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The Happiness of Faith

by

Rev. Daniel A. Lord, S. J.



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Rev. Daniel A. Lord, S. J., National Organizer of the Sodality of Our Lady, and Editor of The Queen's Work, St. Louis, Missouri.

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✠ JOHN FRANCIS NOLL, D. D.,

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HAPPINESS FOR AN UNHAPPY WORLD

Address delivered on April 8, 1934.

The greatest and most consuming hunger in the heart of man is, of course, the hunger for happiness.

Infinitely varied as are its manifestations, the hunger itself is man's most universal experience. The quiet student, hidden away among his beloved books within a sound-proof library; the triumphant hero, riding down the Broadways of the world under a shower of flowers and ticker tape; the collector, avariciously gloating over a bit of Ming pottery; the explorer, stumbling fever-ridden and exhausted, upon the banks of that unknown river rolling lazily through tropical jungles; the ambitious woman, plotting to thrust her name into the social register; the scientist, suddenly seeing the success of an experiment that proves his theory; the business man, studying that balance sheet upon which is written the record of his first million; the disinterested lover of mankind, tearing down the rotten tenements to replace them with decent homes for decent families; the artist as his canvas begins to glow with a beauty he has sought during long years to capture; the general, as he watches the lines of the enemy sway into disorder; the athlete, straining every nerve in a last victorious burst of strength; the sinner, hotly panting after some new and illusive lust; the saint, feeling the nearness of the Eucharistic Christ—all, all mankind in its noblest and queerest moments, in its limitless activities and its most secret seclusions, its blackest vices and its richest heroisms, is driven on by that relentless hunger for happiness.

God never gave the human heart a hunger that He did not mean to satisfy. The simple hunger for food He satisfies in uncounted ways. The orchards bending under their rich and fragrant fruits; the fields in green and golden harvest; the herds wandering peacefully upon the hillside; the fish in endless variety in the sea; the roots that succulently rest within the rich loam; man's astonishing resourcefulness in shaping God's gracious larder into tempting combinations—are merely God's way of satisfying man's basic hunger of body. While He gave to each beast one or two or a scant half dozen objects for his appetite, He gave to His sons and daughters food in variety of form and color, fragrance and flavor.

In the heart of man is a hunger for the love and companionship of his fellows. God gave that hunger; God satisfies it in extraordinary variety. There is the passing moment of casual acquaintanceship as one catches, in the person met but once and never seen again, a flash of responsive wisdom or the quick glow of a sympathetic understanding. Life's paths are graciously filled with this. There is the warm and reassuring friendship that binds man to a man in comradeship of strength and the pooling of resources. Women find in other women a frequent depth of understanding and tenderness that eases the loneliness of a woman's heart. Children play together in easy friendship. Youth grows stronger in the company of youth. And the deep love of a man and woman for each other is not only the foundation of that sweet partnership in home and children but the inspiration of the world's fairest poetry and much of its most aspiring ambition. Again, God Who gave the appe-

tite for human friendships and loves gave its multiplied fulfilment.

The mind hungers for truth, and there is, despite the Pilates of every age, truth to satisfy it. The hungry eye quests for beauty, and beauty is everywhere. When the throat grows parched and thirsting, God pours out His inexhaustible waterfalls and springs and the red blood of His vineyards.

If, then, these appetites and hungers are so completely and adequately satisfied, need man despair of finding God's satisfaction for that great human hunger for happiness? On the contrary, it must be there, wherever God has placed it. It must be satisfied by the objects that God has destined for that purpose. Naturally one does not quench a burning throat with dried grass; hunger is not satisfied with wool or pebbles; the hunger of the mind is not content with lies, nor the questing eye satisfied with ugliness. The search for happiness cannot be successful except where God has placed happiness. And (for our great consolation) God has placed that happiness within the reach of all.

In all history, it has seldom been more important than now that men and women persuade themselves of the possibility and divine certainty of happiness. We need not be reminded that we are emerging less from the winter of the year into its brightly promising spring, than that we are passing from the shadows of one of the most despairful periods of experience into what we hope is the beginning of happier days.

That was a desperate period through which

men passed. The things in which they trusted for their happiness and the things on which they rested for their peace toppled, crumpled, fell into disillusioning ruins. The golden calf melted like so much rancid lard. The stock-ticker no longer sang its hymn of rising fortunes and of margins triumphant. Wise high priests of finance and prophets of business suddenly croaked dismally of disaster. And the men of literature and science who had promised us, with the final knifing of Christianity, a new heaven on a new earth, who had hated the creed of the "pale Galilean" and gone mad in their joy over the reborn pagan gods, plunged themselves and their gaping followers into a hopelessness that became the most characteristic note of our modern books. Despair of God, despair of souls, despair of the State, despair of big business and small, despair of marriage and love, and a great inclusive despair of man himself, was the theme song sung in endless minor keys everywhere and by everyone who could catch the public eye or ear. What an orgy of pessimism and hopelessness it was!

From all that we are mercifully emerging. Yes! But we must remember that man's despair of happiness was not born in the days of depression but was spawned in the very heyday of our reckless boom. In the sunshine of our age of gold, writers sat in their corners shuddering and afraid. They remembered the war that had almost gutted civilization, and they shook foreboding heads over a war to come. In the midst of national wealth and easy luxury, the current theory of life was that most hopeless of all hopeless philosophies: Eat, drink, and make merry; seize the moment;

gather your roses while you may; for tomorrow, horrible thought, we die.

We die! The voices that uttered that phrase—the voice of the financier clinging to his wealth; the voice of the lustful, holding a little tighter to his perishable lust; the artist as he saw beauty fade beneath his eye; the lover of mankind who, when all his work was done, found men still selfish and hard and unhappy—all sang together in the days of our modern Tower of Babel, the song of death. For nothing that came to us in our days of high stocks and low living, of our laughters and cheap ideals, of worshipful machines and a neglected God, of selfishness run amuck and the hungry failures crushed under triumphant wheels, nothing could escape that gaunt hand of death sweeping all things into an open grave.

The collapse from which we are slowly and painfully emerging did not breed unhappiness. It simply stilled the noise of our factories and silenced our clamorous shouts of victory; it cut down the vehemence of our jazz bands and minimized our loud-mouthed boasting; it hushed the clacking tongue of the stock ticker and struck men into terrified silence; and in the ensuing calm that was not a calm of peace but of terror, we could hear sounds hitherto overwhelmed. We could hear the cries of unhappy mankind hungry in the midst of plenty. Women and children no longer wept unnoticed as they told what the lusts of selfish men had done to them. Prophets crying out against the buccaneers of finance were surprisingly shrill and clear. And the despairing voices of modern literature, the voices of its most:

pagan pagans, Dreiser and Lewis, Shaw and O'Neill, D'Annunzio and Joyce, *The American Mercury* and the hopeless philosophers in our universities, rang out in an old alarm. The gods in whom we had trusted we suddenly knew we never had really trusted. And the goddesses compounded of frail flesh and unhappy vice turned ugly before our eyes, ugly as we had always known that beneath their silks and jewels they were ugly, and revolting.

The collapse made vocal man's unhappiness. It did not create it.

Yet the whole idea of unhappiness is senseless. The God Who gave us hungry hearts must have meant to satisfy them. Man is no Tantalus tortured by a pagan god with water that constantly eludes his parched lips. God gave us this appetite for happiness and God means to satisfy it—perfectly in eternity; surprisingly and adequately even in this present life.

Why, the silly little heroine of your latest stupid novel, echoing without understanding the heroes and heroines of Ibsen and Shaw, when she cries her apparently rebel cry: "I must find happiness; I have a right to happiness!", is only speaking out of the great hungry heart of all mankind. She has that right. She should find happiness. Of course the stupid, shadowy, hot, and dangerous pathway down which she trips in her quest will no more lead her to happiness than will the path of atheism down which Russia drives its millions nor the path of lust into which a hundred motion pictures beckon the young. But she is right when she cries for that happiness which is her due. She

can find it, if she follows the path clearly marked by a God made man for love of man's happiness.

So for the Sundays to come, we are talking happiness, you and I. I am talking as a member of that Church which recognizes not merely the inherent human hunger for happiness but acknowledges that hunger and proclaims God's eagerness to satisfy it. Strange among the many strange paradoxes of Christianity is the fact that the very Church which preaches penance sings the world's most joyous Alleluias. While it frankly calls the earth a "vale of tears," it offers the only philosophy of living in that vale of tears that is humanly satisfactory, divinely joyous. The very clearness with which it faces the facts of sin and disease, failure and death, makes it see the only solutions for those problems. It offers the sinner the happiness of repentance; it brings to the side of the sick, the comforting Presence of the Divine Physician; it gives the failure the certainty of a success that depends upon none of the silly accidents of birth or opportunity that make for wealth, power, or artistic achievement, but which depends upon God's desire for man's eternal success and the grace-strengthened power of his will. And to the dying (perhaps even more importantly for human happiness, to those who love the dying) it brings the ennobling certainty that the swallowing grave only swallows the worthless trifles with which men clutter their lives and is, for those who have believed in God, the gateway swinging into His Divine Presence.

The Catholic Church today is the most joyous, hopeful, optimistic organization in the world, believing in man because it believes in the God Who

fathered him; and giving to man that reassuring hope that, strangely enough, was born in a happiness following the world's greatest sorrow.

For the joy of the Catholic is founded on the sorrow of His God. His happiness is a thing that came into the world in the lightning and thunder and quaking earth that shook the cross of a dying Savior. At the moment of His death, Incarnate God bought back for men their lost right to happiness. In the agony of God, man was assured of his own joy. The blood shed by divinity won the forgiveness needed by crime-laden humanity. God died in torture that happiness might flood the earth.

Glancing swiftly from the Cross, the Catholic sees all this verified. The lurid red of Good Friday is transmuted with hardly perceptible break into the glorious pinks and scarlets of Easter's dawn. The broken body of God made man rises in a triumph of happiness that shall know no end. The horror of death is swallowed up in victory, and in the happiness of the risen Christ the Catholic reads the happiness that in measure will one day be his own.

For if the sadness and pain of Holy Week lasted scarcely three brief days, the happiness of Easter is forever. If for a moment those who hated goodness and happiness seemed to crush both under their blows, goodness and happiness came flooding back with the returning Soul of the risen Savior.

And if the Church takes its members down into the forty days of penitential Lent, it lifts them up to long months of happiness in the certain faith and convincing hope of a God triumphant over the

very things that make for man's unhappiness, sin and death.

Ours is a happy faith, my friends, and for the coming Sundays we shall study that happiness which is ours for the asking. We shall find it down pathways marked often with the bloody feet of a Savior treading the Way of the Cross. But ahead of us now as throughout our life is the happy glow of Easter.

IS RELIGION GLOOMY?

Address delivered on April 15, 1934.

Is religion gloomy? Is religion correctly symbolized by that long-faced, joyless, grim-mannered creature of caricature, in his frayed black frock coat, his tall unbrushed hat, his hand raised in endless prohibitions and denials? Is religion something that stands between a man and the sweetness and joy of life?

So you might think if you believed its enemies, and its enemies have been as diversified as the decadent Nero of Roman days and the rebellious Voltaire of the Eighteenth Century, as Swinburne palely sighing for the pleasures of the flesh, and Nietzsche visioning happiness in that incredible monster, the Superman trampling under the steel hooves of his war charger the bodies of his prostrate foes.

But a caricature by its very definition is not a picture. It is a deliberate distortion. And one does not go to enemies for a true and accurate likeness. Too many of those who call religion gloomy have learned that word not from those men who have found in religion the deepest peace and most lasting happiness, but from those like Nero who saw rising Christianity coming between him and his bestial desires, or like Voltaire who thought religion an infamous thing because it asked of him a little loyalty to God and country, to truth and the claims of friends.

It is true that there have been religions that seemed to hate the happiness of a human heart, as Puritanism did when it served God scowling,

branding laughter as a sin and simple joys as evil, and pulling out with gauntleted fist even the innocent Maypole of Catholic days. Manichaeism called all the beautiful things of the world the handicraft of the evil spirit; yet the Manichees called themselves followers of the Christ Who loved every flower upon the hillside and sought for the love light in human eyes. When within its fold the Catholic Church faced Jansenism and found it making a creed of despair and a cult of gentle melancholy, it branded its followers as heretics untrue to the loving and joy-bringing Savior.

No wonder that Puritanism died of sheer ugliness as Jansenism died of lovelessness. No wonder too that the churches, which began in the sixteenth century to affect an ugly ritual in plain, whitewashed meeting houses, where dreary prohibitions were more important even than an almost hopeless creed of depraved and corrupt wills, powerless against evil, and of souls predestined despite their efforts to eternal misery, have bit by bit readopted the beautiful service and the divine optimism of the Church from which they separated.

When I answer the question, *Is religion gloomy?*, I am answering for the Catholic Church which serves God smiling. I speak for a Church of deep happiness and spontaneous joy. It is filled, that Church, with the light of burning tapers and the voices of great choirs echoing in human fashion the endless music of heaven; its sweet-smelling incense, beloved even by the non-Catholic novelist, rises in clouds through the most majestic buildings ever reared by man, to be shot through with the glorious colors of stained glass

and to mellow the too brilliant gold of Fra Angelica's pictured saints and the smiling faces of Raphael's Madonnas. Its priests go up to flower-covered altars, more beautiful than the poetic shrines of pagan Greece, clad in the world's most graceful garments, and serve God in the stately dance that is the Catholic ritual, with song upon their lips and deep joy in their hearts.

All this external joy which fills each service of the Church is merely the symbol of that joy that is in the heart of every Catholic who understands his faith and has tasted its endless flowing springs of peace and happiness.

Happily for the world, the Catholic religion also has its stern prohibitions. It stands with its laws between men and a host of ugly things. Happily for the world—for the things from which its laws hold back mankind are the very things that poison man's joy and rob him of his real happiness. These are the things which Christ forbade, not because He was a stern, repellent lawgiver, but precisely because He was the divine Lover of mankind. Cruelty was all about Him; He forbade it though the tyrant and the powerful hated Him Who got between them and those they had oppressed. Lust had ruined homes, crushed the hearts of women to the casual passion of men, made marriage almost the chance mating of the beasts, and deprived children of dignity and sweetness and innocence. He was stern in His denunciation of the impure, though the impure thought Him a fool, as Herod did, scourged Him to ribbons, as the bestial soldiers did, and chafed resentfully under the restraints of His pure eyes.

When anyone can show that murder and theft,

cruelty and selfishness, the dull monotonous rounds of passion, oppression of the weak, and contempt for the helpless, have brought or can bring any happiness to the human race, that man can find human joy skulking in the footsteps of the animal, then and only then dare it be said that the stern prohibitions of religion make men unhappy.

The Church has stood, as Christ has stood, unfalteringly between man and the things that would ruin his joy. It forbids him the unrestrained exercise of his passions for which so much of stupid modern literature clamors, not because the passions may not be turned to highest purposes, even consecrated in the joy of a Sacrament; but because it knows that their unrestrained exercise robs man of his dignity, and flings him from his high estate down the scale of life to the jungle and the pigsty. The buccaneering swaggering of robber barons and the ruthlessness of many modern business men, the Church forbids as it forbids all injustice and exploitation of the weak; not because it would cramp the just ambitions of a noble soul but because it would hold back cruelty and oppression from the helpless.

Had the Church done nothing for the happiness of the world except hold in check man's baser appetites; if it had merely forbidden the chains of slavery and the tighter chains of passion, held back the tyrant from his oppression, and restrained the cruel and selfish from the exercise of their strength, its part would have been a tremendous one. The very men who clamor for freedom from the restraining influence of religion are living today in a civilization made safe and a little gentle

and considerate and pure because, or rather if, men are accepting that restraint.

Yet you or I would find the Church uninteresting if its contribution to happiness were merely one of *don'ts and mustn'ts*. We need more for happiness than protection from evil. We need a philosophy of life that brings confidence to our minds and assurance to our hearts. And, finding that philosophy, we need the courage and strength to carry it into operation.

Both these in astonishingly complete fashion come to the man who understands his Catholic faith.

Out of my recent reading, one phrase rose like a slap in the face. "This muddle called life," wrote the author—and in a single ugly expression crystalized all too much of our modern unreligious attitude. One need know little of modern literature to be aware of the grim fact that to hosts of serious men and to millions of the frivolous, life is an exasperating muddle. The chorus of modern thinkers sing neither in tune nor do they keep to a semblance of melody. Thoughts clash hopelessly with thoughts. Philosophies give philosophies the lie. What life means, whence it comes, whither it goes, the simplest answers to the simplest questions: all these things stump the thinker without religion and leave him in a state that is thick and dark with fog.

And when, like some Greek dreamer out of the heroic past, a thinker hits upon a heroic course for life and maps it out for his followers, he knows that no power of his can give them the strength to walk his difficult way; he has no power to lift them up to heights of heroism.

Life today is a muddle because thinking is so muddled. Life today sinks too often into selfishness and cruelty, because men seeing the better, lack the strength to accept the difficult things demanded of one who embraces a philosophy of disinterestedness and self-sacrifice.

How can a man be happy whose mind is muddled? How can he find joy when a sense of his own weakness turns his high resolutions to jelly and holds back his steps from the paths his mind sees and approves? How could a captain on the bridge of his ship be at peace with the world if he knew little of the port from which he came, nothing of the port to which he must drive his ship, and felt he had no stars or sun by which to chart his course, no instruments on which he could rely with certainty?

A man without religion today stands like a puzzled child before a thousand merchants of truth, each clamoring his wares with an emphasis that untrustworthy merchants reserve for doubtful values. Worse, like the captain of a drifting ship, he cannot find anyone to tell him whence he came, whither he goes, or what sun or stars he can trust for his guidance.

Against this muddle, the Church offers a calm and satisfying explanation of all the essentials of life, a beautiful synthesis of truth that fills the mind with a deep content. No longer is the man of faith puzzled by a thousand vendors of truth, each far surer that his rival's truth is worthless than that his own is good. Above him, as he stands on the bridge of that Bark that is Peter's, he sees the magnificent fixed stars, the dogmas of faith, radiant, beautiful, provable, true, and by them he

guides a sure course from harbor to final port. The man of faith is not a man of muddled and unhappy mind, but one who has seen truth as a gracious and comprehensive whole, and by it shaped the great essentials of his life.

All this we shall see more clearly as our course progresses.

Nothing so tears the soul of man as the conflict between his high aspirations and ideals and the downward drag of his weaknesses and sins. Racked between a clear-seeing mind and a weak will, he suffers that awful agony of indecision and thwarting characteristic of our noblest heroes and heroines in modern unreligious drama and literature. His hands reach for the stars. The quicksands suck his feet down into ruin. He has a philosophy of life, perhaps; but that philosophy fails to give him the strength he needs for its execution. And his heart is crushed and disillusioned.

Not so the heart of the Catholic who has found in his Church not merely the happiness of a truth that satisfies but the glorious strength he needs to carry that philosophy into life. From birth to death, the strength of Christ, entrusted to the Church in its Sacraments, flows about in him in steady currents. He finds that he is in clearest truth, the branch of that Divine Vine, Jesus Christ, and that the strength of the Savior flows through his soul in warm, rich, reassuring floods of sustaining grace. He knows himself not a dislodged and isolated unit at the mercy of his own sweeping passions and the chance battering of forces of evil from without; he feels himself united with the unconquerable Savior, strong with His strength, as were the martyrs who died bravely for the truth

they held, or the confessors and virgins who lived yet more bravely in the face of hot traitorous temptation from within and the soft arms and inviting laughter or the frightening mockery from without.

He is happy because he moves along his course sustained by the strength that is divine, brought to him at the hands of that Church whose one concern is that He grow continually in union with Jesus Christ, the center and source of all strength and grace.

Is religion gloomy? Yes, to the man who clings passionately to some hot lust he cannot tear from his arms. Yes, to the man who prefers his own all-too-often tricked brain to the voice of divine authority. Yes, to the rebel who kicks at any law, whether it be God's or man's. Yes, it is gloomy to one who persistently stands outside the Church, viewing its rugged walls growing strong and impregnable out of the very rock of its foundation. It is gloomy to the man who, bogged and fogged in the uncertainties of his own mind, refuses to believe that there is certainty of mind or assurance of truth anywhere. Pilate may have thought the truth-bearing Christ gloomy as He stood before him and spoke of certainties. And religion may be gloomy to that man who has never felt the strength of its Sacraments coursing through his soul and known that of a sudden he need rely no longer on his own weak powers but on the sustaining strength that came from a God made man.

But is religion gloomy to us who know it? It is an unending joy. It is bright with the glowing beauty of the ritual. It is peaceful with the strong, protecting walls of its laws and Christ-given com-

mandments. It is joyous with strong certitudes and magnificent doctrines groined together into the stately arches of truth. It is happy with that strength which, supplementing our own, carries us to heights we dare not attempt unaided and which will, please God, eventually carry us to that only life which makes this life intelligible, the life of intimate and face-to-face union with Him, seen and known and loved, with Whom religion unites us first in life.

Religion, far from being gloomy, is shot through with the smile of the Lover of Mankind and the sweet, pre-vised happiness of God the Rewarder!

PLEASURE OR HAPPINESS, WHICH?

Address delivered on April 22, 1934.

Christ promised His followers happiness. He foretold it as heaped up, pressed down, flowing over. He guaranteed them a hundred-fold of happiness, even in this life. He prayed a divine prayer that their joy might be filled. He loved His dear ones with too deep a love to give them as their legacy other than happiness.

So, where the Old Law was shot through with the woe and pain that would fall in heavy blows upon those who broke the commandments, Christ prefaced His new commandments with the glad word, "Blessed". "Blessed are they", He cried joyously, "who hear the word of God, and keep it." And each of His great Beatitudes is a guarantee of happiness for those who follow their difficult way.

And when the battle of Calvary had been fought and won, Christ gave to those faithful who had tasted its apparent defeat a new cry of victory. "Peace be to you," He said, and they smiled back in new joy. For peace is the lovely word that the mind of man had wedded in close bonds to the other word "happiness." "Peace and Happiness", is a jointure of words dearest of all to man's hungry heart.

Christ promised His followers happiness.

What He never promised them was pleasure. Nor could He, nor His Church, stoop to so unworthy a bribe. For pleasure is to happiness what gaudy paste diamonds are to a Kohinoor; what nerve-shattering jazz is to Beethoven and Wagner; what the excitement of hoofbeats thundering down the

track is to the joy of great literature; what the giggle of a half drunk man is to the strong, vibrant laughter of a great and contented man.

Yet the promise of pleasure as a substitute for happiness is precisely the bid made for the human heart by the world that hates Christ and distrusts faith. "We cannot, it is true," cries the frivolous world of easy living and quick profits, of flattering men and pliant women, "give you happiness. But we can give you a better thing: Frivolity and gaiety, the swift return of pleasure. We can give you dancing feet and eyes that glitter, the feel of gold in your pocket and soft lips upon your cheek. We can give you gay jests and easy laughter. We can give you pleasure."

Indeed, this age of ours has made of pleasure a profession and a trade. It has enlisted much of wit and beauty and smartness, much of society and business, in a great combination whose commodity is pleasure, brought within the reach of all, and suited to the purse of the richest and the poorest.

Merchants peddle it at so much the celluloid foot of film. They hawk it in the dusk, unhealthy atmosphere of night clubs. They sell their books by blazing across the jacket a gay promise of two hours of vicarious sinning, the thrill of watching a criminal about his crime, the excitement of watching with hot eyes a sweet adultery in all its fascinating glitter, with a careful glossing over of its furtive uneasiness and its sick awakening. Pleasure is for sale in the clicking ball whirling toward a winning number; in the rhythm of feet marking time set them by the beat of a primitive tomtom; in laughter responding hysterically to an evil jest; in luxury that wraps warm the body in soft comforts of furs

and fine fabrics, of exquisite foods and languorous beds; wraps warm the body and leaves the soul cold to chattering.

We of a shrewd age that disdains cheap substitutes and pounds the counter as we demand the genuine, have been taken in most shamelessly by pleasure, the cheap counterfeit of happiness, the worthless substitute for Christ's own joy. We have bought pleasure from merchants whose own eyes were burned out with weariness of the pleasure they have sold us. We have taken pleasure from the twitchy hands of those whose lives cried out in newspaper headlines and divorce proceedings, their failure to find other than disillusionment in the valueless thing they offer us.

So if it is pleasure you seek, the Church cannot give you that. Nor can Christ, the Author of the Beatitudes. If your eyes are focussed on that deception known as "a good time", religion is not your approach. True, the Lover of simple things, Christ Jesus, blessed the simple, sweet pleasures of life; He loved the dear delights of home and the happy associations of friendship; He sat at table in the close intimacy of meals shared with happy companions; He stood under the open sky and felt His heart respond to the glory of a golden sunset foretelling a clear day to come, or the waving lilies of the fields that were like the trustful children of His heavenly Father. But the giddy pleasures of His time and ours, He could not and would not offer.

Two young men stood before the fascinating Christ. To both He issued a soul-stirring and impelling invitation: "Come, follow me."

The first was rich. He had tasted pleasure and let it grip him as only pleasure can. So he turned away

sorrowing and moved back to the pleasures of his laden table and his luxurious home, to the fair things of eye and ear and sense that made life so sweet and comfortable—and dreary. He left the side of the poor Christ to buy himself a life of comfort and pleasure, and became for all time the symbol of the man who, clinging to the pleasures that wealth can buy, throws away his supreme happiness.

The other, a poor fisher lad, was young enough to feel his senses drawn to the beauty of fair women and the excitement of the open sea. Pleasure issued its piercing call to the young John, yet he turned from it to the Christ Who had not where to lay His head and Who tasted hunger, labor, discouragement, and apparent failure. He followed a rejected Savior through His career of mounting disappointments and stood beneath a cross of defeat. Then he, John, became an outcast of his people, a hunted fugitive from Roman swords, knowing none of the sweet delicacies of life, and ending in the exile of Patmos.

Yet had he at any moment in his life seen piled before his eyes all the pleasures with which luxurious Rome and comfort-loving Israel could have filled his days and cushioned his nights, he would have laughed his endlessly boyish laughter and pushed them aside in disdain. He had found in the company of the poor Christ that happiness that flames out in the white heat of the Fourth Gospel, that leaps in the soaring love of the Epistles, and that rises to ecstasy as Heaven itself is opened in the revelation to John the Divine.

One young man found pleasure and with it, sickening oblivion. The other found happiness in the joy no man could take from him.

Sometimes it is puzzling how pleasure can ever

trick us with any semblance of happiness. For, despite their surface likeness, they bear no essential resemblance. They are utterly unlike. Pleasure is of the eye and ear, the quickly stirred and swiftly dying senses. It is vibration of nerves to sudden stimulation. It is as surface a thing as the rippling of waves under a casual breeze. Happiness is of the heart and in the heart. It is as deep as the soul and as imperishable. It rests securely at the very core of a man's being and stirs to glad awakening not those senses which he shares with the animals but that spiritual soul which is like a spark of divinity.

Pleasure depends upon the things which are outside a man: the gold and treasures he can finger with greedy hand; the beauty that can be eyed with restless craving; the power that is built into fragile, crumbling monuments; the lying love that withers in a night; the laughter of a chance friend too easily changing to sneers. And because it depends on things outside a man, a thousand accidents can sweep it away. After a brief illness it is gone. A tricky turn of fortune's wheel, and the means of buying it have been swept away. Old age sees it melt beyond recovery. Its mere repetition first dulls its charm, then wears it down to drab routine, and finally gives to it that bitterness that poisons almost beyond endurance a "life of pleasure."

There is no more restless, dreary, unhappy man in the world than a man of pleasure. His eyes are sick. His mouth is hard and unsmiling. He moves with a restlessness that drives him on, less in any hope of joy that may lie ahead than in dread of the boredom and weariness that lie behind. And where on all this unhappy earth are there to be

found such drab and ugly women as those who in terrible irony have been called women of pleasure or daughters of joy?

But happiness is that deep and true and reassuring gift of God. It is a quality that passes description, but that is recognized with a quick leap of the heart and a firm knowledge that it is beyond the attack of any thief. I can give it away. But no man can take it from me. Sickness cannot touch it. The loss of wealth leaves it still. Complete failure cannot strike the smile from the lips of a happy man.

I have seen happiness in the eyes of a paralytic, motionless on a bed of pain. Happiness has greeted me in the smile of the poor. Happiness has crowned with deep content the silvered head of age. Since pleasure can be bought, any thief can steal it. Happiness cannot be bought, so it gaily defies all the thieves of the world, from the petty pickpocket, his fingers clasping my purse, to that thief of all thieves, death itself.

Happiness walks unexpected ways. It has learned the lesson of happiness that Christ taught in His Beatitudes when He promised joy in the very things that seem most remote from pleasure: poverty of heart, purity of soul, meekness and persecution. Happiness stands with the mother at the side of her baby's crib. It enters with the priest into the quiet of the sanctuary. It welcomes with open arms the martyr in whom happiness mounts with the flames of his physical torture. It writes its signature across the ledger of the business man who has set honor and honesty before easy success. It wakes the laughter of the little novice who, in her convent, has turned gaily from youth and beau-

ty and the pleading voice of pleasure. It bubbles ceaselessly in the heart of the saint.

This distinction between happiness and pleasure is most important. Faith could not and has not built the Broadways of earth. It builds lovely homes and quiet churches; it establishes honest businesses and places of clean and sweet amusement. It is more interested in peace than in excitement. The silent approval of God seems far more precious than the rattling applause of men. Faith cannot give you pleasure; but it can give you happiness; and though your heart grow weary to nausea with pleasure, it can never drink deeply enough at the fountains of happiness.

Shall we see in two people just how deeply that difference lies?

One was a man, brilliant, fascinating, charming, clever. He walked the easy ways of sin and found pleasure his for the taking. About him, his charm and cleverness drew the witty and the smart. When he was with the group, wine flowed freely, conversation sparkled, and arm in arm he and his fellows walked first in the delights of high controversy and then into the theaters and taverns where pleasure waited with vine leaves in its hair and golden bracelets upon its fair, white arms. And in the purple darkness of the night, he hurried back to the waiting arms of his lovely mistress.

And Augustine, the man about town, the brilliant wit and practiced lover, turned from it all, disgusted, disillusioned, sated, and revolted, to find in the truth that was Catholic and the morality that was Christ's a happiness of heart and peace of soul he had not dreamed were possible. At last his hungry

heart rested when it rested in the happiness of faith and purity.

There was in the days of Christ a woman charming beyond words. Men looked on her and loved her gladly. They dropped at her feet their jewels, their books, their best achievements, their willing hearts. And she wore their gifts as the proper ornaments for her beauty. We have seen with something like admiration the glittering woman of pleasure who was Mary of Magdala.

Then across her pathway came a new sort of Man. He looked upon her and, far from watching her with desire or admiration, He pitied her from His heart. He pitied her for her easy loves and the jewels she wore so beautifully. He pitied her for the fair face that had been her ruin and the ruin of men. He pitied her most of all for her life of pleasure. Mary of Magdala, daughter of joy, threw away jewels and soft garments, the hearts and homage of men, her ceaseless rounds of pleasure, to fling herself in tears at the feet of the pitying Savior. And in her floods of tears, for the first time her hungry heart that had been glutted with pleasure, found happiness.

If you, my friends, are to follow Christ's way of happiness, you must stand not with Augustine the rake but with Augustine the saint. You must see with the eyes of Magdalen that there is no happiness in pleasure; there is only happiness in penitence that brings back the joyful love of Jesus Christ.

THE HAPPINESS OF A MIND THAT KNOWS

Address delivered on April 29, 1934.

The sanest and happiest minds in the world are the minds that have found faith.

Faith is not the blind acceptance of absurdities. It is not "rationalized superstition." Faith is not a stupid bending of the head to things one would like to think true. Faith is basically common sense, the realization that there are things one can learn from others, and that there are some things one can learn no other way. It is the honest facing of the unescapable fact that beyond the knowledge a man can gain through the brief exploring of his limited mind, there is a wider knowledge that explains the data he has assembled. It is the proud conviction that God could not and has not turned men adrift to struggle for truth. If when He made the world, He gave to it a great purpose, He could not be cruel enough to hide that purpose from men, His supreme creatures. Faith is God's communication to His beloved children of the reason for their existence and the goal of their journeying. Divinely through faith, God reenforces the feeble struggles of man's groping mind.

Faith is the confession that, if man needs a teacher to guide him through the labyrinthine ways of a visible world, he surely needs a teacher who can speak with authority of the more important things that lie beyond the reach of sense: the whence and why and whither of life, and in just how far the God Who made us, guides our stumbling feet and upholds our vacillating wills.

Faith sits us at the feet of a divine Teacher in Whose mind is truth, in Whose heart is love, in Whose words is power.

Never, perhaps in all human history, have men known so much and been sure of so little. They have combed the world for facts and then fought like children about what they might mean. From earth's strata, scientists have pulled astonishing revelations of the history of our globe. They have pried into the atom and found there a universe in miniature, and flung their telescopes across the sky to see it beyond the reach of either glass or imagination or mathematics. Facts that lay buried in tombs of ancient kings and in the scrawling tracery in caves and on prehistoric bricks are now as familiar as the reportings of today's newspapers. We have seen disease tracked to its secret lair, and have followed the microbe in grotesque wanderings. The beam of light has been split into its parts; the secrets of the frozen poles have been dragged into light; we know what lies in the unplumbed depths of the earth.

Facts have been piled on facts. Data have been heaped on data. We have proved ourselves the greatest race of fact finders that ever wrested from nature its most closely guarded secrets.

Yet while science gets to know more of mice, it confesses itself to know less of men. The universe holds back no secrets from us except the only secrets that really trouble our minds; and science cannot tell us whether man is a child of God or the latest chain in an ironic linking of life with life; whether life itself is a glorious opportunity or the elaborate joke played by some cosmic jester; whether the universe is vacant of meaning

or the regal setting for a world drama of forces that transcend the stars. It has not pierced the blackness from which man emerges in brief, unfinished drama; nor has it flashed its lamps into the oblivion toward which man hurries with reluctant but unhesitating steps.

Yet man is persuaded of his importance and dignity. The astronomer who counts the stars refuses to believe himself less important than the things he names and numbers. If man can slowly conquer the power of the waterfall and with his will bend to slavery the savage beast, the destructive germ, the power of the sun, the unseen forces of the atom, the restless giant that is electricity, he cannot persuade himself that he, the apparent master, is really the slave of his slaves, more perishable than they. He cannot think that the winds and tides, the lightning whipping across the sky and the swift, corrupting powers of chemistry, will one day sing a song of victory over his snuffed and extinguished self.

Man studies life and cannot believe so beautiful and elaborate a thing is the flash of a light upon the wall to be ended with "Out, out, brief candle." Seeing all about him the incredible skill of Him Who fashioned the universe at which science pecks with feeble hammer, and into which it probes with its surface-scrapings of microscope and telescope and mathematical formulae, he demands to know if he too is an essential part of this great plan. Since he sees the hand of a mighty Providence setting sun and planetary systems upon their orderly courses and caring for the swallow upon a sand cliff, he demands the reassuring

certainty that he too is in the fatherly heart of a provident, loving Creator.

Seeing plan everywhere, we demand to know if our lives too are planned. Knowing the gracious watchfulness that guides the universe, we are certain we cannot possibly be adrift, derelicts in a world of elaborate care and satisfied needs.

For all that, the mere fact-finders of today give no assurance. To explain their piled-up data, they give us philosophies black with despair. From precisely the same set of proved facts they draw conclusions so contradictory that the thinking world seems to be shrieking with furious denials and the blank charge of lies and deception. Only those have an answer for life's important questions who turn their eyes welcomingly to the Teacher Who pulled together all the data that ever were or could be discovered into a beautiful and complete solution of life, the Teacher Who told us whence we came, whither we go, and how deeply dear we are to Our Father Who is in Heaven.

Thank God, the group of thinkers at the feet of the Divine Teacher grows with the years increasingly large and reassuring.

Yet today it is the voice of the despairful that is still most insistently clamorous. They shout, these men without faith, that it is a purposeless world, or at least that man was flung out into an orderly world, himself without reason for existence, without purpose in life, without any objective except that oblivion into which he one day will be dumped with all the best things of his own devising. Wherever thinkers and fact-finders without faith are gathered together, whether in the

grouping of a conference or between the covers of a single book, they offer the hungry mind of man that awful poison of despair: "Nothing made you but a mocking chance"; "Eat out your heart craving for happiness; there is none to be found"; "You are of the animals, with no more will than theirs and no more dignity or destiny than theirs"; "What a ghastly joke is this thing called life."

God pity an unhappy generation that has fed its minds with a philosophy of despair.

Among the second group, contradiction and denial hold high carnival. They leave us puzzled because they themselves are puzzled. The same set of facts leads them to a thousand contradictions. Man is an animal—man is the only god; there are no spiritual souls—there is no God—there is only God; we are slaves to forces that begot us—our wills are the one supreme power in the universe. They protest, these thinkers, not merely too much, but to too many things. Beyond all else, however, they protest without words the need of a Teacher Who can speak truth with an authority more than human.

Certainly men have never more clearly shown the need of that Divine Teacher than when they went away from Him, scampering off in quest of truth like so many befuddled knights, searching for a Grail they hardly believed to exist.

With happy eyes we turn to that third group, the thinkers with faith. The facts of science are as precious to them as to any man that lives. But they know that the facts in themselves are not enough. The Being Who created this mighty jigsaw puzzle that is the universe, had and has a plan

that unites all the pieces into a single glorious picture. Though the Creator could and did trace in the world clear indication of His power and beauty and that love that brooded tenderly over His creatures, only the Creator Himself could tell us in full the secrets of His heart: Why He had made man; what He had destined for man's goal; what He was willing to do to aid man in his journeyings; the depth of the love that surrounded these rational creatures. Knowing that His children would fear the darkness from which life stepped and into which it slipped, the Creator was certain to open both curtains and allow a little of that reassuring light to brighten our pathways and serve as our beacon in life. Faith knew that a Heavenly Father would place a candle in the window of His eternal mansion to shine out in welcome to His wandering sons.

And when a man has joined in his mind the data of science with the integrating pattern that is faith, he finds himself suddenly possessed of a happy mind. All that he sees and learns falls into a glorious unity that explains man to himself, recreates the universe into a beautiful stage set for man's high adventuring, and makes it possible for each actor to write for himself a happy ending to life's comedy under the approving eye of God, man's applauding father and unfailing ally.

All this he knows, as he discovers Jesus Christ, the Divine Teacher, Who, since He was the teacher *par excellence*, dared to call Himself "the way, the truth, and the life."

Poor pagan mankind was floundering when He came, as pagans are floundering today. They

were lost in a world that was filled with grave philosophers and that had adapted nature's power to men's service. And this Divine Teacher sketched for His followers a way that first He Himself travelled, away from God to God, from life through life to unending life, a path that rose in the great, father-heart of God Who made man because He loved him as a son, Who shepherded mankind with all the love of a good shepherd for his flock, and Who welcomed him at journey's ending with wide opened arms.

He was the Truth. Men had built their universities then as now to teach truth, and had used them to squabble over vague opinions and to cloak with eloquence their uneasy doubts. And He gave a truth that made all lesser truths significant. Out of a divine vision, He spoke of the Fatherhood of God and the consequent Brotherhood of Man; He spoke the truth that man was made for an eternal destiny compared with which all other gain was loss. By His truth He raised man from the level of animals and the abasement of slavery to the adopted sonship of God and the heritage of His unending joy.

He was the Life. Life was a cheap and contemptible thing in the eyes of the pagans then as now. The life of the Savior made the life of the weakest and lowliest grow dignified. And to that merely natural life, He added a share of the divine life, a close union of God with man that gave mankind new strength and heroism and the certainty of some day knowing and loving Divinity Itself.

How feebly in these few seconds can we glimpse that magnificent synthesis of life whereby

Christ clothed all men with dignity, gave to the least factors of the universe a significance and high purpose, and welded together in a single world the Creator and the creatures He had made.

There never was another teacher like Christ Jesus. And those who today sit at His feet find all of life aglow with meaning, and their own minds bursting with the light that floods them.

And Christ, the Teacher, turned to His Church and cried: "Going therefore teach ye all nations . . . He that heareth you, heareth me." With that one command, He made sure that the minds of men need flounder no longer. They could find certainty and security and the answer to those problems which, unanswered, drive men to despair or madness.

Without faith, the mind is at sea on all that really concerns it. And happiness does not lie in hopeless struggle or purposeless drifting. Thinkers without faith have proved themselves musicians playing a thousand discordant melodies on instruments out of tune.

For our happiness, since the happiness of the mind is in truth and certainty, we needed a Divine Teacher. He was given us.

Faith does not cramp the mind; it opens to it another world needed to explain this present one. It does not limit thought; it cuts it free from fogs and mists and the stifling bonds of uncertainty and insecurity and sets it ranging among truths that could but vaguely, if at all, be known did God not reveal them. Faith does not take us from the company of the learned; it brings us into the society of Jesus Christ to Whom in time come all the learned of the world.

Faith explains the unexplained facts of science. Faith kills uncertainty about the issues that really disturb the mind of man. Faith lifts the mind to that happy state in which it shares knowledge with one omniscient God Himself.

THE HAPPINESS OF A SINLESS HEART

Address delivered on May 6, 1934.

The Story of the Prodigal Son is, even more than the story of Cinderella, the most universal story in the world. It traces, as only a divine story-teller could, the strong urge that drew a young soul, first, in resentment against restraint and a dislike of all law into rebellion, then toward the fascinating flame of sin, until finally after he had dragged himself through the mud of the pigsty, he staggered back to repentance, to his forgiving father, to happiness restored.

The story is the universal record of sinful mankind. No, it is far more personal than that. It is the individual record of every man or woman who has given up the happiness of a sinless heart for the exhausting, disillusioning slavery of sin and who has finally found happiness only in the arms of God.

Whatever disagreements may exist between thinkers with faith and thinkers without faith, they are surprisingly in accord on the story of the Prodigal Son. The one element alone which the man with faith can add is the joyful return to a forgiving Father. But you will notice that I say "thinkers." We have had a lot of smart-aleck sneers at sin and its consequences. Our modern writers who think with their nerve centers and have convictions rooted in their emotional complexes, have followed Oscar Wilde into a panegyric of sin. Glitter fascinates them. Glamor they find irresistible. And they think that by tricking out sin in fair words and lovely garments, by parading it through penthouse romances of week-ends on

country estates, by presenting sin as brave or clever or beautiful or necessary, they can make men forget how ugly it is and how completely it slays human happiness.

But thinkers know. Writers whose works are more enduring than banana flies are deeply conscious, Christian and pagan alike, of the horrible misery that follows in the pathway of sin. The Greek dramatists wrote their greatest plays on how the guilty conscience tortures the sinner and how in the end his sins tear him to pieces. Shakespeare gave us his tragedies of sin, as Ibsen showed us the sins of forebears, the crimes of injustice, selfishness, lust, egotism, ruining lives. George Eliot did not keep herself unspotted from this world, and neither did George Sand; yet both wrote eloquently of the unhappiness of the sinner.

The story of the unhappiness brought to the world through sin is written into every popular detective story with its criminal writhing in a final chapter of justice vindicated. Sin strews the popular novels quite as much as the newspaper records with ruined lives and blasted careers, with heroines fluttering in futile fashion from sin to sin, and with heroes who wreck innocent lives. Sin writes its record in gangland headlines that scream less of single murders or deeds of corruption and violence, than of the sordidness, the guilty consciences, the shifting eyes and back street ugliness, the complete wretchedness of sin's fatherland, the underworld.

One need not prove the unhappiness caused by sin. One need only look into the history of every nation or of every family. Compared to sin, nothing else seems to bring mankind unhappiness. Sin

is at the bottom of all human misery. Ask any historian who they are who have steeped the world in blood and tears, and he will point out to you, even though he could not define the word sin, those selfish men of power who plunged nations into war, those hotblooded beauties sacrificing a country to caprice or wounded vanity, those villains of history, whether they were giants like Napoleon or monsters like Caligula or fair courtesans like DuBarry, whose sins wrote unspeakable pages into the record of our race.

And into the story of your own family has been written sorrows I need not repeat for you: Broken hearts and homes, the rifts between relatives, the nagging of bitter tongues, the squabbles over money or inheritances, women growing old before their time, men turning away in disillusionment from the trickery of trusted ones, old people and little children scourged by the selfishness of their own. If there is unhappiness within a nation or unhappiness within a family, blame that unhappiness on sin!

Yet who today is raising any voice against this welter of unhappiness bred by sin and sired by selfishness except the Catholic Church? Modern literature is largely a conspiracy to defend and spread sin. Modern motion pictures and drama present the sinner as gay and charming and fascinating. Much of modern philosophy calls sin necessary or brave, urging youth to sin by talk of biological necessity, or while not free to avoid wrong, befogging the difference between good and evil, praising the rebel who defies the laws and sins bravely.

Against them all the Catholic Church, lover of

mankind, cries, "Along the road of sin, now as in the easily read past, men have rushed from unhappiness to misery. There are only torn consciences and blasted lives along that pathway of vice. You cannot find me one sinner who has escaped the shadow of his sin. You cannot show me one man or woman of evil life whose days were not bitter with unshed tears or cynical laughter."

Even if Christ had not died under the blows of the sinner, His Church would fight sin because it is a degradation of man's nature, an inhuman, anti-social thing. It would hate sin simply because sin, however much it may pander to man's pleasure, hates man's true happiness.

How can sin make a man other than unhappy when it twists his faculties from their highest purposes? The hands of a man, made to build and lift and construct, become through sin hands that soil and despoil and tear down. The tongue of a sinner, destined for truth and friendliness, for lullabies and hymns and serenades and songs of country, becomes a poignard to rip a reputation or stab to death an innocent soul. Wine that might warm the heart, in the cup of the sinner only strips him of reason and self-control and power of will. And the sinner takes his high creative power of love and uses it as the animals do, in purposeless, ruthless, passionate selfishness.

Sin makes man unhappy because it is anti-social, as selfishness always is, or greed or tyranny or cruelty or lust. Sin is the very thing that makes a man less a man and a woman less a woman. Even if God had not by high command forbidden it, the Church must of necessity stand between man and the things which beyond all else rob him of his joy.

Pity the sinner, driven on by his unresisted temptations, and finding each sin a little sourer, a little staler, a more futile effort to fill a gnawing hunger with the husks the swine disdained. Pity still more those whose lives are spoiled and ruined by the relentless selfishness that makes a sinner madly eager to drag all others to his own degraded level. Never more truly does misery love company than in the case of the sinner unsatisfied to sin alone; unhappy when he cannot claw a fellow-victim to his own rotten standards of life.

But the man and woman of sinless heart? How deep is their peace! How sure is their happiness! "Blessed," cried the Savior, "are the clean of heart." Blessed in the fact that they know some day they shall see God. Blessed because they walk earth's ways with sure feet and high courage.

No restless torturing of conscience makes miserable their day or fills their nights with Banquos that will not down. No remorse of soul forces itself upon them with resistless insistence, recalling innocence betrayed, youth misled, fortunes won at the price of God's poor, and partnerships in evil.

Or if the now sinless man and woman see evil in their past, it is evil that no longer taunts and tortures. They stand now with Mary Magdalen, who, though she had trained red robes of passion, yet, forgiven, saw Christ smiling at her in a garden. They take their place with Peter who, though he thrice denied his Lord by the blackest lie that struck the captured Christ, yet was given the triple chance to swear he loved his Savior.

Sin lets loose, as all men have known, those elements of a man that tear him to pieces. His

emotions slip from their restraining rein. Self-control is wrecked. The sinner finds himself no longer master of himself but blown to and fro by every slight puff of temptation, clutched at by the hot hands of sin, and deflected from the paths of peace and decency by every glancing eye or every gleam of easy gold.

The sinless man is master of his own house, ruler of his soul. He has learned the brave lesson of self-control that makes him brush aside the hot-breathed temptation and walk without harm amongst the enemies who are God's and his own. He is brave and sure and certain of himself.

For sinlessness is not a negative thing, a fear-some avoidance of evil that one is not brave enough to seize in eager arms. Sinlessness is the bravest thing in the world. Through it a man stands firm beneath the standard of the Cross when treason would be easy. He fights for principle and for right when yielding would be sweet. Sinlessness holds a man with that brave company on Calvary's embattled ridge, when Judas had sold out his Master, and Peter and the disciples had turned cowardly backs, and the hot surges of lust and cynical unbelief of Herod and Pilate had risen in massed formation to overwhelm Christ and His followers.

Sinlessness is as brave and positive and aggressive a thing as yielding to temptation is weak and cowardly and easy and supine. And believe me, there is no happiness in weakness, cowardice, and the easy treason of a weakling.

What nonsense these moderns talk who laugh at the sinless man and the pure woman as weak and contemptible. Sinlessness is to the soul what health is to the body, a product of exercise and

nourishment, of vigilant care and sane living. Health and happiness, they go together in soul and body. The sinful soul is the weak, unhealthy soul. And happiness is for the strong.

“Blessed are the clean of heart!” How right the Savior was. While the sinner moves restlessly from lust to lust, his appetite for pleasure and wealth, for honor and distinction, for new excitements and less boresome adventuring, sends him careering unsteadily and discontentedly through life, the sinless lifts to God the happy face of a Francis of Assisi, sings to God the ceaseless songs of a Cecelia. While the notable sinners of the world have been the notably miserable, unhappy men and women—as Nero was when he screamed for the releasing sword of a slave, or those later Louises of France when bored to suffocation in the midst of cultivated vice, or Oscar Wilde, rotten in prison as later he rotted to death, or DuBarry shrieking at the foot of the guillotine—the sinless walked through life and into death, smiling and unafraid.

Great DeBrebuef, first of American martyrs in stature and heroism, sang in the joy of his heart as the Iroquois hacked his body with white hot tomahawks and garlanded his neck with festoons of torches. Happy? He had lived with God; he had worked for souls; there was no remorse for the past, no fear for the future. And his great voice that had wakened with song the echoes of our primitive forests sang amidst the tortures of martyrdom in the great joy of his soul.

The sinful may find pleasure. But we threw that aside as unworthy of us. Only the sinless can find happiness. And it is the Catholic Church that

makes that happiness easy as it safeguards our souls from sin. The commands that Christ gave us and that His Church repeats are only stout ramparts against the sin that would steal away our joy. And, while modern ethicists dream high dreams of noble souls scaling the heights of goodness and see them dropping back hopeless before these unassailable heights, the Catholic Church lifts us up to the heroism and happiness that belongs to the Saints.

Sinlessness would be too daring a thing to hope for if we walked alone. The Church brings us into the companionship of Jesus Christ. Temptations would be too powerful, if we fought them alone. The God who dwells within our hearts fights with us for our virtue. We should be desperately lonely even in our happiness if we thought we struggled to fulfill our high ideals, an isolated unit in the midst of a world insistent bent on sin. The Catholic Church couples us with its martyrs and virgins, its confessors and saints, in the gallant army of the Church Militant.

In their company, we may aspire to sinlessness of heart. We may be sure of happiness of soul.

THE HAPPINESS OF A FATHER IN HEAVEN

Address delivered on June 3, 1934.

It is hard to remember what the world was like before Christ, lifting His eyes in perfect trust, cried and bade us cry, "Our Father Who art in Heaven." Or rather, it would be hard, but for the fact that we live in a generation that has largely determined to dispense with that Father Whom Christ asked us to know and love and trust.

Yet, whatever the moderns may do against God the Father, when Christ invited the weary and disillusioned world of His day to lift eyes and hearts and trusting hands to a Heavenly Father, He opened a great new era in the happiness of mankind. The heavens were no longer brass. They were the home of One Who loved the sons and daughters of His creating with a tenderness that was infinite in mercy and generosity and watchful providence.

Obedient to Christ's command (or rather His sweet invitation), the eyes of mankind swung upwards from Olympus with its discredited gods who were only men's own virtues and vices raised to gigantic scale. The ugly gods of pagandom, Osiris and Moloch and the deified devils of Asia and Africa, grew uglier than ever before the picture of a benign Father Who noted the fall of a sparrow and yearned over His children with an eternal love. Valhalla seemed a place of rough boisterousness and petty squabbings when the nations heard of the many mansions in their Father's house.

Even the beautiful page that was the Jewish

religion was definitely closed. God could never again be merely the judge, the avenger, the Jahveh of wrath and vengeance, now that the hand of Christ had pushed aside the curtains of Heaven to show us a God Who preferred to welcome one prodigal rather than to judge the nations; to have mercy upon the lost sheep rather than to lift His rod to strike the guilty; a God Who confessed in divine humility that His mercy was above all His works.

When Jesus Christ gave us God the Father, no other concept of God could ever fully satisfy and make happy the human soul.

Man must have a god. History has proved that. The future will endlessly add its chain of proofs. The world, filled as it is with wonders, is empty without God. Or more correctly, without Him the world becomes annoying and exasperating, futile and purposeless, as is a painting without a painter, a house empty of either builder or owner, a great organ with no one to shape its pipes or touch to harmony its keys.

So when man did not know the true God, he invented a thousand gods to fill this empty space that is the universe and comfort the loneliness that cried aloud for the solace of God's presence and power. He needed, you note, a thousand gods to do inadequately what our Father does perfectly.

And man was happiest when he was serving his god, even a false one. He danced most gaily about the altar of Pan. He knelt in exultation before the beautiful statue of thundering Jove. He moved in lighter step behind the sacred bull that symbolized his deity. He found a deep satisfaction when he

sacrificed to his god the best and finest of his possessions

Yet when Christ came, men were utterly weary of the gods they had invented. Moloch was too cruel. Jove was too cynical. Pan was a little silly. The grim and ugly gods and goddesses of the East were so terrifying and revolting that it was necessary to house them in caverns and hedge them round with mysteries.

And about all the gods, big or little, was a futility that made their worshippers turn away not knowing whether they could not help or did not care to if they could. In all the gods that man had made to his own image and likeness, he found he had put too much of his own cynical selfishness. Even the Jews worshipped Jehovah trembling, with much of lip and little of heart, much of dignified ceremonial and little of gladness. They stood in awe. They hardly dared to love.

And then the voice of Christ rang out, "Our Father!" And God at the words became infinitely loving and lovable.

A father? How simple that all seemed and how simple it made the whole of life. God had made the world not out of caprice or necessity, but because He wanted sons and daughters bearing His image and likeness. All the beautiful things, all the limitless unselfishness that crammed earth and sun and stars, were the lavish provision that the Father had made for this, His human family. All humanity stood revealed in a single brotherhood, severed to outward appearance, perhaps, by color or language or custom or land, but brothers nonetheless in the great generation of their Father.

In God, if He was our Father, there was not

merely power, but power actuated by love; not merely might, but might tempered with mercy; not merely providence, but providence that could and would respond to the appeal of prayer.

No wonder, then, that the first Christians sang aloud in their joy. They were happy with a joy that laughed at privations or martyrdom, ostracism from family and class and country, the stigma of cynical ridicule and the oppression of political spoliation. What did these trifles matter? The great God was their Father. They walked through life straight into His welcoming arms. They moved through all life's problems and difficulties sure that He watched their every step. He was proud as a father of their courage and success; He was quick as a father to understand and forgive their moments of weakness and sin.

With that one phrase, Christ bound together Heaven and earth into a common family. Earth was the happy road along which one travelled to his Father's house. And one had only to lift his voice, and his Father heard his request for bread or forgiveness, for protection or for strength.

Beside this God Who is first of all a father, all other gods have seemed ugly distortions, blundering tyrants, or futile gluttons. And in the happy conviction of this Father in Heaven with power to move His arm and love to sway His heart, the Christian world moved forward in supremest happiness.

Until our own strange age.

If ours is an unhappy generation, it is largely because it is a generation that has forgotten our Father Who is in Heaven. Men cannot subsist without a God. Always they are too inadequate

and lonely. But they can try. And tried they have, to their own deep disillusionment.

We have seen atheism grow in most astounding denial of man's primary instincts. First it was an atheism that merely found God inconvenient and felt it would be well rid of Him. It pushed Him aside because He came bearing His annoying Ten Commandments. It bade Him mind His own affairs and leave men to their pride of mind, their unjustly acquired riches, their power that cracked its whip in despotism of state or factory system, their lusts of flesh and longings of eye. They drove God from them because they preferred their sins which were less crimes against individuals than a kind of gigantic violation of *noblesse oblige*, a blow at family honor and dignity, an affront to that Father Whose kingdom was set back by these sons of His Own creation. Men denied God the Father in practice for the same reason that rebellious sons have always struck at the sires who stood between them and their evil ways.

And then, because God irked them, these atheists took their second step. They cried aloud that He did not so much as exist. They banished the Father from His human family, and left that family utterly orphaned. They slammed the door of His heavenly mansion, and suddenly found themselves homeless and on the outside. They jeered at God's watchful protection over His children and at His willing answer to the voice of prayer, and shouted the desolating doctrine that there was no one in all the world to hear or help or care or answer.

And atheism, stupid and blundering and fatu-

ous, flying in the face of the endless longing and uninterrupted history of man's reaching for God, plunged its followers into a world that had no maker, a family that had no father, a life that had no termination, a destiny in which men were no longer sons or masters but the slaves of relentless forces driving them on from nothingness to nothingness.

The fool, said the wise man, hath said in his heart that there is no God.

Yes, but the miserable and purposeless, the forsaken and lonely, have said that there is no Heavenly Father.

But now as always, man must have a god. Need we give even a quick glance at the fleeing of men from the cold, brutal misery of atheism? It blossomed and died within our one generation, this blatant attack upon a God Whom, in contradiction, it claimed did not exist. Men could not endure a world empty of God, a Heaven that held only flaming suns and cold, burnt-out moons, and unpeopled planets. They could not bear to think themselves orphaned and alone.

So we have seen our moderns swing back to a thousand gods, for gods they must have. But they are gods as ugly and colorless and unsatisfactory and ruthless as those gods of the days before Christ pointed out a God Who is our Father. And in none of their gods have they found the slightest joy or happiness.

With sweat and blood, with the sacrifice of the bodies and souls of men and women, we have seen our fellow Americans serve the great god, success. Yes, and seen that god fling them back into the depths of an as-yet unfathomed despair. Men who

made the old pagan gods like themselves, and fashioned Jove after their wisest, Apollo after their wittiest, Venus after their most beautiful, again set up their self-idolatry. Humanity is god! But what a silly god, waking a momentary enthusiasm, and then leaving the worshipper disillusioned as he looks upon his own pettiness and realizes that all humanity is as he.

Grim eyed philosophers have given us a world soul for god, a vague abstraction as cold and impersonal as the ether that surrounds us and as un-beautiful. Men have worshipped the gods heredity and environment, and known that this worship was slavery. They have fallen down in adoration, as America did half a century ago, as Russia is doing today, before the turbine and dynamo and tractor. And those gods devoured their servants and flung their worshippers into joblessness.

There is no God of happiness save the God to Whom Christ Jesus lifted our eyes when He cried, "Our Father." Our minds reject all other gods. Our hearts regard them with loathing. But if God is my Father, then happily I stand on tiptoe—God's noblest work, His son. Then confidently I lift my hands in appeal, sure that my prayer will wrest from His willing bounty the things I need for life's difficult way. If my first care is for my Father's business, I may go down into the apparent failure of Christ on Calvary; my success is yet assured. If I see in my fellowmen sons of that same Father, I cannot know bitterness or hatred or envy or greed. Nor can I do other than crush from my heart the evils that would harm those brothers and sisters who like myself are children of His dear tenderness.

And with a great throb of happiness, I remember that it is a Father *in Heaven*. Each step I take becomes a little lighter and a little gayer as I stride down the road of life toward that mansion in Heaven where my Father waits for my glad homecoming.

THE HAPPINESS OF CHRIST'S COMPANIONSHIP.

Address delivered on June 10, 1934.

There is courage in the heart of the man who hears a comrade's footsteps moving in rhythm with his own. There is confidence and reassurance in the hand of an unconquerable leader lifted in summons. There is happiness beyond words in the knowledge that in the soul of a lover throbs an affection that folds one close. There is joy in the realization that I need face neither the perils nor joys of life alone and lonely.

And faith brings me all these things as it leads me into the blessed companionship of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Happiness in faith? Ah, yes; faith brings with it the joy of a certain mind and a sinless soul, of a Father in Heaven and a destiny that lifts man above the dull, dread fate of the brute. Yet all of these things seem to fade into secondary importance, or, rather, they seem to merge into one central core of happiness, as faith turns upon the glorious figure of the Savior its bright, white light, and we see Him moving toward us, the Leader Who inspires us to highest heroism and unfailing victory, the Comrade Who walks gladly at our side through every joy or sorrow that may touch us, the Lover Whose patience is as tireless as His love is without bound, the one Friend Who has within Him the power to banish the loneliness of the human heart.

How can one, into a single short talk, cram even a little of the happiness that comes to the man or woman who has placed a confident hand in the hand

of the Savior? From that moment he knows with St. Therese that nothing can affright him, nothing can dismay him. He cannot for a second feel forsaken and alone.

Even God the Father, closer to us than the air we breathe, seems distant and remote when we look at the incarnate Son of God, leaving the joys of Heaven, emptying Himself and taking the form of a slave, to walk the earth as man's devoted friend and constant companion. Earth could never again be wholly dreary nor the human race even close to despair when into its remotest quarters pierced the glad certainty or the thrilling rumors that a God-made-man had come from Heaven to become the companion and comrade of His creatures, the Leader in the terrifying fight against man's ruthless enemies, the Lover Who clothed His love in the form of the fairest of the sons of men.

Loneliness, perhaps next to sin itself, had been the bitterest enemy of joy. Man had grown from long and bitter experience to know that no human companion could ever dispel completely that haunting loneliness. Between each man and his fellows seemed to rise a high and insurmountable wall, and though he beat it until his hands were torn and bleeding, though he plotted to scale it through friendship or art or the self-revelation of poetry, at the end he had not crossed the wall or brought his friends into the secret garden where his realest hopes and ambitions and joys bloomed.

Loneliness comes to sour our best joys. Loneliness doubles the pain of our sorrows and the fear of perils that lurk ahead. Through eyes that are smarting from unshed tears we look upon our closest associates and see that they have not sensed our grief.

We hurry to them with our successes, to find them bored a bit, halfheartedly pleased, vaguely misunderstanding, or, sadly, flashing the green glint of jealousy. And we grapple with temptation relying upon our own weak strength, knowing that it is a fight in which our nearest comrade stands by, a spectator.

Just because they found the earth a lonely place, the old pagans peopled it with superhuman beings: friendly little fairies and sympathetic sprites, "good people" who served men and guarded their interests, dryads who made the dark woods less terrifying, and spirits of earth and air who brooded affectionately over a man even when he seemed most alone.

Poor, futile substitutes for the God-made-man who walked into our lonely earth and made us know that it need no more be lonely.

We had found at last the invincible Leader with Whom we could face our enemies unafraid. He was with us in every good fight. His figure moved before us across life's battlefield shining like a white flame. He smiled confidently and encouragingly at us over His shoulder, reassuring every man who plunged into the struggle for right and decency and honor, holding out firm and encouraging hand to every woman who fought bravely for her purity or stood guard over her ideals and the goodness of those who clung to her.

Faith gloriously assured every good man and woman that they fought life's battles not alone but always under the leadership of Jesus Christ, strong God and tender Man, Who guided to victory every noble cause, Who led to triumph every noble life, Who captained to certain glory every man or woman who, before the eyes of the world or in the secret places

of their own souls, fought for justice's sake the good fight.

Afraid of life's pitiless struggle? Not those who remember that they fight under the glorious captaincy of the unconquerable Christ! Not they who have accepted the Leadership of Him Who flung back all the evil forces that ever surged up against humanity, in the overwhelming victory of Calvary.

Once on a time, men could, with some show of justice, taunt even a merciful Father in Heaven with the bitter cry:

*“What do you know of our woes,
You in your well lighted sky?”*

But that was before the Son of God had become the comrade of His beloved sons and daughters and had, in their company, tasted every human experience that could come to His companions.

We watch with a surge of joy the historic Christ, truest friend that ever offered the hand of friendship, closest companion that ever shared a joy or a sorrow, or laughed happily and wept in deep sympathy with one he loved.

Christ, though He bade His disciples follow Him, saw to it that they did not follow; they walked shoulder to shoulder with Him and He with them. Gladly, because they were His comrades, He tasted their poverty and the labor of their sweaty hands. He felt the fears that tempested their timid souls and experienced the disdain that surrounded the peasant fishermen of Galilee. He stood at the bedside of the sick, touched with merciful hands the foulest sores and ulcers, stroked back to sight the closed eyes, and to hearing the ears that had been sealed to all sound, wept with those who wept over the dead, and paused

in uncontrolled grief of soul before the tomb of a dead friend. Because He had been hungry, He fed the multitudes by miracle. Because He was terrifyingly lonely, He staggered back across the dark garden of His agony, to find His best friends asleep.

Christ became the universal comrade of all mankind. He walked in the cool of evening, His arm in that of the strong young John. He smiled gratefully for the tender gratitude in the eyes of women. The bitter lash of denial stung His face as a friend swore he had never known that captured Man. Gently He disengaged the arms of His Mother clinging about His neck, as He left her at the call of His Father's business. He was the welcome guest at wedding feasts, and sat with His disciples as upon the wood-fire fish were broiled and wine heated.

Not with the vision of God but with the piercing experience of our Brother and our Comrade, Christ tasted life's bitternesses and its joys, the awful stab of failure and the smashing blow of ingratitude, the cruelty of the powerful, wielding not justice but spite, the howling of a mob that wanted one thing, His blood and His death.

It was Christ, not His faithful imitator, St. Paul, Who could perfectly say that He was all things to all men.

God had been creator and infinite ruler; He became companion and comrade, walking the ordinary ways of man's experience and taking His followers with Him through all the really difficult things they might ever meet. He had been remote, in the company of adoring angels; He became so close, that a child could seize His hand in perfect confidence, and a sinner could wipe His feet with her hair.

Why, faith has brought my God closer to me than

my dearest friend of earth. I find Him nearer to me than my own soul.

Blessed Savior, I adore you as God. I honor and thank you as Creator. I cling to you as my Savior. But I clasp your hand in perfect confidence, knowing that you, in all my difficult or joyous ways, are my Comrade and my Friend.

And Christ, the Lover? Who can begin to describe what the love of the Sacred Heart has done in dispelling the loneliness that besieged the souls of men?

We see in Christ a love that was vast enough to embrace all men that ever lived or could live, yet individual and personal enough to pour itself out on a single sinful woman of Samaria or on a thief who hung in just punishment upon a cross.

The strong, manly love of Christ for men, that grappled rough fishermen to His service and held multitudes of peasant folk captive before His charm and transparent affection! The love that broke forth in tears over doomed Jerusalem or over Lazarus, the friend who had died! The love that went out to all mankind, burning Him to death upon the altar of His Cross, yet that tenderly stooped to the little children by the lakeside, catching them up in warm embrace! The love that went out in gratitude to His Mother, in protection to Magdalen, in tenderness toward good women, in pity toward the woman who had fallen!

Christ, the perfect Lover of whom poets had dreamed in vain, Who united to the eternal love of God the strong, throbbing love of a father for His children, a brother for His little brothers and sisters, a comrade for His dearest associates!

As Christ walks into the life of a man or woman,

the hideous, terrifying figure of loneliness is gone forever. God, I realize, no longer knows my needs and my ambitions, my fears and my trials, only from divine vision. He knows what He Himself has tried and felt. He Himself had been hungry and poor and rejected; He had quested vainly for love and found hatred; He has trembled to a blood-sweat at the torture, sin, and death that were pressing in upon Him; He went down into the blackness of failure and death.

My God has become my fellow exile. He has loved me to the point of sharing my life to its every last detail. He has grown to know me intimately, and to love me because I need so much His love and pity and forgiveness.

And the faith of the Catholic pushes on to new flights of happiness. Far from leaving me, the historic Christ is as much today as He was in the days when He summoned His disciples, my Leader, Companion, Lover, Friend.

The endless presence of God in the world, of Christ among His people, foreshadowed when God called Himself Emmanuel, God-With-Us, becomes a glorious reality in the Sacrament of altar, tabernacle, and human hearts. Christ is still with me, still walking my weary and difficult ways, still lifting my head in the joyous knowledge that He has not left me orphaned, but dwells with me until the end of time.

With Him, I move through life in utter confidence. I have a Friend to Whom I can pour out my inmost heart. I have a Lover Who loves me because He knows how badly I need His love. I have a Comrade Who stands at my side pouring His courage into my soul, and placing His reassuring hand under

my elbow. I have a Leader with Whom I move forward to certain victory.

I am not alone. I am never lonely. I have the beautiful companionship of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, made man, to be the comrade of me, a man.

THE JOY IN A HEAVENLY MOTHER

Address delivered on June 17, 1934.

Today, mine is an easy subject. For I talk of the happiness that came to mankind when God gave His Mother to be Mother of Men.

No one need be told, save in briefest reminder, of the happiness that good mothers have brought to the world. We cannot read that complete, lovely record even in the grateful poetry and music of every race, in the sweet faces that have been caught on canvas, or in the eloquence that has leaped most spontaneously from the lips of orators. The only perfect record of a mother's deep unselfishness and boundless love each man reads in his own life's history, and he remembers with reverent gratitude the happiness that came to him when a mother's love cradled his infancy, guarded his youthful ways, forgave, as no other love can do, his faults and his inadequacies, and followed with approving eye his manhood's career.

No page in human history is so beautifully written in unselfishness and service, in truest understanding and most patient forgiveness, as is the page written by mothers.

Yet it is sad that a great section of even the believing world should know nothing of the happiness that was offered when the dying Savior turned to John, the representative of humanity, and cried, "Behold, thy Mother!" The very men and women who have bowed reverent heads before the miracles of human mother love, have refused to accept the happiness that comes when one knows that the Mother of God is one's own mother as well. Quick

as they are to appreciate the vast tenderness and care of their own mothers, they shy away from the happiness which the Mother, chosen by God for His Own beloved Son, could and would bring to these adopted sons and daughters who are the dear, ransomed brothers and sisters of her Boy.

We have not the time nor is this the place to restate the irrefutable proofs that Mary is God's Mother. To one who thinks clearly, there is only one person in Jesus Christ, the person of God Incarnate. Mary is the Mother of that Person Who was born of her in time, and that Person is divine. Jesus cannot be split into two people, a god and a man; He is the single Person with two natures, human and divine, and Mary, the mother of the human nature, is the mother of the one Person Who is divine.

Nor shall we, who are thinking now of the happiness Mary brings to our lives, go over and authenticate the lovely gift by which Christ gave His Mother to us in the person of John, our representative. All we need to remember is the quick eagerness with which primitive Christianity and all Christian religions until the days of Protestantism, clasped this lovely Mother to grateful hearts. Mary, Queen of the Apostles, became Mary, Mother of the Infant Church.

They lived, those first Christians, surrounded by the evil and stupid and arrogant women who had been lifted by poetic imaginations to the rank of goddess. They knew the unhappiness that flowed from the shrines and temples of these unwholesome, sinful goddesses, who stimulated their worshippers to new lusts, to a universal contempt for woman-kind, to a kind of cynical pity for the sex whose very

goddesses were as passionate as Venus or as cruel as Minerva.

With special gratitude they caught and kissed the hand of Mary. All the pale and seductive influence of the pagan goddesses faded before the sweetness and power of the woman God has chosen for His Mother.

Nor need we long stress what Mary's motherhood has meant to the happiness of humanity as a whole. That glorious contribution is brilliantly clear to anyone who sees the burden of pagan motherhood made the glory of Christian motherhood, as women proudly bore their children in imitation of the Mother of Nazareth who had borne God, made man. The new love of purity that inspired young men and women found much of its inspiration in the fair woman who became Immaculate Mother, sheltering the untouched purity of the Most High, only because she had first been a stainless virgin. Hats were lifted and knees were bent to women because they were the daughters of a heavenly Queen. Women felt toward themselves a new reverence. How could they do otherwise? Had not the Eternal God chosen one of their number as the first tabernacle of His incarnate Son?

The love for Mary, and men's reverence for the Madonna and her Child, found expression in new pity and tenderness toward children, and a willingness to forgive and help even those sad daughters of Eve who had lost the exquisite virtues that made Mary fair before men and, in the sight of God, full of grace.

All this the Catholic knows in the endlessly repeated experience of the Church. The world could never again frankly worship sinful women, nor could

it be completely merciless to little children; it could not sneer at good women or thrust back deeper into her muddy despair the sinful woman, after a woman had carried in her body and rocked in her arms the God of Heaven and earth.

Yet deep in his soul, the Catholic knows he has a fuller happiness that comes through Mary. God, again answering a fundamental human craving, has given to him personally a Mother to watch over him as not even the most loving mother can, a Mother who, with sweet and insistent power, pleads his cause with his elder Brother and her grateful Son.

Mary, like all the gifts of God, belongs to the individual soul. She is my mother, interested in me because I am her adopted son who, though I slew her Son and Savior, am none-the-less entrusted to her in His dying testament.

Faith and human experience join hands where Mary is concerned. No one in all the world feels toward a child the interest felt by a mother. The interest with which she regards his first stumbling steps rises in unending crescendo as she watches him stride in triumph through his career or come staggering back in devastating failure. Then, as faith assures me that God's Mother is my Mother too, I realize with intensest joy that Mary holds me deep in the concern of her heart.

With a double interest, Mary regards me. My career is of intimate concern to her Son. My successes serve to advance His kingdom. My sins strike at His crucified body. My failures set back His cause. My brief heroisms delight His Sacred Heart. Mary watches my life with an interest that is part of her mother's interest in all that promotes or impedes the cause for which her Son lived and died.

But her interest goes so far beyond that! When during her own agony beneath the Cross of her Son, she mystically accepted the motherhood of humanity, I became of deep concern to her because I was and am her child. Mother-like, her heart beats high as I triumph. Yearningly, she leans above me as I fall. With gladness she applauds my little victories. I may hide my bleeding, battered head and with it, my failures and sins, in her forgiving, maternal embrace.

There is no limit to a mother's goodness except the limit of her power. What she can do for her children, she does most eagerly. She stands baffled and distressed before the things that are beyond her power. Human mothers feel again and again the thwarted realization that they lack the power to do what love demands and unselfishness desires.

Not so my Mother who is God's Mother as well. Human like myself she still, through her divine maternity, reached to power that is not measured by her own personal greatness but by the infinite gratitude of a Divine Son.

A cup of cold water given in His name, Christ assured His followers, would win for its giver eternal life. The bottle of ointment broken over His feet by the sinner of Magdala won her a place in the Passion of Good Friday, the Resurrection of Easter, the endless story of His Gospel. A dying thief makes a broken prayer of faith from a cross, and hears the promise of companionship with Christ in Paradise.

What, then, must be the grateful heart of Christ toward Mary? Mary, who gave not a cup of water but the milk of her breast; not the momentary washing of His feet, but the servant-like care of His infancy and boyhood; not a passing act of faith but

a lifetime of devotion from the moment when she called herself His little handmaid till the dark afternoon when she followed Him through His Way of the Cross to share His agony and death.

Mary, who was His nurse and only human teacher, His companion and gracious housekeeper, who made Him the infant garments that swaddled Him and the seamless robe He wore during His public life. Mary who prepared the food upon His table and sat watching while He slept. Mary whose love was often the only human affection to gladden His days among His own to whom He came though they received Him not.

What could such a Mother ask such a Son and know refusal? Especially when she asks for those younger brothers and sisters whom He, dying, committed to her care?

Confidently, then, the sons and daughters of that Mother, whose power is limited only by the gratitude of God, lift their hands in petition. She has a mother's heart to love. She has a mother's power to intercede. We know with certain faith that she will talk to her divine Son for us. We know that that divine Son, out of gratitude to His Mother, will answer her requests.

Christ was good when He gave us a Mother for our happiness. He knew that often we would stand even before Himself abashed and ashamed. It is sometimes difficult to realize that a crucified Christ will hear us when we beg Him to forgive the sins that are holding Him upon the cross. But we did not crucify Mary. We did not slay our Mother. Tearfully we turn to her begging her to ask the pardon we do not deserve.

Some day Christ will judge us, justly and with

inexorable regard for right and wrong. How sweetly it accords with God's mercy that we may bind to us in pity and love and maternal sympathy the Mother of our Judge.

And as she shared with her divine Son all the experiences of human life, she regards with understanding born of a common experience the problems we lay at her feet. Our poverty and weakness, our failures and exiles, the loss of friends and position, the thousand trials great and small that crowd our life, she knows through that life which won for her the title, Mother of Sorrows. And, knowing sorrow, she touches our sorrows and turns them into joy.

God Himself knew the importance of good women to the world when He gave Mary, the Virgin Mother, to all mankind. He knew the longing of our hearts for a mother's understanding, and decreed that when death took from us the mother who bore us upon earth, a heavenly Mother would still safeguard us with a love and power beyond that of the mother we had lost.

Happily the Catholic world turns to Mary, and through her to Christ. The mother lifts her little babe to the Madonna and feels new joy in her motherhood. The young woman struggling against a sweet temptation, looks up into the stainless eyes of this pure Virgin and sets her ideals a little higher and her courage a little firmer. The young man looks upon the girl he may some day marry, and reverences her for the Mother in whose footsteps she will beautifully walk. And from the little child learning his sweet "Hail, Mary," to the old man who remembers that Joseph died in the arms of his spotless bride, the whole Catholic world in temptation and trial, in joy and success, in sorrow and failure, moves

happily and securely under the outstretched blue of Mary's mantle that some men call the sky.

Unhappy that world that has turned from Mary back to the stupid, lustful, destructive women who fill earth with tears and disillusionment! Happy the world and happy the individual soul that has taken Mary as its Mother and its Model!

THE HAPPINESS THAT DEATH CANNOT DESTROY

Address delivered on June 24, 1934.

In the center of their banquet tables, the old Egyptians placed as the chief ornament a grinning human skull.

Looking upon its empty sockets, its fleshless jaws, and endlessly sneering mouth, they cried: "Some day, we shall look like that. So seize the moment in greedy hands. Death will tear from us our loves, our gold, all the fair things of palace and hovel, of abundant Nile and richest wheat field. Be merry while you may, for life runs on swift feet toward the open mouth of a swallowing skull."

And in the oblivion of drink and lust and uncontrolled merriment, they tried to forget the horror of the grave.

Centuries later, into that same Egypt came the first Christian monks to build their rude cells where they might love God in peace. And before them on their rough tables, they placed the same ugly skull. Looking upon it, they cried: "Some day, our bodies shall be as that. But when the day comes, and our skull is stripped of its fair flesh, our souls will stand triumphant in the presence of God. Nothing will be lost of the things we love. In God's eternal mansions, we shall find our friends and our beloved; our minds shall go endlessly questing into infinite truth; our hearts shall throb with the revelation of eternal beauty. And even that grinning skull will be re-clothed in immortal flesh and reunited in endless happiness with its soul."

And, in the midst of their voluntary penance

and renunciations, they smiled gaily into the face of God, and dug their own graves that were to be their gateway to immortal happiness and joy.

There is no questioning the fact that death, for the man without faith, ruins all. Despite the whistling-in-the-dark attitude of modern pagans, death has never lost its terror. Always, in Christ's words, it is death, the thief. Death flings under its feet and tramples the roses of love. It stills the laughter and the song. It takes from the hand of the artist his brush and chisel, from the scientist his unfinished experiment, from the scholar his precious books and manuscripts, from the genius his incompleted achievement, as it takes from the arms of the mother her child, from the husband his wife, from the lover his fair young sweetheart. Friends scuttle away and the house grows terrifyingly silent as death enters. And the man, poised, before the push of death topples him into the cold arms of the grave, peers with frightened eyes, first at the life he is leaving unfinished, incompleted, utterly inadequate, and then into the dismal ugliness that rises black and foreboding before him.

Of course no man has willingly believed that the grave was the end. What a horrible thought, if all the beauty and wisdom, the goodness and genius of history, were really rotting in their decaying monuments! Mankind has been convinced that beyond the grave was life. But what kind of life? How fair an exchange for the precious life that is slipping off like a cape, old but familiarly dear? And the modern pagan, when he dares face the inescapable fact of death at all, asks the same pathetic questions.

If only, cries the pagan, one of our fellows could

come back from the dead! If only he could tell us what lies beyond the tomb!

So history shows us men dabbling in necromancy, the dread science of communication with the dead. In our own times, the hysteria of spiritism was just another futile effort to reach the dead and learn from them the secrets of their life after death. Men cannot endure the thought that death ends an existence that clearly has hardly begun. With so much of love in our hearts, must we stop loving? With so little of wisdom and knowledge in our minds, must we stop learning? With our achievements just the silly scrapings at surfaces permitted in our brief span of years, must our activity stop? Can't someone reassure us? Must we live on in the unhappiness of our uncertainty? We must know, or our very happiness makes us more miserable, as in the midst of our joys we realize that in death we lose all those precious things that make us happy.

Give us a man who, from experience, can tell us of life beyond death.

And such a man was given us.

Jesus Christ died. Oh, how competently and effectively they put Him to death, at the end piercing His heart to let flow the last drops of blood and water. They buried Him, and with Him the world's happiness, in a sealed tomb. And He broke the inescapable chains of death, smashed the prison of the grave, and walked the earth radiant and glorious, in the same body and with the same sweet tenderness toward His friends, and forgiveness toward His betrayers, that had marked Him in life, and in His own person proved to us that all He had preached of man's immortality and priceless destiny was divinely true.

Then faith, with a glad cry, knew that man was immortal, and that it lay within his power to pattern that immortality on the glorious, triumphant, endlessly happy immortality of Jesus Christ Himself!

Men would live on, holding still the personality that makes them individuals, but with the imperfections burned away. Men at death would begin to live the new life for which all else was preparation, a life of love and knowledge and power and endless achievement under the smiling approval of a heavenly Father.

At once the life men led on earth became reasonable and purposeful. All the best instincts of the human mind had insisted that beyond this life was another life, lived perhaps in the Elysian Fields, Valhalla, the Isles of the Blest, the Happy Hunting Ground, Abraham's Bosom. God had not given these instincts without a full determination to satisfy them. For those who lived as men should live, and who walked in the companionship of Christ, there was the City of God, Heaven, that Eternal Kingdom compared with which all kingdoms of earth were ephemeral and valueless.

Of course life had become reasonable. Men were placed on earth as on a proving grounds; the brief business of living was man's opportunity to prove to his Father that he deserved a little the eternal joy prepared for him.

If there were another life, then the unpaid debts, the unsolved problems, the unfinished business, the untasted joys, the inadequacies could all be balanced. Life's most difficult problems would yet be cleared as the light of divine wisdom fell upon them. Life's most arduous road led upwards toward a Father's

mansion. Life's joys were a faint glimmer of the endless happiness prepared for those loyal sons and daughters who did, to the best of their power, their Father's business.

Life was not snuffed out in death. Rather, in St. Paul's magnificent figure of speech, life was planted like a grain of wheat in the earth to rise in the full fruition of a complete and perfect life.

Friends and lovers were not snatched away from us and swallowed up in black, intolerable oblivion. They slipped through the gateway across which falls an impenetrable curtain. But beyond that curtain, they live in deepest happiness; they know us and love us and wait for us to join them in the perfect bliss of God's presence.

Modern pagans have sneered at what they liked to picture as the Christian Heaven, laughing at its "psalms and harps, its golden streets and ivory gates, its wings and angel choruses, and the hosannas of the saints." Which is just as silly as sneering at the lovely figures of speech by which a lover describes the swanlike neck, the raven hair, the lily hands, and rose bud lips of his beloved. Pity the poor pagans who cannot understand the joys of Heaven because they boggle at a simile.

The Catholic, however, knows that Heaven means the eternal possession of God Himself. Our restless quest for truth and beauty, the great longing by which we want to know and want to love and be loved, will at last, with that possession of God, be satisfied. In the infinite God is all truth, all beauty. Every detail of earth's perfection is a small copy of God. Every truth the mind discovers with laborious searching is founded on the divine essence. And

Heaven brings us face to face with this exhaustless beauty and truth.

If the explorer or the scientist, if the writer or the historian, attains to heights of happiness when he discovers some fragment of truth, who can imagine or describe the happiness of the human being suddenly discovering the source of all that truth as he looks upon its author, God?

There is no human joy like the joy of loving and being loved. Yet on earth, the purest love is limited and sometimes wearisome, ending in boredom or in death. In spite of repeated failures of love, the heart goes on craving for a love endlessly, completely satisfying.

And in Heaven it finds that love. God is infinitely beautiful, the great exemplar to which all human beauty bears some faint resemblance. And He loves us with an everlasting love that, incredibly enough, craves our love in return. The soul standing before God's infinite beauty, stretches out with a glad cry knowing that throughout eternity, love will rise in a glorious tidal wave as new beauties and perfections are endlessly revealed.

Heaven a place of boredom or weariness or inactivity? Why, at last we shall be released for the supreme activities of our soul, endlessly exploring the infinite truth that is God, endlessly loving and being loved by the God Whose beauty is faintly suggested in the glory of sunsets, the calm face of a woman, the warm comradeship of men, the unselfish love of mothers, the exquisite contours of flowers and precious stones, the inexhaustible glory of the earth and sky He fashioned.

Eternity will be all too short to spend rising to a fuller and ever developing knowledge of God's

limitless truth, sinking ourselves more and more completely in the boundless love of an Infinite Lover awakening an unfading love in return.

What then is life for the man with faith? Why then is the heart of the believer the happiest heart in the world?

While for the man without faith life is lived under the unbroken darkness of night or the misty, disturbing clouds that he cannot pierce, try as he will, while he finds the world without meaning and the future without real hope, the man with faith looks upon life and knows that, whatever its problems and difficulties and the soiling effects of sin, it is a beautiful and glorious adventure. Life rises from its source in God, awakened through the great love of a divine Father preparing earth for His beloved sons and daughters. Life moves not through uncertainties and doubts but through the white, piercing light of faith. There is happiness to be found by any man who beats back the wolves of sin and keeps himself young and strong and decent through high integrity of character and deep regard for virtue and the heroism of sanctity. Over life broods the tender love of an infinite Father. At our side through life walks a divine Comrade, Leader, and Lover. We can take life's bruises and joys to the understanding bosom of a heavenly Mother. We move in the company of the world's noblest men and women.

And at the end, guaranteed to us by our divine Teacher and proved to us by His Own resurrection from the dead, awaits the endless happiness of seeing God and knowing and loving and possessing Him together with all the dear things of experience that we have ever known and loved.

All this comes to the man who believes.

All this is bound together in the glorious synthesis of life given by the good God to the man who prays on bended knees for the happiness of faith.

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