

CATHOLIC HOUR

RT. REV. MSGR. LEO J. STECK



THE CHURCH IN RURAL LIFE

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THE CHURCH IN RURAL LIFE

Four addresses delivered on the nationwide Catholic Hour, produced by the National Council of Catholic Men, in cooperation with the National Broadcasting Company, from September 7, 1947 to September 28, 1947

BY

RT. REV. MSGR. LEO J. STECK



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC-MEN 1312 Massachusetts Avenue, N. W. Washington 5, D. C.

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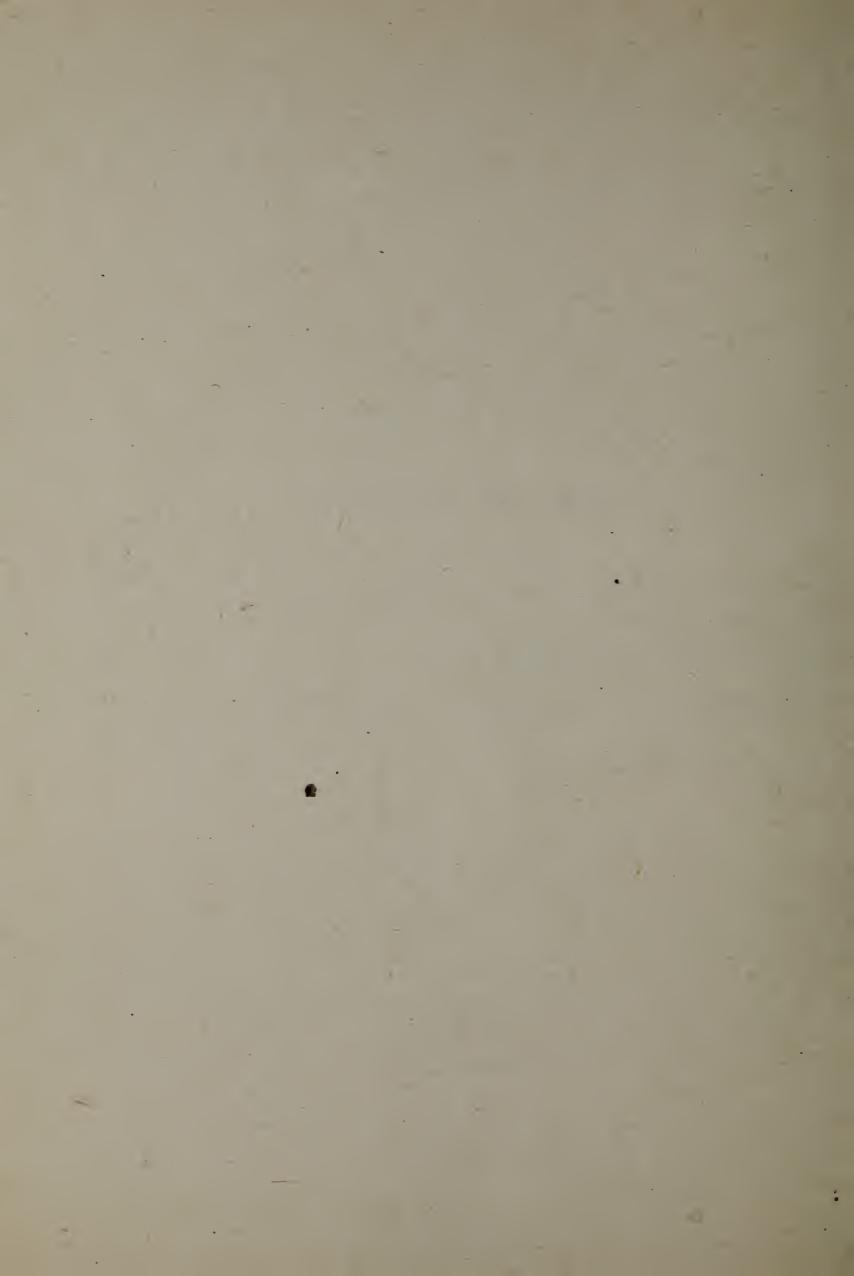
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THE MODERN CRUSADE

Address Given On September 7, 1947

It is but natural for the Catholic Church to take an active interest in the problems of the people living in rural America. Christ, Her Divine Founder, took just such an interest in the people with whom He lived.

He was born on the outskirts of a small town of Bethlehem, where His companions were the beasts of the field, and His first adorers, the shepherds who watched their sheep on the hills of the Holy Land. Not in the larger cities did He spend His youth, but again in the small town of Nazareth.

His parables are stories of Rural Life. All examples are taken from such things as the wheat of the field, the fruit of the tree, the lost sheep. birds of the air, the lilies of the field are all used to remind man not to be too solicitous for the things of this world, and to tell man that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one lily. His companions were farmers, shepherds, fishermen. He lived with country people and loved the country-side where He preached the Sermon on the Mount. When He died, it was upon a tree He was placed fast with huge nails, and from which He Gave up His soul to His Father in Heaven. His tomb, like the place of His birth, was a limestone cave.

The Church, from Monte Cassino down the centuries to Maryknoll, has produced men who took an active interest in the tillers of the soil. The Benedictines of the fifth century are bound to the religious of the twentieth century, not only by the same Faith, the same Sacraments, the same moral principles, liturgical practices, and priesthood, but also by the same interest in rural communities.

In the United States of America, the Catholic Church is, for the most part, an Urban Institution. Forty-four of its one hundred-sixteen dioceses are found in the industrial northeast, the area east of Milwaukee and St. Louis and north of a line drawn between Cincinnati and Baltimore. These dioceses have a combined Catholic population of 16,000,000 or sixty-six per cent of the total number in the United

States. In these forty-four dioceses, despite the fact that the Catholic population soars over the million mark in cities such as New York, Brooklyn, Chicago, and Boston, in ten of the rural dioceses of the same area, it drops below the level of 100,000, falling as low as 32,000 in the diocese of Lafayette, Indiana. The United States Census for Religious Bodies, classified the the Catholic membership of Church as eighty per cent urban and twenty per cent rural.

A study of such conditions prompted a young priest, Father Edwin V. O'Hara, of Eugene, Oregon, now Bishop O'Hara of Kansas City, Missouri, to take the role of a Crusader to interest members of the American Hierarchy, the clergy, religious, and the laity, to begin a movement and to start an organization to remedy the sad situation. Father O'Hara was rewarded for all the sacrifices he had made when the late John Cardinal Glennon invited him to come to St. Louis. meet with the members of the Central Bureau, and start the Catholic Rural Life Conference. That was in the fall of 1923, and here in St. Louis, within the shadow of this magnificent St. Francis Xavier Church. - mustard seed of the conference was planted in fertile soil. Almost twenty-five years have passed by, during which time much good has been accomplished for God and Country.

During that quarter century many distinguished members of the American Hierarchy have served as President to guide the Catholic Rural Life Conference along a course that would make for a permanent and representative organization. In the years of its existence more than sixty Dioceses have Directors to supervise a workable diocesan pro-A board of Directors, gram. made up of clergy and laity, has produced a well-thought out, and workable program for the entire United States. Numerous books and pamphlets have been written on the Rural Life Program together with a most comprehensive Manifesto on Rural Life, presented to enlighten the public on the Catholic Philosophy A National of Rural Living. Office has been established in Des Moines, Iowa, with the generous permission of the Most Reverend Gerald T. Bergan, who graciously consented to allow the Rural Life office to have the services of one of his most zealous and energetic priests, Monsignor L. J. Ligutti, who has done more than any other living

person to make this new crusade known to the citizens of this nation.

It is a crusade to improve the economic, social, and spiritual conditions of our fellow citizens living on the land. It is a Crusade for God, our homes, our fields. Do we realize every time we sit down at table to enjoy the food placed before us, the heroic effort, the back-breaking work, the unseen heartaches endured by the men and women who made these gifts possible? Do we realize, that practically everything we eat—the clothes we wear, the furniture we use, the fuel to heat our homes, the ornaments that adorn our churches, homes and schools—all these come from Earth—Good Earth? Mother Yes, all this is God's gift to There is something in every man that urges him to go back to the land, to enjoy the beauties of nature, to gaze at forest and mountain, river and stream, flower and field and say: "God has created all these things." One need not be a poet to fill his soul with such uplifting thoughts.

This modern Crusade has taken up the cause of the farmer and his family to make life more human and the burdens lighter. But this Crusade works

not only for the body man, but also for his soul's wel-There is little sense in asking Catholics or any other people to move to the farm and make it a way of life, unless they have the same opportunities for the practice of their religion, and the education of their children that are available in the large cities. Without such opportunities there will be a loss of faith and religion—a thing which has happened in all too many instances in past decades.

Recently this new crusade has undertaken, with the aid of clergy and laity, a program of street-preaching and lecturing in the open forum, to bring the doctrines of the Church to those who know her not. Paul of old went into the city of Athens in the Areopagus to preach the "unknown God"; in the present day we need more St. Pauls to preach the unknown Christ and His doctrines.

In order to care for the religiously underprivileged, group, the New Crusade, the Rural Life Conference, has sought to arouse interest in the importance of the problem and has developed a technique for its solution. The Religious Vacation School Movement, the Religious Correspondence Courses, and the

Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, have been fostered and are used by the National Catho-Life lic Rural Conference. Every effort is being made to rural hosestablish Catholic pitals, to build and maintain small Catholic rural schools, and to provide Missionary Sisterhoods for home visitation and instruction in scattered rural districts.

By such methods, the spiritual and corporal works of mercy can be preached and, above all, practiced. St. James tells us: "Be ve doers of the word and not hearers only." This is a work that will tax the intelligent, prudent zeal of the clergy, religious, and laity of the Catholic Church in America. It will mean sacrifice of time, talent, and money. But all our talents, money, and energy are but gifts from God, instruments in the hands of God, and we are to use them for His greater honor-and glory and for the extension of Christ's Kingdom on earth: "Thy kingdom come."

For the full development of human personality, the greater good of the family, the welfare of the Church, and the maintenance of a democracy, rural living is the desirable mode of life for a greater number of people, perhaps a fifty-fifty balance rather than the twenty-eighty ratio of today.

In recent times, we have heard much and read more of the displaced persons in Europe and other parts of the world. Their indescribable physical, moral. and spiritual plight has been presented by honest men and women who have visited the camps in which these unfortunates are Everyone agrees something must be done. Hunger is taking its toll among the men, women, and especially, the children. Disease is increasing and, if allowed to go unchecked the entire world will feel the ef-The four horsemen, especially hunger and disease, are spreading fear, panic, and despair in many parts of the world. Our nation is feeding large portions of the world, and according to the estimate of thinking men, that will be our privilege of charity for some time to come. These displaced persons must be rehabilitated. Why not allow a reasonable number to come to the United States, settle on farms, and help produce the food their own people need so badly? After a very careful survey, it has been discovered that many parts of the United States are in need

of such farm help, and the American people living there are most willing and anxious to have some displaced European farmers assist them in producing the grain necessary to feed the world. Never have millions prayed more fervently: "Give us this day our daily bread."

This in brief is the history, the program and in small part the achievements of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference —the modern crusade. Pope Pius XII, gloriously reigning says: "We are well aware how much the moral recovery of the whole people depends on a class of farmers socially sound and religiously firm . . . God gave man the earth for his cultivation as the most beautiful and honorable occupation in the natural order . . . Notwithstanding all his difficulties, the tiller of the soil represents the natural order things willed by God. The farmer knows that man, by his labor, is to control material things; that material things are not to control man."

Friends of the Catholic Hour, won't you join with me in offering a prayer to God, Who Alone can give and preserve the fruits of the earth, so urgently needed, to feed His starving children.

"O God, Source and Giver of all things, Who dost manifest Thy infinite majesty, power and goodness in the earth about us, we give Thee honor and glory.

For the sun and rain, for the manifold fruits of our fields, for the increase of our herds and flocks, we thank you. For the enrichment of our souls with divine grace, we are grateful.

Supreme Lord of the harvest, graciously accept us and the fruits of our toil, in union with Christ, Thy Son, as atonement for our sins, for the growth of Thy Church, for peace and Charity in our homes, for the salvation to all. Amen."

RELIGION AND THE RURAL HOME IN AMERICA

Address Given On September 14, 1947

With a large proportion of our American people practical pagans who have no religious affiliation whatsoever, we are facing a very serious problem that may prove more destructive than the dreaded atom bomb. More than 70,000,000 American people do not come under the benign influence of religion. Approximately 20,000,000 American homes are deprived of religious influence. If the first line of America's defense is found in the hearths and homes of rural America, then these homes must be kept strong. When I say, therefore, that the first line of America's defense is found in the hearths and homes of rural America, I mean that America's first line of defense is the preservation of religion in those rural Take religion from our homes, and the homes themselves will perish. Take religion from our homes, and all the armament in creation, all the wealth and organization of mighty minds, and a huge nation will be as helpless as Chinese paper dragons against a country or government which will invade and destroy us. These are no idle

words, no mere ponderings of a pious philosopher or cynical pessimist. They speak the living fact, and we must face this fact or perish. If proof be required, look at those nations that outlawed God and substituted man. A sorry spectacle today, with their people impoverished, disillusioned, their cities destroyed, their honor impaired. We must learn from the history of the world.

The lack of religion in the home of our American people is of serious concern to leaders of both Church and state. The members of the educational commission appointed by the Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York make this observation: "We are convinced that the great lack in our homes and in our national life is the lack of true, simple religion." If this nation does not maintain its religious foundation. its whole structure will fail. With generation after generation of our youth growing into manhood and womanhood without religious instruction in their homes schools, a real danger confronts the future welfare of our providentially discovered and preserved nation. We need a generation of boys and girls, filled with a spirit of spiritual conquest, determined to lead a full, abundant, unashamed, Christian life, come what might.

God at all times has manifested the greatest concern for the safety and security of the home and family. The long history of the human race gives ample evidence of God's special providence for the protection of the family. So great was God's love for home and family that His only-begotten Son was born of a Virgin Mother in the city of Bethlehem, and lived in the city of Nazareth, in a humble home, with Mary, His Mother, and St. Joseph, His foster-father, for eighteen years. Thus in a very marvelous manner did He sanctify the home and bless the human family. We are told in the pages of the New Testament that "He went to Nazareth and subject to them" was 2:51). Christ began His public life by being present at the wedding feast of Cana and blessing that union and future home. His love for little children is known to all men and has been the inspiration of artist and poet. "Suffer the little children, and forbid them not to come to me:

for the kingdom of heaven is for such." (Matthew 19:14)

On another occasion, He condemned in strongest terms, those who scandalize a little child: "He that shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone should be hanged about his neck and that he should be drowned in the depths of the sea" (Matthew 18:6). Even as Christ was dying on the cross He provided a home for His Blessed Mother, when He entrusted her for safe-keeping into the arms of St. John, the beloved apostle.

We are giving much attention to the economic and social evils that threaten our civilization and the future safety and security of this great nation. A commendable effort is being made to remedy these evils, but unless more attention is given to the greatest danger that threatens modern America, we are most certainly going to find "that the path, of glory leads but to the grave." The most potent danger that threatens the present and future security of our Blessed land, is the alarming decline of religious influence in the homes of its citizens.

The record of the infant days of our beloved country is a story

of ideals and principles clothed with religion and found in every home; in the days of her youth, she was esteemed by nations as a Christian exemplar; in her early adult life she regarded religion and morality as necessary elements in the permanent structure of society. But today, although the statutes remain, an analyst points to the danger signals already appearing on the American horizon, and a non-Catholic commentator adds: "Unless the churches can Christianize men and women, the world is going back to barbarism." More and more each year are Christian principles being relegated to the Limbo of the undesired; the last generation witnessed the rapid fall of America down the scale of morality; and the decade just past saw the criminal and the racketeer ascend to shameful prominence in our national life, where they have been placed upon a pedestal to be venerated and imitated by the youth of the land.

In no dark and ugly corner do we find the breeding of this dragon that pulls down our standard of security; it cannot be traced to the halls of the legislatures, nor does its unmistakable imprint lead to the door of the classroom. Although many

agencies have contributed to the decline, nevertheless it is unquestionably true that the finger or major responsibility must be placed upon the home. "Hast thou children? instruct them, and bow down their neck from their childhood" (Ecclesiasticus 7:25).

The home is the first school. It is the best, the most hallowed, and the most potential of all the academies; and the parent, especially the mother, is the first, the most influential, and the most cherished of all teachers. No human ordinance can abrogate or annul the divine right of parents to rule their own households.

The education of the child should begin at its mother's knee. The mind of the child, like softened wax, receives first impressions with ease, and these. impressions last longest. "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." A child is susceptible to instruction much earlier than parents commonly imagine. He has the capacity to perceive and apprehend the truth, though unable as yet to go through the process of reasoning and analysis. Mothers should watch with zealous eye the first unfolding of the infant mind,

and pour into it the seed of heavenly knowledge.

A mother wields more power over her child than she often realizes. She is his oracle and prophet. She is his guide, philosopher, and friend. He never doubts what his mother tells him. The lesson he receives acquires additional force because it proceeds from one to whom he gave his first love, and whose image in after life, is indelibly stamped on his heart and mem-Mothers, do not lose the ory. golden opportunity you have of training your children in faith and morals while their hearts are open to drink in your every word.

Mothers, you share the same home with your children; you frequently occupy the same room. You eat at the same table with them. They are habitually before your eyes. You are, therefore, the best fitted to instruct them, and you can avail yourselves of every incident that presents itself and draw from it some appropriate moral reflection.

The most distinguished personages who have adorned Christianity by their apostolic virtues, or who have served their country by fine patriotism, or

who have shed a luster on the home by the integrity of their private lives, have generally been men who had the happiness of receiving from pious parents early principles of moral rectitude.

The Vicars of Christ in their uninterrupted line have continuously reminded the home of its responsibilities. The late Pope Pius XI, in a very special manner devoted himself to recommendations for its greater stability. His letters on Chrisand Christian tian education marriage are masterful and scholarly efforts to build up the defences on its frontier. He reiterates that it is in the school of schools—the home, that there is a lamentable decline in religious and moral education which can be remedied only in the more effective discharge of the obligations of the parents within the home. "It is certain," he says, "that by the law both of nature and of God, this right and duty of educating their offspring belongs, in the first place, to those who began the work of nature by giving them birth, and they are indeed forbidden to leave unfinished this work and expose it to certain ruin." "They that instruct many to justice [shall

shine] as stars for all eternity" (Daniel 12:3).

No intelligent man can question the importance of religion in the home of today. Where is the child to receive its first impressions of God, heaven, love of God and men, the virtues of charity and justice, obedience to authority, reverence for the Constitution, devotion to country, honesty, unless it be in the home? The Father of our country, George Washington, in his memorable Farewell Address, as if inspired from on high, spoke to the citizens and especially to the makers of homes: "Let us indulge with caution the supposition that a nation can long remain moral without religion." With the vision of a prophet he spoke to those who today have divorced religion from government, school, and home.

Behold the Iong list of broken homes with all the evils that follow therefrom. In analyzing the alarming increase in juvenile criminals, Mr. J. Edgar Hoover of the FBI attributes it, at least in part, to the collapse of the home and the failure of parents to teach religion in the home. And so it is to you, mothers and fathers, builders of American homes that I appeal. Bring religion back into your own lives;

return to the faith of your fathers, for no one can give to his children what he himself does not possess. You provide abundantly for the needs of body and mind for yourselves and your children. But you deprive yourselves and them of the spiritual food that is the nourishment of your souls and without which no family, no society, no nation on the face of the earth is secure. Without religion there is no true morality.

Any honest man has but to scan the history of the world in the past few decades to secure convincing proof of that fact. Wherever the worship of God and adherence to His law has been eradicated by governments you have seen the triumph of force, of brutality, of denial of the most fundamental Deny God, rehuman rights. ject religious principles, and there is no check upon the evil actions of and man desires whereof the world bears sorry witness at this very moment. You seek, and rightly so, to secure your physical well-being and to increase your store of secular knowledge, but you are being untrue to yourself in not providing for the needs of your soul by seeking a knowledge of religion and are thus depriving your children of a precious heritage without which human society cannot endure. "To thine ownself be true and it must follow as the night the day, thou cans't not then be false to any man," in the words of Shakespeare.

It is only when parents realize that they themselves must supernaturally equipped for their holy task and live according to the dictates of Christian principles that their children will so learn to live. Only when the parents live temperate lives, will understand the children beauty of abstinence; only when the parents live, think, and speak in terms of purity will the children appreciate the angelic virtue; only when the parents honor each other, will the children understand with conviction meaning of "Honor thy father and mother."

Bring religion back into the home and the future of this nation is secure. "Not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that procedeth from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4), is as true today as it was when Christ spoke those words. "Seek ye... first the kingdom of God, and his justice, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33), is as encouraging and consoling today as it

was when Jesus walked the earth as the God-man. Allow these agencies, that today are threatening our American homes, to continue without strong interference, and the same fate that befell proud, cultured Greece and mighty, pagan Rome will be ours. We are no wiser than Greece nor mightier than Rome. There can be no genuine democracy without God. A so-called democracy without God is a Frankenstein monster that will destroy its creators. If the home fails in its duty to the child, the child will fail in its duties to God and to society. But with the restoration of religion in the sacred confines of the home, we can look forward with the confidence that this nation with all its glorious traditions will continue to be the home of freedom and democracy, the haven of the oppressed and the persecuted. May God continue to bless and protect our American homes.

Won't you join with me in offering this petition to God, through the intercession of Mary, Christ's Immaculate Mother, for the safety and future security of our homes, rural and urban:

"O Mary Immaculate, guard with loving care this country dedicated to thee. Let thy purity

keep it pure. Watch over its institutions. As thou art the refuge of all sinners, let this country continue to be the refuge of the exiled and the oppressed. Let it never forget its high voca-

tion to teach all nations of the world, by word and example, the principles of well-regulated liberty and reverence for the rights of all men."

God be with you, always.

MISSIONARIES IN RURAL AMERICA

Address Given On September 21, 1947

The Catholic Church, Christ's Church, must always be a Missionary Society. Her Divine Founder gave the Command: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations . . . teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you, and behold, I am with you all days, even unto the consummation of the world" (Matthew 28:19-20). The Apostles and their immediate successors brought the message of the Gospel to the Roman Empire and the Greek World. In spite of fire and sword, persecutions and plunderings, the doctrine of Christ entered the homes and hearts of patrician and plebeian, of the Greek and Roman civilization.

The migrating millions of Teuton and Vandol tribes were tamed not by the sword but by the soothing doctrine of charity, by the teaching of men's dignity, that dignity which resulted from man's having been made to the image and likeness of God and from which dignity issues the equality of master and slave in the sight of God. These Barbarian tribes became the great

Christian nations under the leadership of such missioners as Patrick to Ireland, Remigius to France, Boniface to Germany, Austin to England. All became one in Christ. One Faith, one Baptism, one set of Sacraments, one in Authority. Into every part of the world this doctrine has been carried by missionaries filled with the love of God and their fellow men.

The greatest, since the days of St. Paul, undoubtedly is St. Francis Xavier, who unfurled Christ's banner, the cross, in the Orient with its teeming millions.

To our own providentially discovered country came the Franciscan padres with the discoverers themselves. They in turn were followed by the whiterobed Dominicans, the blackrobed Jesuits, the Redemptorists, the Passionists and many others. Since the foundation of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, November 1, 1789, a legion of diocesan clergy joined these zealous missionaries. From the tiny mustard seed planted in "Mary's land," 120 dioceses have grown,

with 153 Archbishops and Bishops constituting the American Hierarchy, under whom approximately 40,000 priests serve 30,-000,000 Catholics, or teach the 400,000 students in 2,400 high schools, colleges, and universi-That is a rich contribution to the spiritual and cultural development of this divinely preserved republic. Christian culture is stamped on every portion of the United States through the self-sacrificing efforts of those who make up the membership of the Catholic Church. In peace and in war they have responded to the call of the country's leaders.

In spite of the remarkable growth of the Catholic Church in the United States much remains to be accomplished. Our growth, for the most part, has been and still is in the urban portion of the nation. We are a small minority compared with the more than one hundred million who are outside the church.

What is the true picture? The population in the United States is a little more than 141,000,000 souls, of these approximately 30,000,000 are members of the Catholic Church, and some of these only nominal Catholics. That makes us a very small minority indeed. In this nation

there are 3,000 counties of which one third or 1,000 have neither priests nor Catholic Churches. Placed together their combined area equals 757,000 square miles. It is a territory as large as twelve average states. It is large enough to form a nation the size of Old Mexico with a population equal to that of Canada, and let us remember that these counties include many regions where the birth-rate is the highest in America.

The people living in these rural areas have excellent traits that endear them to visitors.

These people have a strong love for children, and their homes, as has been stated, are blessed with many of them. In this they have resisted the modern trend to small families.

Their loyalty to home and family ties is outstanding. They are kind-hearted and generous. But, most important of all, there is in them an instinctive love of religion, even among those who have no practical working knowledge of it and profess no allegience to any church.

These conditions in the United States were carefully studied and surveyed by a young priest, Father Howard Bishop, a charter member of the Catholic Rural Life Conference, the Modern

Crusade in America. With a stout heart, strong faith in God and man, zeal for souls, he desired to begin a society known Home Missioners of 2.8 the America. Father Bishop beheld millions of people, his own American kith and kin, sitting in the darkness and in the shadow of death. He felt something must be done about it. journeyed the length and breadth of the land surveying the problem, then waiting, imploring an answer to the challenge which he perceived. His beginnings were not only difficult, they were a veritable martyrdom of the soul which groped through the All beginnings black night. which are born of God encounter these obstacles. They strange, but almost infallible guarantee of the presence of the finger of God. They are the trials before which strong men sometimes succumb. But Father Bishop carried on in season and out of season. He was convinced that the Good God who had done so much for America would not permit a great mass of Americans to move on without knowing Him or the unspeakable blessings of His Redemption. Less than eight years ago the answer came to his prayers and watchings. His great benefac-

tor, the scholarly son of St. Dominic, the Most Reverend John T. McNicholas, Archbishop of Cincinnati, Ohio, permitted him to start his work in Glendale; Ohio-Glenmary as it is known. In less than eight years spirit of Glenmary has caught on. Otherwise, how shall we explain the fact that already eighteen priests are affiliated with the work? How shall we explain the students who have come to place their youthful souls and energies and talents at the disposal of this great Amer-Missionary movement. ican vital part of the Modern Crusade? How shall we interpret the presence of a band of enthusiastic young women who have renounced their lives and careers in the world to cooperate in this apostolate?

There is nothing but humanly humdrum existence among America's submarginal farms, unspectacular village streets, and mountain cabins. Along Tobacco Road they plod their weary way. But for them it is the Road of High Romance because they are able to bring to America's forgotten men the glow of new inspiration, a new purpose for living, the abiding presence of the Eucharistic King, the sanctify-

ing effects of the seven sacred sacraments. And what sustains them is the important fact that wherever they go, toiling up mountain trails, through the ooze of dismal swamps, there walks beside them the figure of a Carpenter, who was born in a stable, who grew up in a hidden hill town, who chose twelve poor country laborers for His companions, but who conquered a world.

What is the most urgent need of the Home Missioners of America today? The answer is simple -missioners-fine young men and young women, with their deep faith and pure, strong, fearless souls, to come and be soldiers of Christ in a great enterprise that can save the world, that can save our dear, loved country from final defeat in time and eternity. How vast the harvest to be gathered and how few the laborers! For the physical preservation of our country, millions of brave men and women offered their lives. What will you, dear listeners, offer to save her soul? The Church of Christ is alive to this need, but she needs human instruments to carry on her divine mission. She is alive to the invitation of the Divine Master: "Come, follow Me," that is beckoning to her

young men and young women the flower of her great army of souls—to battle with the peaceful weapons of love, truth, and charity, for the salvation of the millions.

Yes, the Church in America needs missioners who are filled with an apostolic zeal, burning with the original pentecostal fire; missioners, who have the love of God and their fellow men as the two great guiding lights in their labors of love.

It may be impossible for you, dear listener, to enter the religious life and embark upon a mission of mercy by preaching and practicing the spiritual and corporal works of mercy, but you can be represented by some priest or nun. I have known of many cases where people have educated seminarians on their long, difficult road to the priesthood. Maybe God has not sent a vocation to your son, but you can share in that great honor by having an adopted son stand at the altar of God, working in the "no-man's" land of America. You can help him by your prayers and sacrifices once he is actually on the Missions, bearing the burdens of the day, the heat of summer, and the cold of winter. "Be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only." You will

have the great consolation of knowing that the words of Sacred Scripture are applicable to you. "He that instructeth another unto glory shall shine as the stars for all eternity."

There are many business men and business women who have placed their God on the list of stock-holders in their business. When the business has flourished, they have given God the same dividend they gave themselves or other members of their firm. In the language of Pope Pius XI, remember: "There is so much to be done and so little time in which to do it."

And then there are the Gold Star Mothers and Fathers, who may be in a position to build a permanent monument to memory of a dear son who made the supreme sacrifice. Thev could build a small mission chapel. It will bring such people great consolation to know that somewhere they are making it possible for others to share in the Redemption of Him who made the supreme sacrifice on the hill of Golgatha.

There have been many of the larger, more thickly populated places, and wealthier dioceses who support a poor diocese with its hundreds of priestless counties. Is it asking too much to

have the large cities understaffed in order to give one or more priests to those places where there are none? The Missions must not suffer. It has been demonstrated that where dioceses send missioners to other lands or other dioceses, God sends an increase in vocations to the mission-minded Ordinaries. Many a large parish with its debts paid, its people well established, have adopted a small struggling mission in the southern part of this It is the only way in nation. which these impoverished Bishops, priests, religious and underprivileged laity will be able to succeed. The few parishioners in these missions are generous according to their means, but they are so few and so scattered, they simply cannot carry the load. In a diocese in the middle West, a tiny mustard seed was planted thirteen years ago, when the Ordinary of that diocese organized a Rural Life Conference for the benefit of his scattered missions. In a short time he succeeded in securing the wholehearted support of the clergy, religious and devoted laity. Today, that mustard seed has grown as a Cedar of Lebanon. In a little more than a decade, nineteen schools and eighteen churches have been built and

paid for in whole or in part; school buses transport forty more than two thousand children centrally located parochial schools; chapel cars fully-equipped bring the message of Christ and the Mystery of Faith—the Mass—to the people living in the mountain regions; clothing, medicines and medical aid are distributed with lavish hand to Protestant, Jew and Catholic, to black and white, alike. This is only the beginning of a program, that with God's help and blessing will bring the truth of the Catholic Church to the most remote sections of that particular diocese. A comprehensive plan will allow the laity to participate in the work of preaching in the wide open spaces and on the street corners, as did the disciples of old, who were laymen.

If such a program has succeeded in some dioceses then it is reasonable to conclude, it can and will succeed in others. This is a challenge to the intelligence, zeal, and charity of the Catholic people of America. By their united efforts they can make

Christ's prayer and prophecy come true: "Other sheep I have, that are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd" (John 10:16).

Christ compared the extension of His Kingdom to a harvest. He scanned the entire world and said: "The harvest indeed is great, but the labourers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send labourers into his harvest" (Matthew 9:37-38). Yes, pray, and sacrifice, for the Missions of America.

"O God, Who willest that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth send, we beseech Thee, labourers to Thy harvest, and give them to speak Thy word with all confidence, that Thy message may run and may be made plain, and that all people may know Thee, the only True God, and Him Whom Thou has sent, Jesus Christ our Lord."

Queen of the Missions: Pray for us!

WOMAN'S PART IN RURAL LIFE

Address Given On September 28, 1947

Woman has played an important part in the history of the human race. God Himself has destined her to fill this role, for He is the authority for the statement: "It is not good for man to be alone." In the book of Genesis we read that "the Lord God formed man of the slime of the earth, and breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul" (Genesis 2:7). But woman; He formed not from the slime of the earth, but from the body of man. After it had been elevated to the supernatural state. Woman was to be man's helpmate. She must be his counsellor and comforter; she must encourage him when he is weak: reanimate him when he falls: she must be his better self, his inspiration, his ideal.

The condition of woman throughout paganism has been one of dishonor. She was degraded by polygamy and divorce, and reduced to the position of being little less than the chattel and slave of man. "Woman makes the world from century to century," therefore woman made paganism. The depths to which woman fell

during paganism, show the heights she might have attained. The influence she exerted for the degradation of mankind, shows the influence she might have exerted for its elevation.

While pre-historic times are shrouded in mystery and veiled in secrecy, we do have an accurate account of the history of God's Chosen People, in the pages of the Old Testament.

There we find the names of illustrious and distinguished men; but with them we discover equally illustrious and famous women. When Judith slew the Assyrian tyrant, Holofernes, her people acclaimed her: "Thou art the glory of Jerusalem, Thou art the joy of Israel, thou art the honor of our people."

The heroic mother of the Machabees beheld her seven sons tortured and slain in one day, and "bore it with good courage, for the hope she had in God: and she bravely exhorted every one of them in her own language, being filled with wisdom: and joining a "man's heart to a woman's thought" (2 Machabees 7:20-21). When her youngest son was to be

killed, she was asked to counsel the boy to save his life by violating the Mosaic Law. This mother, turning towards her son said: "I beseech thee, my son, look upon heaven and earth, and all that is in them: and consider that God made them out of nothing, and mankind also. So thou shalt not fear the tormentor, but being made a worthy partner with thy brethren, receive death, that in that mercy I may receive thee again with thy brethren" (2 Machabees 28-29).

Many a mother would sacrifice her life for her sons; it is a pure, a noble, and a brave mother who would sacrifice her sons for God.

Words fail when we try to describe that woman, who is the connecting link between the Old and the New Testament, Mary, Christ's Mother. She has been honored through the centuries by painter, poet and composer. She was saluted by the Archangel Gabriel: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women." (Luke Protestant Poet. 1:28). The Wordsworth referred to her as: "Our tainted nature's solitary boast."

When the prophecy of Isaias, foretelling that a virgin should conceive and bear a son, was verified, the whole human race

was rehabilitated. When she. whom we call in the Litany, the Morning Star, first appeared as the herald of the Rising Sun of Justice, there was realized here on earth, a living ideal of womanhood. Is it strange that this ideal of womanhood, this blessed vision of virginal purity, and of sweet motherhood, has not only changed the condition of woman, but has remade her standards, her aims, her aspirations? Is it strange that she, "Our tainted nature's solitary boast," should have been so mighty an influence, though she wrote no books, made no discoveries in science, though outside of one short poem we have little record of what she said? The greatest powers for the good of man, have been the most silent.

Thereafter, society felt the quickening pulse of a new life and the home took on a new character. From woman's throne beside the hearth, she influences the child and molds the character of the future citizen. Her homes for the poor and the aged, her hospitals for the sick and diseased have established standards of social activity, to which the world attempts to conform.

The history of Christianity is filled with the names of women who have made rich contributions to God, Church, home and culture. The youthful St. Agnes and St. Cecilia stand as models of Christian purity. St. Catherine of Alexandria, pure of heart and keen of mind, has been placed by the Church as the patroness of philosophy philosophers. There is no brighter gem in the crown of Christian civilization, than the daughter of eldest daughter of the the Church, St. Joan of Arc, who at the age of seventeen led her country's troops to a glorious victory over the invader; and who at the age of nineteen died a martyr's death at the stake, having been betrayed by her own people, condemned by those she rescued, and abandoned by the King she restored to power. In more recent times the name of St. Teresa, known and loved by all the world as "The Little Flower," serves as an inspiration to man and woman. Within the memory of all in this audience, one of the most recent names to be listed in the "Who's Who" of the Catholic Church, is St. Francis Xavier Cabrini, known by the lovable title of ... Mother Cabrini.

In the glorious history of this nation, who will attempt to list the names of those women, wives and mothers, who sacrificed a

life of ease and comfort, to establish new homes in the American wilderness? They came with the discoverers themselves, then with the explorers, then with the Colonists, who settled on the eastern and southern shores of what was to become the United States of America. They shared the hardships of a primitive home, they braved the winter's cold and the summer's heat: they faced the fierce Indians and battled plague and disease with untried means and methods. They stood side by side with their husbands and sons, to defend homes and extend frontiers.

When new settlements were to be established far inland, these women did not hesitate to enter the caravan of covered wagons, to blaze a trail through forest and field and over turbulent rivers and uncharted seas. west and northwest were opened by the sons and daughters of these hardy pioneering women. Many did not reach their coveted Their mortal remains lie bleached on the desert sands or the wide open spaces of the endless prairie. These were courageous women in the days when America was entirely rural. Every American citizen today, as he scans the glorious past, must offer a prayer of gratitude to

God for these heroic mothers, who, when America was rural, carved the future of the greatest nation on the face of the earth.

Modern woman must not be less courageous. Divine Providence can supply whatever women lack. When the wreckers of civilization can be daring, what excuse can women have before God, if they are less daring? "Launch out into the deep," Christ urges. When we take Him at His Word, we always pull through.

Into the hands of woman God has placed a sacred charge; the homes, the land, the liberty of our people. Men may strike the loudest blows, but the final decision in these matters rests with the women of the nation. Where man's clumsy reasoning fails, a woman's insight will often save Today this nation the truth. and the world need that insight. needs women whose keen minds and pure hearts will look beneath appearances and those spiritual truths upon which rest our democracy, our prosperity and our endangered peace. Placing the Kingdom of Heaven first in their lives, they will do all in their power to see that it is placed first in the lives of their fellow citizens. They will see that religion is honored not with mere lip service, but that its rights are ever preserved; the right to teach the sacredness of every human personality, without distinction of race, nationality, creed or color, and the right to proclaim the holy Revelation by which this sacredness of the human personality is guaranteed.

The present Holy Father, Pope Pius XII has urged the women of the world to take the lead in salvaging society from the wreckage wrought by war that has left us bankrupt, financially, morally, and spiritually. He reminds woman, that "her dignity is from God and in God." The sphere of woman, her manner of life, her native bent, is mother-hood.

"Thus it is that a woman can see all problems of human life only in the perspective of the That is why her delifamily. cate sense of her dignity puts her on guard any time that a social or political order threatens to prejudice her mission as a mother. Women, your destiny is at stake. Public life needs you. Your entry into public life came suddenly as a result of social upheavals which we see around us. You are called upon to take part. The fate of the family, the fate of human relations are at stake. They are in your hands. Every woman has the obligation in conscience to go into action, to hold back those currents which threaten the home and world peace. This direct participation in social and political activity does not change the normal activity of the woman. Who better than she can understand what is needed for the dignity of woman, the integrity and honor of the young girl, and the protection and education of the child, the preservation of a costly Peace? She knows from bitter experience, the sufferings women endure in times of war. She knows the anguish of soul suffered by mothers when sons or daughters make the supreme In this she shares sacrifice. the sorrows of the original Gold-Star Mother-Christ's Mother. She must work and pray for peace, while stumbling statesmen prepare for war. Her vote must be a vote for peace, hence, in the interests and for the good of the family she will strive to maintain peace."

"The need of the hour is women who are fearless leaders and not weaklings; women who put religion above all else; women who dare to be different; women who are willing to be Christophers . . . Christ-bearers . . . to live Christian lives at home, in public, at play and at prayer.

Christian women: pray and work without ceasing, without allowing yourselves ever to be discouraged by difficulties or obstacles. Under the standard of Christ The King, under the inspiration of His wonderful Mother, you must be restorers of the home, family and society. You must be modern Judiths who by your courageous example, will slay those tyrants, who endanger Christian civilization; and for which your children will proclaim you":

The Glory of the whole world, The Joy of the United States of America,

The HONOR of our Christian people.

GOD BE WITH YOU.

THE PURPOSE OF THE CATHOLIC HOUR

(Extract from the address of the late Patrick Cardinal Hayes at the inaugural program of the Catholic Hour in the studio of the National Broadcasting Company, New York City, March 2, 1930.)

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

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

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

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

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