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Meehan, John E.
— Religion in a
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RELIGION

in a capsule

the poor in spirit

the meek

the sorrowful

the righteous

the merciful

the clean of heart

the peace-makers

the persecuted

Rev. John E. Meehan

Religion In A Capsule



Religion In A Capsule

Eight Sunday discussions delivered on the Hour of Faith during the months of May and June, 1950, by Rev. John E. Meehan and various guest speakers. The Hour of Faith is heard at 11:30 E.S.T. and is produced by the National Council of Catholic Men in cooperation with the American Broadcasting Company.

BY

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THE FIRST BEATITUDE

Talk given on May 7, 1950

FATHER MEEHAN: Dr. Hagerty, I am very grateful to have you with me today in this discussion, and I've chosen this way of bringing out our discussion on some of the problems of our time because I have noticed so frequently in radio programs, in the press, the various writings and pronouncements of individuals, that there seems to be a recognition of the need for something besides the material approach to the problem of our times, and so often I have heard it said that the Beatitudes or the "Sermon on the Mount" was what was needed. Had you noticed this?

DOCTOR HAGERTY: Yes, I have noticed it, Father Meehan. There are a number of books that have been published on the Beatitudes, and people are crying for the deeper, spiritual meaning of life.

FATHER MEEHAN: Well, I have often wondered, as I've heard this especially from some of the—oh—so called more practical men of the world, the business men, and the politicians, too, if they really know what the Sermon on the Mount is all about. I wonder if they've read it? Do you think they have?

DOCTOR HAGERTY: Well, I would imagine that many people have read it. There is still a great proportion of our population that reads the Bible, but the difference between thought and action is an evident fact of our time.

FATHER MEEHAN: Well, it seems to me that in our time people are seeking religion in a capsule, and they want their prosperity and their pleasure in large doses. It has occurred to me that perhaps they are thinking about—instead of the Sermon on the Mount (that's pretty long) that they were probably really thinking about the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount which we call the Beatitudes, and, I thought these things which looked like eight small capsules of religion given to us by our Lord might be a good basis for our discussion.

DOCTOR HAGERTY: That would be a marvelous prescription, Father, to give to America. I imagine that more people would

DOCTOR take capsules in the form of penicillin or even hista-
HAGERTY mine, don't you think?
CON'T:

FATHER Well, they're taking plenty of those. Now, do you
MEEHAN: suppose we can change it over a little and perhaps the
 cure we can offer will be even more effective?

DOCTOR I would imagine that the capsules that are contained
HAGERTY: in the Beatitudes would be more potent perhaps than
 even the atom or the hydrogen bomb.

FATHER They certainly would, and I am sure that they would
MEEHAN: be if our Lord were to speak them again today. The
 first Beatitude, for instance. We find Our Lord with
 the multitude gathered around Him at the beginning
 of His public mission, and He spoke those words
 in His direct way, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for
 theirs is the kingdom of heaven." This was certainly
 an atom bomb in His time. He was speaking to a
 crowd of people that were not looking for that sort
 of thing. Don't you think it was a good deal of a
 shock to His hearers?

DOCTOR I wonder, Father, how the people of that time under-
HAGERTY: stood such a strange pronouncement. I imagine that
 today there are many—in fact I know of many—who
 receive that Beatitude with a certain cynicism.

FATHER Yes, I think that's very true. I think the people in
MEEHAN: our time react much as the people did then. They
 heard the word "poor"—and in their time there was a
 good deal of prosperity in the Roman Empire, and
 the standard of living was high in Judea. The stand-
 ard of living is high in our prosperous time now, and
 don't you think the attitude is that there is a certain
 disgrace attached to poverty?

DOCTOR That is a theory that developed unfortunately some
HAGERTY: centuries ago, and as a result of it, heaven is here.
 The good are rewarded by good things here, and so
 perhaps that idea of "the poor in spirit" needs some
 understanding. What does it mean?

FATHER Well, I think the distinction that should be made is
MEEHAN: that there is a difference between poverty and desti-
 tution. Do you think that's the misunderstanding?

DOCTOR I wonder. Do you think, Father, that in the light of
HAGERTY: the way that our world is now constructed, that the

DOCTOR idea of poverty is found in the goods of the earth?
 HAGERTY Many people are completely devoid of such goods. On
 CON'T: the other hand, the people who are in control of these
 goods can get no joy in them. Whom did you say
 are the poor, the destitute?

FATHER Well, the destitute are those who are what we call
 MEEHAN: the victims of society, the victims of our economic
 order. I know it's been my experience in dealing with
 what we call the poorer part of a great city that there
 are three kinds of poor, or three kinds of people who
 are destitute—there were those whom I call the un-
 fortunate poor, who seem to have difficulties, some-
 times they have great difficulties—once upon a time
 they got down and they can't seem to get up again.
 Then there are the, well, shall we call them the stupid
 poor, the ones who are certainly not well equipped
 mentally or don't have the capabilities of making a
 way for themselves in the world. I think those are
 the ones our Lord was speaking of when he said, "The
 poor ye always have with you." And then we have
 the third kind, we had them especially during the de-
 pression, whom I call the professional poor, the ones
 who play the game, and they get all the free things
 that are handed out by the social and government
 agencies.

DOCTOR I'm impressed by the universality of our Lord's
 HAGERTY: thought, and I'm reminded that old Aristotle, in talk-
 ing of the ways of life, the ways of pleasure, the ways
 of honor, and the ways of goodness, eliminates a way
 of money-getting, and he says that people who seek
 money as a good are in grave error. Money is always
 for something else, and so I wonder if the people who
 devote most of their time to the pursuit of wealth,
 that sort of wealth, are not poor, not poor in spirit,
 Father, but poor in understanding.

FATHER Well, I think that's certainly true. There's, of course,
 MEEHAN: poverty of spirit which isn't limited by one's financial
 condition, but I think too often we see it in our coun-
 try that the prosperity of spirit—the prosperity of
 goods—is an end of poverty's spirit. But I think
 that we still have a problem—the problem of destruc-
 tion, which those who have a good deal of this world's
 goods should recognize and that they should be will-
 ing to do something about because, I believe, destitu-

FATHER MEEHAN CON'T: tion is a disgrace to society. Poverty is a virtue. Now-a-days we hear people speak so often of St. Francis and we see how popular he is—everybody's St. Francis—and yet St. Francis was wed to the Lady Poverty and took on to himself a life of voluntary poverty.

DOCTOR HAGERTY: That's a delightful idea, Father, to add to our discussion—voluntary poverty. I think that we have distinguished and shown that destitution is in itself an evil. It is possible, too, that the mere acquisition of goods is not good in the deepest sense, and so somewhere in the middle of that comes what you call voluntary poverty. What do you mean by that?

FATHER MEEHAN: Well, we have the voluntary poverty, of course, that's been illustrated in the Church for centuries in the religious orders where poverty is accepted as their way of life. I don't know where one finds more happiness and contentment than one does in a religious house of either men or women. That's the Christian proposal, and there are many others. On the other hand we have the effort in our own time which is a departure from the religious attitudes on the part of so many.

DOCTOR HAGERTY: I wonder, Father, when you mention voluntary poverty—voluntary poverty is an example on the part of holy men and women in a world that doesn't understand the ultimate objective. Would voluntary poverty be possible without detachment—complete detachment from the world's goods?

FATHER MEEHAN: I think that's of course the essence of the Christian ideal and the Christian way of life, that is detachment, renouncement. That's the essence of it, and it's what our Lord asked of us if we are truly to be Christian. And I think it's possible for the greater part of society to accept it. Not only to ask just smaller groups in religious houses to accept it. It's that ideal our Lord emphasizes in some of his parables when He speaks of the stewardship of wealth. I think that's an ideal that has been lost too much in our time, and it would do a great deal for our society, and it would do a great deal to solve our problems of destitution if there were the recognition of the stewardship of wealth.

DOCTOR HAGERTY: I wonder how it's possible for the men who produced the goods of the earth to be so detached from them

DOCTOR that they will release themselves from slavery to those
HAGERTY goods which are often called "poverty."
CON'T:

FATHER Well, I think the best answer to that is, "If they will
MEEHAN: stop to look at life as it is, they will realize that in
the smart saying of the day, 'You can't take it with
you,' and they're going to leave it all behind." I think
the difficulty is that people are so reluctant to take a
birds-eye view of life—to stop and look at it as a
whole and take it from day to day.

DOCTOR I'm wondering if we haven't a moment in timing here.
HAGERTY: The Communists not only don't want us to take it
with us; they want to take it from us now.

FATHER They're trying to make a heaven on earth, so they
MEEHAN: have to take it now.

DOCTOR Wouldn't it be better now if we measured our steward-
HAGERTY: ship carefully so that there would be no need of a
mere issue over these transient goods?

FATHER I think that's exactly what brought Communism into
MEEHAN: being. I think Communism is a materialistic reaction
to the materialism of our time. It is simply another
way of trying to overcome the problem. It sets about
this in a way that is wrong, because it forces poverty
onto a man and forces him to give up the fruits of
his labor to which he has all just right, and then
says that the State knows best, the State will take
over and administer property because it (the state)
knows better than you what to do with the fruits of
your labor.

DOCTOR Is there the need, in the light of the doctrine of this
HAGERTY: first Beatitude, to emphasize that the reward of labor
is not really the property we achieve, that there is in-
volved work, and in work, perhaps, there is something
that we find even in war—blood, sweat, and tears.
What philosophy would enable us to accept that?

FATHER Well, the Christian philosophy of course is able to meet
MEEHAN: any of these problems, and it meets them even in
time of war because our Lord never promised us
heaven on earth, he never promised prosperity or any-
thing of that kind to anyone who followed Him. He
said to "take up the cross and follow me," and that

FATHER MEEHAN CON'T: has always been the emphasis in the Christian philosophy of life—that this is not a lasting city; that we're just passing through here; that we have ultimate goals that are so infinitely more important than these earthly things that we should hold them lightly as we go along and not clutch them to our breasts as too many are wont to do with their material possessions.

DOCTOR HAGERTY: That strikes me, Father, as one of the really profound senses of the poor in spirit. If we can really grasp that—have an insight of that—perhaps we are then prepared to look for the heaven that's envisioned in that institution of poverty of spirit.

FATHER MEEHAN: Yes, I think it is entirely possible that we can see that it has been accomplished, that it is accomplished; it's possible to make life something very real, genuine, and a source of happiness and peace if we use it in the Christian way. The difficulty comes with the lack of Christianity. Of course, we've had that crack made so often, we hear that "we've had Christianity around for 2000 years, and look at the world!" Well, who did these things to the world that we see now? As for instance, today we have the liberals, so called, who are in the saddle. They offer to us the solution of democracy. Well, now, is it possible, do you think, to have democracy without a Christian background?

DOCTOR HAGERTY: I wouldn't imagine that it was Christianity that produced nationalism, or industrialism, or internationalism, but perhaps Christians have watched the passage and haven't taken their capsules.

FATHER MEEHAN: That, I think, is very true. We're to blame, of course, for a good deal of it ourselves. We can't put off the blame and point the finger. We have too many of the kind that . . . well, like a good old friend of mine who, when the doctor prescribed capsules for her, she would throw them into the stove, so many each day, so that if anybody in the family counted them to check up on her, it would appear that she'd taken them. And I think there are a good many of our Christian people who take their religion that very same way.

DOCTOR HAGERTY: It would be a wonderful thing if you could institute a scientific way of restoring our health and giving us spiritual vitamins, Father, as you would prescribe each week these capsules of the Beatitudes.

FATHER Well, we have it. We have the science of the saints,
MEEHAN: and that science has worked. Look at the lives of
of the saints—the vast number of them through the
ages. And we have also the remedies that our Lord
has given to us in the Sacraments, and these are ours
to use, if we use them. And we have also the voice,
the living voice of the Church, especially in the sov-
ereign Pontiffs in our time, who have given us their
great Encyclicals as guides to our actual, practical liv-
ing, if only the world would listen to them.

DOCTOR I'm often moved to think, Father, that the Encycli-
HAGERTY: cals are in a sense prescriptions written by the holy
doctor . . .

FATHER Yes indeed . . .
MEEHAN:

DOCTOR . . . for the world. And those prescriptions have
HAGERTY: never been taken to the drug store of the world!

FATHER Well, look at the reaction to Pope Leo XIII. He
MEEHAN: spoke out in the height of the Industrial Revolution,
and the reaction was, "You run along, old man, and
say your prayers; we'll take care of the practical
affairs of the world. We know just how to do those
things, and what do you know about them? You're
just an impractical person." And then look what hap-
pened 40 years after. They listened to Pius XI, I
believe.

DOCTOR I wonder if they've listened to him or if it's one of
HAGERTY: the wonders of the world that Leo XIII and Pius XI
are pointing out the same facts that were pointed
out by Marx and Engels, and now the challenge is be-
fore the so-called "ideologies." Who will restore the
health of the world? Communism has had a long
time, and we are being led . . .

FATHER Liberalism has had longer . . .
MEEHAN:

DOCTOR . . . and has had longer, so that now is it possible
HAGERTY: that there is a chance for the opportunities of Cath-
olic Action?

FATHER I think it's here!
MEEHAN:

SUMMARY

The first Beatitude was the utterance of our Divine Lord that opened His public life. It was certainly a shock to his listeners and undoubtedly set in motion the thoughts and plans that led to the final conflict with the powers of the world, that led to his trial and condemnation by them. It was an utterance that was offensive to all ears except those that were truly spiritual—those that truly loved God and understood His way. In the multitude that came out to hear our Lord, there were many scribes and Pharisees, the eminently respectable of the community. They were the ones who were superior because of their learning and piety. They were shocked when they heard the pronouncement, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." They had not been consulted by this Galilean who spoke—and with what authority he spoke! They were offended because they heard the word "poor," and they were prosperous themselves. They were interested indeed because they heard the word "kingdom." That brought to their imagination pleasant thoughts of power, wealth, and luxuries. So, they did not move against our Lord at once, but began their game of watching Him in the hope that He might somehow reveal Himself as the liberator of Israel, perhaps even the conqueror of the Roman Empire! In all of their watching, though, they were suspicious. They had not been consulted. They did not wish to lose their own prestige. They did not want to have any authority speaking contrary to themselves. In the multitude on the mount, there were certainly representatives of the law—of the political power in ascendancy at the time—that is, the official guardians of the Pax Romana, the loyal servants of the Empire. Perhaps they were there because they had heard talk among the people that a Redeemer—a powerful Son of Israel—a new Hope, had come. The prophets had foretold that such a One was to be expected. They were certainly there because they felt it their duty to keep an eye on any gathering of these troublesome Jews whose indomitable spirit and strong religious convictions were alien to the hedonistic Roman outlook. Undoubtedly, these foreign agents were contemptuous when they heard the word "poor" and suspicious when they heard the word "kingdom." It was all confusing, and about the only thing they could think of to do, was to see that the business did not get out of hand. They were the liberals of their time, and like liberals of all times, theirs was the way of generous tolerance—"live and let live"—just so there was no disturbance of the high standard of living. Yes, as in all times, the liberal is one who prefers expediency to principle. It requires no great effort of the imagination to project the divine voice of Our Blessed Lord over the centuries and to under-

stand how He speaks to the multitude now with similar effect. The eminently respectable bourgeois, small-minded, nominal Christian of our time, with his pious Sunday pretense, his respect for prosperity, his contempt for the poor, takes refuge in the sweet sayings of the Master, and in them finds refreshment for his own shriveled soul. He is sure that the kingdom of heaven and all its glory is meant for himself and that God is good because He has provided it for him. He is suspicious of any voice that speaks out to the contrary. The materialists and the secularists of our time are the representatives of the law—the patriots of our time—who are sure that the foundations of government and good order are silver and gold and oil, that the happiness of man rests on the American standard of living, and of this kingdom there must be no end. They oppose, of course, the Communist standard, not because it is unjust, not because it takes from man his rights by force, not because it takes the fruits of one's labor by government decree, but because it disturbs the condition of things as they are. It is not difficult to see that if our Lord were to come again in our time, He would be crucified. Let it be noted well that our Lord did not say, "Blessed are the poor in pocketbook" and leave Himself open to the accusation of the Communists that religion teaches that one should not strive to better his economic condition, that one should be satisfied with what he has, that one should never disturb the equilibrium of things as they are, in a word, that religion is the opium of the people. What our Lord said was, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," and poverty of spirit can be found in those who have much, but who realize that it has all come from the providence of God, and that they who have are but stewards. The poor in pocketbook may be entirely lacking in poverty of spirit, for they may be envious and greedy and full of hate. They are far from the kingdom of heaven. In the patriarch Job in the Old Testament, in whom we find a prefigure of our Blessed Lord, because he possessed all things, lost all things for the glory of God, and regained all things by the providence of God, we find the perfect example of poverty of spirit. Job summed it all up in his virtuous words to those who reproached him, "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." How many of those who fear the portent of material destruction and who piously wave the Sermon on the Mount as a banner over the fortress of hoped-for safety in things as they are, can truthfully and sincerely say in their hearts, "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

THE SECOND BEATITUDE

Talk given on May 14, 1950

FATHER Dr. Hagerty, I'm very glad to have you here with me
MEEHAN: again today so that we may further discuss these
"capsules" given to us by Our Blessed Lord, which
may, because of their capsule form, appeal to the
modern mind, and perhaps we can be of service in pre-
scribing them.

DOCTOR It's a privilege to be with you again Father. However,
HAGERTY: as we discussed the matter last week, our thought was
that these capsules were strong medicine. I wonder,
Father, is it as difficult to take the medicine of Our
Lord as it is to take some of the medicine that is of-
fered in our day by our great doctors?

FATHER I don't think it's nearly as difficult. And, moreover,
MEEHAN: we have an assurance, in taking the medicine that Our
Lord offers us, because He didn't ask us to take it on
blind faith. I think today people in general have a
great deal more faith in the doctors' medicine than
they have in the prescriptions of Our Blessed Lord.
And we can look to Our Blessed Lord and see what
the effect of His own medicine is because He took it
first. He was the perfect user of His own prescrip-
tions. And we can see the effect of them in His
life and what they will bring in our lives, too, if we
follow Our Blessed Lord. He gave up everything;
He gave up everything in His showing of poverty of
spirit. And then He was in perfect obedience to His
Eternal Father. He gave up His place in heaven. He
submitted Himself perfectly to the needs of man,
and that's what we're concerned with. The doctors
of medicine in this world are concerned with the needs
of the body, but the needs of the soul are even more
important.

DOCTOR That seems to be the prescription that you have for
HAGERTY: discussion today, Father, does it not?

FATHER It is. Our Lord had another of those prescriptions of
MEEHAN: His which were, I believe, all of them a shock to the
ears of His time. "Blessed are the meek, for they
shall possess the land." It must be a shock, certainly,

FATHER MEEHAN: to us at first, to think that the meek will possess anything.
CON'T:

DOCTOR HAGERTY: One difficulty that I find, Father, regarding this Beatitude, is that the word "meek" or "meekness" seems almost to have dropped out of our language insofar as meaning is concerned. It has an entirely different meaning than it must contain in the prescription, don't you think?

FATHER MEEHAN: Don't you think it's just the change in the first letter

DOCTOR HAGERTY: That's about it.

FATHER MEEHAN: . . . from "meekness" to "weakness"?

DOCTOR HAGERTY: weakness . . .

FATHER MEEHAN: . . . That's the general attitude today that "meekness" is about the same as "weakness."

DOCTOR HAGERTY: And once again people will smile, perhaps express a certain cynicism, even to dream that the *meek* will inherit the earth. How can the *weak* inherit the earth?

FATHER MEEHAN: Well, I suppose the weak can't if we really stick to what the word "weak" means; but if we keep to the meaning of what Our Blessed Lord said here, the *meek*, or the "patient," as Monsignor Knox puts it in his translation, "shall inherit the earth," then we can look back and see that this has been proved. Again, the medicine of Our Lord has worked. And, while it may not seem to be true in the immediate present, and the impatience of man with things as they are would lead Him to believe otherwise, nevertheless, we see the working out of it in the long run, and that's what's important—because a thousand years are but as a day in the mind of God.

DOCTOR HAGERTY: That is very true. But in our day people are indulging in action rather than in contemplation.

FATHER MEEHAN: Yes. I know they have the idea that anyone who isn't up and doing all the time is meek. It's in one of our

FATHER MEEHAN
CON'T: cartoon series in the paper—Casper Milquetoast—who is never able to do anything. He is weak, and unfortunately, moderns consider him meek, too. But he's not, he's just weak, of course, and that's a different matter. Well, we see these tendencies, in our time, don't you believe, in this entire business of action, action, action all the time—going places and doing things rather than thinking things through and pausing sometimes to be meek, to be patient?

DOCTOR HAGERTY: The denial of God perhaps is the foundation of this kind of weakness. We need our medicine, but how are we going to be restored to God if we spend our time wholly in action?

FATHER MEEHAN: Well, that's the great difficulty, of course, and we've had, as you say, the denial of God. But people can't just have a denial; so something has to be put in its place. There has to be something offered to the minds and thoughts of man, and the thing that has been offered by some of the prophets of the new hope is the deification of man. Man has been set up as the highest evidence of creation, and we have this "men like Gods" idea.

DOCTOR HAGERTY: It seems so interesting that that has arisen. It has sprung up almost like the dragon's teeth not only in countries like England, with H. G. Wells, but perhaps the truly great prophet of "the men like Gods" idea is Friedrich Nietzsche. Nietzsche has forgotten God, and in the demand, the desire, the need for Him, he has made God of himself. That, perhaps, is the very antithesis of meekness.

FATHER MEEHAN: We certainly see it in Nietzsche. But we might say that H. G. Wells was the popularizer of the idea, and because everyone read H. G. Wells for a while, his ideas had a great effect on the minds of people in the English speaking world. He was simply carrying over Nietzsche's philosophy, of course, and we see its effect in our own country, don't you believe? For instance, in the way we're training children by bringing them up centered on self. Don't you think that that is what we're doing today, for instance, with our health and hygiene programs? It's drummed into the dear children all the time that they must just eat certain foods, and they must have certain

FATHER MEEHAN CON'T: amounts of rest, and they have their rest periods at school, and they're taught how to take care of their teeth, and their toenails, and all of these things center them on their own little self and welfare.

DOCTOR HAGERTY: That is the pragmatism or the functionalism of our time. It is a frightening thing in terms of the formation of perhaps a "real" self, if I might say that as a philosopher.

FATHER MEEHAN: That is certainly the word, I think. In "real" self there is so little of realness, and, for many of our children today, that false realness is evidenced, I think, in the lack of good manners in children today. Don't you feel that there is a good deal of lack of decent manners?

DOCTOR HAGERTY: If children are conditioned to an egotism and pride before they know better, I wonder what manner they could manifest towards their parents and towards those who are associated with them. Are they not like the brute rather than the little angel that Rousseau imagined?

FATHER MEEHAN: Well, they certainly would seem that way. Perhaps, it sounds cynical. There are some, of course, that are exceptions, but there is an evidence of fear on the part of so many parents for their children today, and I must confess that sometimes I am afraid of them myself, especially with the parents hovering in the background. Do you remember the motto of New College at Oxford, "Manners Maketh Man?"

DOCTOR HAGERTY: And that is a profound statement, Father . . .

FATHER MEEHAN: . . . It sounds superficial, maybe in first hearing . . .

DOCTOR HAGERTY: . . . but if we were to ask what is the root of manners rather than consider this superficial conditioning that we receive by imitation, if manners sprang from the south, that deep, profound south, then perhaps we would be in a situation to explore further this idea of meekness.

FATHER MEEHAN: Well, meekness is further put out of the minds of people today, don't you believe, by the glorification of competition and by the glorification of publicity, and

FATHER MEEHAN CON'T: by the glorification of power. We see this constantly. We see evidences of it even in the young. So many of these youngsters that get into trouble and get themselves locked up for it—the first thing they ask the next day is, “Did it get into the papers?,” and “What did they say in the papers about it?” It’s the publicity end of it that they’re interested in. And then the competition in the business world . . .

DOCTOR HAGERTY: Perhaps, Father, do you think that the dynamism that’s behind some of our theories today, for example, a conflict for survival, fails to overlook or to note that the survival is based not upon the conflict merely, but upon a service. I wonder if that isn’t one of the fundamental elements of meekness?

FATHER MEEHAN: I think that’s exactly it. We should understand that, and the world *must* understand it, I believe, if we are to survive at all. In the condition that we’ve gotten ourselves into now, we simply have to understand that it’s not the struggle, not the competition, and not the power that’s going to be the salvation of our civilization and our culture, but it *must* lie in the prescription of Our Blessed Lord, “Blessed are the meek,” and they shall possess the land indeed, and if *they* don’t possess it, it looks now as if nobody will.

DOCTOR HAGERTY: How, then, can we be led to the insights that are found in imitating Our Blessed Lord?

FATHER MEEHAN: Well, of course, the only way is the old way, and that is to listen to the voice of Our Blessed Lord—where that voice is to be heard and where we can hear it with certainty, where He established Himself in His Church, where He established that living voice and gave it a tongue. And that voice is to be heard, is to be heeded by mankind. Our Lord has said very definitely that it must be, and if it is not, we pay the penalty. Now, God spoke to Adam and Eve in the beginning, and told what He was giving and how much was to be theirs, and the conditions on which they received and the conditions under which they would hold what God gave them, and they turned against that, and we see what happened. The penalty was death. Our Blessed Lord came to overcome that penalty. He gave his prescriptions as to how we were to overcome death, and death is still the lot of

FATHER MEEHAN: man and of civilization unless we heed the prescriptions of God as spoken to us by His Divine Son.
CON'T:

DOCTOR HAGERTY: Do you see a difficulty here, Father. The voice of God comes to us through the Church. There is a tendency in our time, in the light of the movement of history—dictatorship, tyranny, the various political systems—to identify the voice of the Church—perhaps as the voice of a tyrant.

FATHER MEEHAN: Why, I think that is in the minds of many people. And certainly there's been a great deal of propaganda to foster that idea, and that propaganda has come, of course, from the tyrants of the world who wish to put up a smoke screen, or shall we say an "iron curtain," and so we won't see the truth. And certainly today the world has learned these tricks of propaganda, and they're using them to the limit. Yet there is one voice that should be heeded. This is the voice that is really the voice of meekness as well as the voice of true power—the Church. The worldly tyrant voice tries to silence it by accusing the Church of being tyrannical.

DOCTOR HAGERTY: That is the great truth that is recognized by every loyal son and daughter of Holy Mother Church. It seems to me that the title of love and affection that is given to the Pope—our Holy Father—is so very significant. It implies meekness and draws out a corresponding meekness on the part of the faithful.

FATHER MEEHAN: Yes. And that's the thing that is not understood in our time. There are probably many well meaning people in the world—sincere people—who would say that the Church must be tyrannical, that the Pope must be a tyrant because of his position in the Church, and because of the power that he wields. But they forget this—that Our Lord has said, "Blessed are the meek." It's the very meekness of Our Holy Father that keeps him from being a tyrant, that keeps him sincere, and keeps him truly the Holy *Father* and not a holy tyrant.

DOCTOR HAGERTY: And I note that the title for which he has the greatest affection is: "Servant of the Servants of God." Meekness is likewise his virtue.

FATHER MEEHAN: Yes, it certainly is. And if one has ever had any contacts, any personal contact with the Holy Father, and

FATHER
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the opportunity of observing him at work, one certainly understands that he *is* the "Servant of the Servants of God," for any man who is elected to the Papacy immediately gives up all personal life. He has no possibility of any personal life of his own. He's at the beck and call of others at all times, and as Pius XI said at the end of the last Holy Year—someone was sympathizing with him for having to see all the thousands upon thousands of pilgrims that came in every day, a million during the year—"Your Holiness, you must be glad now that this ordeal is over." And he said, "No, I am not. On the other hand, I am very sorry, for now, once again, I shall be the loneliest man in the world."

DOCTOR
HAGERTY: Should we make some comment, Father, about the presence of this great gift in weak human beings, even at all stations? Is it possible that sometimes the lack of meekness in a person in authority may cast a shadow upon such a great organization as the Church?

FATHER
MEEHAN: Oh, yes. It can happen, of course, because after all, the Church is, as Christ established it, made up of human beings in this world. It's a visible society. And so they are individuals who can and do forget—because they are human. But that's their misfortune, and it's the misfortune of the Church, too, when they forget the virtue that Christ has called upon us to practice. But that is nothing, there's nothing permanent about it, nor has the effect of lapses been permanent in the Church. Certainly none of this *weakness* is to be found, I don't believe, in our present Holy Father.

DOCTOR
HAGERTY: No, certainly not. I wonder how we can all imitate Our Blessed Lord, and some of His great saints, in developing in ourselves this gift of meekness?

FATHER
MEEHAN: Well, I think it's very easy if we just remember that we're not all meant to be heroes. We're not all meant to be doing the great things of the world. The little things that come our way to be done, the little relationships that we have with others in this world are of tremendous importance in the sight of God. After all, if we think of the relative importance of things to God Himself, then we will understand how important are the little things of our lives and our

FATHER little attitudes and relationships. We call them little.
 MEEHAN They're really big. Bearing in mind the bigness of
 CON'T: little things in the sight of God is the way character
 is formed, and it's the sum total of the virtue of the
 little people of the world that will make the world
 great or will break it.

DOCTOR And this will rise through love rather than through
 HAGERTY: knowledge. And we must get it through faith rather
 than through natural conditioning?

FATHER We must get it through faith, and we must get it
 MEEHAN: through seeking the grace of God which is given to
 us in the means established by Our Blessed Lord.

SUMMARY

As the First Beatitude was a shock to the hearers of Our Blessed Lord, because He offered poverty of spirit as the gateway to the kingdom of heaven, so the Second Beatitude must have puzzled them because He declared that meekness was the price of possession of the land. They all had deep inside themselves the desire for possession, but who of them had thought of meekness as the way to gain? In the time of Our Lord they had seen how the force and power of the Roman Empire had taken possession of even the land of God's chosen people. They must have resented the teaching that implied that meekness could ever win it back. Their immediate reaction must have been that this man who spoke to them thus was a dreamer, an idealist, and quite impractical, but they listened. They did not turn away because He did say something about possessing the land. Over the centuries the voice of Our Lord comes to the multitude and declares to them the same truth, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land." As I said last Sunday, even the leaders in the secular worlds who commend the Sermon on the Mount as the great guide for our time, and urge it as a road leading us out of our confusion, are calling us to meekness, though one may wonder if they really practice it themselves. What does it mean? Certainly, in our time there is a great desire for possessions, for possessing the land, or anything else. But, what does meekness have to do with it? The powerful hold the earth, and the atom bomb and worse are invoked as our hope and salvation. The unthinking may react as did the multitude in the time of Our Lord speaking on the mount, and turn away. Yet, there are those who do understand. After the Bikini experiments with atom bombs, a high ranking Naval officer, who is a friend of mine, came to see me on his return from that

revealing show of force. He said that it was possible to foresee the time when any willful group of men in the world could take over control. They could do this by placing atom bombs in strategic places, and then make demands with the threat that if they were not met, they would push a button and blow up our great cities one by one. Then he said, "there is only one defense that we know, and that is to form the minds and consciences of men so that such use of force will be outlawed and rejected. That is your job." In as forceful language as I could use, I countered that it was his, too, that it is everybody's job. He, like a host of others, will point to the Church and the clergy as the ones to do a job of saving the world from itself. I asked him if officers could win a war. They could not, of course. Nor can the clergy alone—the officers in the army of Christ—when the war against the powers that threaten in our time. The multitude must be enlisted. And that is what Our Blessed Lord sought to do in His time, and the response was His crucifixion. It has been the same in many places in the world today, for we can point to Mindszenty, to Stepinac, and a host of others whose names are known only to God. However, in faith, we can take courage. For He overcame even death, and has enunciated the eternal truth that our hope is in such as these, for "Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land." The meek are those who understand the providence of God, who see what is evident, to those who are willing to see, that we are not the source of anything. We have not made our lives, but have received them. We are not able to sustain our own lives, but constantly receive from outside ourselves that which is necessary for our sustenance. We are not the sources of any power, but only users and transmitters of that which is supplied to us, supplied to us by the Divine Generator. We may compare our use of God's power in ourselves to our use of electricity in this material world. We know that if we use it according to laws that tell us how to insulate and transmit it, we have something good and useful. But, if we ignore these laws, we shall be burned. So it is with God's power. We must use it according to law, His law. If we are men of good will, if we are friends of God, how then shall we go about responding to the words of Our Lord? St. Peter spoke to those who put this question in the early years after they were first spoken. He reminded them that they were really strangers in exile and must live among their neighbors so as to be beyond reproach. God expected them, he said, to silence by honest living, the ignorant chatter of fools. Let us recall that the most glorious monument in the world erected to the honor of God and the memory of man stands over the mortal remains of St. Peter, the meek and humble fisherman, who took the words of Our Divine Lord literally. This should convince us in our time that it is not the big talker, it is not the

noisy propagandist, not the clever politician, not the writer of catchy and misleading advertising, not the lords of finance, not even the scientist who discovers what God has planned, but rather the one whose manners are formed by the fact that he is here living in an alien house. For truly we are but guests whose dwelling is a loan, and our real home, something far, far better, surely awaits us if our manners are good, for we have the divine guarantee, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land."

THE THIRD BEATITUDE

Talk given on May 21, 1950

FATHER MEEHAN: It is a great pleasure to have you take part in the broadcast today, Mrs. Norris.

MRS. NORRIS: I am very glad to take part in this discussion with you, Father, and I like the way you have considered the Beatitudes as capsules.

FATHER MEEHAN: Yes, the Beatitudes, at first glance, may look like small capsules of religion, easy to take. They may appear as gentle moral sayings of the gentle Master—suitable doses for those who wish to have their religion and morals in small lots and their pleasures and satisfactions in generous measure, with frosting and no tasteless coating.

MRS. NORRIS: That is indeed the desire of many, but they forget that a capsule can be very effective because its contents are so concentrated. At times, too, a patient may be a little afraid of the strength of what the doctor prescribes and concerned about its effects.

FATHER MEEHAN: How true that is, and Our Lord, who was the eternal God, became the physician of the souls of mankind, not to give a prescription of lulling sedatives nor aromatic stimulants, but to work the cure of sin. That does take strong medicine.

MRS. NORRIS: Yes, the ills He undertook to remedy are deep-seated. They need much more than a few doses of strong medicine. They have their roots in the very depths of life.

FATHER MEEHAN: To be sure, and this He demonstrated by not stopping with the Beatitudes, not even with the whole Sermon on the Mount, but by going on to the sacrificing of Himself as the Divine transfusion that men might live, and live eternally. Here, the patient must work with the Physician who said, BLESSED ARE THEY THAT MOURN FOR THEY SHALL BE COMFORTED. Again, in this Beatitude, Christ Our Lord shocked His hearers by declaring those who *mourn* as *blessed*—but He caught and held their interest by speaking of being comforted.

MRS. NORRIS CON'T: No, I suppose the people of Our Lord's time were just as unwilling to accept mourning as they are in ours. Yet everyone must sometime in his life learn what is means. We all have great sorrows come to us in

the course of life, and if we take them as they should be taken, we find that they can make us much better, they strengthen us, they turn us to finding our comfort where it really is, in the spiritual life.

FATHER MEEHAN: Yes, that is it, but we have similar temptations in our time that hide that fact as did the people in Our Lord's time. They were offered the comfort and prosperity and safety of the Roman Empire and the pleasures of the Roman way of life.

MRS. NORRIS: It is like the "American way of life" when you put it that way.

FATHER MEEHAN: Very much like it, and so it was a shock to the ears attuned to such propaganda, and the third Beatitude is a shock to the world today for in our time, we hate being sad, we like to have fun.

MRS. NORRIS: Yes, people do like pleasure, and somehow they too often associate religion with the absence of it. Maybe that comes from the Puritan background of our country, for the very word Puritanism in our language has come to mean the suppression of all that is relaxing and comforting.

FATHER MEEHAN: But the difference is that Our Lord was speaking of a spiritual sadness. He did not mean that we should go about with a long face, that we should have a lugubrious front, or be dour and repelling. He was speaking of a sorrow that is rational and reasonable because by original sin we have lost God or because we lose God again and again through sins of our own.

MRS. NORRIS: No, it would not be the way of Our Lord to have people take out their own limitations and weakness on their neighbors, so perhaps we can say that Puritanism was wrong because it tended to do just that. I have known people who do act that way, and probably, Father, you have known such people too.

FATHER MEEHAN: Yes, there are plenty of them for this feeling of loss is deep and instinctive. Those who have rejected the

FATHER MEEHAN CON'T: spiritual way of life must find it a great burden, so they seek to shake it off by other means such as habitual attendance at the movies, by drinking, night clubs, pulp fiction, romantic "love" stories.

MRS. NORRIS: Yes, and the so-called comic books that are such a bad influence today. I receive many letters from mothers and teachers who are worried about this problem. They know how great the influence of these picture books with their lurid depicting of crime and vice can be, especially on the minds of children. They feel almost hopeless in the face of it. I think we can certainly say with truth that they, together with so much that is like them in motion pictures, are a contributing cause not only to juvenile delinquency but to the general weakening of the mental fiber of the young.

FATHER MEEHAN: Yes, and not only to the young in years, but also to those who are not so young in years who have failed to grow up.

MRS. NORRIS: Yes, how often you see adults with the "comics" in their hands and preferring them to adult mental fare.

FATHER MEEHAN: And the unfortunate part of it is, that all this sort of thing has taken away from people the ability to face reality. The result is that war, atom bombs, evil, and such, breed *hate* on the one hand, and *frivolity* to the other: read the fight terminology in headlines, in news, in sports, in business reports, in political activities, in the reports of conferences of statesmen. For frivolity, read "society" news, style descriptions, the women's pages in papers and magazines.

MRS. NORRIS: You certainly are right, Father, when you say there is much frivolity in magazines and columns for women. There is good and bad, to be sure, but I do feel that there has been a great lowering of standards in what is offered as of interest to women. Probably the women themselves are chiefly to blame. They have sacrificed so much that is feminine and refining without the sufficiently strong protest that would have stopped the trend.

FATHER MEEHAN: Yes, Mrs. Norris, and when the standards of womanhood go down, all standards follow. Perhaps too many

FATHER
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CON'T:

mothers have forgotten to mourn for the waywardness of their sons and have sought refuge in frivolity. In the spiritual life, we know that splendid paradox of Christian life—happiness even though we mourn in facing the reality with Christ. St. Augustine put it so well long ago when he said, "Thou hast made us for Thyself, O God, and our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee."

SUMMARY

The impact of the third Beatitude on the listeners who had come out to hear Our Blessed Lord must have been just as much of a shock as the first two. Again they heard mention of something desirable, comfort, but it was preceded by a condition that seemed strange indeed. How could mourning and comfort go together? The people of Israel who were present had long been accustomed to mourn but it had not brought them comfort. In the time of Our Lord, they were mourning again, as they had mourned beside the waters of Babylon, because a stranger had entered their gates and taken over the rule of the proud little nation. They chafed under this domination: it brought no comfort. They could have readily understood this new teacher if He had said, miserable are they that mourn for they are without comfort.

The impact of the third Beatitude on those who casually or incidentally hear the words of Our Divine Lord today are as disconcerting and mystifying as ever by the juxtaposition of the words "mourn" and "comforted." The modern listener is quite like the few Romans who might have been on hand to hear Our Lord as the guardians of good order and government. To them, religion was an ornament of life, put on or left off according to the choice of the individual. It was not of vital importance, though it was useful in keeping people quiet and under control. In our time, there is a constant and consuming pursuit of comfort, but that one should mourn to gain it, is inconceivable. If one is going to preach religion successfully, if his doctrine is to appeal to the eminently respectable—they are the ones who must be depended upon to bring success—he must promise comfort, the comfort of peace of mind undisturbed by any outmoded ideas such as conscience and guilt, penance and sin. Oh, the Cross may be used as an appropriate symbol of some vague Christian connection, but it is to be thought of as related to something that happened a long time ago and calls for no more unpleasantness now than the firing on Fort Sumpter does. The doctrine that appeals must promise

a sure and unobstructed path to the center of Heaven, past a St. Peter shorn of all authority as keeper of the gates—in fact, the gates themselves must be abolished, for they are a symbol of all that is undemocratic. Then, too, of course the doctrine that appeals must include financial security, pensions, and no children except for those who want them—and are “fit” to have them. Marriage must be a convenience to be put asunder according to the whimsical sentiment of man, and God must stay out of it and bide His time—if He really has a time, or an eternity.

Yet in spite of all the wilfulness of man, in spite of his demands and the setting up of his own standards, everyone born into this world must learn to mourn. According to his use of this necessity, he will find comfort or misery. If our mourning is according to the mind of God, revealed to us by the incarnate Second Person of the Most Blessed Trinity, we shall have comfort. He called us to mourn in the depths of our souls because the sin of man has opposed the will of God, because thereby we have lost our heritage, because the cross of mourning and repentance is the cross that we must take up if we are to share in the work of Christ the crucified Redeemer. Blessed are they that mourn in this wise, for they shall find the comfort of faith and hope and charity; they shall find the comfort of grace that shall nourish their supernatural life; they shall find the comfort of Simon of Cyrene who learned to love when pressed into service; and the comfort of Veronica whose loving service in the presence of a hostile and mocking crowd was rewarded by the impression on her scarf and on her soul, of the face of Him whose mourning brought the whole world gladness. Through all the ages since, the Saints have mourned with Christ and have found His promised comfort and led others on the way of beatitude.

The other way of mourning is the sadness of the flesh. It is an inevitable sadness, because life in this world is a constant witness to the fact that the moment we are born, we begin to die. The flesh mourns the passing of youth, the loss of its beauty, of its strength. The carnal mind mourns the weakening of its instrument, the brain, as the inevitable years wear down all creation. All are fated to mourn who do not remember their Creator in the days of their youth, for inevitably the days will come when they shall say, I have no pleasure in them. (Ecctes. XII) How all must mourn without comfort, both the dead and the mourners, who stand at a grave that is thought to be the end!

Only the blindest beggar at the gate of life can deny that to mourn is the lot of man, willingly or unwillingly. Lord Jesus, give us grace to understand and to live by Thy prescription, Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted.

THE FOURTH BEATITUDE

Talk given on May 28, 1950

FATHER MEEHAN: Mr. King, I'm very glad to welcome you here on our program in this series on the Hour of Faith. I've called this series "Religion in a Capsule" because I've taken the Sermon on the Mount, its beginning and the Beatitudes, as a prescription of Our Blessed Lord given to us in the . . . form of a capsule . . . Our Blessed Lord—the Divine Physician—going about the work of curing the ills of mankind.

MR. KING: How did Our Blessed Lord, Father, happen to get a crowd about him on the occasion of this sermon?

FATHER MEEHAN: Well, St. Matthew tells us that Our Blessed Lord had been curing many people of their bodily ills and that he had been preaching penance to the people. He was evidently making preparations to draw a crowd so that they would listen to His teaching. Our Lord was getting attention. Up to this time He had been curing bodily ills. Apparently, that's what St. Matthew would indicate. St. Matthew also said that He was preaching penance. That probably didn't attract very many people, but He balanced it off with these bodily cures so He would get a crowd to listen to him. Now, they were not prepared, of course, for the kind of remedies that Our Lord offered them in the sermon on the mount because their real interest, we can be sure, and their first interest, lay in the cure of their bodily ills.

MR. KING: Well, that sounds very much like 1950, Father.

FATHER MEEHAN: Well, human nature is human nature all the way through, isn't it? They had not understood what was necessary as a preparation for what Our Lord wanted them to do and again we see, as I've said before in this series, that Our Lord didn't ask anyone to do anything that He Himself did not do. He gave the examples as well as being the Divine Physician. He was the Divine Exemplar, for just before this sermon, St. Matthew tells us that Our Lord had gone out into the desert and there He had fasted for 40 days and 40 nights, fasted from all food and drink as a

FATHER MEEHAN: preparation for this work that He was to do. Jesus Christ, who was God, was doing this as an example to us of what we must do . . .

MR. KING: . . . proving his own teaching about the necessity of penance . . .

FATHER MEEHAN: Then he preached penance afterwards. Yes. While he preached penance to the people, he'd given the example of penance first, and a very severe penance. Few of us could ever stand the penance that He took upon Himself. And so He had to begin the work of preaching penance and then show it, and at the end of His life, of course, He gave the supreme example of penance. But, in the meantime, the people of His day must have been shocked again when they heard this Fourth Beatitude as they had been shocked by the others. They must have been shocked by this "call to justice" and those words, "hunger and thirst," but again you see He uses this means of holding their attention—He promises that they would be filled. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall be filled."

MR. KING: If the words "hunger and thirst" sounded pretty harsh to their ears then, Father, possibly they sound just as hard to modern ears.

FATHER MEEHAN: They certainly do. Of course, probably the greatest difficulty that we have in the world is making the effort. Hunger and thirst and sacrifice and struggle of any kind is a difficulty for human nature, but Our Lord made bold to urge them all on the people because they are necessary in the scheme of things as they are arranged by Almighty God. Now, the people of His day may have been a little disappointed in hearing that Our Lord spoke of hunger and thirst. They might have thought, "Here is the one we've been waiting for, here's the one who is going to be the restorer of the kingdom of Israel." Now, in the Old Testament, you see, God had promised them a land flowing with milk and honey, and that's the way He drew the people. He drew the children of Israel, the way He got them to leave the materialism and the material comforts and luxury of Egypt, because He promised them a land flowing with milk and honey. And so they were willing to go out of Egypt where they had all of the high pagan civilization of that time.

MR. KING: Well, the expression "hunger and thirst" involves so much of a personal deep yearning, and I think it more or less indicates that even the least, even the least known, even the poorest as well as the richest, are involved in this particular Beatitude, though of course hunger and thirst nowadays to some people seem to be a miscarriage of the whole cosmic scheme, don't you think so, Father?

FATHER MEEHAN: Oh, undoubtedly, because we think of our bodies first, we think that is the basis of living, we think of living as a bodily matter; and that if there is any such thing as life after what we call "death" here in this world, that it is a very uncertain thing and that it will not be connected with anything like hunger and thirst anyway, and they figure, much as the people of the old law did, that "Why not let God take care of this sort of thing?" They looked to the law of Moses, and the law of Moses regulated everything, and they saw that God had sent prophets and teachers and had used Divine force to protect his people. "So," said those of the old law, "Let God do it." And people say the same thing now, don't they—"Why doesn't God do this, why doesn't He do that?"

MR. KING: Well, that's quite true because sometimes people don't care nowadays, it seems to me, to do their own share of the work that must be done. Now, this matter of hungering and thirsting after justice, Father. Do you think that some people could construe this, in our own day, to mean that "I hunger and thirst after justice for myself. I want everything that's coming to me," but not particularly recognizing any other duties or obligations that this Beatitude would involve?

FATHER MEEHAN: You are undoubtedly right, there. Of course, it may sound a little cynical when we say that, but the general attitude, don't you believe, in most people is, "I come first, and after me the deluge," that sort of thing. "I want what I want when I want it?" And wasn't that the basic difficulty of all mankind? It is fundamental in the natural order into which man plunged himself in the very beginning when our first parents chose their own will in preference to the will of God. We see that today, we see it's the same kind of thing . . .

MR. KING: . . . except, of course, being translated into an alto-

MR. KING: together different dimension by the life of Our Blessed
 CON'T: Lord. He told people to love one another and to have
 a care for even the least, even the lowliest. It seems to
 me that this is the beginning of an entirely new con-
 cept of justice . . .

FATHER: . . . Exactly! That's the point that you make right
 MEEHAN: there. That is what our Lord was doing here. He was
 bringing to mankind the announcement that they
 were to be drawn into the works of God, into the
 work of divine justice; that man was once more being
 incorporated back into the scheme that God had plan-
 ned in the beginning. Our Blessed Lord was to be
 the bridge over the gap that had separated man from
 God for all this long period of time between the fall of
 our first parents and His coming. And so they were
 to be drawn into the works of justice.

MR. KING: But, Father, would you say, then, that, on the basis
 of this, as of the other Beatitudes, that any human
 being at all, no matter who or what he may be, can
 become instruments of the divine justice?

FATHER: Oh, that's what Our Lord was calling them for. You
 MEEHAN: notice, too . . . here's an interesting thing: in all of
 the Beatitudes, have you noticed that Our Lord al-
 ways makes them in the plural? He says "they,"
 "they," "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for *theirs*
 is the kingdom of heaven," and "Blessed are *they* that
 mourn," "Blessed are the meek, for *they* shall possess
 the land." All of these are in the plural. They're not
 in the singular. He doesn't say, "Blessed is the *man*
 who is poor in spirit, for *he* shall possess the king-
 dom of heaven." There's something here, you see,
 that He's bringing into our life. There had been a
 separation—man had gone apart from God and so
 men had gone apart from each other, and we see under
 the old law how that little group of chosen people
 were held together just by the very *force* of God. All
 the rest had gone off into paganism and into the dark-
 ness of their own ways, and they were constantly at
 one another, and the cruelties and the miseries that
 came in the pagan countries and among the pagan
 peoples is well known as a matter of history. But here
 speaking in the plural, Our Lord was indicating the
 beginning of a new way of life.

MR. KING: Well, that word "they" then is just as broad as the
 whole human family.

FATHER: It is just that, and it certainly is most significant.
 MEEHAN: It has its very important place in the consideration of what Our Lord was saying.

MR. KING: Well, Father, don't you think that that's very important for our own times, 1950, that *every* person, every human being, should feel both the obligations and the benefits of the exercise of justice?

FATHER: Well, certainly, that is true too, and not understood
 MEEHAN: and appreciated enough. I think it's a very good point that you make, that we should understand that each individual has his place. We have been raised in dignity by Our Blessed Lord by the very fact that the Son of God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, came into this world and took on to himself human nature. And so it raises *all* human nature by that very fact to a dignity which is of tremendous importance.

MR. KING: Yes, that's quite different than the ideas we sometimes read about and hear about nowadays. It would make a human being just a unit of energy, or an entry on a ledger, or a cog in the wheel . . .

FATHER: . . . That's right. Just disregard human dignity
 MEEHAN: completely. Yes, that's one of the great difficulties of our time, I believe—the disregard of human dignity. As you say, the disregard of the individual's work. There is too much of considering of the individual in the mass.

MR. KING: That's right, Father. That's right. And of course that is complete injustice, because it doesn't give a person his due.

FATHER: Don't you believe that's a consideration, for instance,
 MEEHAN: in our general attitude in our educational system today, that we consider the children as a "mass?" We don't consider them as individuals, although there's some effort to say we'll classify them, but still they're in groups and not individuals and considered as children of God—and that there's a heaven. They're just little possible cogs in the future wheel that will work the works of the world.

MR. KING: Yes, and turned by someone else. But it seems to me that nowadays the concept of justice is something that people expect to be applied to them, to their

MR. KING CON'T: lives, to their families, by possibly the state, or by some organization to which they belong, and that precious and wonderful individuality of every human being begins to be submerged.

FATHER MEEHAN: I think that's undoubtedly true. Oh, we think that organization and regulation is so important today. We're always being shouted at to organize and get together in groups. Well, it's a good thing, of course, if organization is kept as a real organization and not just, well, what we call today "pressure groups," and to give somebody a job. We organize and we elect the officers, and we set them up and say, "Now, here, you go to work," and "you do the work; we'll supply the funds, and we'll supply the background of numbers and so the others drop back into just this group of numbers, and the few take over and do the work, and the first thing you know, people get used to that idea, and they lose their identity . . .

MR. KING: . . . and they also lose any conception of justice that they may owe other people. Sometimes it's rather difficult for the individual, sitting back in the "Bleacher seats," shall I say, and simply paying his dues and going along and not expressing his own convictions, moral or otherwise, to practice this particular Beatitude.

FATHER MEEHAN: Yes, it's difficult. But, of course, difficulty is the maker of character. And you believe that we can have social and economic justice in our time without tyranny or paternalism?

MR. KING: Oh, absolutely, Father. We can certainly have social and economic justice. I think, on one point, if we can ever again restore the original American, and of course the original Christian concept of the dignity and the importance of each individual, we're bound then to have a broad moral base of self-respect, of mutual respect and esteem, and out of that kind of root I believe you can have the flowering of social and economic justice. Assuming, of course, that there is enough enlightened and ready intelligence to apply that particular type of pattern to human life.

FATHER MEEHAN: Well, there I think you make a good point, too, that we have to have that enlightenment, we have to have

FATHER guidance, and I do believe we have it, don't you,
MEEHAN in our time. For instance, the Papal Encyclicals.
CON'T:

MR. KING: . . . Oh, definitely . . .

FATHER . . . how much they've offered to us . . .
MEEHAN:

MR. KING: . . . Very, very much . . .

FATHER . . . with a call to the paying of the just wage, for
MEEHAN: instance . . .

MR. KING: . . . Well, I like that idea in the Encyclicals. It is certainly a wonderful principle. It's a true principle that we absolutely *must* give to each man what is his due. It must be done.

FATHER And then don't you believe, too, that we should re-
MEEHAN: member this: that the Popes have called on us in the Encyclicals to remember that each one has to give his just day's work for that which he is paid.

MR. KING: Oh, yes. We can't go along and have a free ride or simply continue to eat pie in the sky, or . . .

FATHER . . . break the handles on the shovel . . .
MEEHAN:

MR. KING: . . . That's right, Father. That's right.

FATHER Well, I read in the paper not long ago of a labor
MEEHAN: leader who—I hope he's not like all of them—but there was one labor leader, anyway, who is quoted as saying, "If they pay you 95 cents an hour, do 45 cents worth of work." And he was reported to have said this at a big meeting.

MR. KING: Well, he was probably an exception to the general rule, but still that individual stands as a good example of what one should *not* do, if one is interested in justice.

FATHER Yes, that's the sort of thing that we have to watch,
MEEHAN: and the reason, don't you think, that we have to develop some real Christian leadership in our world today. It's not sufficient for our people to sit back and just say, "Well, we'll let those who are doing the criticizing bring us out of it, but we must be willing to face criticism too ourselves, and have the courage of our convictions, regardless of the little dogs that bark."

MR. KING: Yes, I would even say, Father, that we must hunger literally, and we must thirst literally after justice, or justice is going to vanish from human life.

FATHER MEEHAN: That's exactly it. And we have got to get that idea into our lives today. And certainly our Catholic people must get it into their lives that we have got to take this word of Our Lord literally; that there must be sufficient zeal in us that we're willing to sacrifice if we're going to be of any use in this matter of doing what Our Divine Lord stated here that we *must* do. After all, we can't beat the game when we play against Him . . .

MR. KING: . . . That's right, Father . . .

FATHER MEEHAN: . . . We have to pay this cost, this price, for accomplishing what He desired, and that means sacrifice, hunger and thirst, and a willingness to give up things, and to go empty if it's necessary . . .

SUMMARY

The ear attuned to the Divine voice of Christ can hear in the Beatitudes the very pulse of the Sacred Heart. There was first its sublime pressure, forcing into the mind of the listener the call to penance and spiritual action in union with God and then the drawing of the soul thereby into the stream of the Divine Life: poverty of spirit is entrance into the kingdom; meekness, patience of spirit brings possession of the land of promise; mourning, contrition for sin brings the comfort of eternal life; hunger and thirst after justice is the filling of the veins of the soul. Oh, the Divine paradox of the way of God! But the ears of those who heard Our Divine Lord on the Mount heard only with difficulty. They had been closed by the blandishments of the prosperity of the Roman Empire with its comfort of the security of political unity and a peace purchased by force. They had lived in the presence of man's success, which is always transitory, in accomplishing man's desire. They had been deceived by men who seemed to be as wise as God: the ancient tempter had prevailed—for his brief hour.

Once again in our time, man claims to have lifted himself up to the heights. Science is unlocking the secrets that have been hidden since the foundation of the world. There are no unknown lands, there are no uncharted seas. In the pride of his heart, man looks forward to the subduing of the last untamed forces; he is on the threshold of making his own weather, for is he not making

the clouds to rain and building so the earthquake cannot destroy his work? But all his success has not solved the greatest of all problems, man's inhumanity to man, for the most powerful discoveries are turned to the uses of destruction and the human heart can still hate.

Some who realize that this problem still remains are moved to complain against God and they chide the faithful as they were reproached long ago, "Where is your God?" How can war and misery and hate go on their way if there be a God such as you claim there is? They listen to the pride of their own hearts and put their own plans first because they have not listened to the Voice that has spoken from the Mount of Beatitude, they are unwilling to conform their wills to the will of the Creator. They forget that the price of redemption must be paid: that indeed, it has been paid, but that they must use the coin minted by the Eternal God if they are to buy it for themselves and their children. The voice of God could cry out to the generation, as to the children of Israel breaking the bondage of captivity of Egypt: the price of liberation, the price of redemption, the price of passage to the land of promise is the blood of life; I have given the blood of my Divine Son, His life, His humility, His obedience as the payment for your redemption. The voice of God might well say to this generation, use this, even as I commanded the children of Israel to use it that they might be spared from the visitation of the angel of death. He might well say, as indeed it seems that He has said, If you do not, if you deify yourselves, if you think you have made of yourselves men like gods, then you must act in a godlike way and you shall give the blood of your sons, for such is the price that justice demands if you are to break away from bondage. Man makes the attempt and war is the result—war that brings no peace but only increases the burden of bondage. The rulers of the earth offer vain substitutes and deceive even the decent godless so that they look for salvation for themselves and for the world in the inventions of men, in the discoveries of science, in the political arrangements of the United Nations.

So, forgetting the prescriptions of Our Blessed Lord, who was the Eternal God and the way, the truth, and the life, the people cherish vain dreams. In our time, we can repeat with the Psalmist (Ps. 11) "See how the kings of the earth stand in array, how its rulers make common course, against the Lord and against the King he has anointed." Unless we heed the voice from the Mount and go into the desert of the civilization made barren and parched by the new paganism, by the vain dreams of the peoples who have denied God, ever ready and willing to hunger and thirst after God's justice and to seek in Him our filling, we shall fail and die; but we can be sure that ever and always the hunger and thirst

after God's justice will bring us the filling of peace, strong and certain peace. Shall we doubt when we remember the first Pentecost, the coming of the Spirit of God with such power that the mortal ears of the witnesses thought of a great wind. They saw too, how the fire of God does not consume but enlightens and they were the receivers of light. They immediately went out and taught the truth concerning what David had foretold, "Mine to proclaim the Lord's edict; how He told me, Thou art my son; I have begotten thee this day. Ask thy will of me, and thou shalt have the nations for thy patrimony; the very ends of the world for thy domain." In our time, in the light of the Holy Spirit of God we may say, "Princess take warning . . . Tremble and serve the Lord, rejoicing in His presence, but with awe in your hearts . . . When the fires of his vengeance blazes out suddenly, happy are they who find their refuge in Him." We who have so much more than David, we who have so much more than those who gathered about Our Lord on the Mount must hear and understand, Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice for they shall be filled.

THE FIFTH BEATITUDE

Talk given on June 4, 1950

FATHER It is very pleasant, indeed, to have you with me again,
MEEHAN: Mr. King . . .

MR. KING: Thank you, Father . . .

FATHER . . . We shall go on with our discussion of the "cap-
MEEHAN: sules" which Our Lord prescribed for what we might
say were for the strengthening and curing of the
spiritual life of the world. Perhaps these listeners
thought as He spoke of justice that He was strength-
ening up these "capsules" in order they would be
more to their liking, and that He would speak for
the domination of Israel.

MR. KING: That's quite understandable, don't you think, Father?
People who have been bitterly subjected to domina-
tion, feel that justice should be for them.

FATHER Yes, I suppose their long history of being overrun by
MEEHAN: nations and taken into captivity—the last under
the heel of the Roman Empire—had brought them to
seek justice and to desire justice for what they felt
was their supreme task in the world—their Messianic
mission.

MR. KING: Do you think that possibly they mistook justice for,
say, divine vindictiveness?

FATHER Well, that's probably true, because the old law which
MEEHAN: had been promulgated by God for the protection of
these people had said, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth
for a tooth." Perhaps that led them to believe there
would be a day of vengeance; perhaps, divine ven-
geance, in their favor.

MR. KING: This is quite understandable for conquered people who
suffered under the Romans.

FATHER Yes. They certainly felt that if wrong had been done
MEEHAN: to the chosen people—would not their God of justice
require much of their conquerors. So this word
"justice" came up and was very welcome to them, but

FATHER MEEHAN: they didn't like, perhaps, the "hunger and thirst" part of it.
CON'T:

MR. KING: That's quite understandable. They probably felt they were hungry and thirsty, after which they conceived it to be the "justice" that their redeemer would give them.

FATHER MEEHAN: Yes. But the justice that was to come to them, of course, was another kind. It's natural for us to think of vindication. That's natural. We are seeking the supernatural life where Our Lord was emphasizing here the supernatural virtue, the supernatural change, which was to be brought into the lives of the people of the world. It's that supernatural change which we have to convince the world of today, because we have natural living. Some is good and some is bad. But it is the supernatural living that is the only safe way for man to pursue in this world if he is to live according to the purposes for which God made him. After Our Lord said, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall be filled," they must have been disappointed with the next capsule, which although seemingly weak, was nevertheless bitter. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

MR. KING: This must have been quite a shock to those who had expected some sort of political vindictiveness on the part of their Messiah.

FATHER MEEHAN: Yes. They certainly weren't expecting Him to speak of mercy because here their conquerors were the pagan people, and mercy is not a virtue that is found in paganism. On the conquest of the Empire, the Romans had shown no mercy. They failed to show mercy, even to one another. We know the stories of the great games which took place in Rome in the Circus Maximus, and we think of the Colosseum where mercy was unheard of and where cruelty was the rule. Isn't it true that cruelty is the rule of paganism?

MR. KING: Yes. Because cruelty is about the only way people who worship force can actually assert themselves, as did the gladiatorial combats. To the modern mind, this sort of thing is absolutely repulsive. Fellow

MR. KING: captives, fighting each other in the ring, usually with
CON'T: tremendous funds and steel bars, for the sake of providing not a spectacle, but for the simple sport of a public execution. Mercy was far away from their notion of life.

FATHER: Don't you think that we have something of that today?
MEEHAN: We don't have slaves and captives which we bring in from other places, but we have the slaves and captives that are held in bondage by, shall we say, that great God prophet—money. For us they come in and put on their gladiatorial combat and knock one another around in such fashion that sometimes it is fatal.

MR. KING: Sometimes it's true, Father, that there is no mercy in the life that is led in our own times, but I think it is because we still have a tremendous amount of paganism in our attitude toward life.

FATHER: Yes—we certainly do. And I think it is one of the
MEEHAN: difficulties that we have today, not only in the minds of our pagan people, but also makes for difficulty and confusion in the minds of our own people, the minds of Christian people, and of our Catholic people. Because of this mixture of paganism and Christianity in our own time and place, we have paganism and Christianity together; a strong paganism, and a Christianity—confused by its breakup into a vast number of sects. And so, there's confusion in the minds of people, and this sort of thing comes and takes its place again.

MR. KING: The Christians, normally speaking, can recognize probably best at Christmas time, at least it seems so to me, this wonderful thing which happened to human life. This was the fact that with the birth of Christ, a system that preached mercy, came into the world, raising mercy to the eminence of a genuine beatitude. It means also more than simply giving the other fellow a break.

FATHER: As you speak of Christmas, I am again tempted to be
MEEHAN: a little cynical on the subject. It reminds us of Christmas bells and cash register bells, too, doesn't it, at Christmas time? It certainly gives a great many

FATHER MEEHAN: merchants a break, saving some of them from bankruptcy, if that's what you mean.
CON'T:

MR. KING: Well, that's probably true, Father. Undoubtedly, it may be. But on the other hand, perhaps in our times we're faced with the same sort of conflict that may have struck the minds of the contemporaries of Christ when they heard Him say, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy," which was an altogether new concept to their thinking.

FATHER MEEHAN: Yes. And we need the renewal of that concept in our time because as in the spiritual sense, you say, it is giving every fellow a break. It's kindness. It's generosity. It's compassion. It leaves judgment to God.

MR. KING: Well, Father, if we could, as individuals, leave judgment to God and give other people a break, it would not be easy for any one of us to condemn someone at first sight and feel satisfied our judgment is correct. Likewise, the saying of charitable things about someone, when it causes no trouble certainly serves better the interest of both justice and Christianity.

FATHER MEEHAN: Yes. That is indeed true. In talking on these little things which we fail the worst, we can do the heroic things much better sometimes than we can the little things. So often you will find that one will, after hearing a discussion of a point such as this, do some little thing so very contrary, showing that it hasn't affected him. He will make judgment. It's here in this matter, as you say, of leaving judgment to God and of giving the other fellow a break. God is merciful, not because He is weak or because He's sentimental, but because He knows all things. Don't you think that our judgments are warped too often by the fact that we don't know everything and we judge, as you say, a man by his surface qualities and our first meeting with him? We make "snap" judgments, as we say.

MR. KING: That's true. I think everyone has probably experienced the emotion of regret when he may have been unkind toward someone, perhaps from not knowing the circumstances. Later, when he finds out the story, how much he may regret it . . .

FATHER . . . Yes. . .

MEEHAN:

MR. KING: . . . be ill tempered or mean judgment that they may pass on to others . . .

FATHER That's very true indeed. But the point here, I think,
MEEHAN: that Our Lord was making was that it should be a Christian habit and not something that is left for regret afterwards.

MR. KING: That's true, Father. If we could ever get the habit driven deep into every Christian heart and soul, I wonder how many social, domestic, national, and even international issues could be resolved.

FATHER What a world it would be if the prospects had had it!
MEEHAN: Wonderful to contemplate, isn't it, when you stop to think of it?

MR. KING: It is! And what a world it would be if this Beatitude had never been uttered.

FATHER If mercy were only the rule of the world . . . But
MEEHAN: how mercy has been twisted. By paganism in the old times and by materialism or the secularism of our time.

MR. KING: . . . and by the so-called "mercy killing," where individuals assume by petty arrogance, the right to commit such a crime as playing God and inflicting death upon some other human being.

FATHER I like that phrase, "by use of petty arrogance." It is
MEEHAN: indeed just that. And don't you believe that it is mixed with a great deal of selfishness, also?

MR. KING: I believe you are right, Father. I think that one of the strongest statements on that particular misuse of the term "mercy" in connection with killing, was used by the New York Medical Society recently when they spoke about how precious each person's life is, and how in the progress of medical science, there will be found remedies for illnesses now regarded as more or less incurable. To them, as I think to most thinking people, for an individual to put another to death, to take his life under any circumstance now passing as mercy killing, is nothing but arrogance. IT'S MAN TRYING TO PLAY GOD.

FATHER: Yes, and then again we have this unwillingness to carry a cross. After all, as you say, the medical society said that every life is precious. Isn't it true, also, that all suffering is precious? After all, the precious suffering of Our Blessed Lord is what brought us salvation. The precious suffering of each of us in this world is what enables us to share with Our Blessed Lord the carrying of the cross. And that's what He called on us to do. He said, "Take up the cross and follow me." And so, isn't it a precious opportunity, then, which we have, instead of a burden? These people who take it upon themselves to end the sufferings of another, saying that it's "mercy killing," are just desirous of relieving themselves of a burden that is a handicap to them or as we may say, "cramping their style."

MR. KING: That's probably correct, Father. At any rate, I think the accent should be on the *second* word of those two. Not *mercy* killing, but *mercy killing*.

FATHER: Yes, indeed. And then we have this other pagan business that's coming up now. We have it more and more, and that is "euthanasia." Do you remember the book of Robert Hugh Benson that came out in 1907 entitled "Lord of the World"? It created quite a stir and brought a great deal of criticism upon Benson's head. He was accused of all sorts of things by those of early faiths too. Back in 1907, Benson was using the word "euthanasia," and putting it in the civilization of one hundred years hence of which he wrote, as a regular thing. And now, here we are, face to face with it.

MR. KING: We certainly faced it when the Nazi style of thought was paramount. They felt it in their arrogance, which is only a modification of mercy killing, that they had a right to put the perfectly innocent people of the Jewish faith to death.

FATHER: Well, we don't have to go as far as the Nazis, even.
MEEHAN: We have a Euthanasia Society in the United States, and it has grown in influence, and with the word coming up more and more. You remember the old propaganda system of tapping away on something until it makes an impression, until people get to thinking it's a part of life. That's the scheme of propaganda. Here

FATHER we have euthanasia which is taken as something that's
MEEHAN a good idea by a great many people, especially people
CON'T: without any Christian persuasion.

MR. KING: Christian persuasion, at least, for respect for the
dignity of an individual human being. The individual,
after all, has a right to life that is strictly circum-
scribed, and nobody can take it away under the guise
of mercy killing or euthanasia, simply because they
feel it is the thing to be done. I think euthanasia is
one of the worst possible results of a completely pagan
civilization.

FATHER It has come in, this right of mercy killing. This would
MEEHAN: give the right to destroy another's life. Then euthan-
asia would also give the right for a person to take
his own life. It would simply make the killing of
oneself something all right in the eyes of the state.
Perhaps all these people, who are in favor of it would
say it would be surrounded by the proper laws, to make
it safe and sure, the same way with mercy killing.
But, would you allow someone to have the final say as
to when your life will end?

MR. KING: You mean if I had to depend on mere whim?

FATHER . . . If you had to depend on any human being. Which
MEEHAN: would you rather take? God, or human being, to say
when your life will end?

MR. KING: Well, the answer to that is obvious. I would rather
have God.

FATHER How silly these people are, then, who place the decis-
MEEHAN: ion in the hands of one human being, believing it is
a fine idea. How very silly it is!

MR. KING: Apart from that, even to those people, I suppose, we
owe some mercy. Probably there is a good reason
for our continuing to try to convert them back to
sanity or at least to some kind of moral balance. If
we need anything in our civilization, we need mercy,
and the practice of it!

FATHER Yes. But we need the right kind of mercy. . .
MEEHAN:

MR. KING: . . . That's right . . .

FATHER . . . we have this kind that's glorified in sentimental
MEEHAN: writing of which we have so much today impressed

FATHER in books—the sentimental kind of mercy which is non-sense.
MEEHAN
CON'T:

MR. KING: That's right, Father. It's a sort of meringue which has a sweet taste and is nothing but puffed up air.

FATHER Yes, exactly that. Then we see again the lack of
MEEHAN: mercy in man's judgment in war, where man turns against man. Here we have, then, the judgment of man coming out in war, with its hate and vengeance. But we have mercy that we look for in the courts, and we have legalism and sentimentality. But mercy is not emotional. It's a cool and gentle endeavor to act as God acts. As has been said by the Psalmists, "But thou hast mercy upon all because thou canst do all things and overlooketh the sins of men for the sake of repentance." Lack of mercy in our time is in intolerance, and prejudice, and bigotry.

MR. KING: Don't you think, Father, that mercy is simply treating other persons as you yourself would like to be treated by them?

FATHER Yes. It's partly the Golden Rule, but it's more than
MEEHAN: that. We can go beyond that, and we can treat someone better than we treat ourselves. That's really Christian mercy. But today we see where people say that they will treat us as we should be treated and make a judgment on ourselves as a result of their emotionalism, ignorance and bigotry, it becomes a rather dangerous thing. A look at the writers who today are writing against the Church and the Catholic people, placing them in a bad light by questioning their patriotism, motives, citizenship, and Americanism, should prove this.

MR. KING: I suppose even there, Father, charity and mercy should enter into our judgments. If people are going to do the wrong thing, they are not going to base their judgments on fact and knowledge, and on authentic information.

FATHER Yes. We have the obligation of tolerance. But we have
MEEHAN: to distinguish, since, tolerance is for persons, and not for wrong ideas. It is not for the false and the evil beliefs, but for persons. There is justice for the false

FATHER and the evil, and mercy for persons, or tolerance, but
 MEEHAN we have to do it in the Christian way, and understand
 CON'T: that persons are the important thing in the matter of
 tolerance. Too often there is confusion, in the matter
 that mercy is for the false idea, and tolerance is rec-
 ommended for that which is false in thought and pur-
 pose without distinguishing the person from the thing
 which is wrong!

MR. KING: The person is always subject to salvation and conver-
 sion by the Grace of God, but the idea has to be fought.

FATHER - That's it, exactly. And so we have to do it by bring-
 MEEHAN: ing ideas out in the open. For instance, the great
 American dictum, "Never bring religion and politics
 into a polite conversation," prevents us from having
 the open discussion that we should have for bringing
 out ideas and for understanding one another. It
 makes conversation thus chit chat, that we lose so
 much time and opportunity in the accomplishing of
 what we should accomplish in the way of understand-
 ing and tolerance.

MR. KING: That's right. Then, the perfection of any human
 character—this attribute of mercy—is probably the
 thing that makes a person a regular giant of the
 moral order.

FATHER Exactly.
 MEEHAN:

SUMMARY

Our Divine Lord did not leave the subject of mercy with just the brief words of the fifth Beatitude, "Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy." He returned to it again and again during His public ministry. When He saw that those who followed Him were hungry, He said, "I have compassion on the multitude" and He gave them bread. In the midst of His final agony on the Cross His mercy was a flaming light, brighter and far more lasting than the lightning flashes in the darkness that gathered and hung over Calvary. In His agony, He appealed to the mercy of His eternal Father in heaven, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." With Divine compassion He spoke to the penitent thief the most consoling words ever addressed to the ears of a single man, "This day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise." Dare any real Christian condemn a fellow Christian, even in the name of

patriotism, for such patriotism must surely be false. Yet, how poor human nature remains ever the same, swayed by emotion and deceived by Satan! Our Divine Lord was condemned by His own in the name of patriotism, for did not His ears hear the cry, "We will have no king but Caesar." But who loved this people more, Caesar or Christ? Who can doubt the answer to that question?

Let us, then, who have sought always to follow the way of Our Divine Master, who have sought always to be faithful citizens of our country, who have offered ourselves without reservation in time when it needed defense, wear with patience and a plea for mercy, the badge of opprobrium that some have tried to place upon us. We must, following the example of Our Blessed Lord, be tolerant of those who err, of those whose wilful blindness even, tries to force us into compromise. This does not mean, of course, that we should sit idly by and let deception prevail. We have the right and the duty to express the truth, to condemn error, to seek knowledge and speak wisdom, to hunger and thirst after justice that our children may be filled, that our land may know peace, that the world shall be freed from iniquity.

Who should be more merciful than we who have known the mercy of God brought to us in such generous measure by His Divine Son, Jesus Christ? In the first place, we have His word, "Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy." Shall we doubt it? We have His further word in the Sacred Scriptures, for St. Luke has recorded His words for us in his Gospel, "Be merciful, then, as your Father is merciful. Judge nobody, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and gifts will be yours; good measure, pressed down and shaken up and running over, will be poured into your lap; the measure you award to others is the measure that will be awarded to you." We must also plead for mercy for those who condemn us falsely, for in the spirit of Christian charity we must pray for those who speak and act in error, even against us who are of the household of the truth, for St. Luke also records that Our Lord spoke ominous words regarding such, "Can one blind man lead another? Will not both fall into the ditch together?" In all mercy, we may use the words of Our Lord in our own defense, for He foresaw what His followers would have to face and so He gave them a divine defense to quote, "How is it that thou canst see the speck of dust which is in thy brother's eye, and are not aware of the beam which is in thy own? By what right wilt thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me rid thy eye of that speck, when thou canst not see the beam that is in thy own eye? Thou hypocrite, take the beam out of thy own eye first, and so thou shalt have clear sight to rid thy brother's of the speck."

Yes, we should show mercy, for how great is the mercy shown to us? We have gone so often to the mercy seat, we have taken advantage so frequently of the work of forgiveness of Our Divine Lord in that Sacrament of mercy which He instituted when He breathed on the Apostles, the first priests of the New Law, and said to them, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain they are retained." In this institution, we and those who have gone before us in the faith, have taken advantage of the paradox of this strange commerce that is established in the way of Our Blessed Lord. It is mercy that has made it possible. Through the little wicket of the confessional, we pass to the Lord's clerk the baseness of our sins. He receives them in Christ's name and presents them with an appeal for mercy that is never denied, and in that name most merciful he returns pardon and grace. Who could have invented such a scheme of commerce save only the merciful Redeemer of the race, the God-Man Jesus Christ, who purchased mercy from the infinite and eternal God with the infinite and eternal price of Himself, the only begotten of the Father. In the Old Law God commanded mercy as His way, for He said, "When thou reapest the crops on this land, do not raze all to the level of the ground or pick up the scattered ears; do not hoard up the clusters or the grapes that have fallen. Leave something for poor men and wanderers to glean; remember what God you worship." The compassion of God has given us the true gleanings of His creation in Him who abides in the wheat and the grape of the Bread of Life, and we are strengthened to follow the way He opened when he said, "Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy."

THE SIXTH BEATITUDE

Talk given on June 11, 1950

FATHER MEEHAN: Mrs. Norris, it's very fine to have you here again for a discussion over the air on the Beatitudes in these "capsules" which Our Blessed Lord prescribed for the cure of the world, and which certainly we need today. As Our Divine Lord progressed in offering His prescriptions for beatitude, that is, for happiness, to His listeners, it must have become more and more clear to them that He was putting the root of happiness in the spirit, and indicating plainly that the material world could not offer the joy that was to be found in His kingdom.

MRS. NORRIS: Would you know, Father, in a very quiet way, I have found that out from many, many years through letters that come to me from women and men all over the union. And I find that whether they're humble, or rich, prominent, or obscure—if the faith is there, if some belief is there—there is happiness, and if it is not there, happiness cannot simply exist.

FATHER MEEHAN: Yes. That's indeed true. We find it true from the experience that we find as a result of those who live in accordance with the will of Our Blessed Lord. He didn't prescribe any revolution in government or violence against the resented rulers. He was prescribing an inner revolution. Isn't that what we need today? A change in attitude, purposes, and renewed understanding? A renewed understanding, I say, because we've lost so much of the things of God.

MRS. NORRIS: Well, that understanding is the solution, Father, for all these feverish, terrible troubles that are sweeping back and forth over the world. Just that! Just an understanding that this is not our true world. This isn't our true home, but we are living in a certain darkness here and have to fight for light which is beyond this particular phase of our understanding.

FATHER MEEHAN: Don't you think there's been a good deal of forgetfulness of that fact?

MRS. NORRIS: Oh, Father. Everywhere. Magazines, books, pictures, comic . . .

FATHER MEEHAN: . . . You know how we have talked along this line from the very beginning of the discussion of the Beatitudes. But yet I had a letter last week from a gentleman who took me to task and asked me if I thought the people of today were living according to the Beatitudes. I certainly must say "no." If I thought so, I'd talk about something else here. I think this is a need, and that's why we bring it out. Certainly we have that need for a renewed understanding of the Beatitudes and the Sermon on the Mount. The whole thing all the way through. Not only the Sermon on the Mount that Christ preached, but also the Sermon on Calvary where Christ died.

MRS. NORRIS: . . . lived, and died . . .

FATHER MEEHAN: . . . that's the whole point. And so, because of man's nature, we need these renewals. Man must recognize the fact that he must seek God in faith, hope, and charity, and that always there is a basic desire in man to know God directly. We always have it. I think it's a leftover of the days before the fall of our first parents. We wish to know God directly, or as we say, to see Him. The sight is the keenest of the senses. So the Sixth Beatitude must have been of the greatest of force for those who heard it first, for it probed, on the one hand, deep into man's life, and on the other, held this greatest of promises, "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God." Now, what sort of things occur to you as being the things that soil the heart, that cloud over man's love for God and his neighbors?

MRS. NORRIS: Well, Father, take a small child. A child need only be three or four years old, when if he does something that puts him out of his mother's good graces, his little heart is heavy and troubled. He cannot, for the time being, see others. He loses mother. In the same sense, it applies to God. We cannot see Him, but yet habitually go on doing the things that place a veil between us and Him.

MEEHAN: And don't you believe that the greatest veil, or
FATHER obstacle, between us in our seeing of God, is ourselves

FATHER MEEHAN : . . . from the worship of self and the satisfying of self which is, shall we say the religion of our time?
CON'T:

MRS. NORRIS: It is. It really is. This particular Beatitude means a good deal to me because I have come to feel that one thing that we, believing women, must do—I speak perhaps especially of Catholic women—is clean up this indecency. But there are thousands of others who know that this “modern indecency,” this indecency in books, in schools, and even in these frightful “beauty” contests, in which girls, almost undressed, parade among newspaper men, while their charms and qualities are valued as though they were young horses, or pedigreed dogs. It seems to me we could stop that if we let the movie people know that we are not going to theaters where those exhibitions are held.

FATHER MEEHAN: Yes. We have more than the movies. The chambers of commerce . . .

MRS. NORRIS: . . . and the magazines . . .

FATHER MEEHAN: . . . All of these different organizations are putting these contests on, trying to get publicity for the local glories of the country, whether it be a particular town, county, or state. A stupid method for publicity, isn't it?

MRS. NORRIS: Don't you think there could be a generation of mothers and fathers, perhaps a hundred years from now, who would look and find it hard to believe that we allowed this type of exhibitionism and immodesty to flourish?

FATHER MEEHAN: Well, I hope and pray to God that there may be a generation that will look back, and perhaps there will. I remember that before the first World War, there was a very interesting book by the Comptroller of the City of New York, a man named Kohler, who called his book, “Two and Two Make Four.” Unfortunately, I think it's out of print now, it being a very splendid piece of work. In it he took up the question of our American educational system, some of its teachings and some of its weaknesses. I remember one statement—and this was back about 1911 or '12 that the book came out—that the teaching of eugenics

MEEHAN —it was called in those days—for fifty years in our
FATHER public schools would leave the Catholics in possession
CON'T: of Christianity. A hundred years of teaching it
would leave them in possession of the earth. Now,
perhaps, that gives that generation a hundred years
from now . . .

MRS. Well, that might be. But Father, it seems to be
NORRIS: strange that men and women and fine educators who
wouldn't attempt to teach a child of five anything
about the fourth dimension, will take the adult sub-
jects, especially subjects relating to marriage, to sex,
and attempt to interest little unformed minds in things
that they are completely unable to grasp.

FATHER Yes. That's well put. They don't teach them about
MEEHAN: the fourth dimension, but they teach them about the
fourth appetite.

MRS. Oh, don't say . . .
NORRIS:

FATHER . . . now we have our four appetites. The basic
MEEHAN: appetites were given to us by Almighty God. They
were all given to us for good and for fruitfulness.
We have the appetite for food, for the nourishment
of the body. We have the appetite for drink, for the
refreshment of our body, and we have the appetite
for sleep and rest, for the renewal of our body. And
we have the sex appetite for the renewal and continua-
tion of life. Now, all of these are good. And yet
they can be abused, and they are. We can over eat
and become gluttons. We can overdrink and become
alcoholics. We can over-rest and become just lazy
loafers. And when the sex appetite is overindulged
and overfed, it becomes a master, and cleanness of
heart is gone. God is blotted out. It becomes a god
worse than an idol or plague.

MRS. In their adolescence they burn out the feelings and
NORRIS: the natural appetites that ought to wait for a moderate
development. That's why marriages go on the rocks,
and why so many thousands of children grow up with-
out parents. It's simply because sex has been abused
and overused and awakened, much too soon, and
through the wrong channels. You would want to be
sure that it was a very carefully selected teacher
that told your child anything . . .

FATHER . . . well, there's no teacher like parents . . .

MEEHAN:

MRS. . . . No! And parents who have a sense of faith and
NORRIS: moderation, and who know that "Blessed are the
clean of heart."

FATHER Well, doesn't this whole problem come back to just
MEEHAN: one thing—to the banishing of teaching of religion
and morals from our schools and from the lives of
the young? Now, so many children today don't have
any. They don't even have Sunday School or the
"released time" which is utterly inadequate. One
hour a week is perfectly inadequate to balance off
or counteract what they're hearing all of the rest of
the week, and what they are having given to them
and taught to them for five days a week in school.
It is here I think, our educators, perhaps some of them
well meaning, and I think there are others who have
a vicious purpose, promote this sort of thing. They
would like to see the breakdown of American life so
something else could be substituted. But they are
seeing there is terrific and alarming promiscuity
among our young people today. Since religion and
morals have been banished, they don't have that as a
means to combat it in the educational process, so
they're looking for some substitute, with the only
apparent substitute they have been able to find so far,
sex education.

MRS. . . . this, of course, puts religious and home education
NORRIS: out. I believe with you that some educators take a
deep satisfaction in venting a sort of restless dis-
content of their own in undermining what the children
might be taught at home. By this, they do a thing
that has always been punishable in *all* states and
countries and *all* civilizations. It's simply high treason
. . . high treason to their parents and high treason
to God . . .

FATHER . . . Yes . . .

MEEHAN:

MRS. . . . The result is they go on further and further.
NORRIS: Books, movies, and magazines are now passing all
bounds, all control.

FATHER Well, our education of today goes back to just what
MEEHAN: Our Lord said was the pagan education of His time.

FATHER MEEHAN CON'T: They used to say, to quote His words, "What shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and wherewith shall we be clothed?" Today we have another thing which you speak of as "beauty contests." It reminds me how many schools, even our own schools, are having these "style shows," to raise funds. Constantly we see this parade. Of course, it's a means that is much easier and causes less effort than it would be to put on a good amateur theatrical or something of that kind. So, children and the parents are let out easy in the responsibilities we leave, by putting on this style parade since people are so style conscious, believing they've got to be pretty.

MRS. NORRIS: . . . and what is, would be, amusing, if it wasn't pretty sinister, is that the mother who scrupulously raises her children in physical cleanliness of their teeth and their eyes—suffers if a little girl of nine has put on glasses, practically collapsing with grief. "She won't be attractive. People won't like her. She won't be successful." With all of that worry, about their appearance—and of course little children now,—Father, I don't know whether your world wide experience includes a knowledge of what the word "permanent" means, but it now means an artificial hairdo that . . .

FATHER MEEHAN: . . . Well, of course, how could I miss that? . . .

MRS. NORRIS: . . . that costs anything between seven and twenty-five dollars . . .

FATHER MEEHAN: . . . Really . . .

MRS. NORRIS: . . . But there are children in our town of four years old who have their little "permanents" every six months so that they're physical beauties. Yet those children already read comics, listen to programs, and use words which mark them for life as blind to the actual sight of God by their own parents.

FATHER MEEHAN: Well, you speak of this pattern of "permanents." Now, just to let you know how . . .

MRS. NORRIS: How sophisticated you are . . .

FATHER . . . as a result of experience, and very sad experience
 MEEHAN: sometimes, I remember, in a large parish in which I once served. It was in the very depth of the depression, and when it came time for First Communion and Confirmation, we used to dress most of the children in the classes. We'd send out the women of the parish to the little girls, who dressed the girls from the skin out for that occasion to make it something important in their lives, in that material way so effective in our material time. I remember one family that was very poor. They had scarcely any furniture

FATHER in the house and no rugs on the floor. Yet we dressed
 MEEHAN: the child, and just before Confirmation, I passed a
 CONT. little "beauty parlor," so-called, and here was this child in there getting a "permanent." Now, that . . .

MRS. . . . they could afford that . . .
 NORRIS:

FATHER . . . had to be done, but they couldn't buy clothes.
 MEEHAN: And so that's simply the indication . . .

MRS. . . . but if the cleanness of those little souls and the
 NORRIS: style of those little hearts could be handled with half the anxiety that the mothers show in other lines, we'd have a very different generation of children. We can't expect that everything will turn towards the spiritual, Father, but to put that first would seem to me—to be the real object of any mother who wants her child as she or he grows to see God, to be pure of heart, and to see God through His world.

FATHER Yes. And how much this would correct all the diffi-
 MEEHAN: culties that we have. We have the matter, for instance, of the promiscuity of divorce, which certainly would be corrected by the understanding of the cleanness of heart. And we see all of these effects of fleshy living in history. Why can't we learn our lesson from it? Of course, there are some who think that cleaning the heart means "cleaning all religion out" . . . But that leaves nothing there, and they go on their own standards. You hear that expression, "Oh, it really makes no difference now." We hear it over the radio. We see it in the press, and all that sort of thing, that we can all go along together because we're good Americans and religion doesn't make a bit of differ-

FATHER
MEEHAN
CON'T:

ence. I think we should keep in mind that it's more than sex that's involved in what Our Lord said in cleanness of heart. The opposite of it we may say as meanness of heart. We certainly have much of that in the world today in the suspiciousness and questioning of motives, of hate, prejudice, and bigotry. There is religious bigotry and racial bigotry, racial discrimination. Those things are not found in the clean of heart. Now, all of these hide the truth, and therefore, it follows that they hide God.

MRS.
NORRIS:

And, of course, the attitudes toward the Church and its teaching are twisted and warped, which means you can't love your neighbor, and that clouds, of course, love of God. So to be really pure of heart means to live as a child—a good child.

FATHER
MEEHAN:

Yes, a good child. Of course, children are naturally good to somebody who gives to a child what it must have to think with, to live by, standards, ideas, ideals and purposes. Children are born blank, and I think that's something that is forgotten today. That what is put in will make them clean, or will soil them. It is then what they receive from teaching, from home example, and from their associates, that is so very important.

MRS.
NORRIS:

And they want it. Children instinctively want what's good.

FATHER
MEEHAN:

Yes. And they, as we ourselves, even for grownup children, can't be really happy if mean of heart. It's impossible because it's not in the ways of God.

SUMMARY

The blind man who besought Our Lord asked for one favor, "Lord that I may see." What happiness, what beatitude was his when the Son of God had compassion on him and restored his sight, for the first light that came to him was the sight of God in His creation. He first looked up to behold Jesus Christ, the second person of the Most Blessed Trinity, the Word made Flesh, the Way, the Truth, and the Life! No matter what burden may weigh upon the heart of man, no matter what sin may darken the soul of man, no matter how far one may stray from the will of the Creator, this remains as the one basic desire of every human heart—to see, to see perfection, to see God. No distraction, no

blandishment of the false and the passing pleasure of life can really turn the human soul, made in the image and likeness of God, aside from the real desire of the heart which is to see, to see cleanly, to see perfectly, to see without doubt, without the negation of evil; to see in the fulness of light; to see, that is to know the answer to the age old question of man, groping in the shadows of his own pride and disobedience, why am I conscious, why am I here, whither am I going, why am I burdened on the way, where is the cause of my being, toward what end do I move? Forever in the heart of man there is desire, there is thirst for beatitude. No sin, no crime, no hate can obscure the desire in every human heart to see, to realize the goal of desire. The perversion of Sin in all its forms may twist and darken, but in the end God will not be mocked, for through it all man desires to see.

In our time, there is a great blindness, a great darkness over the world, even as in the time of Our Blessed Lord on earth. Men will not see because they have learned to hate, to make war, to question the motives of their neighbors, to break the bond of unity that Christ desired among those who would believe in Him. Well might Our Divine Lord say again as He looks down upon our cities, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered together thy children as the hen doth gather her chickens under her wings and thou wouldst not!" In our time, as so often in the past, the blinded heart asks for a sign, just as St. Mark tells us that "the Pharisees came forth and began to question with him, asking him a sign from heaven, tempting him. And sighing deeply in spirit, he saith: Why doth this generation seek a sign? Amen I say to you, a sign shall not be given to this generation."

In our time, as in the time of Christ, there was light for men to see if they would look up, but because men were not clean of heart then, as now, so they do not see. There are those who have sullied their hearts with lust and greed. Their god is money. They love what money will buy for the satisfaction of their bodily desires. They may love money for the power it will bring them to lord it over their fellow men. They may love the honor and salutations that it brings them in the market place—or even from their philanthropies. There are those who are blinded by the knowledge that they can make great profit from pandering to the baser appetites of human nature in its fallen state, and they maintain a certain air of respectability by labeling their efforts as entertainment, as literature, as recreation and relief from the cares of business, as sport, yes, even as truth, though it be false as the word of Satan.

Worse than these are the successors of the Pharisees, the

successors of Saul of Tarsus before his conversion. The light of Christ abides in His Church, His Mystical Body, for that was His will. It is easier to understand the sins of weakness committed by men than it is to understand those that go out in self-righteousness, self-convinced that they have a mandate to set things right, even when their method is to attempt to destroy that which Christ established and which has been kept in wisdom and truth by the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit. Over all in the time of Our Lord, there was the great hulking paganism of the Roman Empire that sought to crush the light in the Chosen People: over all in our time, there is the great hulking paganism of atheistic communism, of materialism and secularism, of hate and greed, but the Sacred Heart of Our Blessed Lord must be more wounded by the evil that He sees in the house of those who would call Him friend. There are those who divide and thus seek to conquer. There are those who, like Saul of Tarsus, who thought himself a champion of God, set out to persecute their neighbors who have kept faith with Christ and their country. Let us pray that these shall learn, perhaps even as Saul learned in the blaze of a light so great that it blinded him for a time, that Christ abides in the unity of His Church and not in a divided house. Charity will bid us echo the prayer of Christ that all may be one, that these who are zealous as was Saul, will like him, be transformed into Pauls, so that we may overcome the giant evils that hover over Christendom in our time. If men will look up from the petty, from self, from prejudice and bigotry and free their hearts from the blinding film of misunderstanding and hate, then shall the world hope, for there will come a great light and out of the midst of it a voice that shall say, "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God."

THE SEVENTH BEATITUDE

Talk given June 18, 1950

FATHER Mr. King, I'm very glad to have you again today, so
MEEHAN: that we can discuss the Seventh Beatitude, or another
one of these "capsules," as we've been saying, which
Our Blessed Lord prescribed for the good of mankind,
and which we certainly need in our time. I think
this Beatitude is particularly important, because in
the heart of every man, there is a desire for peace.
Don't you believe that's true?

MR. KING: It's certainly true today, Father, more than possibly
at any time within the last several years.

FATHER Yes. And in the time of Our Divine Lord there was
MEEHAN: also a desire for peace, but I think today we have a
greater desire because there is greater fear, and
behind it lies this fear of what is to come. But also
there is some resistance to peace because there are
many who have the false notion that peace is just
doing nothing?

MR. KING: That's true, Father. I'm afraid also that some people
seem to feel that absence of conflict equals peace.

FATHER Yes. But we must have some conflict. There's con-
MEEHAN: stant conflict in the support of our very physical life,
but that is a different matter because the conflict
that we have and which can be peaceful is the con-
flict that comes in action, in legitimate action, which,
St. Augustine says is, "the tranquility of order."

MR. KING: That's a beautiful expression, Father . . .

FATHER . . . "ordered conflict," we might call it . . .
MEEHAN:

MR. KING: . . . Yes. Conflict to achieve certain ends and if pos-
sible defeat other ends. Peace, for example, is not idle-
ness. Do you think it is, Father?

FATHER No. Of course not. It's activity. But it's activity
MEEHAN: which is ordered, as St. Augustine says. And we must
remember that God is action—"Actus Purus," as

FATHER MEEHAN CON'T: we learned in philosophy. And certainly the peace of God will not mean idleness at all. He's given us the earth for our inheritance—a creation—and so that means that there is activity, too. He was active in creating it and giving it to us.

MR. KING: Yes, Father. The misuse, I think, though, of that activity on the part of some people, some misguided, some possibly vicious, arises from their own disorder, their own personal disorder, and having such people in positions of power over others may be responsible for the lack of peace in our own times. A lack, in other words, of order, whether it's tranquility of order of whatever you might call it.

FATHER MEEHAN: Yes. The turmoil comes from the kind of activity that many people who are trying to run the world today foist upon us, but we also must remember that this is a part of our nature, perhaps because . . . of the difficulty in the beginning. It was a difficulty of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Paradise. And the misuse of will—is basic. That's what we have to guard against. Here Our Lord in this Beatitude again returns to that theme that He's stressing, I believe, all through the beginning of his teaching, that we are to participate. We're to be drawn back into the activity of God, into the tranquility of order which is in God, and not merely to be receivers and partakers of the beneficence of God, just to live by the providence of God, but, we're to cooperate. We're to move, to act, and to will with God. Will again. So we're not just to remain lazy and loathful and challenge the Creator to act. We, too, must act with the Divine Will, and so the Divine Physician gives us His strengthening capsule of tonic, we may call this, a tonic and a challenge, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."

MR. KING: That's a Beatitude, Father, that should be written in flaming letters on every possible place where the people of 1950 could see them . . .

FATHER MEEHAN: . . . with a line under "makers" . . .

MR. KING: . . . Active . . . Line under "makers." It's interesting, isn't it, how this Beatitude seems to take all of the

MR. KING: others and compress them into a focal point. The
 CONT: Beatitude, for instance, about the merciful; the Beat-
 itude about justice; all of these things come into play
 right here, "Blessed are the peacemakers . . ."

FATHER: . . . for all of these are the works of justice, and of
 MEEHAN: mercy, and now these things bring peace. That's
 what we're seeking when Our Lord was calling, then,
 for an activity on our part that would make possible
 the peace which is the will of God. Now, don't you
 think the question comes often—and you hear it;
 probably I do too, that, "Oh, yes, but what can we
 little people do?" And there's always that little hope-
 less note that "we're just little people."

MR. KING: Well, I think that's very interesting, Father—the
 complaint of the little people. In the first place, it
 seems to me that a lot of the concern, and of the
 anxiety, about achieving peace in our time, is a result
 of the lack of peace in our own minds and our own
 souls. In other words, we are so easily, it seems to
 me, driven into one side or the other side of an angry
 controversy. We can become confused. We can in-
 dultge our prejudices. And in all of these things we
 are definitely not acting as peacemakers. If you
 simply multiply, or increase, or expand and intensify
 the confusion in our own lives—the confusion of the
 objects that we're living for—it seems to me that
 they're bound to reflect themselves in a lack of peace
 and in a lack of what you call "order," not only in
 our personal lives, but also probably in our political
 lives and in international affairs.

FATHER: Well, it certainly is very true in our personal life. I
 MEEHAN: think you've said a great deal there, Mr. King, and
 that strikes home because, after all, it's our personal
 life and personal relationships of the little people that
 stir up and muddy the waters which flow out into
 the great stream of life. There we have a difficulty,
 and it's our own pride, it being often our own sensi-
 tiveness, or hypersensitiveness. You hear people com-
 plain because their toes have been tromped on, but
 they never say a word about the toes that they them-
 selves step on.

MR. KING: That's very true, Father. I'm thinking here now of

MR. KING
CON'T: the people, let's say, in an ordinary family, where you're bound to have a difference of opinion once in a while, and where, as we know there are, let's say, family feuds. Now, sometimes the very people who will refuse to try to compose their differences are the ones who are crying out loudest for our diplomats or someone else to establish peace in the world when these very people don't even try to establish peace in their own families and probably don't even try to establish peace in their own soul.

FATHER
MEEHAN: Yes. Of course, you will find no peace in a family—
if there is no peace in the individual souls which compose it. This is I think the great difficulty today. So many families just live for what they can do with Papa's salary. They just want to spend money to have a good time, as they call it, and to dissipate in one way or another. Then there are also other irritations that people allow to grow up with one another in the family. It seems to me that there are so very many who forget after the romance, and the first rosy glow of the honeymoon period is over, that the family life has to be put on a sane and solid basis. When they have to get down to something like that, how often they become irritable with each other, usually passing so much of that irritability to their children.

MR. KING: Yes. Of course, I had to smile when you mentioned the passing of the honeymoon stage, Father, because when that particular stage is over, it seems to me, from observation again—that the tremendous drive to compete with everyone else on every level emerges. That desire particularly reflects on family living being responsible for a great deal of our turmoil and our unrest. If somebody is driving a moderate priced car, and his friend goes by in a high priced car, immediately his peace of mind is shattered until he's satisfied his desire to purchase such a car, since "he wants to give everything to his children." That's a kind of a laudable ambition, but I think it's not conducive to the enjoyment of what he has—the enjoyment of his family, the enjoyment of working for something without going completely to the extremity of wishing he had it or wanting it at any cost or any hazard.

FATHER MEEHAN: Well, I think this "family" business is really a problem. You say these conflicts come in the family, that children take them out to school, where perhaps they're spread into the faculty and their reactions. So it goes on up the line. Now, of course, the children are growing up. I remembered a friend of mine who was a teacher in a public school, who told me one day that he told the children that he was going to a PTA meeting that evening. And he asked them, "Have you any message you'd like me to take to your parents so they'll know your ideas on anything you would like to get over?" Well, the children looked at him in amazement for a moment. Finally one boy put up his hand and he said, "Tell them to keep their fights till we get out of the house." . . . I think there's a good deal to that. If parents would be better peacemakers in the home, perhaps there would be a fostering of peace in the world. And when they go on it's carried on too . . . this sort of thing goes out from the home into the business world, where there's conflict and turmoil.

MR. KING: . . . Certainly, Father. The "ulcer" is the proof of that, isn't it—the badge of our civilization. The great triumph of successful competition seems to be an ulcer.

FATHER MEEHAN: Yes. Although they tell us that the people who suffer from ulcers are superior people, to the others who don't get them, it is not much consolation. But, of course, the strife of competition, the greed for money, and the seeking for luxury, brings so much strife, that it is a destroyer of peace. Of course, we go into the larger aspects of it; peace in the social order.

MR. KING: Well, we know that theory of competition and of wanting everything possible, disregards the peace and the enjoyment of the things that every man can enjoy. Sometimes it seems to me it is responsible to a great extent for the "give me, give me" attitude that characterizes a lot of our political thinking and a lot of our political pressures today.

FATHER MEEHAN: Of course, if greed is to be the basis of so much of our difficulty, and destroy so much peace . . . why in the social order do we have racial prejudice? Isn't it because people want something for themselves, believing

FATHER other people are not worthy of it, since they want to
MEEHAN keep it themselves?
CON'T:

MR. KING: That's very often true, Father.

FATHER We have class distinctions. Why do people create
MEEHAN: classes? Because, they think they're superior to
 somebody else. It's a species of greed and selfishness
 again—in setting oneself up over another.

MR. KING: Well, it's certainly fantastic thinking, if that's what
 you wish to call it. But the interesting point about
 this Beatitude to me is that the peacemakers would
 be called blessed, and yet how few there are who are
 willing to take on that role personally. It's easy for
 you or for me or anyone else to nurse our own little
 prejudices and to keep our own particular faults that
 promote anything but order, and at the same time
 look to the diplomats or the United Nations or to some-
 one else to restore peace. You know, I'm afraid,
 Father, that some people feel that peace at any price
 is a goal worth striving for. In other words, at the
 beginning you mentioned the fact that peace calls for
 activity. Now there are times when the values of
 peace have to be fought for.

FATHER But don't you think there are too many people who
MEEHAN: like peace at any price, at any price except their own
 effort and their own sacrifice . . .

MR. KING: . . . that's right . . .

FATHER . . . and that's the difficulty? . . .
MEEHAN:

MR. KING: Well, that's it. On our national scale, or particularly,
 let us say, on a Christian scale, our values that we
 cherish most are in danger. Peace at any cost amounts
 to surrender. It amounts to an abdication.

FATHER . . . just that . . .
MEEHAN:

MR. KING: I wonder just how that fits in with the Beatitudes
 here.

FATHER Well, peace at any price, of course, as you say, is an
MEEHAN: abdication. It's giving up of will to someone else, and
 it's not for the good of the majority. It's simply

FATHER
MEEHAN
CON'T:

telling somebody to do what he thinks is good and to do it in the way he thinks best. But, how many are there in the political world, and in the social and economic activities, of our time, who are really interested in the greatest good for the greatest number? Do you think there is much real sincere interest on the part of a good many world leaders today?

MR. KING: Yes, Father. I'm rather glad that you said that, because I often wonder if those persons are accused of, let us say, rather cynical action . . . are not actually reflecting what, you might call, "pressure groups" want them to do. In other words, I often feel that some persons who are leaders and who are too responsive to pressure groups, particularly with respect to peace, in respect to abandoning positions that they should hold, often do that because of the fact that many, many other people besides that individual are responsible for the decision. In other words, the pressure that is on a person may sometimes make him collapse. It's deplorable and it's regrettable, and on a large enough scale it could be tragic.

FATHER
MEEHAN:

Well, it is tragic. We're having tragedy enough from it now, but we have it all the way through. Then again, it's the little people who support this sort of thing by their very weakness and wanting to pass off the work of peace to someone else and to fall for the propaganda that is passed out to them. Then, of course, the great leaders, and such things as the United Nations—that sort of thing they talk about being diplomacy—but is it diplomacy? It's just seeking for a balance of power. Then, the little people who have their affection for power themselves allow such things as the atom bomb to threaten the world and all that, because they have their own little atom bombs in the way of their automobiles, and their planes, and their guns, and they play around with these, with everyone a little bit par-mad and speed-mad.

MR. KING: . . . I think you're quite right, Father, and particularly I'm impressed with this fact, that we can't look to someone else—to a diplomat, to a leader, or to a group—to bring peace to the world, if the average person, the ordinary people like you and me, are unwilling

MR. KING to try at least to be peacemakers to the best of our
CON'T: ability in our own small circle, whether it's the family,
 or the fellow next door.

FATHER . . . in our parish . . .
MEEHAN:

MR. KING: . . . that's right. Whatever it may be, on whatever
level, each one of us is capable of being a peacemaker.
And I think that it's a poor excuse to look from the
errors and the mistakes of our own and failures of
ourselves in this regard and to wonder why others
in a position of higher authority don't establish peace
when we're unwilling to do our part of it.

FATHER Well, of course, the difficulty is that there're too many
MEEHAN: who won't take the way of peace. It's been lost. There
are so many who don't know of it today. Ignorance is
one of the great barriers to peace. We're always
talking about increasing education, and we have
UNESCO, and all these different things. We're ad-
vancing science, as we say, and we're building schools,
but still there is nothing being done particularly in
them about teaching the way to peace and indicating
what it is. People have to have something tangible,
something that they can get a hold of. And here we
have it in the world, and it is neglected. We have the
voice of Christ, the Prince of Peace, speaking to us
today. That voice has been speaking to us all through
the ages. Today we hear it in the person of His
vicar, Pope Pius XII, and here is an example, isn't
it—Pius XII, who is such a power in the world, and
yet without armies, or navies, or planes, or guns, or
atom bombs.

MR. KING: Yes. It reminds you of that insolent remark of Mr.
Stalin, "How many divisions does the Pope have?"

FATHER Well, he has plenty of them, but they're not the kind
MEEHAN: that Mr. Stalin is developing . . .

MR. KING: That's right. But they are the kind, Father, that can
begin now to launch that crusade for peace, not the
peace of surrender, but for peace . . .

FATHER . . . the peace that the angels sang on the first Christ-
MEEHAN: mas night—peace that comes to men who are God's
 friends.

MR. KING: That's right, Father.

SUMMARY

The promise of Our Blessed Lord of beatitude, of happiness, was not to those who desired peace, not to those who merely talked of peace, not to those who longed for peace, but to the *peacemakers*. In the nature of man, there is no peace; in the ways of man there is no peace, because peace was lost in the Garden of Eden when man made his choice between God and self, between the spiritual order, the perfect order of God's will, and the strife that was engendered by the choosing of the knowledge of good and evil, by the acceptance on the part of man of the penalty of which he was forewarned by God, that his freedom could set at odds matter and spirit, body and soul. Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, came into this world to restore the way of peace. He came to make it possible for man to set himself once again in the path of peace. There can be no peace when there are two worlds, two conflicting wills, and because of the failure of man, the fall of man as we term it in theology, peace was lost. Disorder was the fruit of conflict, disorder remains as the fruit of conflict. In Christ, and in Him alone is the conflict stilled, in Him alone is there peace, because the Son of God, the Second person of the Most Blessed Trinity by becoming man, made Himself the Pontifex, the Bridge, the Way for restoration of union between the Creator and creature. He brought grace once more into the life of the human race, that grace, that stream of divine life, which had nourished man before his rebellion when he knew peace, the tranquillity of order that Adam knew in the beginning.

Our Blessed Lord did not come into the world to force man to take His way, to take His truth, to take His life. His eternal Father had given the gift of free will and He never recalls His gifts. So too, He gave His Divine Son, and though there are those who do not accept Him, nevertheless He remains for those who will. In our time, then, the essence of conflict, or strife, of the loss of peace in the world lies in the acceptance or rejection of Christ. This is true in all times, and we can look at history and see how the cause of peace has been fostered or defeated. There was a tension in Israel in the time of Our Lord because there were two worlds at odds, God's world, God's action is his chosen people and the pagan world of the Roman Empire which moved and lived and grew by force, by the will of man, and it demonstrated its final rebellion by defying the emperors. After the purging of the world, there came into being that unity among the civilized nations that we call Christendom. It was fruitful in producing great minds, great literature, great art.

In the 16th century, the unity of Christendom was broken, and again there came conflict and strife. All peace was lost, first in the so-called religious wars, and then in the political wars that were spawned in the divisive deception that Christ foretold when He said that the time would come when men would deceive and cry out, "Lo, here is Christ, or there!" He had also said, "Go ye not out!" but men did go out. They have gone out until we face another division which divides our very civilization, that divides the very roots of life, for now it is not only the deception of "Lo, here is Christ, or there," but the very denial of Christ, the denial of God. In this, there is no hope for peace. The remedies that men offer for the restoration of peace are vain apart from Christ, apart from unity in Christ, the Divine Source of peace.

Where shall we place the blame for the war and strife that characterize our time, where shall we place the blame for the loss of peace? It is human nature to seek a scape-goat, but if we are honest and willing to accept truth, bitter though it be, we must place the burden of failure on ourselves. We have not been peacemakers because we have lost poverty of spirit, meakness before God, contrition and a sense of sin, we have been too soft to hunger and thirst after justice, we have not shown mercy, we have let uncleanness of heart bring us to compromise. We must place the blame on those who promote dissension between White and Negro, between Christian and Jew. We must blame those who foster the suspicion and misunderstanding that makes for warring sects among those who claim Christ as their Lord. We who are Catholics have a right indeed, to point an accusing finger at those who question our loyalty, who would reduce us to second class citizens, who would deny our children privileges of public service given to the rest. But we who are Catholics, who are nearing the word of God spoken to us by the successors of the Apostles, we who are receiving the Bread of Life in Holy Communion have the greatest responsibility. We are the ones who must be peacemakers, because we have been ordained in the sacrament of Confirmation to be soldiers of Christ, defenders and extenders of the kingdom of God. In our time, this demands much of us, but with the help of the grace given us so abundantly in the Sacraments, in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, as the fruit of prayer and good works, we can be peacemakers. Our home life, our parish life, our work, our recreation must center in Christ for it must ever be our preoccupation that peace is only in Him. His Divine voice has said it, **BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS FOR THEY SHALL BE CALLED THE CHILDREN OF GOD.**

THE EIGHTH BEATITUDE

Talk given June 25, 1950

The traditional eight Beatitudes are indeed like the capsules in more ways than one. They add to or sum up these Beatitudes. To consider the eighth—to sum up what we've considered, instead of having the usual discussion, I would like to give an opportunity to some of the people who have been kind enough and interested enough to write to me to use some of their letters as a basis for a discussion, as it were. It's a distance, but they have a chance to express themselves too.

The Beatitudes contain so very much. They are so very vast in their implications. But they are by no means all. The Divine Physician gave them, like earthly physicians give their cures and remedies, as a preparation for the larger and more important portions of food and nourishment, of life strengthening exercise and sunshine and fresh air. We're not cured by medicine. We're only helped by it. Nature is simply given a lift. We have to have those God-given means which are supplied to us by Divine Providence. We, in

our discovery of the laws of chemistry and so on, have found certain medicines and certain helps, certain capsules that we can give to help a person to assimilate what God has given us in the normal, natural order of life. And so it is here in the normal, natural order of the supernatural life, of the spiritual life. We must have much more than just these little eight Beatitudes. We must have more even than the whole Sermon on the Mount. That was not enough, nor was the teaching of Our Lord for three years enough.

As I said in the beginning of the series, that many people today like their religion in capsules, while they take their pleasures in large quantities. Many letters which have come in bear out this statement. Many seem to have expected that in the eight short discussions of the Beatitudes everything should be settled. And that's quite impossible. There are too many questions. I've only approached a few things that needed to be considered, and we had time for considering in the brief minutes

allotted for the discussion. Even Our Lord couldn't do everything in the eight Beatitudes. If He could have, He would have stopped there. But He went on for the longest course of the Sermon on the Mount, which the Beatitudes are an introduction. He went on, too, with three years of His teaching, along with the action of His miracles, and finally came the tremendous act of giving Himself, His suffering, His life. For good measure He added His Resurrection, the work of the forty days thereafter, and His Ascension. Even that was not enough, for He sent the Holy Ghost to vivify His living Church as a Mystical Body in which He chooses to live and act until the end of time. Satan had lost heaven for trying to imitate God's omnipotence; is still trying to do so, and he continues in his hopeless and tireless efforts in trying to destroy it.

Now, the persecution of the Church is the persecution of Christ. We have the witness to that in the very beginning, and so we see the persecution today which is directed, as we say, against the Church, is really a persecution of Christ, Our Lord, Himself. In the very beginning

of life of the Church when Saul of Tarsus, before his conversion, was persecuting the Church, and on his way to Damascus when he was struck from his horse and thrown to the ground, the voice that came to him then and reproachfully said to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" The voice didn't say, "Why do you persecute my Church? Why do you persecute Christians? Why do you persecute my followers?" He was doing all that. But the voice said, "Why persecutest thou me?," because Christ and His Church are one, Christ lives in His Church and acts in His Church through the ages and will so act until the end of time. And so, then, this persecution of the Church means the persecution in the lives of those who try to live in union with Christ. And there is this persecution going on in the world today. There's the persecution—a constant persecution—of all those who have during all the ages tried to live according to the life of Our blessed Lord. The world instinctively persecutes. And so Our Blessed Lord has said, "Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice's sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Now, the reaction to these words in the time of Our Lord was probably similar to the reaction in our time. The first question would be, "Why suffer?" Why suffer purposely, even? We feel that we have enough suffering that comes our way without seeking it, or we should ward it off, do everything possible to keep it from coming. Suffering is nothing that we should welcome. Suffering has no purpose in life in the minds of so many people. They say . . . so many will say, "Don't we get enough hell on earth without getting ourselves into something that will merely add to our problems, our difficulties, our persecutions?" Well, of course, there is hell on earth, oftentimes. But certainly we make our heaven or our loss of heaven here in this life. It is our work here. It's the one work that is important for them to do while he's living this life. It's the only thing that gives it significance—that gives it any sense of reality—in that it has an eternal fulfillment. If it were something just temporary—life in this earth and these our bodies with all that there is—then certainly it would not be worth living. It would simply be a taste of tremendous reality

which would be taken away from us at the end of life, and if there is nothing but oblivion at the end of life, then we have lived in vain.

Now, we take what comes in this world. We can take it in two ways. We can take it in the spirit of resistance—the suffering that comes, that's inevitable, the trials and difficulties, the persecution for justice's sake. We can take that in the Christian spirit. We can take it in the way that Our Blessed Lord meant here in the eighth Beatitude. We can understand what St. Paul meant when he said it is useless to kick against the goad. For the goad which was used to keep the animals going when they were driving them for plowing or harvesting crops, the goad is a pointed stick. And when the animal kicked against it, the goad just sank in all the deeper. So here, St. Paul then uses this picture which was understood by the people of his time. It is useless to kick against the goad. Well, we may sit back and in a stoical sort of a way say, "Well, we'll take what comes, and we will live accordingly." But that is not virtuous living. The stoic is just steering himself to what he considers to be necessary evil.

Now, suffering is not an evil if it's used as Christ meant us to use it, if we use it as Christ used His suffering. What He accomplished with His, we can accomplish with ours in a lesser degree. Well, of course, we see around us the pagan world hating and fleeing from suffering. That is the essence of paganism—to seek pleasure, to seek satisfaction, to use all the means at one's command for gaining these pleasures and satisfactions that come to our senses in various ways. But that, of course, is but . . . it doesn't mean that we have to go around being very sad and that we have a long face and that we can't enjoy anything. We are sorrowing and sad all the time. Not at all! We can have the greatest joy and the greatest happiness in the world if we use suffering in the sense that we use it for justice's sake.

Now, the pagan world is pretty strong today. We live in the midst of a growing paganism. Perhaps it's reached its growth. There are indications that it has, but nevertheless it is certain that Christians have been infected by the paganism of our time. We see that everywhere. We see the coldness and indifference of Christians—the luke-

warmness of faith, the lukewarmness of zeal—which is only too often evident among people who call themselves Christians. They're unwilling to suffer. They're as unwilling as a pagan. They're unwilling to sacrifice. They're unwilling to give themselves, their time, their effort, and their strength. There are so many Christians, too, who often say, oh . . . they admire heroic suffering. Well, the interesting thing of that is the admiration for St. Francis of Assisi. There is so much admiration for him. And, of course, here in the great city of St. Francis by the Golden Gate we hear a great deal about the good St. Francis. There have been many pictures made of him by local artists, and statues, and all this sort of thing . . . And that's been done over the world, and over and over again. And so often St. Francis is pictured as a sort of a sweet little man. They talk about the poor little man of Assisi, and he's pictured with flowers and birds around him in a sort of soft and sentimental way. Well, that's as far from the true picture of St. Francis as anything could be. St. Francis, today if he were living, would scorn the paganism of our time. He would scorn our

Christians who have been infected by it. He would be very insistent in calling them from their ways, and he would not be a gentle sweet, little, mushy man doing it. He would speak in no uncertain terms. St. Francis was strong. It took strength and it took character to do what he did—to deny himself, to live the life of voluntary poverty, and to live it with virtue, which can be done and should be done. Then, these people who admire St. Francis so much . . . if he came along today, they wouldn't have anything to do with him. They'd say that his clothes were tattered and torn, they were dirty, and that he was not up to the standards of our time, and the way he was groomed, and all that. And they would say that he was an odd character, and they would just lift their eyebrows and pass by. And that is the truth.

Now, many of these people who admire St. Francis and the other saints would say, "Oh, if I only had the opportunity that they had, the opportunity to do great and heroic things, I could be a martyr. I could sacrifice tremendously and do great things if the opportunity came my way." But the opportunity doesn't come. They don't know how to take

the ones that do—the little daily recurring opportunities, the irritations and trials of life, of work, of relationship with others, the trials and difficulties that come in family life. They don't accept these, even. Then, how could they take the big ones? They've been weakened so much by the pagan attitudes that they complain, and they grow irritable with even the little things. They take refuge in divorce, and they use painkillers. Look at the wide use of them today! The first thing anyone wants is a painkiller if anything happens to him. And then they seek mental salves in the form of movies and romance and thriller fiction, and all that sort of thing. We see so much of drinking to excess to bring about forgetfulness, to anesthetize our suffering to get us away from it. And, of course, it doesn't do anything of the kind. It only increases it eventually, because we cannot beat the game. We cannot beat the game when we're playing against God. Suffering is a part of the building of characters, we can see. We can see that in the old law—how God did it—with the Jews who came out of Egypt, who had been softened by their four hundred years of living in

Egypt with the pagan civilization there. They had been reduced to a slave mentality, and they had been turned aside from the strength of purposes by the ease and the comfort and the luxury of the pleasurable living which was the feature of pagan life in Egypt. God took them out of that country to bring them back to their own, but He kept them wandering in the desert for forty years in order that the generation which came out of Egypt might die off, and a new and stronger generation be born and brought up in the suffering and trials and difficulties of desert life. And so, when that new generation grew up, God brought them back into their own country.

We can see, too, how suffering builds character in individuals. The pampered child is not noted for good character, and the boy or girl who may face some difficulties, has some trials in life, and these are the ones who have character, and they are the ones who do not attempt to find simply pleasure in life.

Now, of the correspondence that has come in, there had been much helpful literature mailed to me—printed literature. Some of it was interesting, and some

of it was just nice and ethical, and some of it was a little fantastic! There are schemes and interpretations from all sorts of people, and apparently there are many who are earnest and sincere, who are trying to think things through, but they forget some very fundamental principles—some very fundamental and basic needs in our time. Some of this literature also came from Catholics, and they showed great interest in signs and wonders of the time, and we have the greatest wonder of all—the Mass and the Holy Eucharist. And that should be our first consideration. And if we take that, then the others will come and take their place properly.

The Blessed Mother has worked signs and wonders for us—at Lourdes and Fatima—but She asked for penance and prayer. Now, there's a great interest in the manifestations of Our Blessed Mother at these places, but the penance and prayer is lagging a little behind. And that's what we must have.

Then, I had another letter which was interesting, because it misunderstood the whole purpose of my theories . . . This gentleman who wrote to me seemed to have the idea that I was

boasting about the superiority of Christian life and practice, and that we are living according to the standards of the eight Beatitudes. Well, I certainly am not boasting anything of the kind. I took the eight Beatitudes as a basis for these discussions and these broadcasts. It seems to me our Christian people need to be reminded of them very seriously, and they are not living according to them. If they were, I would have taken something else that would have been more helpful and more needful in their time. But this is exactly why I've taken the eight Beatitudes to bring them back to the minds of our Catholic people.

Now, this gentleman also took me to task for indicating that the Christian rulers of the world, as he calls them, are meek, and practicing meekness. Well, I don't know who the Christian rulers of the world are. There aren't many that are really Christian in their practice and certainly in government, and the politics of the world hasn't much of Christianity left in it. And he also makes the mistake of calling everything Christian which is not Jewish, as he himself is. That is a mistake, of course, that we must distinguish

—that there is Christian and pagan, and there are a great many other standards of life, and everything that can be just bunched together and called Christian. He says the Christian world looked on and did nothing while Adolph Hitler killed six million Jews. I thought the world did a great deal. It seems to me that we went to war, and Hitler has been polished off. Now, he says that the Christian world is arming the enemies of Israel to take away their little piece of land again. I don't see that either, and I hope the Jews keep it, and certainly they are welcome, we say again, to the Waters of Babylon. My own people left their native land a hundred years ago because of persecution. Many have been persecuted in this world, and they are making a struggle and have made a struggle for hundreds of years to straighten out the difficulties in their own land and their own situations.

Another letter said that I should take up the question of nudity on the beaches. Another one asked that I do something about the problem of the murder of the unborn. All of these could be done, of course. They are evils that cry for justice in this

world. But the basic need, and the one thing that is necessary, we must not forget, is the practice of virtue and the Grace of God. People forget the positive side.

SUMMARY

We are concerned in our time with the question of survival in this world—the survival of our form of government, the survival of our civilization, with the very survival of life. The ingenuity of man has conceived the means for his own destruction by delving into the power put into Nature by its creator and turning that power from its original purpose. God made all things for good. God made all things for love. But man, because of the blemish of pride, may fail to realize this fact, and by the misuse of the gift of free will they forget and be tempted to listen to the voice of the spiritual tempter who knows in his Satanic wisdom that the corruption of the spiritual is the way to the accomplishment of evil ends, that the ends of good and love may be frustrated by moving man to the centering of his life in self, and by distracting man from the realization that suffering is the price of redemption and reconstruction of self. Instinctively

we turn to good, and it is that we are concerned with—the survival which we have accomplished of our good work, what we have done of good in our civilization.

Can our form of government survive? This question is calling for an answer in our time. We may weigh in our minds other questions and seek for answers in various ways, but the answer will not be known unless we seek it in the spiritual, for “man does not live by bread alone.” Whether our form of government survives or not, may not decide the fate of civilization, the fate of the world. But of this we are convinced—that we have built a nation here in which the voice of the individual has been respected, in which the minority has been considered. And under God that is good, because God is concerned with all men, with each individual, and to Him parties are not of importance. Artificial labels are not of importance. He is a God of justice, and to bring justice to men, to individuals, to the race, He has spared no sacrifice.

So it is that Our Blessed Lord has called upon those who would unite themselves to His way, to His sacrifice, for He is the way

of Salvation foretold by Isaiah, "Lift up your eyes to heaven and look down to the earth beneath, for the heaven shall vanish like smoke, and the earth shall be worn away like a garment, and the inhabitants thereof shall perish in like manner, but my salvation shall be forever, and my justice shall not fail."

In these inspired words we find the key to the answers to the questions that beset us in our time. The Creator has sent His own Divine Son into the world for its salvation. He is the Son of Justice. He took it upon Himself to suffer because men had refused to suffer the poverty of spirit, the meekness that required him to know less than God, because man had thought to make himself wise as God, and banished humility—the humility that made him mourn — because he had lost the eagerness of will that made him willing to hunger and thirst after justice, because arrogance had made him lose mercy, and because cleanness of heart had been soiled by meanness and by putting flesh in the first place, because he had been unwilling to sacrifice to make peace and called upon an avenging God to impose it. Man's way was an offense to the Di-

vine Architect. And only by suffering, the suffering of submission, the suffering of denial of self, could the offense be satisfied and amended. The infinite effects of man's offense were satisfied for by the divinity of the Redeemer, the Son of God, the Second Person of the Most Blessed Trinity.

In His life on earth He incorporated man into His own life that we might have redemption. So it is that man has to suffer persecution for justice's sake if he is to be one with the Redeemer, if he is to walk with Him in the way of justice. Our Divine Lord has said that this is the way to the possession of the kingdom of heaven. Whose word has stood the test of time? Whose word is the stamp of truth? His, or yours? If, then, we are concerned in the largeness of our vision, with the question of the survival of our government, with the survival of our civilization, or with the question of the survival of our own individual souls, because the God who created them desires them back again, we must turn to Christ for guidance and truth. His way is the way of suffering for justice's sake. The Founding Fathers knew that the suf-

fering of the people had brought them freedom and an opportunity to grow strong in a new world. They knew in their rugged wisdom, born of suffering, that "In God We Trust." Lincoln learned it and prayed that this nation under God might have a new birth of freedom. Can we not learn in our time that some power must be supreme, because it is plainly evident that man is not. For in . . . individual lives we see that suffering and sacrifice builds strength and character and will. Shall we not then be willing to sacrifice our pride in the recognition of the fact that is forced upon us by universal experience, that it is God, or the dictatorship of a demigod, that will hold us in subjection?

It is important that we interest ourselves in the cause of justice and freedom in this world, because if they flourish, then and then only can the works of the spirit be made manifest. The salvation of our own immortal souls can be brought about more surely when the justice of God prevails in the works of man, and when the Creator is denied, for God has set us in this creation to work out our eternal destiny, and that destiny is Himself. Whether we seek justice in great ways or small, we must seek it in God's way, and Christ has said we must suffer persecution, for if we are to know the fountain of happiness, it is necessary. We have His Word, "Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice's sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

103 STATIONS CARRYING THE HOUR OF FAITH

In 36 States, the District of Columbia, Canada, and Hawaii

Alabama	Anniston	WHMA	250	kc
	Gadsden	WGNH	250	kc
	Mobile	WMOB	1230	kc
	Montgomery	WAPX	1600	kc
Arkansas	Fort Smith	KFSA	950	kc
California	Eureka	KHUM	1240	kc
	Los Angeles	KECA	790	kc
	Sacramento	KFBK	1530	kc
	San Diego	KFMB	550	kc
	San Francisco	KGO	810	kc
	Stockton	KWG	1230	kc
Colorado	Denver	KVOD	630	kc
	Pueblo	KGHF	1350	kc
Connecticut	New Haven	WELI	960	kc
District of Columbia	Washington	WMAL	630	kc
Florida	Pensacola	WBSR	1450	kc
Georgia	Augusta	WGAC	580	kc
	Savannah	WDAR*	1400	kc
Illinois	Chicago	WLS	890	kc
	Peoria	WIRL	1290	kc
	Rock Island	WHBF	1270	kc
	Springfield	WCBX	1450	kc
Indiana	Anderson	WHBU	1240	kc
	Evansville	WJPS	1330	kc
	Fort Wayne	WOWO	1190	kc
	Terre Haute	WTHI	1480	kc
Idaho	Boise	KGEM	1340	kc
	Idaho Falls	KIFI	1400	kc
	Pocatello	KEIO	1440	kc
Iowa	Burlington	KBUR	1490	kc
	Davenport	WOC	1420	kc
	Dubuque	WKBB	1490	kc
	Sioux City	KSCJ	1360	kc
Kansas	Coffeyville	KGAF	1450	kc
	Wichita	KFBX	1070	kc
	Wichita Falls	KFDX	960	kc
Kentucky	Lexington	WLAP	1450	kc
	Louisville	WINN	1240	kc
Louisiana	New Orleans	WDSU*	1280	kc
Maine	Bangor	WGUY	1470	kc
	Lewistown	WLAM	1470	kc
Maryland	Hagerstown	WARK	1490	kc
Massachusetts	Boston	WCOP	1150	kc
	Hyannis	WOCB	1240	kc
	Worcester	WORC	1310	kc
	Pittsfield	WBEC	1490	kc
Michigan	Detroit	WXYZ*	1270	kc
	Jackson	WIBM	1450	kc
Minnesota	Minneapolis-St. Paul	WTCN	1280	kc
	Rochester	KLER	970	kc
Mississippi	Gulfport	WGCM	1240	kc
	Vicksburg	WIBC	1390	kc
Missouri	Kansas City	KCMO	1480	kc
	St. Louis	KXOK	630	kc
	Springfield	KWTO	560	kc
Nebraska	Omaha	KOIL	1290	kc
Nevada	Las Vegas	KENO	1400	kc
	Reno	KWRN	1490	kc
New Mexico	Albuquerque	KOAT	1450	kc
	Gallup	KGAK	1230	kc
	Santa Fe	KTRC	1400	kc
	Las Vegas	KFUN	1230	kc
	Roswell	KSWS	1230	kc

New York	Albany	WXKW*	850	kc
	Endicott	WENE	1450	kc
	Glen Falls	WGLN	1230	kc
	Jamestown	WJTN	1240	kc
	Massena	WNSA	1340	kc
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	San Antonio	KABC	1450	kc
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