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JOY



Is YOUR

Heritage

by John M. Scott, S. J.



Price Fifteen Cents



A GRAIL PUBLICATION

St. Meinrad

Indiana

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Declassified

DURING the past twelve months 7000 murders smeared their bloody fingerprints across the front pages of our newspapers. And this isn't half the story of sudden death!

According to facts gathered by the Federal Bureau of Investigation there were over twice this number of suicides last year. Since suicides are more often hushed up, the ratio may be even higher. "Life" magazine refers to the suicide rate as "the one statistical measure of despair."¹

In recent years a steel fence had to be erected around the observation platform on top of the Empire State building. In addition, uniformed guards are on patrol. Reason—to keep people from jumping from here to eternity.

What is it that prompts a man to jump from the top of a skyscraper and hurl himself to destruction? Why do men leap from a bridge in the dark of night and end their lives in the murky waters of a river? Is it because they are

so poor they are starving from lack of food? Don't they have enough money to live?

Look at the suicide list. You will be amazed at the number of suicides among millionaires.

SORDID THINKING

Isn't one of the main reasons for suicides due to a pessimistic outlook? Consider that weird society which existed in Paris, France. It was a society for the promotion of suicide. Its members were convinced that life was not worth living. They had a pessimistic outlook that found expression in drastic action. The members of this society wrote their names on slips of paper, and placed them in a vase. At certain set times a number of slips of paper were drawn out from the vase. Those whose names appeared on the slips, killed themselves in the presence of the other members. A ghastly expression of their sordid thinking.

DEATH LEAP

James V. Forrestal, first Defense Secretary, committed suicide by leaping from the thirteenth story of the Naval hospital in Bethesda, Maryland.

The fifty-seven-year-old former cabinet member left behind his own epitaph, a hand scrawled

copy of a Greek poem containing the line: "Better to die and sleep the never waking sleep than linger on."²

WITHOUT REASON?

Is the pessimist right? Is life a muddle without reason? Is man born to sweat, work, and suffer like a horse, and then turn his face to the wall and die? Is man a mere creature of earth and water, born to flourish for a day like the grass of the field, then wither and vanish?

SEA OF INDECISION

Men who have no answers to these heart-searching questions find themselves lost on a vast, trackless sea of indecision. They are like the navigator of a giant bomber who finds himself high over the ocean without compass or radio-beam to guide him. Captain Eddie Rickenbacker and crew experienced such a disaster when their Flying Fortress was lost over the blue waters of the Pacific. At last the fuel supply gave out, and the B-17 crashed into the shark infested waters of the Pacific. The men took to rubber lifeboats, and there began a terrible ordeal of twenty-one days.

Modern man finds himself adrift on dark, drifting seas of doubt and despair. "Pessimistic

man today," says Bishop Sheen, "has given himself up to a philosophy of despair."

ONE WORLD ONLY?

At the convention of the National Council of Catholic Nurses in Cleveland, Ohio, Archbishop Richard J. Cushing of Boston emphasized this fact. "Our generation is a generation of fears because it is a generation without faith. A generation without faith, it is strictly pagan in its outlook. The modern pagan lives in one world, and one world only—the world of material things. When that world turns to ashes or otherwise disillusion him, if he be physically strong he becomes a cynic. If he be physically sick, as like as not he becomes a suicide."³

REX BEACH

When Archbishop Cushing made the above statement, he may have had in mind the tragic death of one of the most lovable and dynamic figures of our times, a six-foot-three Olympic swimming champ, and water polo star of the Chicago Athletic Association. Rex Beach was a man's man, and a giant in heart as well as in mind and body.

Rex Beach was a big game hunter, scientific farmer, adventurer, and, above all, a wizard with

words. Hundreds of articles and thirty-three books came leaping from his pen. Hollywood paid \$100,000 for the movie rights to his last novel, the highest price ever paid by a motion picture company for an unpublished manuscript.

Rex had the King-Midas touch that turned whatever he undertook into gold. After conquering the film frontier, and shooting Alaskan brown bears, he dug into Florida's rich soil to sell \$200,000 worth of lily bulbs in one season. Apart from his writings he made over a million dollars in his various business enterprises.

LIFE'S TWILIGHT

Then, in the twilight of his life, his vision failed. Four cataract operations proved useless. He recognized people only by their voice.

Cancer struck like a python squeezing him in a steel-like grip that prevented him from even turning his head or speaking. For two years he breathed through a tube inserted in his larynx, and was fed through a tube that opened into his stomach.

Pain jerked his muscles like taut wires. Nerve-block surgery failed utterly to dull the sharp stabs of pain that pommelled his agonized body.

As a last resort special injections were tried—with no more success.

On the morning of December 7th, in the year that marked the close of the first half of the twentieth century, Rex Beach shot himself. The "Victor Hugo of the North" thus climaxed his own life."⁴

THE ONLY EXPLANATION

"No man has ever solved the problem of pain by refusing to accept the only explanation of it that will not drive a man to suicide or despair." These are the words delivered by Clare Boothe Luce in her Commencement Address at Creighton University.⁵

And Bishop Sheen reminds us that the present pessimistic state of mind that darkens the souls of men will be counteracted by the reaffirmation of love and life.⁶

SHOVE BACK THE CENTURIES

To get the correct view of life, shove back the centuries until you stand on the edge of vastness, before the mighty waters rolled upon the deep, before the stars were called by name to shine in the firmament of heaven. Go back along the arches of the years until you find yourself standing alone in the dazzling light before the great, white throne of God.

God is supremely happy. He is love and joy itself. "God," says St. John, "is Love."

LOVE

God is so good, He wants others to share His love and joy. He wants others to partake of the riches of His uncreated goodness and happiness supreme, and so, God decides to make man.

Out of the void of nothingness God fashions a world; then, reaching down to earth, he takes a handful of clay, and breathes forth into it His spirit. That first man was Adam.

Longfellow phrases the truth with an artist's touch:

*"Love is the root of all creation; God's
essence;
Worlds without number lie in His bosom
like children;
He made them for this purpose only,
Only to love, and to be loved again,
He breathed forth His spirit into the slum-
bering dust,
And upright standing, it laid its hand on
its heart and
Felt it was warm with a flame out of
heaven."*

God is not satisfied with having breathed into

us His breath of life. True Lover that He is, He wants to tell us of His love.

LOVE LETTER

His love is so vast He emblazons it in the spacious night with silver stars against a background of splendor from immortal tides of light. His love is so delicate, He fashions it in the fragile artistry of an Easter lily, and molds it in the upturned face of a pansy. His love is so mighty it speaks to us in the thunder of the summer storm striking echoes from the anvils in the sky.

NEW GIFTS

Each heart beat, each pulse throb is another gift fresh from His hand. Without His fingers supporting us, we would vanish into the empty nothingness from which He drew us.

STARS ARE MINE

Think what it means to have God for your Father, your best friend. You can look up at the stars tonight and say, "You are mine. For me God made the sentinels in the sky. Our Father Who is in heaven spread out the scintillating beauty of the Milky Way to speak His love for us. By day He sends the sunshine to warm our earth, to coax the tender growing plants from

the soil, and to nourish fields of wheat that we may have our daily bread."

WHO'S WHO

Your name may not be in "Who's Who." You may not rank among the upper 400. But you are still great. You are important. You are God's child. You are the work of His hands. He will never forget you, even for an instant. God is always by your side. This is a truth of great consolation. Your best friend is always with you. Whether you walk in the soft quiet of the evergreen forest, or climb into the wide blue yonder in a Douglas Stratoliner, God is with you, that great God of Whom the Scriptures say, "He walks on the wings of the wind, and the clouds are His chariots." Even if you try to escape Him, He will pursue down the nights and down the days and down the labyrinthian way of your own mind, and in the midst of tears.

YOUR ESTATES

As a child of God you have a dignity greater than that of all the kings of earth. You belong to the nobility of heaven. You belong to the court of the King of Kings. Your estates are

not limited by fences and walls. Your kingdom is the limitless kingdom of heaven.

GOLD COAST UNLIMITED

Have you ever strolled past the palatial residences of millionaires and envied their magnificent "Gold Coast" homes?

You need not envy them. You, yourself, are a landowner in the Celestial Kingdom of Heaven where eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man the things God has prepared for those who love Him. In comparison to the good things to come, all the riches of planet earth vanish to the zero point.

INHERITANCE UNBOUNDED

You have an inheritance greater by far than the combined wealth of the Rockefellers, the Du Ponts, and the Vandenberg. Your inheritance is not a few poor million dollars. Your inheritance is the vast treasure of heaven, the country that will afford you every desire of your heart.

HIGH AND BRIGHT

You can look up at the stars tonight and say, "You are high and bright; but someday I shall be above you, and thousands of years from now, when you are burnt out and gone from the sky,

I shall continue in the shining glory and unbounded joy of heaven.”

LIFT UP YOUR HEARTS

No wonder the Christian religion is called the religion of optimism, of hope, and of courage. Each day at Holy Mass Mother Church bids us “Lift up our hearts.”

It is good to lift up our hearts. To leave the valley of smoke and fog, and to mount unto the high mountain of the Lord. From the summit of the mountain of prayer, our spirit takes wings and soars like the eagle. The small things of earth are left behind. Your soul feels at peace with God. You gain a new perspective of earth-bound problems, and exclaim with the poet, “What is this ant life on a sphere of sand that it must drive with ant like cares my soul than all the stars together more sublime?”

NOT ENOUGH

Out of the void of nothingness God created us. Each second He sends gifts that speak His love. But this is not enough.

After giving us all other gifts, God, the Infinite Lover, decides to give us the greatest gift of all—the gift of Himself. He put away the glory that is His from eternity, and comes to

us as a child. He comes to us in the most gentle, most appealing, most loving manner which human nature could afford—that of a newborn babe.

TO CLAIM LOVE

Had He so wished, God could have come with all the glory of a four-star general amid the roar of cannon, and the shouts of Broadway and Times Square. But He wishes to enter softly and quietly into the sanctuary of our heart, to claim our love with His love.

The sight of a little child in its helplessness and innocence, its dependence and trustfulness, moves our hearts with an irresistible impulse of affection and protection.

Looking upon the Christ Child, dwelling upon the mystery of God Almighty becoming a human child, the intelligence of man staggers and grows dim trying to comprehend the greatness of God's love.

SO GREAT A GOD

How overwhelming to realize that the holy and infinite God should really wish to be our friend. To love us, and to be loved, to give us His wonderful gifts, and in return, to receive the devotion of our hearts. This is a truth so

tremendous that all St. Francis could say as he gazed into the crib was but one sentence, which he repeated over and over. "So great a God, so tiny a babe!"

The great God, whose fingers scooped out the Grand Canyon and built the vast arch of the sky, the great God who balances the awful weights of universes of stars and suns, and keeps the galaxies spinning down their orbits, this great God comes as an infant for one reason only—to claim our love.

CHRIST AT WORK

During the long years He spent with us, Christ was constantly showing His love. Christ knew you would have to work for a living, so He worked for His living. After the death of St. Joseph, Christ became the bread winner for our Blessed Mother.

Christ was born a poor man. He earned His daily bread in the sweat of His brow. The hands of Christ which were to give light to the blind, and open ears to the magic of sound, and raise up the widow's son—these hands were callous with work. These hands gripped the handle of a cross-cut saw, tightened around a hammer, and drove nails into wood.

A MAN'S HANDS

The hands of Christ were strong, manly hands. They made the kitchen table around which it is so pleasant to sit when day is done; the bed whereon man takes his rest when darkness falls from the wings of night; the arm-chair wherein old men sit around the fireplace on chill evenings to talk of the dewy days of their youth and recall the glory of their dreams.

THE CARPENTER

On a hot summer afternoon when His hammer and saw were making music in the valley, Christ would pause to wipe the sweat from His eyes with the back of His hand. This Christ, a Carpenter, the son of a carpenter, was the King of Kings. Yet no glittering crown of sapphires and rubies gleamed above his brow. No snow white robes of ermine hung from His shoulders. A carpenter's plane, not a scepter lay in His hands. But on His face was visible the unruffled sweetness and gentle dignity of a soul perfectly at peace, and the unbroken consciousness of royalty which reigned within.

WHEN DAY IS DONE

At the end of a day of work in the carpenter shop, Jesus washed His hands and face in the

clear waters of the hillside stream, and turned His footsteps towards the white cottage that was home. He lifted the latch from the door and walked in. Mary, His Mother, raised her eyes to greet Him. There was no need of words as the current of love flowed unspoken between them. Mary looked into those tender, smiling eyes, and felt love all a tangle in her throat. Words suddenly grew too small for the long thoughts of love. Mary's joy was all the more enthralling because Christ willed not only to appear but actually to be so human in His human nature.

Jesus and Mary sat down to their supper in the little kitchen shadowed by the branches of the giant sycamore tree that showered its yellow blossoms over the doorway. After the evening meal is over, and the dishes cleaned and stacked away, Jesus goes out and gathers wood for the morning fire. He picks up the axe and splits the cypress block into small splinters so it will catch the flame quickly.

HE RULES THE SEAS

This is the ordinary life of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. This workingman of Nazareth is the God Who created you. He it is Who rules the winds and the waves. He spoke on that

day of creation and the mountains rose from the deep to shove their peaks above the clouds. At His bidding the vast ocean stirred with limitless energy and sent its waves racing to meet the sands.

WHY?

Why does the King of Kings labor in poverty? It is because He loves you. He wants to show you how to accept the hard life that may be yours.

Remember that question from the Baltimore Catechism; "Why did Christ live so long on earth?"

The answer—"Christ lived so long on earth to show us the way to heaven by His teaching and example."

Christ wanted to teach us the meaning of life. Since He loves us, He was not content to simply hand us a dry, theological rule book on how to live. He wanted to put truth into action.

AN EXAMPLE

The catechism tells us that man was created to know, love, and serve God in this life, and to be happy with Him forever in the next. Christ took this answer and put it to work. He lived each day the model life to give us an example.

SEE CHRIST

Is your work hard? See Christ carrying planks in the carpenter shop. Are you tempted? Watch Christ face temptation in the desert.

Christ's love for us is almost beyond belief. Long ages before Christ came upon earth, the ancient pagans dared dream of a god who would come down from heaven to walk in friendship with man. The legends of Rome and Greece weave stories of Jupiter and Mercury associating with mankind.

POETS DREAM

But here is a dramatic fact that shouts with the voice of thunder. No pagan poet, even in his wildest dreams or flashes of poetic fancy, ever imagined that God would go to such an extreme as to share man's earth-bound burdens. At their climax of dreams, the pagan poets hoped God might come down from the heights of heaven to walk in calm dignity with man. But for God to bend over a saw, for God to sweat and labor, and, finally, for God to die for us—this was utterly beyond their power of imagination.

YOU IN WELL LIGHTED SKIES

A modern pagan who knew not the sweet love of Christ, and was ignorant of His divine attrac-

tiveness wrote, "O God, You in Your well-lighted skies, what do You know of our sufferings and woes?"

NO GREATER LOVE

That cry has become empty by the life of Christ. He not only shared the sufferings and woes of the ordinary man, but He was nailed to the cross, and with His arms stretched wide in a gesture of love, He died for us, "Greater love than this has no man, that he lay down his life for his friend."

TWO MONUMENTS

The two great monuments that show God's love for us are Creation and Redemption. The fact that God made us, and that Christ died for us are so tremendous that Holy Mother Church pauses each day in Holy Mass to commemorate these great events.

At the offertory of the Mass, when the priest is pouring the wine and water into the chalice, he says that beautiful prayer, "O God Who in creating human nature didst wonderfully dignify it, and hast still more wonderfully renewed it, grant that by the mystery of this water and wine we may be made partakers of His divinity, Who vouchsafed to become partaker of our humanity,

Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, world without end. Amen."

We can never thank God enough for having made us, and having died for us. Without God's love, we would be like brute oxen nourishing a blind life within the brain. We would be mere creatures of mud and clay.

THANK GOD FOR GOD

But God loves us. Loves us so much He made us in His image and likeness. And He wants us to love Him with our whole mind, our whole heart, and our whole soul. And after this short pilgrimage here on earth, God will come to take us by the hand and lead us home to the many mansions He has prepared for us. No wonder Joyce Kilmer exclaimed, "Thank God for God."

We should "Thank God for God." Thank God that we know God created us out of love, and that we are destined to live with Him forever in happiness. Thank God that the trials and sufferings of this life are but a prelude to our enjoyment with Him in heaven.

RELIGION OF CHEERFULNESS

The religion of Christ is essentially the religion of cheerfulness. The coming of Christ was an-

nounced as the coming of joy. "Behold," said the angel in the winter sky of the shepherds on the hillside, "I bring you glad tidings of great joy that shall be to all the people."

REJOICE

Jesus Christ, in His divine masterpiece, the Sermon on the Mount, explains the reasons for our joy. "Rejoice and exult for your reward is great in heaven."

St. Paul echoes this clarion call to joy sounded by His Master. "Peace and joy" in the Holy Spirit is his greeting and wish for the Christian flock. "May the God of hope fill you with all joy" (Romans 15/13), even though we have much to suffer; rejoicing in hope, bearing tribulation in patience.

JOY AND SUFFERING

The relationship of joy and suffering in our lives is brought out in the rosary. Five mysteries speak of suffering and sacrifice. But ten radiate with joy, and announce glory. There is no over-emphasis of death or tragedy in the Christian scheme of living. Rather Christian doctrine is a magnificent drama of life, of a tranquil conscience born of virtuous living with Christ, of confidence in Mary Our Mother, and of overwhelming victory of a glad tomorrow.

GLORY OF EASTER

It is good for us to kneel at the cross. But it is not good to remain there. For the fullness of Catholic life we must also include the glory of Easter Sunday morning; for it is only in the bright light of Easter that the cross of Good Friday afternoon has meaning and fulfillment.

BETTER THINGS TO COME

The Catholic religion teaches us to use the good things of this life to lay hold of the better things in the life to come. Our religion is not a maze of cold mathematical formula and Spartan discipline. Our religion is a generous, life-pulsing thing shot through with the smile of Christ and the bright sunshine of God's love.

ETERNITY'S RAINBOW

Our God is the "God of Love" and "The Source of all consolation." We can smile through life's tears, because for us eternity's rainbow beckons. In that delightful technicolored motion picture, "The Wizard of Oz," a little farm girl in Kansas sings, "Somewhere over the rainbow bluebirds sing, and dreams that you dare to dream really do come true." With a few adaptations, this song Dorothy sang might be called the Christian's theme song.

THE LORD RULES ME

In the 22nd Psalm King David gives us reason to rejoice: "The Lord rules me; and I shall want nothing. He has set me in a place of pasture. He has brought me up on the water of refreshment. He has converted my soul. He has led me on the paths of justice, for His own name's sake. For though I should walk in the midst of the shadow of death, I will fear no evils, for Thou art with me. Thy rod and Thy staff, they have comforted me. Thou hast prepared a table against them that afflict me. And Thy mercy will follow me all the days of my life, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord unto length of days."

MARY

We have even more reason to rejoice than King David. The Israelites had only the Ark of the Covenant in their journey through life. We have Christ with us upon our altars. We have Mary, woman above all women glorified, our tainted nature's solitary boast.

I SHALL REJOICE

We can voice our appreciation in the words of the 91st Psalm: "It is good to give praise to Thee, O Lord, and to sing Thy name. To show

forth Thy mercy in the morning, and Thy truth in the night. For Thou hast given me, O Lord, a delight in Thy doings; and in the works of Thy hands I shall rejoice."

"JOY" SUNDAY

Even in the middle of the sober season of Advent, Holy Mother Church on "Joy"—Gaudete—Sunday, reminds us of the words of St. Paul: "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I say rejoice. May the peace of God which surpasseth all understanding keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, Our Lord."

Commenting on the Epistle for Gaudete Sunday, the Rev. Richard Ginder, wrote in "The Sunday Visitor (December 17, 1944): "There is nothing warped in our theology. We take a sane view of things. We uphold the dignity of man. We show that this life is but an instrument for the winning the next."

"Use these things," she (the Church) says, "God made all creatures to be used rightly. Enjoy yourselves. Don't be going around blue-nose and calf-eyed. You are the salt of the earth, the elect of God, called to be Saints. Throw back your shoulders! Carry your chin up! You're going to have a good time, now and forever."

Father Ginder concludes with these words: "We have joy and happiness in this life, and assurance of salvation in the next."

FROM LIFE TO LARGER LIFE

Our joy and happiness are based on the blessed hope and coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ. It was this hope that enabled the martyrs to gaze steadfast into the hollow eyes of death, yet sing as they marched forth to be devoured by lions in the arena. Despite his instinctive revulsion from the death of the body, the Christian is strengthened by the thought of death; for death means simply the transition from life to larger life, from suffering to unending glory. With the saints the Christian exclaims, "I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ."

GOD IS JOY

Fr. Considine in his encouraging book, "The Virtues of The Divine Child" remarks: "God is Light, and Love, and Inexhaustible Joy. He is glad in our gladness; He would have us be joyful rather than sad. He grudges us no holiday, if only we take Him along with us."

ALLELUIA

The Church proclaims the joy of living in its liturgy. Its shout of joy, the "Alleluia" vibrates

throughout the Mass and Office. Its official prayers glow with cheerfulness. The Magnificat, Benedictus, and Te Deum rise like a jubilant rocket in the sky cascading golden sparks of hope and happiness. Even in the season of sorrow, in the middle of Lent, the Church urges us to rejoice on Laetare Sunday. And the day on which the friends of God die is called their birthday.

BROTHERS OF CHRIST

We are the children of God, Our Father. We are the brothers of Christ, our elder Brother. This stupendous fact is the basis of everything beautiful in life—friendship, love, romance, marriage, children, music, art, song, laughter and joy. Every true sense of culture and refinement flows from the fact that we are children of God.

CHILDREN OF GOD

“Children of God.” What a royal and beautiful title to give us strong courage, constant hope, and reason for being civilized and human.

If we realize what we are in God’s sight, and act accordingly, the more exalted will our position in the universe become. We will come to value ourselves and others, as indeed we are, the sons and daughters of a kind and loving God.

THEE, GOD, I COME FROM, TO THEE GO

"Thee, God, I come from. To Thee go."

This is the Christian philosophy of life.

With this philosophy you can take

*"The heartache, and the thousand natural
shocks*

*That flesh is heir to . . . the whips and scorns
of time,*

*The oppressor's wrong, the proud men's
contumely,*

*The pangs of despised love, and law's
delay,*

The insolence of office, and the spurns

That patient merit of the unworthy takes. . ."

(Shakespeare—"Hamlet" III, i, 62-74)

ANT LESS UNHAPPY

Without this philosophy, you will complain with Maurice Maeterlinck, "The ant is far less unhappy than the very happiest of men." "All seek happiness and receive only death."⁷

FAITH FOR JOY

If you wish to capture the bluebird of happiness that eluded Maurice Maeterlinck, you will have to harken to the truth Ann Blyth received from her mother, "She taught me that faith was the only sound foundation for lasting joy."⁸

A modern, distinguished psychologist, Dr. C. C. Jung, after thirty years of practice wrote: "Among all my patients past thirty-five years there has not been one whose problem in the last resort has not been that of finding a religious outlook. It is safe to say that every one of them fell ill because he or she had lost that which the living religions of every age have given to their followers; and not one of them has been really healed who did not regain his religious outlook."

INSECURITY FEARS

Father James Castiello, S.J., in his inspiring work, "The Humane Psychology of Education" remarks: "All agree that it is the sense of insecurity which is at the root of many neuroses. But what better means of combating insecurity fears than a strong moral and religious idealism?"⁹

"One must, if one is to be happy," remarks Clare Boothe Luce, "accept pain and understand its warmer and redemptive uses. Without a strong faith in God, the understanding of that most everpresent of all problems, the problem of pain, is impossible; and life becomes a madness, an unendurable mystery."¹⁰

INTELLECTUAL CONVICTION

The "Joy of Spirit" which should be the trademark of the Christian is not an emotional thing. It is not founded on feeling, but is an intellectual conviction that life is worth while—that the purpose of life is worth the suffering it entails. "Thee, God, I come from, to Thee go."

"The sufferings of this time," says St. Paul, "are not to be compared to the glory to come."

SHADE OF HIS HAND

Life's sorrows come and go, but the lover of God sees them all as the "shade of His hand outstretched caressingly." The man who loves God looks beyond the grave to "the fountains of the waters of life" and that happy day when "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

WALK SIDE BY SIDE

Even in life's greatest sorrow, the separation of a loved one by the hand of death, the Christian is not without consolation. To comfort a wife who had lost her husband, Bishop Sheen wrote: "In true married love it is not so much that two hearts walk side by side through life. Rather two hearts become one heart. That is why death is not a separation of two hearts, but

rather the tearing apart of one heart. It is this that makes the bitterness of grief."

"But be consoled," continues Bishop Sheen, "Your love in the beginning came from God. As fire mounts upward, so part of your flesh is already at the Source of Love. The love you enjoyed was but the spark of which God Himself is the Flame. Thank God for the trusteeship of such love during a long companionship."¹¹

LADY WITH SMILING EYES

Mary, the most beautiful woman who ever walked the earth, the Mother of God, and our Mother, knew only too well that sorrow and joy can walk side by side.

Mary is the Mother of Sorrows. Her soul a sword did pierce. Yet she is also the cause of our joy. Her life was one of boundless peace and great joy of spirit. She is called the "Mother of Sorrows" but not the "Mother of Sadness." Rather she has been called "The Lady with the smiling eyes and the singing heart."

MY SPIRIT REJOICES

The melody of the Magnificat wove itself through the framework of her life like a morning glory entwining a trellis. Despite the sword

of sorrow that pierced her heart, the song continued, "My spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour; because He Who is mighty has done great things for me." (Lc. 1/46)

True Christians are those who learn the lesson of joy in sorrow; even though the sorrow be squeezing their heart in a steel-jawed vice of pain, and their joy is strictly an intellectual conviction that God must have some reason for allowing such dreadful suffering. A reason hidden deep from us, and one we will understand only in the light of the great white throne of God.

HAIL, HOLY QUEEN

After Low Mass each day you say that beautiful and inspiring prayer, "Hail, Holy Queen, our life, our sweetness, and our hope."

Herman Wolfrad, the man who wrote that prayer, was born such a horrible cripple his parents wished he had never been born. The kind priests at the orphanage of Reichenau accepted the deformed boy, and here the lad grew up. Herman Wolfrad was never able to stand, let alone walk. He could hardly sit, even in a special chair. His fingers were twisted like pine branches, and his palate so deformed he could hardly be understood. But he was courageous

and by much effort learned music, mathematics, and several languages. "Not once in his life," according to his biographers, "was he out of pain." Yet he was pleasant, friendly, and easy to talk to. Never did words of criticism escape his life. On the contrary, he was constantly striving to be cheerful and kind as possible, with the result that everybody loved him.

Despite his weak fingers, Herman Wolfrad learned to write and left us two lovely hymns to our Blessed Mother, the "Salve Regina," and the "Alma Redemptoris Mater."

After receiving Our Lord in Holy Communion, Herman died on September 24, 1054 at the age of forty-one years. His last words to his friend crying by his bed were, "My beloved, do not weep for me."

FREDERIC OZANAM

The Founder of the Conference of Saint Vincent de Paul knew well the lesson of sorrow. When Frederic Ozanam was in the prime of life, and had just begun to taste the fame won by his writings in defense of the Faith, and on the very eve of his being honored by the French Academy, death suddenly approached to call him away.

Frederic knew full well the sacrifice God was asking. Frederic had planned so carefully to use his talents in the cause of the Church, and for the glory of God. Though his heart was breaking, Frederic Ozanam submitted without reserve to God's will. In his Act of Resignation, written before his death, we can sense the agony of his soul, and almost taste the salt tears and acid bitterness of the chalice he so bravely drank, after he pleaded that it might be taken away. "Not my will, but Thine be done"—such was his prayer.

"Today," wrote Frederic, "is my fortieth birthday. I have a young and beautiful wife, a charming child, many friends, an honorable career is before me, and labors that have just reached the point of a long-dreamed work." All these Frederic Ozanam put aside to answer the call of the Eternal Captain and King.

COURAGEOUS LADY

The last case history we wish to consider brings us to the 20th century. It is the story of a young, beautiful, very talented young lady, married to one of the most famous doctors in Manila, and the mother of an attractive youngster. She was one of the most popular girls in Manila, and during the Japanese occupation served as

intelligence officer for General Douglas MacArthur. Life had given her beauty, talent, popularity, and a happy marriage. But life is strange. After giving her all these things, life suddenly seemed to go against her. She became a leper.

From the leper colony outside Manila she wrote: "The inside story of the life of the leper in a poor and sadly abandoned leper colony is full of heartache, misery, and want. I had always thought that to place our many troubles on the laps of other people very inconsiderate . . . but my little girl always wins out by saying that this is what my friends are for; that I may turn to them in times of stress, that I may unburden to them the weight of the cross that lies heavy at times in my heart."

"First I want you to know that I am happy to suffer in God's love. I would not be human if I were to tell you that I am never otherwise, for that would not be true. There are moments of unspeakable loneliness, of unexplained longings and yearnings, and too many secret motions in which one's heart is tried to the core. But I feel that our Lord desires this strange hidden life from me for reasons I shall never know until He calls me home. So I have made my oblation, and only ask that He give me grace and strength to follow His will. I look for-

ward to heaven, and the thought keeps me forever joyous and young in heart."

HOMESPUN HEROISM

There is no need of going to the far corners of the earth in search of heroic souls who surrendered themselves to God. In the circle of your friends you can without doubt find many who could tell a thrilling romance of their soul's surrender to God's love and will. The inspiration of their lives will continue long after God has called such generous souls home. Like a great masterpiece of music, or inspiring picture, the lives of such people echo a theme that is consoling, encouraging, a thing of beauty and a joy forever. They give proof to the words of the poet, "God's in His Heaven, all's right with the world."

The heroism of most of us will spring from the commonplace material of every day existence. The majority of us have no dramatic Good Friday; just a monotonous grindstone of exasperating details that chip our patience like a carborundum wheel and make us complain with Shakespeare's Portia, "My little body is a-weary of this great world."

SMALL HATCHETS

The daily martyrdom of self in routine tasks

may be more courageous than death by the hatchet. The North American Martyrs said they would rather experience at once the sharp impact of the Indian tomahawk on their skulls than endure the deadly stench, smoke, and dirt of the wigwams in the dead of winter.

DISHPAN HERALDRY

Our Blessed Mother is a shining example of the sanctity of the commonplace. The dishpan, scrub brush, and wash tub were heraldic symbols on her escutcheon of sanctity. Each day was a gem in a diadem of jewels consecrated to the Lord of her soul.

Mary did the work that mothers of ordinary families do. When she awoke each day the flame of her heart arose straight upward toward God. For Him were her actions intended, and with a whole hearted consecration of love.

CONTENTMENT

The joy of spirit that should be yours will not cause you to burst geyser-like into song, turn cart-wheels, or even smile like Mona Lisa. Your heart may be heavy as stone and dark as evening shadows.

In his consoling and encouraging book, "Most Worthy Of All Praise," Father V. McCorry

sums up the matter neatly, "There are peaks of satisfaction in every human life, and it is usually in connection with these high moments of existence that we use the strong word "happiness." We speak of the happiness of a bride, or of a proud mother, or the winner of a scholarship. But these strong joys are likewise rare joys. It is not really pertinent to ask an ordinary man on an ordinary day whether or not he is happy. Yet on an ordinary day an ordinary man ought to be ordinarily content. They need not regularly shout for joy or habitually throw their hats in the air; but they should be at least normally contented. A man should be "happy in his vocation" not enthusiastic perhaps, but fundamentally satisfied. Obviously, fundamental satisfaction may coexist with accidental dissatisfaction."¹²

SOME ENCHANTED MORNING

Some days you wake up with the wonderful feeling you have just returned from some enchanted land to find reality even more enticing.

The sky seems like a wedding cup that was overturned of old, and pours into the eyes of men its wine of airy gold. A contented, muted sort of happiness vibrates through your whole being making hushed music like a lovely harp caressed with tenderness.

Love walks in to fill the fugitive moment with warmth and unsayable joy, and beauty stirs a tumult in your soul that will never die. Her presence endows the moment with irridescence. Your pulse sputters and crackles like a new lit fuse. Eyes shout bravo, as two hearts beat as one. Hand in hand you carry on a conversation without talking. A web of enchantment weaves itself around you, and the cords of that net are beauty.

Perhaps you stand alone on some vast mountain peak and gaze steadfast into the tremulous blue that vibrates all around you. You need but reach it, it seems, and you could touch the face of God.

MANY DREAMS AWAY

Then come days when the jubilant rocket that filled the sky with sparks of golden hope plunges to earth—a dead stick. Loved ones are many dreams away, or stolen by the hand of death. Chained to the memory of a beloved presence, restless without possession of it, your heart is crushed between the steel jaws of memory. A drench of anguish saps your strength, and makes you feel aged as the earth is old. Your mind is at half mast and out of focus.

Fearful currents stir deep within your soul.

Desperate thoughts rise unbidden from the dark-heaving tempest that rocks your resolutions, and makes you ask, "Why must this chalice come to me?"

A fierce want and hunger, a craving unsatisfied, an emptiness and longing for a voice that is still becomes a dull pain that burns itself into the very fibers of your soul.

God knows the anguish that wrings your heart, and if you but let Him, He will use the cords of sorrow to draw your heart closer to His.

BITTER WITH SWEET

The saints knew how to take the bitter with the sweet. They praised God for the joys when He chose to send them, and these temporal consolations made them realize more keenly the joys of heaven.

"They praised God," remarks Father Garesche, "for sorrows which made them partakers of the passion and sharers of the sweet wood of the cross. They looked forever at the bright side because this is God's side, and they wished to see all things with the eyes of God."

TOMORROW—GLORY

Michael Kent captures the truly Christian spirit in his beautiful and inspiring book, "The Mass

of Brother Michel." On the eve of their execution by the French Huguenots, Michel says to Louise, "Tomorrow we lay aside these garments we have worn on earth, and in their place what glory we receive! Tomorrow heaven is ours, and beauty, and end of pain, forever. I cannot think what it will be like to live without pain, but tomorrow it will be as if it had never been. And in proportion as we have suffered on earth for love, so much greater will our joy be in heaven. We have great happiness here, it is true, but on earth it is broken and interrupted. Tomorrow we will receive that joy in all its fullness, and it will never end. Tomorrow we do not die, Louise; tomorrow we live."¹³

WAKE UP IN HEAVEN

A great seventeenth century Englishman, Thomas Traherne, wrote, "Your enjoyment of the world is never right until every morning you wake up in heaven."¹⁴

"There is a great degree of happiness, and that fairly continuous," remarks Clare Boothe Luce, "in being mindful of Him (God). If you keep Him in mind, yours will be often the happy mood of the poet:

*"To see the world in a grain of sand,
And heaven in a wild flower;*

*Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
And eternity in an hour."*¹⁵

In the autumn of 1954 appeared the English edition of Father Irala's encouraging book, "Achieving Peace of Heart." In this book the priest author reminds us, "God wants us to be happy. He repeats it a thousand times in Scripture and Liturgy. Joy is possible then. How? By shifting your gaze from the unpleasant aspect, from the ugly face of suffering, and concentrating on the bright side."¹⁶

And old Chinese proverb says, "I complained I had no shoes, until I met a man who had no feet."

Look about you and you will find other Herman Wolfrads, other Frederic Ozanams, whose lives are an inspiration.

Suffering is a blank check presented to us by God. We may take up the pen of life and write therein with letters of gold and silver payable at the First National Bank of Heaven on that thrilling day when God shall wipe away all tears, from our eyes and death will be no more.

"Earth changes," says the poet, "but thy soul and God stand sure."

"Thee, God, I come from, to Thee Go."

In the nineteenth summer of his life a young

Polish lad was stricken with a fatal sickness. When informed that death was fast approaching, the boy's face glowed with calmness and happiness. Echoing the words of the Psalmist, he exclaimed, "I rejoice at the things that are told unto me. We shall go into the house of the Lord."

We, too, should rejoice at the things that are told unto us, for joy is our heritage.

OUTLINE OF JOY IS YOUR HERITAGE

The Malady—MODERN DESPAIR

The **SUICIDE RATE** is a "statistical measure of despair" (*Life*)
indicating a "Philosophy of despair" (*Sheen*)
resulting from a "generation without faith" (*Cushing*).

The Cure—The "ONLY EXPLANATION of life which won't drive a man to suicide" (*Luce*) is the **TRUE LOVE STORY**, which gives us reason to rejoice because of

CREATION { "Love is the root of all creation."
(*Longfellow*)
"Thee, God, I come from. To Thee go."
"You are a landowner in heaven."

REDEMPTION { "So great a God, so tiny a babe."
(*St. Francis*)
"Greater love than this has no man."

OUR RELIGION { "Rejoice and exult for your reward is great."
"God is Light, and... Joy."
(*Fr. Considine*)
"The Sufferings of this time are not to be compared to the glory to come." (*St. Paul*)

Examples of Heroic Souls Prove That Joy Is Our Heritage.

MARY—"The Lady with the smiling eyes and singing heart."

HERMAN WOLFRAD—whose love for Our Lady prompted him to compose the "Hail Holy Queen."

FREDERICK OZANAM—gallant defender of the Faith.

LEPER WOMAN—former intelligence officer for General MacArthur.

Conclusion—We All Have an **OPPORTUNITY**
for { Homespun Heroism and the Her-
aldry Of The Commonplace

Which Should Result in "FUNDAMENTAL SATISFACTION" (*Fr. McCorry*)

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