mediterranean from Caesarea to Troas. There is only one force in the world which explains how habitual doubters like Thomas, sensitive tax-gatherers like Matthew, dull men like Phillip, impetuous characters like Peter, gentle dreamers like John, and a few sea-faring men reeling under the shock of a Crucifixion, could be transformed into men of fire ready to suffer, dare, and if need be, die—and that is the force of Love which showed itself in the Christ Whom the builders rejected, and now was made the head of the corner. Everywhere they gave the secret of their success: they were witnesses of a Resurrection; He Who was dead, liveth. And eleven of them went out to have their throats cut in testimony of that belief—and men generally do not have their throats cut for an hallucination. There is only one conclusion their blood will let us accept, and

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that is the lesson of Easter Day which they preached: *It was not Christ Who died—it was Death.*

The cycles of the years whirl away in history, but it was ever the same antiphon that went up from the hearts of men. Each age repeated it in its own way so that no generation of men was without the tidings of victory.

See how that lesson was verified as the followers of the Risen Christ taught Rome the real reason why she was Eternal. Hardly yet grown to her full stature, Nero published his famous edict: "Let there be no Christians." And his successors, with no fear of God to restrain their cruelty and a great army to administer it, set to work to destroy the Gospel of the Risen Saviour. The swords of the executioners, blunted with slaughter, no longer fitted their sheaths; the wild beasts satiated with Christian blood, shrank from it as if more conscious of its dignity than those who ordered it spilt; the river of the Tiber ran red as if already one of the angels of the Apocalypse had poured into it the vial which turns waters into blood. From a thousand times a thousand throats there came the cry, "Christians must die," as a thousand times a thousand thumbs turned down in signal of death. A day finally came when Rome thought it had cut off the last hand that would make the Sign of the Cross and silenced the last tongue that would breathe the name of the risen Christ. And yet what is the verdict of history? The verdict of history is the verdict of the empty tomb. It was the same antiphon struck on a different key. It was not the Christians who died. It was the Roman Empire. *It was not Christ Who died—it was Death.*



Come closer to our times and see Easter once more proclaiming its lesson, when men would dare forget even the name. The end of the nineteenth century marked the great upward climb of man divorced from God. Every one of the sacred truths taught by the Church since the first Easter Day was presumed to have been dissolved by the 'acids of modernity.' God was reduced to a mental symbol and then explained away psychologically; man was reduced to an animal and then explained away biologically; life was reduced to chemicals and then explained away mechanically. The supernatural was made synonymous with the superstitious; the mystical was identified with the unreal; Christ was considered a mere social reformer like Buddha and Confucius; the Church was called a sect; and man was believed to be on the way to being a God.

But just at that moment, when the world boasted of its superior organization, and its faith in the material and its doubt in the spiritual—just at that very second when it was said the death of the Church marked the beginning of the modern world—the crust of the earth seemed to crack as hell came to the surface in the World War. Science, which was supposed to be an ally of man, became his enemy; man, who was taught he was only a beast, acted like one; souls, that were counted as straw, were now blown like chaff across the battle fields of blood; God, Who was denied, now left man to godlessness—whose other name is death.

And finally when the smoke of battle had cleared away, and the long range guns were beaten into plowshares, and the living made an inventory of the dead, it was discovered that men had failed; that governments had failed; that institutions had

failed. There was only one thing that did not fail. It was the Church and its unwavering loyalty to the Divinity of Christ. The antiphon of Easter was ringing again. It was not the Church which died—it was the modern World. *It was not Christ Who died—it was death!*

Now enter into your own personal lives. You have heard the voice of the Eternal Galilean calling to your own heart, as abyss of goodness crieth unto abyss of need, and beckoning you on to His Way, His Truth, and His Life. In a moment of silence, perhaps, He whispered to you that truth is in His Church; in a passing prayer He called you to greater prayerfulness. But you felt it would seem to be the end of your reason if you accepted, if you embraced, the word of Christ in its fullness; that it would be a lowering of your self-respect if you knelt for forgiveness; and that it would be torture to give up the world for deeper and longer prayers. Then finally you took the great step, and made the great adventure. You entered the Church, you confessed your sins, you perfected your spiritual life, and lo and behold, in those moments when you thought you were losing everything you found everything; when you thought you were going into your grave, you were walking in the newness of life; and when you thought you were in the dark you were in the blaze of the Light of God. The whole experience of conversion, confession, sanctification seemed in the beginning only death; but it was only a new verse to an old tune. It was the antiphon of the Empty Tomb struck on the chords of your heart by the fingers of God. It was not you who died—it was sin. *It was not Christ Who died—it was death!*

Christ liveth. The Eternal Galilean abides. Why then do we not recognize Him? Why do we delay embracing the inevitable which is God? There is nothing new to be tried. There is no need of setting up new laboratories to test new faiths. We have tried them all and found them to be old errors with new labels. We tried all the experiments of the ancients who believed in the supremacy of man, and found that if we did not believe in God we could not be human. We tried human fierceness and it turned our poppy fields into Haceldamas of blood. We tried indifference and it ended in our identification of the spirit of truth with the spectre of evil. We tried science and it fed our minds and starved our hearts. We weighed the earth, measured the turning of Arcturus, took a census of the stars, set our thermometers in the very heart of the sun, and in the end we had new measures, greater numbers, and fancy names; but we still had our ignorance and our heartaches, and our "dismal universal hiss of sin." We tried the experiment of law and we did not obey the law, but changed the law to suit our moods, and called it progress; we tried the economic, leaned on its staff, and found it pierced our hands; we tried the experiment of beauty, and found it vanished as we touched it, and grew old as we embraced it; we tried the experiment of doubt and found that we even doubted our doubt, and were in "confusion worse confounded"; we tried the experiment of wealth and found ourselves poor; the experiment of power and found ourselves weak; the experiment of pride and found ourselves humbled. We have found no welcoming shade by quiet waters, where our bodies could repose and our minds could be at rest. We are always

seeking but never finding; always knocking and never being admitted; always learning and never coming to a knowledge of truth. There is only one experiment that modern man has not definitely tried, and that is the love, not of Jesus the Teacher, Jesus the Social Reformer, Jesus the Humanitarian, but of Him Who is true God and true Man, One Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Somewhere on earth His unerring absolute Truth still abides; somewhere on earth His Divine Life flows out into hearts like fresh springs from an Eternal Fountain. Somewhere on earth His Calvary is prolonged through space and time as other Mothers raise up other Johns to stand beneath a cross and swing it in benediction in the direction of Eden's four-fold river. Somewhere Christ lives, loves, and teaches. Where that beautiful somewhere is, I shall disclose in my next broadcast on November fourth when I begin a new series on the Mystical Body of Christ.

But for the present, let me assure you that I have had only one purpose in mind during these past four months, namely to make the Eternal Galilean better known and loved as the Son of God. If, therefore, any word of mine has, like a seed, sprouted an aspiration in but one single soul; if any thought, carried on the invisible winds of radio, has fanned a spark of prayer into a flame of devotion; if any phrase has stirred a well-spring of your soul to rise and run murmuring into the great sea of the love of God; if any sentence has made your heart unfold itself like the petals of a lotus and then drink in the dew of sanctifying grace; if any sermon has made one single sinner climb up Calvary, and there like the rocks under the Cross split wide open for the draughts of forgiveness which pour from the

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Cross; in a word, if all the time, labor, and love that went into all of these discourses did nothing other than make one simple heart follow the beckoning rays of the sanctuary lamp to make a single visit which otherwise would not have been paid, to the Eucharistic Prisoner of Love, then I shall not have labored in vain, then I shall not have spoken in vain. That is how much a soul is worth. That is how much Christ matters.

If I have done this, write me a word assuring me that you will breathe my name in prayer; if I have not done this, then pray for me all the more, that next season when I return, I may not blush at having empty hands to show my Lord.

God bless you!

## 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.

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