

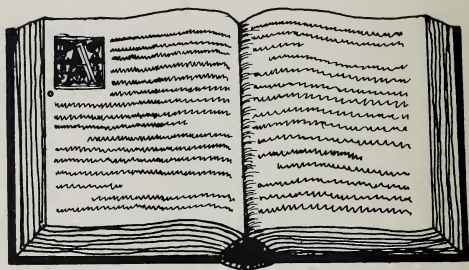
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What's wrong? : a few questions for  
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**A Trappist  
Asks  
Catholic College Graduates:  
“WHAT’S  
WRONG?”**



**A  
Few Questions for  
Alumnae and Alumni**

# UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME



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*A Trappist*

*Asks*

*Catholic College Graduates:*

**“WHAT’S  
WRONG?”**



A

Few Questions for  
Alumnae and Alumni

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**TO**

**MY YOUNGEST BROTHER**

**H. CHARLES**

**PRAYING THAT HE MAY MAKE HIS**

**ALMA MATER PROUD**

### Something Is Wrong!

Causes still produce effects, and as we sow, so do we reap; yet Alumni and Alumnae of Catholic Colleges are not being Catholic College Alumni and Alumnae. So I say that something is wrong. What is it?

Something is very wrong! Born and bred to be different; placed for four years in an entirely different atmosphere; schooled in a very different philosophy of life; trained to be totally different in aims and ideals from the thousands and hundreds of thousands that surround us, Catholic College graduates should be stand-outs and stand-offs in our frenzied world of modern men and women. But look around you. Look and see if you can find anything that sets us off from the rest.

Certainly it is not our keenness of mind, for keenness of mind can come from Columbia, which, I read, is "the greatest red training school this side of Moscow." Most assuredly it is not our conscious dignity, for conscious dignity which shades into hauteur, if not snobbery, is typically Harvard. It cannot be our urbanity, amenity and refinement, for these can be found in those from Vassar, Princeton and Yale. As for culture and breeding, I have encountered both in men and women who were not even baptized. And if we dare say "Faith," one need only point to the unlettered but worshipful day-laborer and shame us with a gesture.

Strain your eyes as you may, you can come only to the conclusion with which I have titled these pages: "Something is wrong." Something is very wrong! We do not stand out; we do not stand off; we are not really

different, and we should be. Just what is wrong?

At the next reunion, or even now, look around you and recall your college chums and you will see that something is wrong. We have attained our measure of success as men measure success. Senators, governors, mayors, judges, doctors and lawyers, keymen of corporations and captains of finance, powers in the world of money, politics and the press, all come back for reunions. Career men and women, who were our campus companions, greet us at alumni and alumnae gatherings. There are surprises and disappointments in our ranks: campus stars have fallen and wall-flowers burst into bloom; but striking the average, we can justly label our graduates with the label of success. But is it a specifically Catholic success? Hardly! And "there's the rub."

Senators, governors and mayors have come from other colleges, and the difference between their regimes and ours was not striking. There are just judges and skillful lawyers, clever surgeons and expert doctors who never made the Sign of the Cross. And the world of money will always be dominated by the uncatholic and the unchristian. The successes that we have achieved in these fields do not stamp us as Catholic College graduates, nor make the world look to Catholic College campuses as training fields of men and women, successful men and women, who are startlingly different. What is wrong?

Our ranks are no longer thin, but our effects on the world at large are just as meager, if not more so, than they were when a Catholic College graduate was the anomaly of anomalies.

Just look at the situation. From out of the thousands and the tens of thousands, God selected us. With a definite purpose in the mind divine He placed us in Catholic Colleges and for four full years had us specially trained for a specific end. God paid our tuition and now looks for dividends on the divine investment; and I am afraid that He looks in vain.

Something is very wrong!

### God Paid Our Tuition

Yes, it was God who paid our tuition, no matter who drafted or endorsed the checks. Some of us had brains and won scholarship; but it was God who gave us the brains. Some of us had brawn and the Alumni hired us; but it was God who gave us the ability to punt, pass and run or the skill to block and to tackle. Most of us had parents who sacrificed; but it was God who gave us those parents and inspired them to the sacrifice. And for the few of us who worked our way through, the same holds true — it was God who paid our tuition.

Now God does nothing bootlessly. "Nihil frustra dedit Deus." He has a purpose divine for everything from a dazzling dawn to a sparkling drop of dew, a purpose divine for a blazing sun and a whirling Saturn as well as for a glowworm and a golden chalice but-tercup. He had a purpose divine for Bethlehem's cold and Calvary's Blood and He had a purpose divine for our College education. There are no accidents with God and He does nothing haphazard. When He made us freshmen, He had a plan; when He placed us in sophomore, He had a purpose, when He passed us on to junior, it was with definite intent; when He gowned us as seniors and graduated us, it was with divine determination. BUT



— He left us free! Free to frustrate or fulfill the purpose divine. Free to complete or defeat the plan of the Infinite. I wonder whether God wasted four years on us.

I start with Alpha, because I want to be true. I start with a concept that may strike you as strange, for we are not used to going below the surface and looking at things from the standpoint of the divine. Our own personal intellectual system has never been really theocentric, and that is why so simple a truth as the fact that God paid our tuition, and paid it for a very definite purpose, will strike many of us as strange. But it is true! And He is Alpha!

The next thing to realize is who our Alma Mater is. It is all well and good to speak of Holy Cross, Georgetown and Fordham, of New Rochelle, Trinity and Notre Dame, or any one of the other hundreds of Catholic Colleges as Alma Mater, but it is not deep enough. It is meet and just to name Jesuits, Dominicans, or Benedictines, the Madames of the Sacred Heart, the Sisters of Charity or of Notre Dame as our educators, but it is not deep enough. These orders and congregations have being only because a Man one day said, “All power is given Me in heaven and on earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations.” And that Man was the Son of God. That is why I say our Alma Mater ultimately is Holy Mother Church, whose soul, you know, is the Spirit of Truth, and whose body, you and I and the hundreds of millions who are baptized.

This is theocentric thinking and true. God selected us. God paid our tuition. And the Church of God schooled us. God is our Alpha. And God acts purposefully.

Now why did He do it? Why did Omnipotence and Omniscience put His finger on you and on me? Why, out of the thousands and tens of thousands of Catholic boys and girls, did God select you and me and place us in the classrooms of Catholic Colleges and keep us there for four years? Why?

Just what answers will come to your mind as you face that question, I do not know; but I want you to know the ones that finally came to my mind, for I consider them important, eternally important, not only for you, but for the Church and for God. I started with Alpha. Do you think that I will end with Omega? Read on and see!

### **Not To Make Us Geocentric!**

It was at an Alumni banquet some years ago that I heard one of the finest after-dinner speeches of my life. A fellow classmate took for his theme “The Treasures Alma Mater Gave Us” and then grew eloquent. He thrilled us that night and many a back was straightened and many an eye looked out on life with a bolder, braver vision because of a newer realization of all that Alma Mater had given us in the four-year course.

When the banquet ended my friend was surrounded by appreciative alumni and warmly congratulated and thanked. But to all the compliments and congratulations that came to him that night he had but one answer. It was, “Oh, just another sentimental loud-speaker.” He said it with a laugh and he made others laugh as he said it. I took it to be his pleasant way of bandying praise and I chuckled. But when we were alone my chuckling ceased for he did not cease to say, “Oh, just another sentimental loud-speaker.” He even added that the only true

statement he had made all night was the one with which he answered compliments.

“But your speech...” I said.

“My speech was nothing but sentiment. I conceived it in sentiment, delivered it out of sentiment and for the sole purpose of arousing sentiment. And, by heavens, I succeeded.” Then turning abruptly he asked, “Just what practical treasures did Alma Mater give us? Did Latin or Greek ever get us a job, or hold one for us? Did our faultless syllogisms and our clever philosophical distinctions swell our pay-envelope? Did our chemistry, physics, and biology, our astronomy and geology, our sociology and history ever help us make a sale?” He was bitter. He now grew sarcastic. “Why, the only practical thing our College ever did was to call our graduation ‘a commencement’; for commencement it was, commencement of a new life in a strange world; commencement of a practical education with Experience as professor and profits, the passing mark; commencement of practical learning and practical living; a commencement of life’s battling after four years of coddling by our Alma Mater.”

There was much more than that to the tirade; in fact, we spent the better part of the night at it. But I have given you enough to let you see why he concluded that four years spent in a Catholic College of liberal education were four years wasted, as far as practical results were concerned.

And he is right! Latin as Latin and Greek as Greek never got anyone a job, and formal philosophy, history or the sciences never held anyone his job. My friend is absolutely right! The classics as classics never increased a salesman’s sales or fattened his commission. But where my friend is wrong, and very

wrong, is in thinking that they were ever intended to do so!

Acquaintance with the "wily Ulysses," the "well-greaved Greeks" and the "swift-footed Achilles" was not meant as a "sales-promotion meeting!" When Alma Mater introduced us to Plato, Socrates and Demosthenes, to Euripides, Aeschylus and Sophocles, she did not mean us to look upon them as "possible prospects." Homer taught us that the sea was "loud sounding" and "wine dark"; Virgil told of the "pious" Aeneas and the "facilis discensus Averno"; Horace gave us odes and epodes and Juvenal some real satire; from Cicero we learned how to swing a rhythmic sentence and from Tacitus how to strike off a sharp and staccato one. But all these adjectives and adverbs, all these melodious phrases and these striking pictures of the pen were never meant to aid a salesman in making his demonstration or show him how to make "a close." Alma Mater aimed higher.

Telescope, microscope and geologist's pick are excess baggage for the modern man of business. To know who attacked whom, in what place, in what year and why, is so much useless data taking up valuable floor-space in the memory of a man whose one aim is to make a dollar. But Alma Mater aimed higher.

For the man whose world is horizoned by sales and a commission, and whose life's ambition is a bank-account, a liberal education is the most profitless and impractical investment that can be made. It is four years wasted! And if life is only for earning and earning and more earning, if material prosperity and economic security are the be-all and end-all of human efforts, then I say, let us have done even with sentiment and sentimentalities, let us label Alma Mater im-

practical and proclaim her education a waste of time!

But the shoe goes on the other foot! If today our world is geocentric and not theocentric, we are the ones who wasted four years; for we have missed the whole point of Alma Mater’s training. She did not teach us the arts for art’s sake; she labored with them to teach us the one great art, the ART of LIVING! She did not give us the sciences for the sake of information; her sole aim was our formation. She did not teach us how to make a living; she did teach us how to make a life. She taught us one art, one subject, for one end. She aimed **to make our lives theocentric** and to keep us from ever going geocentric. She had a unity about her that approximated unicity.

### Unity That Nears Unicity

I know that the general condemnation of our generation is lack of thought. From pulpit, platform and press, by priest, pedagogue and pamphleteer we are labeled a thoughtless generation. But I am convinced that the general condemnation is wrong! We do not lack thought; our big trouble is that we have too many thoughts, altogether too many thoughts, with no reflection on those thoughts!

The modern mind is never still. It cannot be; for when the press is not screaming at it, the radio is. And we know from our psychology that the mind of man is like a highly sensitized photographic plate and that it catches every light and shadow. How can we lack thought then, when our whirling world would give us no rest, when not even the home is quiet, when from morn till night and often far, far into the night, flash after flash after flash is being imprinted on our

sensitized souls. No, we do not lack thought nor do we need time to think. That is our greatest trouble; we are always thinking. What we very specially need is time to stop thinking and time to reflect. Our mind is like the silver screen in the modern movie house of continual runs. Second after second after second some new scene is being flashed upon it. What we need badly are some "stills" so that we can stare at them, study them and thus learn!

Our modern world is too noisy; too filled with broad headlines and big broadcasts. What we need is a little silence so that we can listen to ourselves reflect! We have become so noisy that we can never hear the whispers of our reflective selves and our innermost souls.

Our world is too bright; too many headlights and searchlights and spotlights. What we need is a little darkness so that we can see, clearly see the Way, the Truth and the LIGHT!

We have so much thought that we are thoughtless, so much noise that we are deaf, and so much light that we cannot see. In short, our difficulty can be summed up by saying that we are so busy about so many things that we can never find time to be occupied with the ONE thing necessary. And that is why we are failures! We have failed to fulfill the one vocation God gave us; failed to be the one thing He trained us to be; failed to attain the one end He had in mind when He sent us to College and kept us there.

Yes, I am insistent on the oneness of it all; for I know something of the single-mindedness of God and I have seen the absolute single-mindedness of our Catholic College education. What I want you to realize is

not the unity of it all, but its almost unicity. It is true that we studied many subjects and many branches of subjects; it is true that we were schooled in the various arts and the various sciences; but now that I have closed out the hurly-burly of the world, now that I have cloistered myself in silence and heard myself reflect, now that I have become truly theocentric, I see what I want you to see — the startling unity, aye the almost unicity of our College education. Study these “stills.” Reflect! And you will find what is wrong.

God, who paid our tuition and sent us to His school, never does things by halves. When He said, “Going therefore teach ye all nations,” He instituted His colleges. When He added, “Teaching them to observe whatsoever I have commanded you,” He drew up their curriculum. When He said, “Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven,” He defined the purpose of all education. And when He said, “This is eternal life: that they may know Thee, the one true God and Him whom Thou hast sent, Jesus Christ,” He set in the boldest of bold relief the aim and object of all life and learning. That is why I dare say that Catholic Colleges do not teach many things. That is why I say that they teach but one thing and that through many media. They teach THE WAY, the only way to HAPPINESS; happiness here and hereafter, and they teach that fully. They could not do otherwise for they are but the mystical continuation of Him who said, “I am come that they may have life and have it more abundantly.” Life, you know, is only for happiness!

I have heard the classical training laughed at and a liberal education assailed; but now that I have had time to reflect I find that it

is the mocker who is at fault and the sneerer who has failed. In fact, perhaps the cleverest summary of the matter that I have ever heard was given by my classmate, the "sentimental loud-speaker," and he gave it the night we thrashed out the practicality of the course. He did it in the modern American manner, with wit, exaggeration, sarcasm and slang. He played with words and on words and used the "reductio ad absurdum" with an artist's skill. "To most of us today," he said, "'Helen of Troy' is only a girl from upper New York; 'Quintillian,' the amount of our overbalanced budget; and 'Juvenal' a gangster under twenty-one." On he went with a whole host of classical names and allusions. From "Ars Poetica" to Ethics and Natural Theology he covered the course. But when he was finished it was pointed out to him that he had omitted one subject, a subject that runs through the whole course, a subject that IS the whole course; for it is the subject that makes Catholic Colleges Catholic and renders liberal education really liberal.

My friend looked puzzled, so we went on to tell him that this one subject colors all others and gives them what true meaning they have. It is the one subject which, when fully learned and fully lived, makes us Catholic College graduates, but without which we may be cultured, clever and refined, brilliantly learned and astoundingly wise, successful beyond youthful hope or maturer expectation, but we are not CATHOLIC. That one subject will not help us make a living; in fact, there will be times when it will prove a positive hindrance; but it will help us make a life! It is not meant to be an asset in the carving out of a spectacular career, but it is the one instrument that will chisel out a



character, make a man, a man, and a woman, a revelation. That one subject gives meaning to our “A.B.” and our “M.A.,” for by it, and by it alone, we are constituted bachelors and masters of the one great art, the art of living.

To teach that art is the end and the aim of Catholic liberal education. Catholic Colleges do not intend to turn out money-makers, kings and queens of finance; they aim to produce real men and radiant women. It is not their purpose to bring out the instinct for gold that is latent in every son of Adam and every daughter of Eve; they want to bring out the instinct for God that is in the soul of every child of our fallen race. So they teach but one art — the art of living, the art of CATHOLIC living, the art of living the Christian life in all its fullness. Any other life is shadow or sham! So for four full years in every class and in every course, Catholic Colleges teach RELIGION!

Etymologically and theologically speaking, religion is the binding of man to God; but pedagogically speaking, it is the **revelation of man and God**. That is why I say that Catholic Colleges teach one art, one subject, for one purpose — they aim to produce not mere men and ordinary women, they aim to produce MYSTICS!

Do not start. Mystics are not queer people! In the truly Catholic sense they are simply real men and radiant women who know, love and **live** their religion; real men and radiant women who are life-giving cells in the mighty Mystical Body of Christ; real men and radiant women who are representative Catholic College graduates — lights in the midst of darkness, theocentric souls in a geocentric world, fearless leaders of a lost race. That is what

Catholic Colleges aim to produce — MYSTICS — happy souls who radiate Christ!

### **But What Has Happened?**

We went through that course. But today, most of us have only our degrees, to prove that we are Catholic College graduates. We have not the happiness that was planned for us nor the contentment that was promised. We are not mystics. We are not men and women different from the hundreds of thousands around us who never saw a Catholic College campus. But do not blame Alma Mater! She taught us the way to happiness, and taught it thoroughly. When we left her care we were in possession of an easily read road-map. Alma Mater had red-inked our only way. She knew where we should be going and she knew the shortest and the safest way. But we, in our eager hurry to arrive, threw away the map this Lady of wisdom had given us and started to ask directions from the clever traffic-cops of the world. We wanted short-cuts to happiness. We got our directions from these smart boys, directions that took us off the road and directions that we have followed! If we have not found joy in life and living, if we are not now possessed of that "tranquillity of order" that Alma Mater called "peace," if we are not enjoying a harmony of all our faculties and a perfect balance of body and soul, if we are not really happy, do not blame our educators nor our education, blame ourselves. They showed us the way; we deliberately got lost!

We were told to build our lives "four square," and we were shown how to build them. Alma Mater gave us detailed blue-prints. She showed us the indestructible pyramids and told us to build along those

lines, to base our lives on the four unshakable corners of Prudence, Temperance, Justice and Fortitude and then to go on building to our apex, which should be lost in God because we were made for God.

But we tore up those blueprints and started to build as the wise of the world build; we would base our lives on money, fame, position and pleasure. We were wiser than our Alma Mater. She told us that we would find our happiness from within, but we were sure that we could find it from without; for the wise world had told us so. We sought our happiness then, not in what we are, but in what we could get; not in the manhood and the womanhood that God had given us, but in the trinkets and the trifles that we could acquire. Yes, it is too true that most of us tore up the blueprints that Alma Mater gave us and instead of building on the four Cardinal Virtues, we have foundationed our lives on the four capital curses!

It is not difficult to see what happened. We were mesmerized by the materialistic world. Our apprenticeship for life was spent under the tutelage of Alma Mater, but when we had “served our time” we refused to work along the lines that she taught us. She trained us for happiness, we went in for hedonism. She showed us how to make happiness, we sought it “ready-made.” She told us that it came from personal activity, we thought we could find it in mere passivity. She said from within, we insisted from without. She said from creation, we said from absorption; and that is why we are more nearly sponges than intelligent men and women.

Today we would rather read a thousand lines than write a single sentence. We would

prefer to listen to the radio with all its trifling trash than really think. We would rather parrot someone else's opinion than form one for ourselves. We are "ready-made" men and women of the Twentieth Century. We think "ready-made" thoughts, utter "ready-made" words, feel "ready-made" emotion, follow "ready-made" political platforms, accept "ready-made" economic ideals and programs, and never reflect! That is why we are like receiving-sets and not studies; we echo and only echo, we never produce! That is why we are not happy and that is why we are failing to make others happy. We are lights that have failed, cisterns that are broken, leaders who are being led, mystics who have been mesmerized, truth-bearers who are being deceived.

It is very easy to see what happened. We went in for comfort, not contentment; we sought leisure, not life; we thought only about a good time and forgot almost completely about a good eternity! We became completely geocentric, as money, man and maid absorbed our attention. We became engrossed in a job, a salary, a bankbook, a home; some friends, some fun and some future. But real life and real living — those things of eternal value and everlasting worth — we forgot. Our assets lie unused as we pile up eternal liabilities, chasing the rainbow trail in quest of power, popularity, pleasure and peace.

It is high time to call, "Halt!" and to reflect. It is high time to realize that as long as we are not dynamically Catholic, we shall never be tranquilly happy; as long as we are not theocentric in thoughts, ideals and efforts, we shall never know peace; as long as we are not MYSTICS — men and women

who are God-conscious, God-centered, God-absorbed — we shall never know happiness here, nor any great degree of glory hereafter. It is high time for you and me to reflect and to evaluate the assets we garnered from our four years in a Catholic College. It is high time that we remembered what Alma Mater taught us with all the clarity and force of her very clear and forceful being; namely, that life’s goal is not economic nor political; it is moral and mystical!

Do not be deceived. This is no narrow view of education that I am presenting. Alma Mater had a unity that approached unicity in the midst of her startling variety. Actually, she treated only two beings — God and man; and she treated them for only one purpose — the happiness of both. That is a proposition that needs no proof for the reflective. If Catholic Colleges swerved from that course and that objective, they would have played traitor to Jesus Christ who commissioned them to teach truth that man might have beatitude.

You know that the Catholic Church admits of no divorce. When separation is imperative, she permits it; but she knows that then the soul is gone from the conjugal union and she well knows that a body without a soul is a corpse. So, too, in education, separate Catholicity from culture, divorce “reading ’riting and ’rithmetic” from religion, and you have a corpse — an organized something, but NOT an organism.

If the proposition sounds strange, I think the trouble is with our perspective and not with the proposition. No matter how uncertain our thought on the matter, the thesis itself is certain. God paid our tuition for our formation and not for our information,

and His one object has ever been “that men have life and have it more abundantly.” His spouse and our Alma Mater fitted us for life and did it in a most practical manner. Her liberal education endowed us with every good gift that is necessary for man to live as man. She prepared us for life and prepared us thoroughly; not only for this life but expressly and explicitly for the much more important after-life. After all you know life is a unit. We are not creatures of an hour, we are beings immortal. Life for us will never end, though our mode of living will change. Life does not end at death. No, indeed! Its mode alone is changed. In other words, our eternity has already begun! So, when I say Alma Mater prepared us for life, I need make no distinction. I mean that she fitted us for that unit which began in time but goes on forever. She did her part; but are we doing ours? Are we using our assets?

### **Are We Using Our Assets?**

In our moments of exhilaration we have often cried out, “This is the life!” But when reflection came we had to admit that that was NOT the life. What we have sometimes called life was nothing but an unmanly and an unwomanly way of seeking escape from life. Drugs, drink and debauchery place one in another world, it is true, and they cause one to dream. But there is always an awakening! Now dreaming is a human necessity. It is part of life and one of its happiest parts. That is why Alma Mater taught us how to dream. She labored to give us the very ART of dreaming. She wanted us to be able to dream pleasant dreams, and dreams from which there would be no sad or sick awakening. Two full years she gave to the develop-

ment of this faculty and the acquisition of this art for she knew that man and woman must have stimulants. Stimulants are a psychological and physiological necessity. But Alma Mater taught us to take ours from books and not from bottles. She wanted us to be “full men,” but she wanted that fullness to come from reading and not from rum and rickeys. She wanted us to be able to dream dreams that come true and not be drunkards. That is why she gave us two years of literature. But I am afraid that we have laid aside this asset. I hope we haven’t lost the art.

Do you remember when “Be yourself!” and “Act your age!” were common colloquialisms? As usual these slangy, expressive imperatives have foundation in deepest psychological and pedagogical fact. For four full years Alma Mater labored to teach us how to be ourselves and how to act our age. To insure our evolution into our real selves she first taught us selflessness — that was sophomore year; then she taught us salutary selfishness — that was junior and senior years. She showed us the heart of man through rhetoric and the drama, and the soul of man through logic and psychology. She wanted us to feel for others and to live for others, but she knew that we could never do this rightly until we knew how to live for God and for self. Throughout the course she labored to give us balance; and if today we are unbalanced, it is only because we have not used our assets.

Alma Mater was thorough. She neglected nothing from our tenuous fancy to our physical well-being. We had our library, gymnasium and chapel, our arts, sciences and philosophy, and we had our broad-vistaed,

breath-taking dream-making theology. If we have narrowed our horizons and hemmed in our souls, if today, our life is 95% material and 5% spiritual, if we are aesthetically and mystically anemic but economically and politically robust, if life is a battle and only a battle for dollars and cents, if existence is the dry, unromantic, prosaic thing that many make it, merely a grasping for gold, if life has lost all lyricism and we find ourselves soured, disillusioned, disappointed men and women, the fault is ours! We have not used our assets. And here is how I prove it...

### **Do You Ever Dream?**

A human is more than a mere body, and life is a whole lot more than a tremendous amount of work, a few laughs and very much worry. Your soul is more than mind, you have a memory and a will, a fancy and an imagination; and unless you employ all these you are not really human. As I said before, Alma Mater wanted you to be yourself, to be fully human, so for two years she gave you literature. Why? Why were we saturated with poetry in freshman and with rhetoric in sophomore year? Why did Catholic Colleges, who had so little time to school us for life, give so much of that time to literature?

I say to make us happy by giving us the sublime art of knowing how to dream!

That may sound like a unique theory, but do thrash it out with me for I think I can show you what is wrong and what has happened. I further think that I can help you to happiness.

I say that literature was given not so much for language as for life; that freshman year was aimed more at showing us how to live a



poem than how to write one, for it was a year of revelation — the revelation of God and man. God, you know, is Truth and Beauty and the one Object worthy of our noblest emotion, and man is hungry to hold God and to be held by Him.

Just look at what Alma Mater did to us that freshman year. She tuned our ear to the magic of melody and the rapture of rhythm. She opened our eyes to the wonder of the world and showed us how to see God in everything from the sounding sea to the silent stars. Mind, memory and will, fancy and imagination were all given play and given full play. Whole worlds were conjured up before us in a sonnet’s last line or in a triolet’s refrain. The trinity was taught us, that immortal trinity: the good, the true and the beautiful. More, we learned much of man this first year. We learned that man was head and heart as well as hands; that there were other thrills for man than those of the flesh; that there was an ecstasy to be had in everything from the witchery in the mere word-music of “Kubla Khan” to the soul-shaking agony in “Oedipus Rex.” Indeed, this was a year of revelation!

If we did not come forth from freshman artistic creators, we should at least have become capable critics, for our Catholic Colleges were most Catholic. They took in the full sweep of Poetry’s gamut. Alma Mater did not shrink from showing you the beauty of Swinburne’s music or the exquisite cameos in Omar Khayyam. She gave you pagans, not for their paganism, but for their poetry; the Iliad and the Odyssey were taught, not for their theology, philosophy or morals, but for the epic grandeur and the true beauty they contained. Alma Mater steeped us in

a world of musical cadences, delightful fancies and mystic imaginings, for she wanted us to know how to dream and how to lead a full life so that we would know happiness.

Have you ever dreamed since? Have you ever caught the poet in Christ as you listened to His Gospel? Have you ever played with God's great universe since you left the campus? Have you been little enough and great enough to be childlike? Have you been "so little that elves can reach up and whisper in your ear, that you can turn pumpkins into coaches and mice into horses, lowness into loftiness and nothing into everything?" Have you been great enough "to be bounded in a nutshell and count yourself king of infinite space?" Have you ever "made the universe your box of toys? dabbled your fingers in the day-fall? become gold-dusty from tumbling amidst the stars? or made mischief with the moon?" In other words, have you been the child that Francis Thompson describes in his "Essay on Shelley," saying, "he teases the growling and kennelled thunder and laughs at the shaking of its fiery chain. He dances in and out of the gate of heaven. He chases the rolling world. He gets between the feet of the horses of the sun. He stands on the lap of Mother Nature and twines her loosened tresses after a hundred willful fashions to see in which way she will look the most beautiful."

No, we have never done that! For that would have been to dream, and dreaming, while it may make one momentarily happy, will never make one any money; and we would rather be miserably rich than happily poor. There is our answer in a sentence!

We are not fully happy because we are not leading full lives. Man can make real money,

but money can never make a real man, and every real man is part dreamer. Oh, I speak not of idle dreams. I speak of mysticism and meditation, for I am talking not of sleep, but of vision. The dreaming I have in mind is brought about, not by closing the eyes, but only by fully opening them. I am talking about the ability to soar from the visible to the Invisible, from creature to Creator, from buttercup and butterfly, from shooting star and pounding surf to the eternal silences where dwell the Trinity, Father eternally begetting Son, and Father and Son ever producing the Holy Ghost. I am talking about going from the heart of a rose to the Heart of God, of lifting oneself out of the muck of this world’s mad maelstrom of materialism and dwelling in the light of the Light Inaccessible, the Glory that is our glory beyond the stars! The dreaming that I am talking about is the practical dreaming that Alma Mater taught us, the dreaming of the Catholic mystic who gets the most out of life because he or she puts the most into life; the dreaming that has us often, yes, almost always, hearing the “deliberate speed, majestic instancy” of the beat of the feet of the “Hound of Heaven.”

Life at its highest is spiritual, not material; intellectual, not sensitive; imaginative, fanciful, emotional — poetic rather than prosaic; a romance, and not drab realism!

But why should I go on? Old Cicero taught us that “letters are the nourishment of youth, the delight of old age, the adornment of our prosperity and our consolation and refuge in adversity”; he also taught that “letters delight us at home, are no burden abroad, stay with us at night, are company in our travels and companions in the seclu-

sion of our country villa." But what of that? He was old and he was Cicero. We confine our readings to the daily newspaper, the graphic and now and then, the Sunday supplement. Our home libraries contain a few current magazines that are neither thought-provoking nor soul-satisfying. And yet we wonder what is wrong! We have forgotten that there are men who see more than appears and who speak in musical cadences of the beauty and truth that is a reflex of God. We have forgotten that there are those who, using rhyme and rhythm, express their worthy thoughts in a manner that can stir our noblest emotions. Alma Mater saw fit to teach us how to dream. But we do not believe in dreams. We are of the Twentieth Century. We are more nearly machines for making money than men and women who can dream of God. Small wonder we are unhappy! We have neglected the Art of Dreaming and hence, have crippled our souls.

### **Haven't We Become Too Singular?**

I think so. And I say singular in order to avoid the offensive "selfish." I say singular and by it I mean that we have ceased to be universal. Will you thrash that statement out with me? It is my summation of our neglect of the asset we gained in Sophomore year.

Tell me, why were we taught rhetoric? Was it merely to enable us to build a speech properly? to be able to weave words in a manner calculated to persuade? Did we dissect Demosthenes, Cicero, Burke and Webster just to know what an exordium is and how to draw up a peroration? If so, it was all a waste of time. For most of us have never delivered a speech since; and most of us

never shall deliver one. If so, Alma Mater was teaching artifice and not art, turning out manufacturers and not men. If so, sophomore year was most impractical. But is it so?

I say no! I say that Catholic Colleges do not teach Latin, Greek, and English in sophomore year. I say that they teach man and his emotional heart. They teach man and his relation to God. They teach life. Oh, I know that they teach the "Queen of the Arts" through the threefold medium of Latin, English and Greek, and that they do this to cap with a fitting climax the training of mind and heart that began five years before when a gangling youth began to learn his grammar. But that is my point — art bespeaks the universal!

Alma Mater taught us the "Queen of the Arts," and taught it thoroughly. Actually, she gave us a stethoscope in our sophomore year, and placing it on the pulsing heart of humanity, had us listen.

What was Hecuba to us or we to Hecuba that we should weep for her? Why should we frown with Hamlet or frenzy with Lear unless we had much in common with them? If there be not a striking solidarity as well as a striking singularity about us, then literature cannot live, nor art have a universal appeal. Unless my heart beats as your heart beats and you and I have ambition as well as Macbeth, ideals as well as Brutus, and purposes as set as Hamlet, then there is no mirror that can be held up to nature. If mankind is not a unit, then drama is a foolish dream and rhetoric a waste of time.

But Alma Mater knew better and she wanted us to know better. She wanted us to know ourselves and our fellow man, so for a full year, she adjusted a stethoscope to our

ears and taught us to catch every murmur of Humanity's throbbing heart. That is the why of Cicero and Demosthenes, of Sophocles and Shakespeare; that is the whole why of sophomore year. Not drama nor rhetoric, but the universality in every single one of us, our solidarity in the human race. These studies have been called "Humanities" and rightly so, for they tend to offset our giant selfishness and to stunt its dreaded growth. They clearly teach us that the human heart is not merely a pump for our circulating blood, but that it is a sensitive instrument of many tuneful strings that vibrate at the slightest breath.

To make us Christian humanists Catholic Colleges have a sophomore year and of that year they make a long retreat. They make it a time in which we study man and God and learn how to live.

In much of the drama Alma Mater showed us how NOT to live, and the reflective man, recalling the lessons of sophomore year, must gasp, "How old the new! How very old the new!" Julius Caesar gave us a picture of a world without God and of a man, a tiny creature of clay, who would make himself an omnipotent deity. And Julius Caesar is being played today in modern dress by a Stalin and a Hitler. Purges are not modern; Henry VIII was very fond of them.

But all this oneness and sameness, all this similarity and solidarity, all this amazing universality would have been useless had not Alma Mater shown us our solidarity in the Mystical Body of Christ and accounted for our tears for Hecuba, our sympathy for Hamlet and our pity for Lear, by showing us our common source — the breath of God.

We had many sermons and retreats during our college course, but no one gave better retreats or preached better sermons than did William Shakespeare. He will live down the ages and be a missionary to many and a retreat master par excellence to millions, just because he so well knew that individuals are not so individualistic, that they have very, very much in common. He taught us plainly that we can be as blindly superstitious and greedily ambitious as was Macbeth, as ungrateful and tyrannically self-willed as was Lear, as dominated and undone by women as was Hamlet and as stupidly self-deifying as was Caesar.

That is how unified our course was! Shakespeare was a spiritual father and pagan Rome a retreat master to teach us our religion. Alma Mater knew that she had but twenty-eight months out of a lifetime to mould heart and mind to “seek first the Kingdom of God,” only twenty-eight months to teach us that we are children of God and so, too, is our neighbor, only twenty-eight months to warm our breasts with love for God, then for self and for neighbor. That is why she labored with Latin, Greek and English, with Science’s microscope and telescope, but most especially with Literature’s stethoscope to teach us that we are one, one with every man and woman who breathes, because we have all been breathed upon by God.

Alma Mater does not call sophomore year a failure because we have ceased to read Shakespeare and forgotten how to write a speech. No. She knew that the day would come when most of us would forget even the alphabet of the Greek. But she hoped that we would never forget that we are all from God. She hoped that we would never be-

come so selfish as to forget that the man next door or the woman across the way are flesh and blood, that under both stiff front and tattered rags beats a human heart that is hungry, that what man and woman and child want most in life is not money, might or mastery, but only human sympathy. Everyone of us is lonely, and a word, a smile, a pat on the back means much to everyone of us. That is why half our college course was given to Humanities. Alma Mater wanted the throb of the human heart to beat in our ears ceaselessly, and finding echo in our own pulse, set us about the corporal and the spiritual works of mercy, so that we might build up the Mystical Body of Christ! Again I say that Alma Mater's one aim was to make us mystics!

Is that too far a cry for you? Am I stretching and straining when I go from Jocasta to Jesus Christ? from Macbeth to the Mystical Body, from rhetoric to Catholic Action? If so, you do not know your Alma Mater. She was fitting you for life, but not only for **this life**. She knew Christ's Gospel and she knew that Heaven is given to those who visit the sick, clothe the naked, feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty and call on those in prison. She was teaching Humanities, but they were Christian Humanities which necessarily culminate in a great-hearted love for all mankind, since all are actual or potential members of our members, and Christ, our head.

But we have forgotten poor blinded Oedipus and sleepless Lady Macbeth. We have long since ceased to weep for Lycidas. Why, we do not even feel for Christ! We have become so singular that our days, our nights and our mornings are all taken up with self.



“Charity begins at home” with us, and ends there! And it is hardly Christian charity, it is more nearly chariness. We who belong to a priestly generation are entirely pragmatic. Our neighbor to us is only a possible customer, a possible stepping-stone, a possible source of enrichment. But to play the Samaritan, to be another Christ “going about doing good,” to be a priestly Christian offering up sacrifice for mankind; to be pragmatic enough to be minting money for Heaven and buying our eternal mansion on the installment plan, the installments being daily deeds of mercy — That’s mysticism! That’s medieval! That’s piety! and we are Twentieth Century, College trained, learned, loons!

What blinded fools we have become! Alma Mater taught us the sure way to happiness here and hereafter, but we still do not believe her. Our hearts are empty though the pockets of some of us are full, and we are all panting for happiness even though we have steeped ourselves in pleasure. Let us tear off the blindfold and see! see that we can acquire happiness only by giving. Give yourself to others. Give your time, your thought, your brightest word and most sparkling smile. Human hearts are hungry. You can fill them. Human hearts are thirsty. Give them a cooling draught. Human hearts are cold and naked. Cover them. Human hearts are lonely and homeless. Take them in. If not into your home, at least into your heart and your prayers. Place them close to the Heart of Christ and real warmth will cover them. And remember always that “whatsoever you do to the least of these, My little ones, you do it unto Me!”

Again I am calling upon you to be a mystic, for only the mystic is worthy of the name

of man, for he alone grasps the divine purpose of life. If you would not be a mere beast of burden, a beast of prey, a beast of pleasure or a beast of pride, then be the man and the woman Alma Mater taught you to be — be a mystic and you will enjoy life!

Again I am back to happiness as I say the only man on earth who knows how to enjoy life is the mystic. All others enjoy only death, for what they call life is not life but death. God is life and only the mystic is wise enough to enjoy God.

Again I am back to God and self, and I say enjoy God. Serve Him. Praise Him. Reverence Him. See Him — in your neighbor. Adjust sophomore's stethoscope again and listen to Humanity's heart. It beats as your own. Drama is being enacted all around you. You yourself are working one out. Will it be a Romance or a Tragedy? Will it be Heaven or Hell? Will it be for God or against God? It has got to be one or the other. Only the infant and the idiot can remain neutral and you are neither young nor completely brainless. You are a Catholic College graduate, trained to be a mystic, a lover of humanity, because a lover of God.

Don't be too singular — that was Satan's trouble. But be singular enough — as was the Christ.

### **Are We Singular Enough?**

The most singular individual to be found in our mad modern world is the man or the woman who is strictly logical. The tempo of our times is too high for straight thinking and the "Modern Mind" has outlawed reason.

When Hilaire Belloc had to write about that which is neither "modern" nor a "mind," but which will be recognized under no other

label than that of “Modern Mind,” he became quite nauseated. He calls it “a spirit which has lost acquaintance with logical form and which is too supine to reason.” He says that “it is made up of pride, ignorance and intellectual sloth — their unifying principle being a blind acceptance of authority not based on reason.” And you must admit that he is right. The trinity that rules our day is Fashion, Print and Iteration. Although a thousand assertions will never take a proof, get something into print, repeat it often enough and the modern man and the modern miss will accept it as strictly proved and make it the leading fashion. That is the psychology behind advertising. Modern man becomes less and less a man as he becomes more and more a parrot. He does little more than repeat and repeat what he had read or heard, and in thus using his memory, he thinks he is using his mind. That is why I say the most singular person to be found in the world today is the person who does straight thinking.

Of course, if Philosophy were only a speculative science this condition might pass as pitiable but not pernicious. But when we know that straight living and straight loving depend on straight thinking, when we know that logic, love and life are a united trinity and follow one another as inevitably as morning, noon and night, when we know that idea gives birth to ideal or principle and on this is based our action, then we shudder. Philosophy might be looked upon as a speculative science if history did not tell of the France of 1790, the Russia of 1920, the Germany of 1940 and the world at the present moment. Philosophy might be looked upon as a speculative science if we did not see

Christ crucified in our colleges, ostracized from our politics and ignored in our world of business. Philosophy might be looked upon as a speculative science if our land was not overrun with loose loves and looser lives, if there were no Reno, divorce courts and foundling asylums. Philosophy is NOT a purely speculative science. It is not something to KNOW. It is something to LIVE, and that is why Alma Mater gave us a junior year of logic.

Have we been straight in our loves and our lives? Have we been singular enough to be straight in our logic? Alma Mater meant us to be so. She meant us to be most singular and that is why she gave us a fixed course in scholastic philosophy. Oh, the wonder of that course! It caused Harvard's professor of Education, L. J. A. Mercier, to break out in a torrent of congratulations to Catholic College students because they were fortunate enough to be getting a clear-cut and complete philosophy of life which could be justified. He said that the classrooms of non-Catholic colleges were filled with students who were getting no such philosophy of life and whose thought was by consequence "chaotic, pitifully chaotic." He should know. And we should know. Our whole world is chaotic, but that is only because its thought is chaotic. It has nothing stable about it because its principles are not fixed. But we — for half of our college course we were rigidly set in the fixity of a determined philosophy. Have we swerved?

I am asking questions because I hate to write the answers. If I must use points, let me use the interrogation in place of the exclamation. They hurt me less and should stimulate you more. So I ask, have we used

our logic? Do we bring every statement to the touchstone of truth? every argument to the touchstone of form? every claim to the touchstone of fact? That was the training we got. We were taught to analyze and synthesize, to distinguish with clarity and precision, to go from major and minor premise to faultless conclusion. We were taught straight thinking. We were trained to the rapture of right reasoning because man is only man when he is human and he is human only when he thinks and wills according to fixed rules. Have we been really human? Alma Mater wanted us to be so; for she knew that that was the only road to happiness.

Yes, I am back again at my original claim. Education is only for happiness. And I am saying that there is a thrill to straight thinking, an ecstasy in divining truth, a rapture in detecting error and distinguishing the true from the false. More! I say that Alma Mater gave us the Porphyrian Tree that we might climb it to God, and the rules for syllogisms that we might find the Trinity. No matter where I look in Logic, I find adumbrations of the Trinity. I know that there is perfect unity in the trinity of logic, life and love. I know that straight thinking begets straight living and both together produce straight love. I know that the syllogism can have only three terms, which constitute one argument and give one forceful truth. I know that truth is eternal, immutable, absolute. So I know that in learning the rules of syllogisms and tapping the fonts of knowledge I was knocking at the gateway to God.

There was nothing impractical about Alma Mater. We were maturing as we reached junior year; full manhood and full woman-

hood was almost upon us. So we were given the food for the strong — metaphysics. With a fearlessness found only in those who have the truth, Alma Mater introduced us to the erring and to error. We met skeptic, agnostic and atheist, positivist, nominalist and conceptualist, materialist, idealist and pantheist. Unhesitatingly she acquainted us with Descartes and his doubt and the awful spawn he generated, men who range from the pantheism and idealism of Spinoza to the materialism and atheism of Hobbes. We saw Berkeley beget Hume and Kant give birth to Fichte, Schelling and Hegel. We saw the children always outdo their sires. Berkeley denies the substantial existence of the body, Hume denied that of the spirit; Kant gave us "ignotum x," but his children made everything from "a" to "z" "ignotum." No wonder, then, that we heard Schopenhauer call the world a madhouse and prescribe, as the only remedy for mankind, universal suicide.

We analyzed these men and their methods and we found that they were all alike. Darwin, Spencer and Huxley, Nietzsche, James and Bergson are only blind men leading the blind and, just as our Savior promised, falling into the pit.

We met these men in our classrooms and there we refuted them. As long as we were on the campus we wanted nothing to do with them or their teachings, for we hated error and were learning to live logical truth. But today, as we live out our logic, are we as cautious, as wisely critical and as Catholicly true? Is not our business associate who works on the principle of "profit at any price" a pragmatic materialist? Is not the man across the way, who is forever talking religion but never practicing any, a skeptical

agnostic? Is not the woman downstairs, who is so full of the latest ways to enjoy yourself without paying the price, a hedonist? Is not that young couple, who are always entertaining, a pair of “eat, drink and make merry” atheists? Are you not surrounded by communists and pagans? They are living out their philosophies — false ones; and you must live out yours!

We must be most singular in our topsyturvy world, for we have a logic that takes care of our psychologic and physiologic. We have a logic that must be loved and lived. We have a logic that guards and guides, that rules and regulates, that guarantees and insures our lives and our loves.

Philosophy is a very practical science. Had there not been a Marx and an Engels there would not now be a Stalin and a Hitler. Hobbes, Locke and Hume are responsible in great part for our drunkenness, birth control and divorce. Suicide, murder and rape can point to Schopenhauer, Spencer and Huxley; for every crime demands a criminal and every criminal, before he acts, must have a concept. That is why I say that the foundation of Sing Sing, San Quentin, Leavenworth and Walla Walla were laid by false philosophies. Let me insist that your mental health, your real happiness, your true holiness are all based on logic, the logic Alma Mater gave you in your junior year.

As you come back to the campus, no longer boys and girls, but men and women of the world, husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, Alma Mater looks at you and hopes that your small families are due to Christian self-control and not to sinful birth control; hopes that your mounting bank account is due to the use of sound principles and not

to sharp practices; hopes that your increasing popularity is due to real worth and not to wiliness; she ardently hopes that your progress in the financial, political and social world is in no way due to any compromised Catholicity, but rather to a vibrant living-out of your scholastic philosophy. Are her hopes well grounded?

Like it or not, we have failed somewhere. Our God-given vocation is not being fulfilled. Our vocation is to be militant Catholics in the midst of a pagan world. We are not one in five in this land of ours, but what a discord we could cause in the ceaseless chant of mad materialism if one in every five gave voice to Christlike spiritualism! We are not one in five in America, but what a drop we could cause in the ever mounting tide of paganism if we boldly proclaimed our Catholicism! We are not one in five in America, but what a different America this would be if one in every five lived his Catholic logic! Yes, we have failed somewhere. We are not singular enough to cause the plurality of the people to pause and wonder, "What is truth?" We are not logical enough to make the illogical stop and ask themselves, "What must we think of Christ?"

### **Why Are We Not Adventurers?**

When we were seniors Alma Mater centered all her efforts on the individual. From every possible angle she played her searchlights on our souls. She gave us Psychology to show us that we had a soul, a personal, immortal, spiritual and free soul. She gave us Ethics to show us that we had rights, individual and inalienable rights and corresponding duties. She gave us Natural Theology to show us that we had a God, an



infinite and personal God, who is omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent. What a year of rapture and revelation this was! What a climax to a perfectly balanced course! What an ecstasy for the ego. Tiny man was shown his sublime dignity, his duty and his amazing destiny. We needed cap and gown for this year because decorum demands vestments when one enters the holy of holies.

Literature gave us much of life, of man his modes and his manners. We had seen the heights and the depths that he can reach. Poetry had fed our fancy, fired our imagination and flamed our emotions by its lofty thought. Rhetoric had thrilled our being as it translated for us the throbs of the human heart we heard beating in our literary stethoscope. We thus learned much of man, and indirectly, much of God. Then came Logic with its accent on the intellect and we found ourselves microscoping man’s mind. Thus for three years we were dealing with the universal with only indirections on self; but now came a concentration and a centering on the ego. Alma Mater was putting on pressure, for the dawn of commencement was graying in the East. Soon we would be setting out on life’s great adventure and she wanted us to know our dignity, our duty and our destiny. Life is a very personal affair. The individual is ever paramount. So Alma Mater stressed our individuality, whispering as it were her parting words, “Remember what you are and where you are going.”

Psychology was an exhilaration. Under our mental microscopes went specimen after specimen until we had proved with a proof as rigid as a mathematical formula, as tangible as fact and as true as God that we were more than a bundle of atoms destined for dis-

integration and the grave, more than a highly organized and evolutionized ape, much more than flesh and blood and bone. With something like awe we looked upon the grades of grandeur: the rock, the rose, the wriggling worm, on and up we made our way from that which only grows to that which sees and feels and hears, to that which understands and knows. Then with all the force of bursting bombs came the thunderous truths of the soul's simplicity, spirituality and immortality. That was the time that we realized that we came from God. Body might be from the blood of the brute, but the spiritual soul IS the breath of God; and that is why we say that we were not formed nor fashioned, but that we were created. "He who is" had to work in order that we be. Indeed, Psychology was an exhilaration! It proved that we had a spiritual soul that is immortal and a will that is free. Our dignity was very clearly shown us — we are children of God!

Quite logically then, came Ethics. For an individual has rights, inalienable rights, and that means corresponding duties. But the real revelation of Ethics was not our duty so much as our destiny. For Ethics took the hunger of our souls and told us what it was. It told us that we were hungering for happiness, and a happiness that is not mere pleasure, but a permanent possession of good.

Years have fled since we learned that truth. Is it not high time that we lived it? Pleasure is not happiness; it is only its counterfeit and sham. If you have not learned that as yet, then ask the bacchant and the bacchante. They will tell you that pleasure is not happiness and never can be; for every brim-filled bowl has its dregs, and every night of revelry its following head-splitting dawn. If

you have not fully learned that yet, then ask the worldly-wise contraceptionists. They will tell you that pleasure is not happiness, and they will be most insistent if you meet them in the evening of their lives; for a house without children is never a home! If you are not fully persuaded that pleasure is not happiness, then ask Mr. and Mrs. Mammon, they of the Midas-touch, or Mr. Demigod, the people's choice at the polls. They will tell you that god and glory are not happiness; for they are too difficult to hold!

Understand me! Alma Mater did not say that we must not enjoy pleasures. Never! Christianity does not teach that you should not snatch as much pleasure as you can from the passing things of this passing world, so long as this pleasure is not at the expense of your real happiness. What she does teach, and what Alma Mater stressed, is that to choose the greatest imaginable amount of human pleasure at the expense of the smallest surrender of a moral standard, is the act of the illogical and the fool. She does teach that to take what is passing in place of what is permanent is madness; to seek pleasure forgetting all the while about happiness, is to be unchristian, uncatholic and untrue.

Ethics told us our destiny. It said that if we would be true to ourselves, we must have God. It told us many wonderful things: it told us about the ego, the family and the state; it told us what was Caesar's and what was not; what parents must do and what they must not do; what I can yield and what not. But the most wonderful thing that Ethics said is that we must grasp God. Happiness is impossible any other way. Beatitude is the goal of life and there is only one way to it. With the clearest of clear calls

Ethics was always saying, "If you want real happiness, follow the road." And that road was labeled "LAW" — the natural law, which is a participation of the divine. I say, "Walk that road, Catholic College graduates, and your pillows will be easier at night, and one day you will rise from your deathbed refreshed!"

Dignity, destiny and duty — what a trinity! But it would never, could never, exist without God, so Alma Mater threw wide the door to her greatest natural revelation when she gave us our Natural Theology. Ethics had translated our heart's hunger and our soul's thirst. It told us that we wanted the permanent possession of the true and an unbreakable grasp on the good; it told us that we wanted beatitude. Natural Theology told us who is the True and who the Good; it translated Ethic's "beatitude" into that monosyllable of three letters that contains everything; Natural Theology told us about GOD. It did that soul-satisfying thing of pouring the light of reason on the "Obvious Invisible," and performed that heart-thrilling act of analyzing man's groping after and grasping of the intangible God.

Taking scholastic philosophy's five traditional arguments, those metaphysical lyrics that St. Thomas has composed, our Alma Mater gave us treasure that time can never exhaust, and beauty that leads to and blends in the vision that will bless us for all eternity, if we are true. These arguments for the existence of God are the climax and the recapitulation of the entire college course. In them I find poetry — they set me dreaming! To start with the infinitesimal and go to the Infinite; to go from motion that is little more than rest to the Prime Mover who is never

at rest; to go from the beauty in the heart of a rose to the inexhaustible beauty in the Heart of God; to go from the faultless symmetry in a snowflake's crystals on and up to the order that is found in the sun and the moon and the stars, to the Orderer who taught the bee to store up honey and the wren to build her nest, who taught the skylark to climb into the rosebush of the dawn and man to go questing down the avenues of time for truth and beauty and woman to long for a child and a home; to go from an acorn that has just dropped from an oak to the Alpha who has no beginning and the Omega who will have no end, to go from effect just perceptible to Cause imperceptible and inexhaustible — that is poetry, drama, ecstasy, awe and adoration.

Here it was that we saw the unity of the course. When cosmology had made use of the findings of chemistry and physics, when psychology had to wait on biology before it spoke absolutely, the thoughtful man saw the oneness in the multiplicity of our studies; but when Natural Theology fused them all, when it took astronomy and geology, biology, chemistry and physics, when it took literature, logic and life, every branch of art and science and showed how every one of them spoke of God, then the thoughtful man exulted even as he adored and saw that Alma Mater's unity approximated unicity. This was the study that proved life worth living as it made the Intangible tangible and the Invisible clearly seen. To learn of God, our God; to argue out His existence, essence and attributes; to prove that He is infinite omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent; to show Him with a mind and a will that are concerned about us; to find Him Creator, Preserver and

Provider, put a lilt in the lines of life and make the grave a gateway to glory.

Have you ever thought of that argument from motion as you watched the whirl of the world? Have you ever thought of the Composer as you listened to Spring’s happy song? Do you sometimes dream of the Artist as you see the orderly chaos in a flaming dawn or the anger in a frowning sundown? Do you often lift up your mind and heart in adoration as you watch a rosebud unfold, a sparrow fall or a baby play with its mother’s hair? Do you daily see more and more of God, your God, in the world around you, in sunshine and stars and sea, in blossom, bird and bee, in child and maid and man? Is life removing veil after veil after veil and preparing you more and more for the vision that will be face to face, the vision of Him whom Alma Mater taught you to dream of, think of, live for and love? Are you so living your Ethics that you are sure of grasping the Subject of your Natural Theology? Are you? Or is your life horizoned by the pay-envelope, the bank-account and the preparation for that rainy day, which may never come, to the almost utter exclusion of thought of the night that will most surely come, “the night when no man can work,” or of that Dawn which will never know sundown? In short, are you praising, reverencing and serving God seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day, or is the late Mass on Sunday the sum-total of your religion? Is your life the grand adventure of ever searching after God, the romance of wooing that “Tremendous Lover,” the thrilling quest to satisfy your soul by conquering Heaven’s battlements and subduing Hell’s hating foe? Is religion your life, or is it a mere accessory? Is God in mind

and heart and will, in home and wife and family, in leisure, business and politics? Are you a daring adventurer after God? If not, you have failed your Alma Mater, you have failed your soul and yourself.

The Argonauts went after a Golden Fleece, the Knights of the Round Table after the Holy Grail, the medieval Crusaders wanted the sepulcher of Christ, and Columbus, a way to the East. Balboa discovered the Pacific and Pizarro conquered Peru. Adventurers have sought the philosopher’s stone and the fount of perpetual youth. Some seek out the Antipodes, while some, the lost Atlantides. Men have rejoiced to climb Mt. Everest or to find Tut-Ankh-Amen’s tomb. But what are these in themselves or in their results compared to the bold adventure of ever seeking God? This is the search that ranges the whole earth over, soars to the very stars and goes beyond, and yet, it is achieved at home amidst the prose of life by souls who are not considered in the least daring, but who are actually the most daring beings in existence. This is the search that captivates mind and heart and senses, this is the search that absorbs the entire man, body and innermost soul; this is the only search that makes this world wondrous, life worth living and death a waking to delight. This is the Adventure of Adventures and the one Alma Mater set you on as she gave you your bachelor’s degree and sent you out, not to make a living, but to make a life, not to amass gold, but to grasp God, not to fight the battle of life, but to begin Heaven on earth as you became a truly Catholic man or woman, a mystic, lost in the love of God!

### Why Not Act Your Age?

I have done. I have covered the course from freshman to graduation day, and though I have mentioned all the arts and sciences, I have said nothing of the course in Religion. Can you guess why? In the beginning I said that Alma Mater teaches but one subject, and that Religion; I am now at the end and have said nothing about the Religion course. It was not an oversight, nor is this section an afterthought. I had a point to prove and I think that I have proved it. Religion is not a derelict among the educational subjects, an exile from professional pedagogy; it heads, permeates and sanctifies the entire curriculum. Alma Mater was teaching you Religion from enrollment day till commencement, from Horace, Sophocles and Shakespeare to the thesis on Church and State and God's particular providence. From the golden September you first stepped on the campus to the glad day in June when you went forth a graduate, Alma Mater's ceaseless theme was God and yourself. At all times, in all classes and in every course she showed you your relation to the Absolute, for that is the only proper end of education.

There was a course in Religion, a course that linked reason and revelation, a course that gave you higher truths and greater truths than test-tube, microscope or biological dissection, a course that should have been called by its proper name — a course in the Science of God — for it was theology. Here you used reason on things that reason of itself could never know and played a light more luminous than reason's light on the two objects Alma Mater had so ceaselessly talked about, yourself and God. These two you saw under the light of faith, and what a



vision that was! You heard God speak, telling you much about Himself and all about your soul. You saw a Man in Palestine who claimed to be the Son of God; you saw Him prove that claim by a life and a death that no mere man could live and die; you saw miracles at His birth, throughout His life and at His death, only to be followed by the greatest of miracles, His Resurrection. You could not escape the conclusion that this Man is true; He IS the Son of God; what He says is the very word of God and therefore true with the truth of Divinity.

You saw Him found a Church every bit as discernible as our American flag with its red, its white, its blue and its stars; for He made His Church One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic; and today you recognize the man who signs himself with the seal of the fisherman as the visible head of that Society the God-man founded after Jerusalem and Rome had spiked Him to a cross and He had split the tomb. Rome’s teaching, then, you know to be God’s teaching, for it is guided and guarded by the Spirit of Truth, who, as He promised, will ever abide.

When once you had established this much on purely logical and historical grounds, then you plunged, and fearlessly plunged. Into that sea of wondrous revelation you went and saw the world created, saw light flash over the universe’s blackness, and watched the formation of man by the fingers of Omnipotence. You saw all creation’s hierarchies from a grain of sand to the singing seraphim, and then you saw — sin. Lucifer fell and lost Heaven. Adam fell and lost for you and for me, Paradise; but moved the Trinity to decree the Incarnation. Golgotha won grace and made glory possible, as through seven

strong channels redemption flows; and we know that by grasping the mystic hand of Christ, which He reaches us from out eternity, we can go to the Triune God.

That was the course, covering everything from before time was until after time ceases; and if it taught one thing clearly, it taught the prodigality of the Trinity's love for tiny you and tinier me. The Father gave us creation, the Son redemption, and the Holy Ghost gives sanctification and consequent glorification. The Father gave Himself as He breathed into a body of clay and made us living persons; then He sent His only Son in Bethlehem's cold to die in Calvary's Blood; then, in a roar of wind and a rain of flame, they both sent the Holy Ghost to make you and me more than man, to elevate us to the stature of superhuman, to lift us up to the level of Jesus Christ!

Creation was thousands, maybe tens of thousands, of years ago. Redemption was wrought nineteen hundred years that are gone. And the Holy Ghost descended immediately after. And yet, we have the Father in every breath we breathe, for He must sustain us in creation; we have the Son, in all His glorified manhood, wherever a sanctuary light burns, for He would prolong His Incarnation; and we have the Holy Ghost in the center of our souls if we are in grace. Indeed we are supermen, men who house the Triune God, men who are spiritual giants spending an exile in Time, men who are Eternity's children. We are not of, nor for, this world, even though we are in it; and it is high time that we acted our age! We are old enough to know better.

Yes, we are old enough to know better, to know much better than to be spending all

our years in a soul-crushing, brain-wearing, body-breaking quest for gold or glory in place of goodness and grace; old enough to know better than to be seeking happiness where happiness can never be found — in the passing pleasures of this very passing world; old enough to know better than to be absorbed in man or maid when we should be absorbed in God; old enough to know better than to be taken up entirely with making a living, building a home, increasing a bank-account, preparing for our old age and our children’s future, when we should be primarily concerned with praising, reverencing and serving God, preparing our eternal mansions, heaping up indestructible merits by saving and sanctifying our souls. We are all old enough to have outgrown our foolish adolescence and the daze of our collegiate life; old enough to have sense, the common, Catholic sense to live the life Alma Mater taught us to live with her literature and logic, her sciences and her arts. We are all just about old enough to become children — the children of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost!

It is high time for us to act our age, make Alma Mater proud and give glory to the God who made us, educated us and awaits for us to grow old enough to become as little children, because — “of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.”

### **Are We Looking Towards the Dawn?**

We are growing older and ever older, and with inexorable steadiness are approaching what so many call “the evening of life.” Do you call it the same? Or are you Catholic enough and true enough to call it what it really is — our Dawn?

To most men old age is "evening," and death, "the blackness of night"; but not to the thoughtful Catholic College graduate. Never! For Alma Mater taught us how to grow younger with the years, how to become greater children of God, and to look upon death, not as an end, but as a beginning, not as a sleep, but as our real awakening. And again Alma Mater was teaching us fact! Death is not night; it is Dawning!

Like all other men and women, you and I are always facing that ever graying and constantly brightening East; but are we looking towards the Dawn? No one can turn from that East; it is inevitable. But many a man and many a woman are closing their eyes to that Dawning; and it is this opening or closing of the eyes that differentiates the modern materialistic pagan from the Catholic College graduate who is true. For it is not our views on life that make us so different, it is our dogmas on death! Omar Khayyam has a philosophy of life, a very definite philosophy, but it is only because he has a definite dogma on death. And today, from the steppes of Russia to the surges of the English sea, human life is wantonly wasted and individuals held as little worth because those in power look upon the human soul as nonexistent and on death as life's end. Are we as pagan as Omar, or as blind as those in the Reich and at the Kremlin? Or are we looking towards the Dawn?

If our eyes are focused on our Dawning, if we are wise enough to be going through life ever mindful of death, if we are always looking, not for a good time, but for a good eternity, then we are safe! We are true to our Alma Mater, true to ourselves and true to God. And when our Dawn does break we

shall have something to show for life. We shall not be empty-handed.

Oh, what consummate tragedy is held in empty hands! And empty hands are all that can be shown to an all-discerning God by those who go through life without looking towards the Dawn. Now is the time to ask ourselves: Are our hands empty? If tomorrow should be Eternity’s Dawn, what could we show for life? If we had to stand in the brilliance of Light Inaccessible tomorrow morn, what would He see for all that He has given us? What would He find as the resultant of the four full years He allowed us for our Catholic College course? Would it be empty hands?

Incarnate Truth spoke a parable one day, a fearful parable. With lightning strokes He etched an unforgettable picture as He told of the man who gave to his servants certain talents and then went afar off. Years after, he returned and calling together his servants, he demanded an account. Some had doubled the money and for it received immediate reward and high praise; but there was one who had hid his talent in the earth, and because of his unprofitableness, was cast out into exterior darkness. Then, lest any miss the point of the parable, Jesus spoke of the Last Judgment. That is the Dawn we are facing, and our talent is our Catholic College course. What have we done with it? Does it lie hid in the earth?

If you say, “No,” then tell me where are the Catholic College graduates who are radiating Christ? Where are the men and women who have spurned the modern heresy of action and who dream dreams as did the author of “The Hound of Heaven,” and sing songs like unto “Ex Ore Infantium?” If you

say, "No," then tell me, where are the men in public life who stand out as did Sir Thomas More, showing to the whole wide world a merry, cultured gentleman of God, a statesman par excellence, and a saint who could price with unerring appraisement the things of time and the things of eternity? And where are the women like unto Elizabeth Anne Seton, she who could be the toast of the town, model wife, devoted mother, holy widow and God's sainted nun? If you dare say, "No," then tell me why Truth Himself is so little known and Infinite Love so violently hated; tell me why the Mystical Body is not more robust and the Church of Christ more universally loved. If you dare say, "No," then tell me what you have to show for life?

Not money — for at Dawning, money does not count. Christ has a different currency!

Not friends — for at the Dawning you stand alone!

Not family — for your life's partner and your little ones cannot be on hand.

What can you show today? If tomorrow should be your Dawning, would Christ have to ask, "What's wrong?"

There is only one way to prevent that question. It is to keep looking towards the Dawn.

If you keep looking towards the Dawn, you will have much to show for life; for you shall dream those prayerful dreams which count in time and in Eternity, you shall amass real riches. Keep looking towards the Dawn and you shall be universal in your works of mercy, ever aiming to be like Christ, always going about doing good. Keep looking towards the Dawn and you shall live your logic, making your life, your love and your longing tangent

to Him who is Life and Love and the Object of your deepest desire. Keep looking towards the Dawn and your life shall be a romance and not a tragedy, a gripping adventure and not just “days without end.” Keep looking towards the Dawn and you shall be a chivalrous mystic who goes tilting down the avenues of time radiating Christ and questing for God. Yes, keep your eyes focused on that Dawn and you shall never be empty-handed; but at its breaking you shall stand laden with deeds done as Alma Mater taught you to do them. You shall stand with soul rich with merits, those weighty merits won through daily expressive expenditures of energy in the exercise of Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance. Fix your eyes on that Dawn and I promise that you shall stand in its full flush with a heart that is crimson-dyed and a flesh that is white with Tabor’s whiteness because daily you fed on the glistened White Bread of Angels and drank from the ruby-red cup of Christ’s Blood. Fix your eyes on it and at its breaking you shall stand with mind, memory and will throbbing with ecstatic delight, for now, at long last, they see and have and hold Him who engrossed them during earth’s exile. You shall stand smiling and unafraid as you come “face to face” with Him who sent you to college that you might have Eternal Life!

Get something to show for life NOW.... Tomorrow MAY BE Eternity’s Dawn! Do not force Christ to ask, “What’s Wrong?”

We are in a very dangerous position. We can reap only what we sow. Time is Eternity’s cradle, and if we do not so live as to make Alma Mater proud, we shall have turned a temporal favor of God — our Catholic College course — into a seed of eternal

woe. If we are only broken cisterns, many members of Christ's Mystical Body may die athirsting. If we are lights that fail instead of lights that so shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father who is in Heaven, we shall most likely burn for all eternity.

Remember Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea! They were disciples of Christ. They learned truth from Truth Himself, but they did not practice it **openly**. They were friends of Christ, but only in **the dark**. When the Sanhedrin voted, these two were absent. They would not condemn Christ, but they did not **defend Him**. They became assertive when it was too late. They became assertive only after His death and were on time only to take Him down from the cross. Are we doing the same? Modern Atheism and materialistic Paganism promise a crueler crucifixion of the contemporary Christ. If we do not soon assert ourselves, we may be on time only to take Him down from the cross!

The Church Militant looks to Catholic College graduates. She expects them to fight, to be leaders in the fight; and the only way to lead is to follow Christ!

Man waits — Alma Mater waits — the world waits — Heaven or Hell waits for the Catholic College graduate! — **What's Wrong?**



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