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# Religion and Liturgy

by

Reverend Doctor Francis A. Walsh, O.S.B.

Four addresses delivered in the Catholic Hour,  
sponsored by the National Council of Catholic  
Men, with the co-operation of the National  
Broadcasting Company and its Asso-  
ciated Stations.

(On Sundays from July 16 to August 6, 1933)

- I. Religion and Liturgy.
- II. The Body Mystical.
- III. The Eucharistic Liturgy.
- IV. Divine Praise In Labor and In  
Song.



National Council of Catholic Men,  
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1312 Massachusetts Ave.,  
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IMPRIMATUR:

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Bishop of Fort Wayne.

## INTRODUCTION

The life of faith centers in worship. Perfect worship is the tribute of the whole man, mind and heart, soul and body, to his Maker. The ages of faith were ages of Christian growth not only by the conversion of nations but by the development of knowledge and devotion of every kind of talent to the divine service. In these ages the great cathedrals were built, monastic centers of music and art were developed, and the faithful showed their zeal by pilgrimages to the tombs of the Apostles and other holy shrines. The weaver and maker of tapestries delighted in the production of sacred vestments, and the worker in silver and gold and precious stones found joy in offering to the service of the altar vessels and ornaments made by his own hand.

The holiness of the Church in America down to the present time has been manifested chiefly by the sacrifices necessary for the construction of churches and institutions essential to the existence of the Church. The development of the liturgical life will mean that now we can add to these bare necessities those elements which have ever marked higher sanctity and deeper culture. To live the Catholic life requires that the feasts of the Church be duly solemnized, that her periods of fasting be carefully observed, and in general that her doctrines and practices be part of those daily events which make up the ordinary round of practical life. These addresses are offered with the hope that they may stimulate in some degree the increasing activity of the Catholics of America in all that pertains to the fulness of Catholic life.

FRANCIS A. WALSH, O. S. B.

DEDICATION

To the Faculty and Students  
of  
The Institute of Apologetics  
Catholic University  
of  
America

## RELIGION AND LITURGY

Address delivered on July 16, 1933

“O God, who makest the faithful to be of one mind and will, grant that Thy people may love what Thou dost command and desire what Thou dost promise; that amid the changing things of this world, our hearts may be set where true joy is found. Through Christ our Lord.”

Every difference is based on agreement. Men must agree before they can differ. They must have a point of contact on which they converge, before any divergence can manifest itself. A man so completely separated from his fellows that he does not find himself like-minded with them in even the slightest degree is not only abnormal: he simply is not found. When men disagree their very disagreement is the best evidence of the reality of the values over which controversy arises. No man would engage in a conflict unless the matter at issue were worth a struggle. Men are strongly moved by their religious beliefs. This means that religion as such is recognized as a universal value. It is so universal that in its most general terms, no one is without it. Even those who profess atheism and tear down churches dedicated to the worship of God erect a substitute divinity when they shout the names of their leaders and the trade-names of their destructive dogmas. Recognizing the intellectual dignity and emotional value which religion has accumulated during the ages they try to steal its mantle and transfer its sacredness to their own theories of social upheaval. During the French Revolution such an

attempt was formally made, and the heart of mankind still shrinks with shame over the degradation which followed.

Every descent from the full acceptance of Christian belief has led mankind to a lower stage of culture and exchanged for a vision a reality. There is no substitute for the true God; apart from every consideration of philosophy, the nature of man sinks to its lowest degree when for the exercise of emotion it turns to the carnal or material, abandoning the nobler motives afforded by religious teaching. True love of neighbor is found only where men behold the image and likeness of God in their fellows; there is no real charity and no solid basis for unity, when men see in their fellow man only another specimen of evolutionary development, useful perhaps to themselves and set upon the same level of biological attainment as themselves. A religion and its consequent social life resting only on such a foundation must fail, for it is directed against a constituent of human nature manifested in every level of human society from the savage to the most civilized.

It is natural for man to strive after such goodness as may satisfy his hopes; he seeks perfection and knows that somewhere the All-Perfect has its being. His worship is the emotional and ritualistic expression of the high place which this perfection holds in his esteem. We would say, therefore, that the common element of all religion, apart from its content of human belief or divine revelation is a form of expression; every great religion of the world—pagan, Jewish, Christian—has possessed a manner of manifesting its cultural stage and the relation which it claimed to the Creator.



The man who believes in God cannot reasonably refuse to worship God; for if he believes, he acknowledges by way of intellectual assent that God is supreme and the source of all that man possesses whether by nature or by grace. Worship, however, means more than this. It implies a service and a right-ordered service. We honor God in the manner in which He would have us to honor Him; we do not give Him a service displeasing to Him or regulated only according to our own desires and whims. We are ourselves annoyed by the officious person always giving the kind of attention which we do not want. The man who thrusts his own ideas of service and worship upon his Creator consults not the word of his Maker but his own private pleasure; he casts aside the proper garment provided for the wedding feast and dares to enter clothed in the fragments of his own stained wardrobe.

Worship means a religious work done in lawful fashion and in token of the order which exists between creature and Creator. Endowed with body as well as mind, man must use both mind and body in the service of God; because man does not stand alone, but both in his origin and in his relations he is a member of society, he craves for and requires social assistance and must join also with his fellow man to form with him one vital unit in the act of worship. No religion has failed to note this. It is so evident to reason that it lies back of every difference in religion and marks the point in which all religions agree. The cold, logical exposition of duty makes evident its necessity; there are however other springs of action in man all of which lead in the same direction. There is nothing which a man is more ready to do than to relate an experience which

has benefitted him. A good work is better done when many are associated together in its doing. An experience or a work which rouses emotion is far more exalted when it is corporately done or performed as a public function. When the emotion is of noble nature, expressing a deeply felt truth or manifesting some far-reaching good, it gives rise to a far greater sense both of beauty and of joy when it is well-ordered or approaches the classic. The more civilized a man is, the more does he seek culture and refinement even in his emotional expression; the farther down in the scale of civilization one goes the more marked becomes the absence of this refinement. The savage abandons himself to such an extent that his excitement dethrones his reason; to the civilized man this is degradation. The advance from barbarism is marked by the degree of self-control.

Deep-down, therefore, in the natural man, we find the roots of prayer and liturgy. Wherever there has been religion, and that is everywhere, there has been some form according to which it regulated its outward expression, and it is precisely this regulated character that gave it its classic power. If we look at the civilizing march of the Catholic Church through Europe after the downfall of the Roman Empire, we shall find above all else that her liturgy was the source of her cultivating influence and the explanation of the permanent hold which she took upon the people of every region where she was established. The nations that have been successfully converted, that is, among whom Christianity has taken root and become an enduring element of the national life, have been converted by and to the liturgy. The influence of the liturgy, founded as it is on human nature, produced many of the arts and

caused them to flourish among the people; only a refined liturgy based on reality and truth can pervade with its gentle civility the life of the uncultured, of the semi-educated, and the most learned. Religion must culminate in liturgy. The nature of religion demands it and so does the nature of man. If we ask what is the peculiar power of the Catholic liturgy, the answer is first of all its reality founded on faith, and next, its dignified ability to portray the action revealed by faith. Catholic liturgy is vitalized by the fact that it is not seeming; the altar is not a stage but a place where by the reality of the Divine Presence the tragedy of Calvary is mystically re-enacted. Remove this element and nothing remains. To this the splendor of ceremonial is but the accessory and the ornament. To have part in this is to become a sharer in the spiritual treasures of the Church. Mere beauty does not make the Catholic liturgy. The public forms of prayer and sacrifice in the Catholic Church are not merely art, but the real work of the society founded by Christ. By its nature Catholic liturgy excludes every kind of simulation. It has not been elaborated for appearance's sake or for esthetic effect, but by genuine efficacy and sincerity. The unbeliever can grasp the beauty of a ceremonial as he would that of a gorgeous pageant. To a Catholic his liturgy is on a higher plane than this. It not only expresses what he believes, it demands that he believe what it expresses. He is as earnest in the work of outward expression as he is in inward faith.

The outward expression of every man, if it is not to be a mere deceit or an empty lie must correspond to his heart and mind within. We all tend to spread abroad by words or deeds our thoughts and our

ideals. Our action is more persuasive than our words. Basically, all religion, on whatever doctrine it may rest, agrees in this. The fullest value, therefore, must be found where behind the outward form there lies the deeper truth; the sincerity of the worship and the devotion of the faithful has won more souls to the Catholic faith than any other form of proclaiming the word. Catholic life elevates man's social being to a form of special union with God through Christ His Son. Outside the Catholic Church liturgical values have never completely disappeared. The sighing for forms of religious expression shows how ingrained in human nature is this necessity of social action and public function. To the conviction of truth in the mind we must add in religion the action which is peculiarly religious, the action of Christianity's lawful worship.

## THE BODY MYSTICAL

Address delivered on July 23, 1933

The Son of God came into the world, not only to redeem from sin but to give us His abiding Presence. This Presence is two-fold, a Sacramental Presence upon the altar and a Presence of union according to His promise, "Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." By this latter Presence He continues in the Church as an institution existing in human society. Leadership in that Church belongs to Him as Son of the Eternal Father and as partaker of our human nature. The concept of that leadership, which is given to us in His own words, is not that of a captain far removed from his men, or of an authority dim and distant, but that of a spirit of life, a head united with a body. He was to continue to give to the Church a share in His now glorius life; for, he said, "I am the vine, and you are the branches." The Church likened by St. Paul to the spouse of Christ is united to Christ as the body to the head.

This union of the Christian brotherhood with its Divine Founder is compared to the union of the head with the body. When we say that the Church is the mystic body of Christ we do not mean that each individual man becomes a physical part of the bodily substance assumed by Christ in the Incarnation. The word body is here used as the most fitting and best known to us of the symbols which might be used to express the manner in which the living Christ abides in the Church. As St. Thomas

Aquinas says, it is metaphorical speech; and the comparison rests not on identity but on likeness. In this manner from its likeness to the natural body of a man which in divers members has divers acts, the whole Church is termed one mystic body.

To this mystic body Christ communicates Himself completely. To it He is the source of existence, action and sanctification, and the divine guardian of the truth deposited in its charge. The leadership of Christ by which He is called head is a leadership of order, perfection, and of power. Endowed with wisdom, He established His Church in order, for it is the part of wisdom to set all things in order, and to set in order is nothing other than to establish such a disposition of means that the end will be attained. Because he arranges his troops in order, the general is rightly called the head of the army. Because they are the principles around which the development of ideas and the advancing thought are marshalled, the divisions of a well ordered book are called chapters or heads.

In the human body the head surpasses the other members in its perfection. The powers of knowing are centered there. It contains the organism by which man exercises sensation, imagination and memory; as by this perfection it surpasses all the other members of the body, so in all the perfection of beauty and of knowledge does Christ even in his human nature stand above all men. If the election of a head for our religion were left to us we should choose one in whom these perfections shone forth. If with our eyes we could see the glory of the Lord, it is under His standard that we would immediately range ourselves.

The leadership of Christ is also founded in power. Now in the human body the direction of the other members in their acts and the very power of movement itself is centered in the head. As the people of Christ ruled by Him we rightly call ourselves His Body, with Him as Spiritual Head. He has the power of bestowing gifts on all the members of the Church, "of His fulness we have all received."

Christ is the head of all mankind. He is the head in a mystic manner not only of our souls but likewise of our bodies; for, as St. Paul says, "He will reform the body of our lowliness made like to the body of His glory", and, "He that raised Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies because of the spirit that dwells in you." The grace of the Church, therefore, flows from Him as from a fountain and descends upon the head of the Church on earth, upon the chosen religious leaders, and upon all peoples serving God.

Every man has a vocation as a member of Christ's body. The words, "you are members of member", apply not only to leaders but to all to whom salvation is to come. Like the death of Christ so is His grace, for all men. Under Christ as its head the Church, His mystic body, has its organization and its life. Its nature is spiritual and its goods are spiritual goods. Its life is from age to age even to the consummation of the world, and its action is the action of divine worship and the sanctification of men.

The religious life of the Catholic is the life of his Church. His action as a Catholic must mean his action as a member of that mystic body. This action is action involving grace, spiritual good and

union with the Head of the Church. We first beheld this action when the Church appeared as the Church of prayer gathered with the Apostles in the upper room of Jerusalem expecting and praying for the coming of the Holy Spirit. Only by understanding the Church of prayer can we understand her real, inner, sanctifying nature. Only they are able to approach closely to Christ our Leader who walk in the way of prayer. By prayer we are joined with Christ in His glory and united with our fellow men in one blessed, sanctifying, corporate act of praise and humble petition. Prayer is the precious heirloom left by the Lord as the common heritage to be shared by men of all generations. This heirloom was asked for by the Church itself when the Apostles addressed the Master saying, "Lord, teach us how to pray." Until Christ comes again in the day of the last judgment, His followers in religion will be gathered around the altar and united with Him through the Holy Spirit. In a very true sense we may say that the Church is the assembly of all those who pray. It is in her worship that she fulfills her function of life as the mystic body of Christ. In the common action which constitutes her liturgy and sacrifice she is united with every good soul that breathes a fervent act of worship and who is thereby joined to the communion of saints on earth and to Christ the Savior and Ruler of the Kingdom. Her prayer is more than individual; it is corporate, because it is the prayer of a body. This body functions as a whole although at times the words may be formulated and uttered by a single member. The power of this body, thus one in prayer, comes from its head which is Christ. From Christ, too, comes the perfection of this



prayer, for it is poured out through Him, received by Him, and by Him it is offered to the Heavenly Father.

The mystic body of Christ is united to Christ by the whole organization and structure which He has conferred upon it. He said, "I will not leave you orphans." From Him, the Church received not only her forms of prayer and the command to teach whatsoever He had commanded, but more, the gift of Himself, the Word of eternal life. That life was to continue among men in the spiritual kingdom which He set up, and which He so loved that He took it to Himself as spirit takes body. As spirit rules body, so Christ rules the Church; she accepts in obedience the mandates He has given.

The model of this obedience is found in the obedience which marked the relation of Jesus to His Father. His obedience was the personal religion of Jesus Christ: "For this cause I am come into the world, to do the will of Him that sent me." It was actuated by practical work extending from the beginning of His life to the moment when He was made obedient even unto death. Our religion must give us also a practical action towards God, a liturgical obedience by which we acknowledge and proclaim the excellence of His divinity. Sanctification in things divine is allotted to man through Christ, our Brother, Who will reform also the body of our lowness made like to the body of His glory.

## THE EUCHARISTIC LITURGY

Address delivered on July 30, 1933

Every religion has a liturgy. This means nothing else than that in its approach to God it uses either a legally determined form or at least prescribes for its adherents some method by which they undertake to bring themselves in closer union with the divine presence. As life forms one whole, distributed though it be throughout the various members of an organism, and continuing throughout the life period of the living thing, so we must say that if religion is a life it must have organic form, vivify every member and sustain spiritual values from generation to generation. The Church of Christ in which He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, is such a living organism. The single points of its teaching are not separated particles disconnected from one another, but are made up of an intelligent development resting on the complete understanding of man's relation to the Creator as known from pure reason and divine revelation. Spiritual life, therefore, is not made up of mere sporadic acts; it is the vital action of a corporate union of many members realizing the full purpose for which each member was made. This spiritual development begins with that rebirth in holy baptism by which the first step is taken towards God and unto supernatural union with Him.

The liturgical life thus begun in holy baptism is continued and fostered by all the sacramental forms and acts of public worship. In the Church as founded by Christ there is one great, all-inclusive support of life and action; there is one great method of approach to God and of Union with Him. This

liturgical action was instituted by Christ Himself and is embodied in the Eucharistic liturgy of the Catholic Church. It includes the notion of a priesthood and a sacrifice. By these this liturgical action is made social and elevated to the supernatural order. There are some things which we can do in our own human nature by natural power and natural right. We can conduct business affairs, care for our health, enjoy recreation, and take part in ordinary social functions. Other things for which a craving exists within us cannot be reached without help from a power above and beyond the natural condition of man. Among these are, first, the eager desire to know more about our origin and destiny than we can learn from mere philosophy. Divine revelation and the gift of faith are the supernatural means of filling the vacancy in the mind and heart which this craving produces. The other desire, which is in man and which by natural means he cannot satisfy, is the desire to do something which will draw him closer to his Father in Heaven and move that Eternal Father in a manner which no mere natural effort of men could bring about.

From the very beginning the Christian Church has believed that in its liturgy it possessed just such an action. The word liturgy itself seems to signify this. It means a right work rightly done. As we know from the writings of St. Justin, Martyr, this elevating and transcending power of the Christian liturgy was the dominant spiritual characteristic of Christian life in the second century. By that time the great liturgical action instituted by Christ Himself had become a tradition in the Church. In this liturgical action was re-enacted that marvellous scene in which Christ on the night before His Pas-

sion and death, took bread into His hands and blessed it, and broke it, and gave it to His Apostles, saying, "Take ye, and eat. This is my body." In a similar manner He took the chalice, blessed it and gave it to them, saying, "Drink ye all of this. For this is my blood of the new testament, which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins." This was His action; and in order that they might know that this action was not for that moment and occasion only, but for all time, He spoke to them, saying, "Do this for a commemoration of me." This action is the central liturgical rite. The death of Christ is portrayed by the mystical renewal of the sacrifice on Calvary brought before us by the twofold species or appearances of bread and of wine. It constitutes the essence of the Eucharistic liturgy, called Eucharistic because it is a sacrifice of joy, of love, and of thanksgiving. Its power is not only for the moment in which it is offered. In a certain sense it is one sacrifice extending over all time, for Christ died but once; in a very special way it is the center around which the prayer and the spiritual action of the Church gather from day to day. In the Missal, or Mass-Book of the Catholic Church, are found the solemn prayers and lessons from the Holy Scriptures to be read in preparation for the offering. The practical mind of the Roman and the artistic spirit of the Greek readily appreciated the spiritual utility and mystic sublimity of this heritage from the Founder of the Church. The Greek, especially, added splendor to the ritual; and when the barbarian laid the foundations for a new culture in the West his mind and heart were captivated by the sublime truth which these sacred mysteries portrayed.

The Mass itself is both a prayer and an action. It is a prayer because it raises the mind and heart of man to God; its words are words of adoration, of praise and of worship undefiled. As the moment draws near in which the form of consecration is pronounced, prayers definite in form and of increasing solemnity move priest and people to devotion more and more intense. The thing done in Holy Mass, the oblation of Christ the Son of God, renewed from day to day, is the very summit of inspiring prayer. Because it is the renewal of the sacrifice it is truly an action; the whole arrangement of the action is such as to recall to us its first institution and that sublime moment in which Christ by His death consummated His obedience to His Heavenly Father.

Before the Church wrote down the sacred words and deeds of Christ in the inspired documents of the Gospels, the early Christian community celebrated the memory of the Lord in this liturgical function. While the Temple of Jerusalem yet remained and the smoke of the holocausts arose to the sky the Church already was offering the sacrifice of the New Covenant, keeping the banquet of the Lord, raising a new canticle and consecrating the ancient psalms to their highest and final service. The first pages of the Acts of the Apostles tell us of the Church in Jerusalem gathered together for prayer and for the breaking of the bread. The work of the Church was soon distributed in hierarchical order so that the leaders of the Church might not be required to give their own personal service to temporal concerns, even to works of charity, but might entirely devote themselves to the ministry of the Word and to prayer. Compared to this service all other works take a secondary place; they are of less account, and their

higher or lower rank is a sign in proportion to their more or less intimate connection with it. By a natural development the various grades in the Sacrament of Holy Orders were established, from the lowest, the order of Porter or Ostiarius to whom is committed the care of the entrance to the house of God, up to the priesthood to which the power of sacrificing is committed.

In the early Church the first part of the Mass was called the Mass of the Catechumens. A Catechumen was a convert receiving instruction in the Christian religion but who had not yet received the Sacrament of Baptism. Since he did not yet fully comprehend the Christian mysteries he was not allowed to remain for the more solemn portions of the Mass. The Mass of the Catechumens includes the preparatory instructions and prayers up to the point when the bread and the wine are set upon the altar for the consecration. This early part of the Mass even in our time continues to impart instruction in the truths of the Christian religion. In it psalms are recited and lessons read from various portions of the Sacred Book, always including a selection from the Holy Gospels. The priest and people join in the prayer which is said or sung from the book upon the altar. This part of the Mass prepares the faithful for their close association with the priest in the Holy Sacrifice. In fact priest and people form one moral person, one vital portion of the mystic body of Christ, in this holy action. The minister at the altar does not stand alone as priest; the people gathered round about him and all the members of the Church on earth share in this priesthood. For his priesthood is not his own, but the priesthood of Christ according to the order of Melchisedech, and

in this priesthood, though not in equal measure, all the faithful share.

The more closely the faithful are united with their priest at the altar, and the greater the union in charity by which, among themselves, they form one body and take their place in community of mind and soul in the mystic body of Christ, the more perfect will be their celebration of the Eucharist. In fact, it is with contrition in their hearts and with an eagerness for union with Him who died upon the Cross that they take their part in this Holy Sacrifice. From priest and people the *Kyrie eleison*, the appeal for mercy goes forth in alternate words. The voice of the congregation is raised with his in that glorious psalm which was the product of popular devotion in the early Church, the *Gloria in excelsis*. The inspired voice of the Holy Ghost is set down in the Epistle for instruction, reflection, and pious meditation. The Holy Gospel, recalling the life of the Savior, is at once an inspiration and an example. By knowing Him we best prepare for union with Him. By understanding Him we best prepare for partaking of Him. The knowledge upon which love will follow will lead us to Him. If we accept at its full value His parting instruction, "Do this for a commemoration of me," we realize that in Holy Mass we have the most sublime instrument of man's approach to God that exists in our religion. This is the Eucharistic liturgy, at once a prayer and a sacrifice. Dramatic indeed in form, but not mere figure or empty imagination, its power is not the incense, the flowers, the candles, by which the altar is surrounded, nor yet the traditional vestments worn by the priest; its power is the reality of the event which there takes place.

## DIVINE PRAISE IN LABOR AND IN SONG

Address delivered on August 6, 1933

St. Augustine set before mankind the concept of the City of God. St. John the Apostle had already written of the city that had no need of the sun, or of the moon, to shine in it. He was thinking of the world which is to come and of the dwelling place of the saints therein. But we on earth although called to citizenship in the kingdom of Christ have yet to establish our claim for entrance into the realm of divine glory. What is our business in this world? Men are occupied with many things; wealth and honor and power beckon to the youth of our time. Service in the social order is the goal of many, and many are troubled by the uncertainties of the future and the fading of all hope. We must turn to the methods of union with God which lie open to us, if we would find a due measure of happiness and a lasting peace.

Out of the chaos of our time we must turn towards God. To Him as the author of our being we must render the tribute of our worship; for Him we must labor while the day is ours. The coming day, says St. John, is ours for work, for the work of God. There are two kinds of work which man must do: he must work as a member of the human race for all those goods which pertain to his own and to the general welfare; he must work also as an adopted son of God for all those goods which pertain to the communion of saints and the kingdom of Christ. It has been well said that to labor is to pray; the true worth of human toil is only recognized when looked upon in its relation to the



true end of man. The joy of work is not only in its doing but in its achievement, and its achievement should bring surcease from labor and from care. How many great achievements did not labor contribute to the praise of God! The great cathedrals which dot the continent of Europe, the splendid churches which here and there are seen in the cities of our own land, are the gift of labor set down before the altar. The painter, the sculptor, the worker in stained glass and in stone have all elevated and sanctified their craft or their art by devoting it to the expression of the things of the spirit and the praise of the Almighty.

In a very special way music enters into worship. The early Christians rejoiced in psalms and canticles, singing even in their hearts to God. Christianity has never been purely individual; it has ever been an organized, a social religion. The union of mind and of voice in the individual symbolizes the union of charity among all the members of Christ's mystical body, who pour forth in the mingling of voices the praises of their Maker.

From the very beginning it was so. On that Sabbath morn which came as a day of rest to commemorate the completion of the work of creation, our first parents with faculties as yet unclouded by the mists of sinful disobedience could join in spotless purity with the grand harmony of all nature, a chorus sublime, beyond the power of human language to describe. It was God Himself Who had set the world in motion; yes, a thousand worlds moving harmoniously and by their motion giving utterance to physical nature's thanksgiving song. If God finds pleasure in contemplating His own divine attributes and perfections it is not strange

that He should behold with joy the exterior works of His Own omnipotent hand. He made all things for His own honor and glory, and when any creature fails to contribute its share in the anthem of praise which should continually ascend to heaven in thanksgiving for its existence and preservation, that creature becomes a disturbing element, unworthy of the Lord Who produced it. We sometimes forget the gratitude which we owe to God for the blessings which He gives us; although our life may be filled with trials we must remember that there is still a God above us, and that there is no evil except what man has made.

In the harmony of creation matter which lacks life, and nature without spirit, cannot produce discord. The first thanksgiving hymn which poured forth ages ago when creation first began to move has ever since unceasingly proclaimed its Maker's praises in the same measured cadence which broke the stillness of the world's first Sabbath. Highly gifted man was the first element of discord. Blinded by the greatness of his own gifts he forgot the Giver and began to idolize his own great power and wonderful skill. When his earthly efforts were rewarded by the discovery of many of the admirable laws by which the world is governed, he paused to admire and sing the praises of senseless matter instead of the Omnipotent Spirit Whom the varied forms of lifeless and living things obey.

We admire the achievements of science and the superior ability displayed by the men whose names, through their deeds, have been written on the pages of the world's history. We marvel at the extraordinary manner in which men have been able to discover and use the powers which God has put

into His universe. But unhappiness is still found in the world, and poverty and misery have not left us. Is it not just possible that in exploring the forces of nature and tracing the courses of the stars that men have listened only to the harmonious notes of nature's music and have left their own souls remain unmoved to the claims of God upon them? This question is the ultimate test of utility, of science and of power, and too often we find that science is of the world, and power earth-born. God must have His measure of praise from rational as well as from irrational creatures. If all mankind had been steeped in this ingratitude creation would have failed its purpose. The science of the worldly-wise does not teach us how to elevate our minds and hearts to God in humble adoration, nor consecrate us to singing the praises of God and supplicating Him in behalf of our brethren. In the Church of God this constant praise has been poured forth through the centuries. The power to please God and to gain His mercy still dwells among men. Such power is not acquired by the strivings of human genius, nor is it the offspring of worldly endeavor; it was first exercised to the great wonder of the people of Judea by the Son of God Himself, and by Him conferred on simple-minded men who knew little of the wisdom of the world but much of the wisdom of God. These men are long since dead, but the powers which they possessed have not died with them but live even to this day in the souls of those who minister at the altar and form on earth a choir modeled after the angelic chorus which on the night of Christ's birth sang, "Glory be to God in the highest."

When a Catholic priest receives Holy Orders

there is placed in his hands the ancient Breviary of the Church. This book is composed of a well-ordered selection of Scriptural extracts, lives of saints, prayers, psalms, hymns and canticles, all of which point to the grand central figure of Christianity, the Savior, Jesus Christ. This book is to be the constant companion of the priest during life, and one of the fruitful sources of grace and strength for the duties of his calling, a continual reminder of the dignity of the priesthood and of the responsibility which rests upon a dispenser of the mysteries of God. The collection of prayers and psalms is called the Divine Office, and merits this title by its primary object, which is God, to Whom every prayer and aspiration is directed and for Whose honor and glory His ministers daily proclaim in psalms and hymns the wonders of His perfection. It is divine also by reason of its source, which is chiefly the Sacred Scriptures, the inspired word of God. The Holy Ghost Who speaks principally in this Divine Office begins by praising God the Father in His Incarnate Son; He expresses His thoughts in the writings of the prophets, and His sentiments in the psalms and canticles; and from these He inspired the Church to compose a prayer and impose its recitation on all her ministers.

This prayer is also called ecclesiastical, for it is the work of the Church. It is at once a duty and a chorus, a labor and a song. For the Church is a society and as such owes a public homage to God besides the individual homage of each of her members. That this work be rightly done and that this chorus may never fail, the Church places this obligation on such chosen and devout members whom she constitutes her representatives before God, and

whom she delegates to praise Him in her name and to invoke Him in all her needs. The recitation of the Divine Office in this manner is never a purely personal act, but one which is performed in the name of the Church. When the pastor of souls alone on his mission turns to his Breviary he prays as the representative of his people. This public character of the official prayer of the Church is more clearly manifest when the Divine Office is solemnly chanted in monastic chapels and cathedral choirs. In neither case is it purely individual nor uttered in the name of only one; nor does it redound solely to the benefit of him from whose lips it comes; it is the voice of the Church rising in adoration and proclaiming, "Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to Thy Name be glory." Even as the merits of Christ's Redemption are extended from the moment of His death on Calvary to the end of time, so each day the fervor of the morning Mass is renewed throughout the day by the Hours of His canonical prayer. It would seem as if the whole world becomes a temple wherein from daylight unto darkness and from darkness unto dawn voices without number repeat unanimously and without variation the same accents of adoration, of praise and supplication. The Levites of old sung the praises of God on the steps of the temple; on the first day of the week the Christians of the Apostolic age went forth early in the morning and engaged in a similar way. Not a moment of time has passed wherein a union of souls and a concurrence of hearts were wanting for this work of love, or lips consecrated to God were silent in His praise. Each day and hour of weary years and tediously passing centuries, this sublime form of prayer has

been heard without ceasing, and in union with the Eucharistic Sacrifice has continually ascended heavenward bearing man's offering of praise and adoration to the throne of God. In a very true sense to labor is to pray; for toil performed in obedience to the Divine Will is true homage to God; but we must also remember that to pray is to labor. The work of prayer is the glory of the Christian. His delight is to offer praise to his Maker in labor and in song.

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## CARDINAL HAYES STATES AIMS OF THE CATHOLIC RADIO HOUR

(Extract from his address at the inaugural program in the Studio of the National Broadcasting Company, New York City, March 2, 1930).

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

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

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

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



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