

Hagspiel, Bruno.
Have confidence!
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"Have CONFIDENCE!"



DIVINE WORD MISSIONARIES
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CLING TO HIS HAND!

Let Him have His way! Is He not the Father of Orphans, the Consoler of Widows, the Advocate and Comforter of all in distress? Can you not hear Him whisper: "Come unto me, all ye who labor and are burdened, and I will refresh ye"?

“Have Confidence!”

By

(Rev.) BRUNO HAGSPIEL, S.V. D.



A HANDBOOK OF HOPE

“Have Confidence, for I
have conquered the world.”

John 16:33

“Confido!” “I have confidence.”

(St. Vincent de Paul's last word before dying)



DIVINE WORD MISSIONARIES
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“HAVE CONFIDENCE!”

“Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in me” (John 14:1). With these words Jesus began His last discourse after the Last Supper. For years He had been teaching them how to be His followers, how to carry the word of God to their fellow-men after He would be gone. And the most important lesson of all would be this, that they remember always to have confidence in Him and His teaching after He had left them.

Hence in this last discourse He struck a note of encouragement and quiet assurance which would always linger in their hearts.

It was not necessary for Him this time to be dramatic and work a miracle such as quelling the waves and saving their lives in the storm-tossed boat. On that occasion He had rebuked them and taught them the same lesson of reliance on Him: “Why are you afraid, O ye of little faith?” (Matt. 8:26) Now He wished to drive home the same thought, but with the calm and serene words of a Father and a Teacher.

“I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you.” — “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, do I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid.” — “If the world hate you, know ye, that it hath hated me before you.” He gives them one promise after the other—of comfort and peace and His eternal bliss. And then the tender tone of the last discourse becomes surcharged with the oppressive gloom of days to come, when they

shall be persecuted and cast out like pariahs: "... they will put you out of the synagogues: yea, the hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth a service to God." Then, watching their downcast faces, He lifts up their spirits again: "Because I have spoken these things to you, sorrow hath filled your heart." But, He continues, a little later, "you shall lament and weep, but the world shall rejoice: and you shall be made sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy ... you now indeed have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man shall take from you."

And then in moving accents He ended His last talk with His disciples: "These things I have spoken to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you shall have distress: but have confidence, I have overcome the world."

Today, in the midst of the turmoil and bewilderment of modern mechanized civilization, how sweet to escape from it all and find a secret source of encouragement and uplift in these words of the Saviour! The clamor recedes, the dust and discord of the strife abate, the fury and the pointless fervor of the day's goals dwindle away ... and we listen to the serene assurance of Jesus: "In me you may have peace. In the world you shall have distress: but have confidence, I have overcome the world."

May the Prince of Peace grant you His peace!



Do not hoist the devil's flag: DISCOURAGEMENT. Instead, throw this banner to the breeze: BEGIN AGAIN. This is the only motto you need to enable you to become a saint. It will help you past every fault and over every fall. It should not make you feel bad to have a series of such discouragements occur to you as long as you do not yield: does not St. Vincent de Paul himself state: "One of the most certain marks that God has great designs upon a soul is His sending of desolation upon desolation, suffering upon suffering"?



A MESSAGE OF TODAY

The Sufferer of Konnersreuth, Teresa Neumann, has a special message for the people of today, according to Bishop Sigismund Waitz, who interviewed the mystic stigmatist. Says he: "What stands out strikingly is her message that we must cherish a great confidence towards our Divine Redeemer.... Lack of confidence offends Him. Teresa has received the commission: "Encourage people to cherish confidence."

It is an echo of the saying of that other Teresa, the saint, "The infinite mercy of God pursues men with the very last breath of life."



God gives us all the chance to use our toil and smarts and discouragements so that they will help us heavenward.

Our salvation lies all about us, in our daily trials, our daily routine.

It reminds us of the story of the sailors drifted from their course who were dying of

thirst. They finally sighted another vessel. They were still many miles from shore and it appeared their broken rudder would not bring them close enough to launch a small boat. "Water," they implored the other boat, "send us water!"

The men on the other boat made signs to them to drop their buckets in the ocean and take all they needed, which seemed a cruel jest. Had they not tried that water some time ago and found it salty sea-water, sure to kill? The men in the other boat finally convinced them, and they dropped their buckets and brought them up filled with sweet water.

Their boat was in the very mouth of the mighty Amazon where it emptied into the ocean.

All about them had been living water....



THE TOY OF JESUS

One of the most exquisite passages in the autobiography of any saint is that in which the Little Flower tells us of her willingness to be really all Jesus' own: "I had offered myself to the Infant Jesus to be His toy, and I had told Him to use me as a little ball of no value, which He could throw on the ground, kick with His feet, let lie in a corner, or press to His heart, just as He pleased. In a word, I wanted to entertain the Infant Jesus, and abandon myself to His childish caprices."

What a marvelous lesson there is here for us! Don't you think that the Infant Jesus loved His Toy; and treasured it more than many a more costly plaything?

NOT WITHOUT SOME SORROW

The "Imitation of Christ" (Book III, Chap. 5) has a passage which ought to be firmly enshrined in our memories: "Love is devout and thankful to God, always trusting and hoping in Him, even when it tasteth not the relish of God's sweetness, for there is no living in love without some sorrow. Whosoever is not ready to suffer all things and to stand resigned to the will of His beloved is not worthy to be called a lover."

In the words of Paul to Timothy (2 Tim. 2:11): "...if we be dead with him we shall live also with him."



Christianity has been called a religion of pessimism, since we stress so much the practice of self-denial and mortification and the thought of the four last things and seem to have our eyes always directed towards the grave.

What so few people outside the faith realize is that we do not stop with death and the grave — "O death, where is thy sting, O grave, where is thy victory?" — but we continue beyond those mortal terminals. We insist on a final victory for the immortal spirit of man, beyond life. And through our insistence on this we have bred through the centuries a race of people with phenomenal courage based on this belief, so that far from being pessimists, we are proved to be optimists of the first water. For, have we not conquered FEAR, the brother of pessimism?



How we all need trust today! With the world engaged in the vastest war ever seen

by mankind, men seek anxiously for someone on whom to lean, someone whom they can trust. They have learned by sad experience that the propaganda mills of their own leaders turn out lies and deceits; and sooner or later they realize, wistfully, that they are indeed like children without a father ... for have they not turned their backs on their heavenly Father? Father Kane, S.J., gives us reassuring words: "Trust, and you will learn. Learn, and you will love. Trust! With the conflict will come the courage, with the difficulty will come the help, with the trial will come the strength." And going far back in Christian antiquity let us bolster our spirits with these warm phrases of St. Cyprian: "As the depth of the chalice of trust varies, so will the amount of the heavenly water which God pours into it. The greater our hope, the greater our hope's realization." And St. Augustine himself gives us the slogan: "Trust the past to the mercy of God, the present to His love, the future to His providence."



The Little Flower of Lisieux gives us many a cheery word to guide us:

"To suffer and to love is purest of all joys."

And again, "My God, what joy can be greater than to suffer for Thy love!"

And, finally, "Suffering itself becomes the greatest of all joys when we seek it as a precious treasure."



Perhaps you say to yourself: "What have I done to merit such scourges, such treatment at the hands of others, such contempt and ill-judgment?"

Pause a moment and read what St. Augustine said about this very state of mind.

"If He who came into this world without sin did not depart hence without scourges, how shall they who have lived here in sin not be deserving of scourges?"



Whenever success in religious life seems harder than ever to attain, think of the inscription set in verse and recorded by the Greek poet Theodoridas:

"A shipwrecked sailor buried on this coast bids you set sail.

Full many a gallant ship, when this was lost, weathered the gale."

You must try and keep on trying even if your efforts seem not to bring you any nearer to the height of perfection you desire.



St. Francis Assisi took from nature many of his lessons to his disciples. Let us imitate him — therefore, let me urge you to be like a duck: it dives in the water, comes up and shakes every drop off in a vigorous reaction. . . . Do just that with your difficulties and worries and you will find that by their very nature they will fly off your back also.



AN EXCELLENT REASON FOR YOU

St. Ignatius gives every Religious a very good reason for keeping up his or her spirits:

"A Religious has no reason to be sad but much reason to be always happy."

Why? Is he not nearer by environment than most people? Is he not deliberately placing himself in the path of the Savior, so as to meet Him oftener than people out in the world? Is he not aware of the various favors which the Lord showers down on His sons in convents and daughters in Religion to a degree which the outside world does not know?

The Religious is indeed God's own pet ... if he or she only knew it.



Above all: avoid the three D's, is the advice of a famous spiritual counselor.

These are: The Devil, the Doctor, the Dumps. And the Dumps, adds the counselor, are little better than the Devil himself, for a gloomy soul is the Devil's plaything.



God is a master sculptor, and sometimes He uses people as the chisels to round out our stature, and to erase defects in the constructing of the masterwork on which he is toiling. Perhaps it is a fellow nun whose unconscious criticism of us is forever shepherding us on the way to cure a certain deep-rooted fault we have; perhaps it is a stray comment from a friend which hurts deeply but reaches the spot which else would never be indicated to our self-pride. If only we would follow the advice of the "Imitation of Christ" (III, 17:1): "My child, let me do with you what I will; I know what is good for you." Then indeed we would find that we would develop into real masterpieces from the Master's hand.



Do you expect great things from God or little things? We marvel at the saints, perhaps we even envy them the great favors which God gave to them. You, too, can obtain favors in just the proportion you expect them. The greater your importunity, the greater the gifts you will be granted. "As we hope in God, so shall we receive." These are the words of St. Teresa of the Child Jesus, and surely she knew whereof she spoke.

It is not possible to have too much confidence in God.



Have you lost heart today? Go to the sick to glean strength for the strife. The beds of suffering in many a hospital are more valuable and productive of lasting good than the endowed chairs of all the universities. The acceptance of suffering gives to many an invalid a poise and peace which amazes all who contact such a sufferer. The mighty lesson of Christ: "tacere et orare" — to be silent and pray — is here repeated in miniature for our benefit. With the Blessed Mother, such sufferers seem to say: "Be it done unto me according to Thy word." With St. Teresa, the heroic, they say: "Lord, not to die, but to suffer" . . . for they have learned from their sickbed goes forth a greater victory than from any battlefield. Take these words of Father Raoul Plus for your own:

"Whatever may be the height to which the waters of tribulation rise, let us always elevate our souls higher, like those aquatic plants which never let themselves become submerged by the tide, but lift their stems to display their invincible and smiling flowers above the surface of the current."

St. Augustine assures us that only the violent carry away the kingdom of God, and he tells us how in his own case the battle lasted for a whole fifteen years.

Now, just think what Christ Himself said: "Behold, I am with you to the consummation of the world." Isn't the struggle worth while, with such a promise to buoy us up?



THE JUST SHALL REJOICE IN THE LORD

(Ps. 63:11)

If there is any certain mark of the abiding presence of the Holy Ghost in the soul, if there is any visible pledge of future happiness destined for man, assuredly it is lightness of heart and joy of spirit. On some souls the black clouds of despondency and gloom never settle, sorrow may touch them with her sable wings, grief may blanch the hair, and early care rob the step of its youthful spring; but the joy which is not of this earth ever shines upon the brow of such a soul, and the heavenly peace and calm within shine brighter through the flood of tears which are wrung from a sore-stricken heart.

FATHER WILLIAM DOYLE, S.J.



Famous Father Vincent McNabb, in a foreword to his excellent book on pain entitled "The Craft of Suffering" (Burns, Oates and Washbourne), quotes a poem given him by a stricken woman, whose words, as he marvels, "flame and sing" because it was from a cancer-burning throat she sang:

"Come down from the Cross, my soul, and
save thyself! . . .

Beware!

Art thou not crucified with God, who is thy
breath?

Wilt thou not hang as He, while mockers
laugh and stare?

Wilt thou not die His death?

Wilt thou not stay as He with nails and thorns
and thirst?

Wilt thou not choose to conquer faith in His
lone style?

Wilt thou not be with Him, and hold thee
still?

Voices have cried to Him 'Come down!' Ac-
cursed and vain those voices, striving
to beguile!

How heedless, solemn-gray in powerful mass
Christ droops among the echoes as they pass!
O soul, remain with Him, with Him thy doom
fulfill."



ONE THING

you can achieve without effort: failure.
Nothing else.

B. C. FORBES

The mind of the Church is like that of a
solicitous Mother, ever mindful of her chil-
dren's welfare. How better explain this than
by noting that right in the midst of the solemn
hush of Advent she sets aside one Sunday
on which to rejoice, *Gaudete Sunday*. And
again in Lent, she foregoes all the penitential
atmosphere of the season in order to celebrate
Laetare Sunday. And on such Sundays even

the very vestments carry out the symbolism of joy: they are rose-colored. The very liturgy carries a daily exhortation: *Sursum Corda*. . . . "Lift up your hearts," that is, don't relax now — keep up your efforts and meantime rejoice, for soon will come the Birthday of Christ, soon will come the Resurrection, and your expectations of great joy shall be fulfilled.



STONES IN THE ROAD

A wise man makes the stones in his road stepping-stones, a coward or weakling lets himself trip on them.

Pasteur was 46 when he had a paralytic stroke. His usefulness seemed at an end.

Instead, for 27 years after this misfortune Pasteur progressed steadily forward in perfecting means to reduce suffering throughout the world.

During this period he perfected the theories which led to the control of tuberculosis.

Robert Schumann's middle finger became paralyzed, and his future as a pianist seemed at an end.

Who among you, however, has not thrilled to the beautiful melodies which he produced despite this tragedy?

Milton, with good eyesight, wrote prose in Latin and in English which is not remembered very well. Blind, he produced the finest epic in the English language: "Paradise Lost."

Sir Walter Scott was lame from infancy. Beethoven was deaf. Prescott was almost blind. Stevenson was ill all his life. Dr. Johnson suffered from scrofula. Schubert was afflicted with severe chronic headaches. —

Make up your own list of such heroes of adversity.



Sorrow is one of the best educators. A man can see farther and sharper through a tear than through a telescope. It all depends on how you apply what you learn.



THE DEAD STILL TEACH US

Walking in an old country graveyard, "God's Acre" in the fine old Saxon phrase, I came upon a pair of lines carved into an old tombstone, which kept me thinking on them for many a minute.

"The great tests of life reveal character; it is not until winter comes that we know the pine is evergreen."



In Carl Sandburg's monumental life of the Prairie President, Abraham Lincoln, he devotes a complete chapter to the difficulties that beset Lincoln in the black year of 1862.

Page after page simply narrates one obstacle and problem after another. One slough of despond is barely avoided when another turns up. Sometimes a page is devoted to explaining the situation; sometimes Sandburg merely relates what dilemma or trial confronted the harassed President.

And there are 85 pages of such closely printed items. . . . But Lincoln survived them all.



A MAN ON AN ISLAND

Who was a famous man who lived on the most famous island in fiction?

No, I'm not Professor Quiz.

And I do not mean Napoleon on St. Helena.

I want you to think of *Robinson Crusoe*. And now and then to act like him. Whenever he had an important decision to make, he would write down two columns of reflections and reasons why he should and why he should not do that certain thing. One column was FOR and the other column was AGAINST the course to be chosen. After a while he would look over his thoughts, thus lined up like soldiers for his inspection, and the right decision would pop to the front.

Instead of worrying and fretting and "stewing in your own juice" over decisions to be made, why not try out this homely, rule-of-thumb method and save yourself time, trouble and temper?



"Suppose that this here vessel," said the Skipper with a groan, "should lose 'er bearings, run away and jump upon a stone? Suppose she'd shiver and go down, when save ourselves we couldn't?"

The mate replies, "Oh, blow me eyes! Suppose again she shouldn't?"

WALLACE IRWIN



If you would have friends, be one.

ELBERT HUBBARD



Bolivar, the Liberator of South America — called the George Washington of South Amer-

ica — founded one country and freed three others.

He struggled all his life against the worst possible combinations of enemies at home and abroad, yet finally defeated mighty Spain, and set the southern part of the American hemisphere forever free.

To cringing followers who were willing to give up after his first crushing defeat, he said sternly, "The art of victory is to be learned from defeat." Yet he was human and, when the world seemed to be allied against him, knew what it feels like to be on the losing end. After many successes, his army suffered a terrible rout at La Puerta, and for Simon Bolivar and his fortunes it was low-tide. . . . But preserving an undaunted heart he rallied fresh forces, attacked the enemy in new battles, and saw the day dawn when no Spanish flag waved in any place in South America.

Nevertheless, at the end of his brief life, he was still harassed by gloom and despair at the slow results emerging from his successes. And while hailed as the Liberator of South America and showered with honors, he said, darkly, "We have plowed the sea." Yet despite all, he carried on.



LENGTHEN YOUR STRIDE!

The successful man lengthens his stride when he discovers the signpost has deceived him; the failure looks for a place to sit down.

Edison didn't sit down and give up when his first efforts to find an effective filament for the carbon incandescent lamp met with failure. He lengthened his stride! He car-

bonized every conceivable thing — fish line, cardboard, tissue paper, thread. He sent men to China, Japan, South America, Asia, Jamaica, Ceylon and Burma in search of fibers and grasses to be tested in his laboratory.

Burbank, the plant wizard, is another man who didn't say quit when obstacles blocked his way. At one time he personally conducted 6,000 experiments before he found the solution.

George Westinghouse was treated as a mild lunatic by most railroad executives: "Stopping a train by wind! The man's crazy!" Yet he persevered and finally sold the air-brake idea!

James Watt built model after model of his steam engine before he got one that worked efficiently. Call the roll of all the builders and you will find that they were men who lengthened their strides.

Every man gets the wrong road at times. He comes upon hills, rough going and dangerous detours. What he does when he meets these obstacles determines his destiny. The world never hears from those who look for a place to sit down. Lengthen your stride!



Let your optimism be genuine and healthy. God said to that great English mystic of the 14th century, Julian of Norwich: "See! I am God. See! I am in all things. See! I do all things. See! I never lift my hands off My works, nor ever shall without end. See! I lead all things to the end I ordained them for from without beginning by the same might, wisdom, and love whereby I made them. How could anything be amiss?"

Do you worry about the future? Does the road ahead seem dubious?

When Mary and Joseph finally discovered Jesus in the Temple, instructing the doctors, they wondered quite a bit. Just what did their son mean when he said, "Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?" The Bible specifically tells us they did not understand him. They returned in a group to Nazareth, and Mary "kept all these words in her heart."

Don't you think she was human and wanted to know just what the years ahead held for her and her son? But she had also that divine wisdom which told her that God had plans which were not revealed to her. The day would come, in God's own time, when he would reveal those plans, but there must be confident acceptance meantime of whatever God willed.

Have you learned Mary's lesson?



AND LAUGH!

Go build of your worries a strong-box,
Have every part strengthened with care;
When as strong as your efforts can make it,
Corral all your troubles right there.
Store in it all thoughts of failure
And each bitter cup that you quaff,
Lock all your heartaches within it,
Then —

 sit on the lid —

 and — LAUGH!



May the God of peace . . . fit you in all goodness that you may do His will; doing in you

that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom is glory forever and ever. Amen. (Heb. 13:20-21)



May He support us all the day long till the shades lengthen, and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done! Then in His mercy may He give us a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last!

CARDINAL NEWMAN



THE CREDO OF SORROW

I believe, O my God, that by suffering with resignation, the Passion of Christ is accomplished within me.

I believe that every creature in this world is sorrowing and subject to pain, while awaiting the day of the Son of God's manifestation.

I believe that we have here no lasting abode, and we seek another in the world to come.

I believe that all things tend toward the good of those who love God.

I believe that those who sow in tears, shall reap in gladness.

I believe that blessed are they who die in the Lord.

I believe that our tribulations will work for us an eternal weight of glory, if we contemplate not what is visible, but what is invisible; for the things that we see are but passing, while those that we see not are eternal.

I believe that this corruptible body shall clothe itself with incorruptibility, that our

mortal body shall put on immortality, and that death shall be swallowed up in victory.

I believe that God will wipe away all tears from the eyes of the just — that death for them will be no more, neither mourning nor weeping, and that their sorrow will cease at last, for all the former things will have passed away.

I believe that we shall then see God face to face.

Let us try to recite this "Credo" frequently, and we will find that joy can be found in the midst of sorrow if we firmly believe that all that God does is for our sanctification. God is always good, even when He asks sacrifices of us.



A religious ought never to indulge in selfish moping. Have you stumbled? Rise again and start anew. Have you lost the chance to help out one particular soul? Don't let haps and mishaps of this kind prostrate you. There are other millions awaiting your prayers or ministrations. Do your share for them . . . leave the success or failure of it to God. Worry is the devil's boiling pot, and you should not add fuel to it.



Have a little more confidence that the trials through which you are passing *will* ultimately pass.

After all, your grievances are not so bad. Did you ever consider that Christ voluntarily went through EVERY kind of suffering imaginable? Your trouble may be physical or spiritual or mental or financial . . . Christ

had every such type and condition of grief and affliction, in a superlative degree.

He suffered at the hands of people: from Jews and Gentiles, from the rich and the poor, from rulers and servants, even from His friends and acquaintances.

He was mocked, repudiated, rejected. He was lonely. He was misunderstood. He was an outcast. Considered from the religious angle, we know He was regarded as an iconoclast; from the political aspect, He was a destroyer of the existing system.

When the time came for Him to undergo the savage punishment of the cross, he was made to suffer a grievous mental and spiritual agony in the Garden of Olives, then the treachery of an Apostle, and the sinister midnight questioning of the Jewish leaders; later came the physical agony of the buffeting and the scourging and the crowning with thorns: He suffered in every bodily member: head, hands, feet, face, body. And in every bodily sense: taste, sight, smell, hearing, touch, culminating in the desolation on the cross: "My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Mark 15:34)

Did ever man suffer as Christ suffered?

And yet you whimper and whine over your own petty pains and paltry pricks....



A FORMULA

When asked the way to perfection, St. Alphonsus Liguori replied: "Be happy and contented; be satisfied with what you have, and where you are."



Often good souls actually have confidence in God, but let their weak human nature assert itself and dominate their spoken expression of their situation. They bewail or bemoan their plight: they seek restlessly for explanations or solutions.

The best proof to give of complete confidence is to "be silent and pray" — *tacere et orare*. As St. Arsenius says, "I have often repented of having spoken, but never of having been silent."

In this we have a marvelous example in Jesus when standing before Pilate. How remarkable that all four Evangelists unite in reporting this august moment at the tribunal when Jesus held His peace! Jesus abandoned Himself unreservedly and completely to God, knowing that sooner or later His innocence would be made known to the world. Jesus was omnipotent, He was omniscient, He was the living God. "Jesus autem tacebat" (Matt. 26:63). And even Pilate "wondered exceedingly" over the perfect silence of Jesus. What finer way could the God-man have chosen to demonstrate His unwavering reliance on His heavenly Father?



Through trials our trust in God is refined until it is a weapon ready for any offensive against the devil.

Periods of desolation which assail us have a definite value in the spiritual life, for through them we learn how solidly we have roots in divine confidence.

St. Francis Xavier knew well the need of trust in the Lord; on the eve of sailing for the Indies, he declared himself "unafraid — I

have not wished to pack fear in my baggage." With St. Augustine he realized this was the proper attitude: "Let us go cast ourselves into His arms. He will take no step backward that might cause us to fall."

The tide goes out; but the tide comes back and with redoubled force. God's favor may appear withdrawn now, but perhaps He is only planning greater delights for you.



The Quo Vadis Chapel on the Appian Road leading out of Rome is a perpetual reminder of how easy it is to lose confidence.

St. Peter had come to the conclusion that he had failed in his attempt to convert the Romans.

He, the Prince of the Apostles, left the city later to be called the Eternal City ... shaking the dust of the imperial capital from his feet he hastened away from the scene of his valiant labors for Christ. His trust in the Lord's direction wavered. Perhaps Rome was not to be the central city of Christendom. He was, like Paul, "weary even of life" (2 Cor. 1:8) and felt the tide of men and events was strong against him.

To him, in this hour of defeat — so runs the legend — appeared Christ. "Quo vadis?" He queried His Vicar gently. "Whither goest thou?"...

Peter returned. He died a martyr's death, realizing the truth: "Cast thy care upon the Lord and he shall sustain thee; he shall not suffer the just to waver forever" (Ps. 54:23, 24).

Are you weary, O soul? Trust in God, and "your sorrow shall be turned into joy" (John 16:20).

Leave sadness to the devil. A Christian has only joy for his heritage. Has not St. John of the Cross assured us that "the soul of one who serves God always swims in joy, always keeps holiday, and is always in a mood for singing"?

◆ ◆
Do you find it hard just to continue the daily struggle? Read these moving words of Archbishop Goodier:

Jesus from His childhood had the deadliest
of enemies,
Yet He went on.

Jesus was ignored and passed over
For thirty years,
Yet He went on.

Jesus was not quite understood even by
His Mother,
Yet He went on.

Jesus had the very worst interpretations
Put upon His very kindest actions,
Yet He went on.

Jesus had all His words warped, twisted,
Falsely reported, magnified, minimized,
Made to mean the very opposite,
By men set expressly to catch Him,
Yet He went on.

Jesus had no support from those in authority,
Only suspicion, heckling, condemnation,
Yet He went on.

With the people, He failed rather than
succeeded,
Yet He went on.

Succeeded in things that meant nothing,
Yet He went on.

Jesus was criticized about His rights,
Condemned as one who was unorthodox,
Proved wrong out of His own mouth,
Yet He went on.

Jesus was worn to death by labor,
Now by excessive loneliness,
Now by the pressure of the crowd,
Yet He went on.

Jesus was sneered at by the great,
Patronized by the learned and old,
Treated by His friends with galling familiarity,
Yet He went on.

Jesus knew very little gratitude,
Yet He went on.

Jesus had none to share His burden,
None with whom He could talk,
Yet He went on.

Jesus was slighted, even laughed to scorn,
When He gave of His very best,
Yet He went on.

Jesus had sententious and wise friends
To tell Him what mistakes He made,
And what He ought to do,
And how He ought to do it,
Yet He went on.

Jesus was deserted by everyone,
Who were scandalized in Him,
Disappointed by Him,
Yet He went on.

Jesus was betrayed
By one He had most trusted,
Betrayed by one of His first priests,
Betrayed for such a paltry price,
Betrayed with a kiss,
Betrayed to a rabble of ruffians,
Yet He went on.

Jesus was denied
By one on whom He most relied,
Yet He went on.

Jesus was hanged as a common malefactor,
Between two other malefactors,
Yet He went on.

Jesus endured the sense of utter desertion,
Even by God His Father,
Yet He went on.

Jesus was never without those who hated Him,
Really vindictively hated Him,
Who plotted against Him,
Who maligned Him behind His back,
Who did all they could to ruin Him,
And in the end He knew they would succeed,
Yet He went on.

Jesus saved others, Himself He would not save,
Yet He went on.

Jesus is passed over and contemned
By generation after generation,
Yet He goes on.



As Uncle Remus says: "You can hide the fire, but what you gwine do wid de smoke?"

Do you get headaches — physical or spiritual ones?

Be glad you have headaches: they are helpful symptoms that all is not well with you.

They are danger signals that the traffic on the road is headed for the ditch.

Pain is (medically speaking) a blessing, for it shows where the body is not functioning correctly.

Next time you have a headache, don't think there is something wrong with your brain, don't just worry and stew and fret over it: take it for what it is: a *beneficent symptom*, and DO something about it. Get the benefit of the pain; extract honey from the thistle.



In your sphere of life God may choose a different test of confidence from you than from your nearest or dearest.

When the Divine Word Missionaries were assigned to the "Wild West" of China, the remote Province of Kansu, with its desolate loess formations, its Mohammedan fanatics, its climatic and political perils, the prelate in charge of Propaganda in Rome at that time was famous Cardinal Van Rossum. Well did he know the dangers and difficulties of the task awaiting the missionaries. When he laid the invitation to this assignment before the Superior General of the Divine Word Missionaries, the latter almost fainted. He pointed out that there were not even any roads, and it would take literally a good month for the missionaries to reach their mission, traveling on springless crude carts. The Cardinal said finally: "Go, if not to spread the gospel, then at least to bear witness to it" ("Si non in propagationem fidei saltem in testimonium fidei"). And for long years the missionaries do just that: they bear witness to their faith, with few conversions, little material results, meager spiritual consolation, scanty recognition for their tireless labors. Well can they say, with Evangeline, heroine of Longfellow's poem, at the end of their life:

"Patience and abnegation of self and devotion
to others —

This is the lesson a life of trial and sorrow
has taught me."



Did you ever stop to think that the star which guided the Three Kings (surely the most favored of all paganism before Christ's birth) did NOT accompany them all the way?

Why, then, worry if you seem to have been retired from God's favor for a while?

How consoling to pick up the Bible and read at random: "His truth shall compass thee with a shield; thou shalt not be afraid of the terror by night" (Ps. 90:5). Get the habit of reading the Bible for the cheerful passages; hunt for them; find them; read them. There are plenty of them.



Confidence in God is its own reward, and it brings you inestimable favors from Him. St. Teresa declared that "it has always been my experience that a soul possessing great confidence in God makes greater progress in one day than other souls in a hundred days."



DON'T ASK FOR LITTLE THINGS!

Be good to yourself! Ask God for big things — if you actually have the hope and confidence in Him which as a Christian you should, you will not fail to go to Him for any favor you need, big OR small. If you honestly believe that He gives you His own Body and Blood in the Eucharist each day, how can you shrink from asking Him for some petty grace or favor? Have confidence! Ask Jesus for the big things too!

With St. Therese say: "We can never have too much confidence in the good God. He is so mighty, so merciful. We shall receive from Him quite as much as we hope for."



In my reading I came across a description of Speyer Cathedral's famous symbolic interpretation of the creed of the Cross.

It is nothing more than a great cross and a great crown hung from the two ends of a chain. . . .

Life, the chain, linking the cross and the crown. No cross, no crown.



ADVANCE UPON YOUR KNEES!

According to Pope Pius XI, of glorious memory, suffering is the highest form of prayer. St. Therese, the Little Flower of Jesus, said that "more souls are saved by suffering than by preaching." Bl. Theophane Vénard declared: "Suffering is the coin with which we purchase heaven." St. Paul states that if we are Christ's companions in suffering, we shall be His companions in glory. "If we suffer with Him, we shall also be glorified with Him" (Rom. 8:17).

Have confidence, therefore! God would not let you suffer unless He knew this was the best way for you to gain heaven.



Many years ago I was in Batavia, in the Netherlands East Indies, and I chanced to stop before the statue of a famous pioneer in the marketplace. Under it was the inscription:

*"In silentio et spe erat fortitudo ejus;
in laboribus plurimis certavit et vicit."*

Translated roughly this means: "In silence and in hope was his strength; in countless labors did he struggle and win."

It was only after I was at home again that I chanced to find the origin of this passage. In Isaias (30:15) we read: "In silence and in hope shall your strength be." And I reflected then how fitting a slogan this was for all the missionaries laboring in those remote islands of Oceanica, and indeed through all

the world . . . and how apt it was for everyone who took up the Cross and followed Jesus no matter what his place in life: "In silence and in hope shall their strength be . . ." Then, truly, no matter what enterprises are undertaken and borne, we shall find ourselves the victors, for Christ and with Him.



PROPHETS OF PESSIMISM

Heine, the German poet, gloomed over life. It became an obsession with him. It was a morbid growth on his mind. He came to the ultimate decision that "to live means to suffer; the whole world is one vast hospital and the physician in it is death."

Voltaire, supreme cynic and skeptic, despite all the knowledge and accumulated learning of his scores of years, kept muttering adverse criticism of the universe, cynically asserting how he would have bettered the world if he had been the architect . . .

It is true that both men attained a modicum of fame and recognition, but by their own confession they were absolutely devoid of personal happiness.

What a difference between them and the humblest beggar who accedes to the crosses heaped on him, embraces such burdens, and emerges as a St. Benedict de Labre, perpetually happy on earth and forever immortal in heaven!



“TEARS, IDLE TEARS”

Women in our own day often refer to a good movie as one in which they “had a good cry.”

There is a big relief in tears.

It is one of the most human things to read of in history. It is only when we read of Jesus' weeping, that we realize, awe-struck, that He was not only God but emphatically MAN.

He wept on three occasions: when viewing Jerusalem, before Lazarus's grave and alone in Gethsemane.

No tears are recorded of our Blessed Lady. Perhaps she heeded her Divine Son's advice to the women of Jerusalem: “Weep not over me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.”

There are tears of remorse; of grief; of genuine sympathy. And there are tears induced by nothing but nervous strains, symptoms of undue worry and lack of reliance in the God that made this universe. The next time you want to cry, ask yourself just WHY the tears are starting?



“Happy are the souls which are tempted.” Now who said that? Surely he was all wrong. Or was he? When I tell you that it was the statement of none other than St. John Vianney, our beloved little Curé of Ars, you will know that he was not all wrong. And indeed, he goes on to explain himself: “It is when the devil foresees that a soul is tending to union with God that he redoubles his rage. O blessed union!”

Now when we are in the midst of tempta-

tions, it may be that we find it hard and we feel our weakness and are tempted further — to complain. But since we have Christ's own assurance that we will not be tempted beyond "that which you are able," why not consider the matter in the same light that a true knight thinks of some great feat performed for his lady? The greater the obstacle the stronger one must be to surmount it. Here is a task for a strong will and a willing heart.

And since God is with us and not against us, He has given us three weapons with which to fight the foe. "Prayer to enlighten us, Sacraments to strengthen us, and vigilance to preserve us." Again we must thank the Holy Curé for reminding us. For, certainly, these things are treasure we need — prayer, the Sacraments, vigilance. Yet we would have much less use for them if we had no temptations to conquer. Or rather, we would not truly appreciate them. Who can appreciate light who has never been afraid in the dark? Who can appreciate calm weather unless he has gone through a storm? Who knows so well the joy of home and father as a prodigal?

"Happy are the souls which are tempted," for when the storm is greatest, they need only put out a hand and call, "Save us, lest we perish," and they will hear the most precious of all voices answering them, "Fear not. I am with you." What more happiness is there than having with us, in any situation whatsoever, Christ, our Lord?



The dictionary defines bravery as the ability to encounter danger, pain or misfortune with courage, and without disposition to yield.

Are you a brave man?

MAKE YOUR WORRIES PAY!

Every day you are going to have a certain amount of what old English writers called "carking care." Every day, following the law of averages, you will find so and so many troubles and trials uprooting your peace of mind. Have trust in God, and with each renewal of your confidence in Him, see how many extra graces you are gaining, **MORE THAN YOU WOULD HAVE HAD WITHOUT THOSE WORRIES ASSAILING YOU.** Remember Archbishop Goodier's memorable words:

"Those who face that which is before them actually, unburdened by the past, undistracted by the future, these are they who live, who make the best use of their lives; these are those who have found the secret of contentment. For such there is no day but it can be lived through, no matter what it may bring, there is no circumstance but it can be put to the best advantage, no matter how contrary and galling."



Perhaps you are a Religious.

You have taken vows that bind you threefold to God. You have tried faithfully to go ahead on the road to perfection. You have overcome temptation after temptation, yet still they assault you. You pray for relief. You plead for aid. Your soul becomes spiritually dry. Your emotions and thoughts, your heart and your intellect are inclined to cry despair. You think that to have confidence in a God who does not heed your prayers is a useless bargain.

Wait just one moment! Temptations in

themselves are nothing. Great saints suffered all their lives from the identical temptations, never were free from them for years on end. The secret of their sainthood lies in this: **THEY KEPT ON TRYING.** Archbishop Goodier, who lived many years in missionary India and had wide experience with the difficulties encountered by the men under his charge, writes significantly:

"When temptation is upon us, it is well to remember that just this trouble, harrowing as it is, death-dealing to our spiritual peace of mind as it is, nevertheless brings us closer to our Lord in His worst moments than does any other prayer or sacrifice."

Temptations means the devil is at work. Are you, too, at work — repelling him and his machinations?



A RECIPE FOR CHRISTMAS, 365 DAYS THE YEAR

Let no pleasure tempt thee, no profit allure thee, no ambition compel thee, no example sway thee, no persuasion move thee to do anything which thou knowest to be evil; so shalt thou always live jollily, for a good conscience is a continual Christmas.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN



Christ, starting His passion in Gethsemane, sweated blood, suffered untold agony of mind ("my soul is sorrowful even unto death"), even begged His Father: "Let this chalice pass from me, yet not my will but Thine be done."

Without that agony, and the horrors that led to the last moment on Golgotha, there would have been no Resurrection and no Ascension.

The way to heaven is often through an earthly hell.



Do you ever play cards? Even from such profane amusements a lesson can be learned. The chances of drawing a good hand in cards are usually against you; in other words, to win, oftener than not, it is not so important to be given excellent cards as in knowing how to play a bad hand well.

And even gamblers know that, when bad luck is following their cards, the thing to do is to keep playing, to "run the bad luck out" ... only through perseverance in the game can they hope to hit a "lucky streak." And these are in games for earthly stakes!

To remind you of what you are striving for, read this little poem by Father T. Burke, C.S.C.:

PERSEVERANCE

Lord, I have tried to walk the narrow way
That leads up Calvary's hill to Thy abode;
Oft have my wandering footsteps gone astray,
Oft has my heart grown faint upon the road;
Still have I struggled through the dismal night,
Hoping the dawn might find me at Thy side;
Though my poor soul is scarlet in Thy sight,
Lord, I have tried.

Lord, I have trod where thorns and briars
grew;

Along each stony road my feet have bled;
And when the wasting winds of passion blew,
I sought to follow where Thy footsteps led.
What though I still am plodding in the gloam,
Far from the mountain peak where saints
 abide,
Take Thou my hand; for, though I'm far from
 home,
 Lord, I have tried.

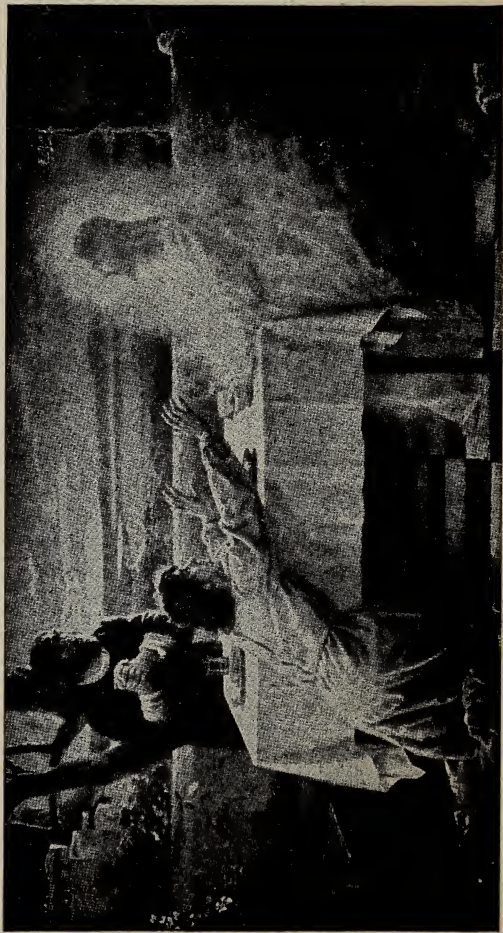


OUR DUTY OF JOY

It is not only our privilege, but also our duty, to preserve and foster a spirit of joy. As Christians, we know that God is our loving Father and, even though He permits suffering to strike and maim, it is always with a deeply planned and judicious motive, which, if borne patiently, will increase our ultimate joy a hundredfold.

Does not suffering help expiate our sins? Does it not lead many souls directly to God? Saul had to be stricken to the ground, blinded, before he could be led to the Faith. Suffering proves our fidelity to God, makes us test ourselves before we receive signal proofs of His favor. And, finally, suffering is the price of glory, the key which opens the wards of heaven's locks, and admits us to the eternal bliss, besides which human joys are but children's playthings.

You have a distinct duty to be cheerful always: both to God, who appears to be inflicting pain and sorrow on you, and to yourself, that soul which is yearning for sempiternal happiness. "Jesus," the Little Flower assures us, "loves the joyous heart, He loves the ever-smiling soul."



63
"And their eyes were opened and they knew Him" (Luke 24:31)

Some souls get the misconception that they can serve God only by excessive activity in His behalf; they place their work for Him ahead of everything. How often does God take such well-meaning individuals into His school, teaching them that it is not the work but He that is intended to come first and foremost in their thoughts! A beautiful little poem has nestled in the pages of one of my spiritual books for many years. It fits the need of such souls perfectly:

SERVICE

I was longing to serve my Master,
And lo — I was laid aside
From the party of busy workers
Who toiled in the field so wide.
They were few — yes, few in number,
And I could not understand
Why I should be kept inactive:
'Twas so different from what I had planned.

I was longing to serve my Master,
I knew that the work was great;
To me it was easy to labor
But oh — it was hard to wait;
To lie quite still and be silent,
While the song was borne to my ear
Of the reapers with whom I had mingled
In the work to my heart so dear.

I was longing to serve my Master,
Ah, this was my one fond thought —
For this I was ever pleading
When His footstool in prayer I sought.
And the seasons of sweet communing
Were few and far apart;
Not of Him so much as His service,
Were the thoughts that filled my heart.

I was longing to serve my Master,
He led to a desert place,
And there as we stopped and rested,
His eyes looked down in my face —
So full of tender reproaching,
They filled me with sad surprise,
Did He think I had grudged my service
And counted it sacrifice?

"Oh, Master, I long to serve Thee,
The time is so short at best —
Let me back to the fields," I pleaded,
"I care not to stay and rest."
I knelt at His feet imploring,
I gazed in His face above.
"My child," He said gently, "your service
Is nothing without your love."

I was longing to serve my Master —
I thought that His greatest care
Was to keep all His workers busy
In reaping the sheaves so fair.
But there in the lonely desert,
Afar from the busy scene,
It dawned on me slowly and sadly
Where the awful mistake had been.

My mind was so full of service,
I had drifted from Him apart,
And He longed for the old confiding —
The union of heart with heart.
I sought and obtained forgiveness,
While my eyes with tears were dim;
And now, though the work is still precious,
The *first* place is kept for *Him*.



When giving retreats to Religious I often
tell them to look up and try to digest the last

sentence in the last chapter in the first book of the "Imitation of Christ," whose authorship is attributed to Thomas à Kempis, though in recent years a good case has been made out for famous Gerard Groote's having been the author.

This sentence is a precious little thing. I say without fear of contradiction that you will progress on the road to perfection only in the degree that you have mastered its teaching and set it in actual operation.

The sentence? Here it is: "The greater violence thou offerest to thyself, the greater progress thou wilt make."



Why let your failures or defeats weigh you down?

Even in literature the stuff for heroic epics and classic plays has inevitably been based on the lives of great failures, not of great successes. It is when the hero dies after valiantly striving against fortune that our heart goes out to him. In real life it is the same. It is after Joan of Arc is burned at the stake that we hail her as a victor; had she won along the line and finally driven the English entirely out of France, would we feel so poignantly for her sake? The Generals of the Union armies of the U. S. A. during the Civil War are not remembered with one-half the glamour that surrounds the name of Robert E. Lee, the leader of the lost cause of the defeated Confederacy.

If in the past temptations have beset you, and you have fallen; if your defeats outnumber your victories ten to one — be not cast down. "There shall be joy in heaven upon

one sinner that doth penance more than upon ninety-nine just who need not penance" (Luke 15:7).

Surely in heaven they know properly how to appraise defeat — and victory.



To some people Christ was a scandal. To others He was a living folly. To others He was a charlatan, an impostor, a mountebank.

To how many of us is He actually God?

Let us pursue this thought further.

Do you believe Him to be God? That is, possessed of omniscience, omnipotence, etc. Do you? If you do, you also believe that He is all-merciful, and that He would not harm you just for the sake of harming you. He has a purpose in inflicting suffering on you. He is all-loving, hence the purpose is fundamentally all-loving, also. If you actually believe Him to be all-loving and all-merciful — in a word, God — then you will treat with Him as if He were God: that is, yield absolutely to Him, confide in Him, trust His judgment ahead of yours EVERY moment of your life. Only by such a standard can you test your belief in His Godhead.

Think it over carefully, and tell me, now — are you one of the few who actually believe that Jesus is God? . . .



DO'S AND DON'T'S

Don't brood over your woes. Don't pity yourself. Don't become angry when afflictions rain on you heavily. Don't let a day pass without smiling to yourself at how unimportant yesterday's troubles were.

Do separate the good from the bad — of the things that bother you. Do study how you can avoid by mere human foresight some of the things for which you were blaming God and His saints. Do propose a plan to yourself for a calmer acceptance of everything.

Do, rather than say you will do, anything that might make the next person feel more cheerful. In this way you will be laying in a personal stock of good-cheer.



In the midst of the hushed weeks before Christmas, the Church sets aside a Sunday on which she urges us to rejoice: GAUDETE SUNDAY (3rd Sunday of Advent).

In the midst of the preparations for Holy Week the Church consecrates one Sunday to joy: LAETARE SUNDAY (4th Sunday of Lent).

Rose-colored vestments are to be used when possible. Even in such liturgical details the Church sees to it that our religion is held up to us as fundamentally a joyous one.

Do we not have reasons for joy? Are we not splendid in the sight of God, through virtue of our baptism? Joy is our secret; through joy we are always God's children.

We know that melancholy is the devil's nurse, and gayety is God's housekeeper. We know why Ananias, Azarias and Misael sang in the burning furnace. We know the secret of the joy of the saints. We are the children of God — and the divine right of children is joy.



I have just been checking my schedule of engagements for the Lenten season.

It struck me more clearly than ever before how well disposed is the position of the feasts.

First comes the Sunday of the Passion. The gloom of Golgotha is foreshadowed. Then comes Palm Sunday, and after that day of exultation, and the triumphal ride through the streets, and the hosannas, comes the betrayal and the mockery and the scourging, the bloody sweat, the death on the cross.

The shouts "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" dwindle away and are stilled.

Then arises the paeon of the alleluias announcing to the world the eternal triumph of the greatest worldly failure the world has ever known, Jesus Christ.

The mourning of Good Friday has given way to the Easter alleluias.



THE MERRY SAINT OF ROME

St. Philip of Neri has given us the example of a life based on a cheerful spirit conformable to God's will. Here are some of the wise sentences he uttered which give us a clue to his conduct. Remember them. They are the wisdom of a saint who liked nothing better than to play jokes on his friends....

"The true way to make progress in virtue is to preserve holy joyousness."

"A cheerful mind strengthens the heart and makes one steadfast in good conduct; hence the servant of God must always be good-humored."

"Charity with happiness or charity with resignation should be our motto always."

"In the spiritual life it is much easier to lead the cheerful than the sad."

Do you not think he fulfilled the definition of St. Francis de Sales: "A saint who is sorrowful is a sorry saint"?



Are you sick, or depressed, or discouraged? Here is a one-word formula to dissipate the confusion and the chaos into which you have fallen:

PRAY!

The golden-tongued St. John Chrysostom declared prayer to be a "refuge in every sorrow, a principle of constant pleasure, the mother of philosophy." And St. Nilus called it a "charm against sadness and depression of soul." St. Francis was sure that "spiritual joy arises from purity of heart and perseverance in prayer."

Think once of St. Elizabeth of Thuringia. On the very night she was expelled from her castle, she ordered a Te Deum sung in the Franciscan Church near by.

And Brothers in religion have a fine precedent to follow in St. Felix of Cantalizio, who was sure to burst out into a fervent "Deo gratias!" no matter how unfavorable the occasion or event for himself. His fellow monks eventually called him Brother Deogratias.

Pray, and you will create a sanctuary within you whither you can retreat from the world's pursuit.



To those who protest that a life of prayer and seclusion in a monastery or convent is a dreary existence, we like to point out the names chosen in the Middle Ages for the convents scattered all over Europe. Here you

will find one delightful "nickname" after the other: "Gate of Heaven, Happy Meadow, Bright Place, The Delights, Joyous Gard, Consolation, Sanctuary" ... the list would really be endless.

Indeed, St. Francis de Sales assures us that "anxiety and bitterness are the ruin of devotion." And to her sisters in religion, St. Clare said: "Melancholy is the poison of devotion."

Joy grows through joy ... to make others happy, is the surest way to insure your own happiness. And the little joys of life, the amenities which add culture to any race or period, abounded in the Ages of Faith, and in no place more than in the convents and monasteries.

Far from yielding to the Babylonian malady (as St. Francis of Assisi called it), we find those nuns and monks acting on the principle enunciated centuries later by Blessed Crescentia of Kaufbeuren: "We must do as the bees, which suck only honey out of everything, whereas the spiders extract poison."



If we had a true devotion to the Holy Ghost, we would be always joyful.

St. Paul placed joy among the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22). The very word PARACLETE used by Jesus in speaking of the Holy Spirit means ADVOCATE or INTERCESSOR or COMFORTER or CONSOLER or HELPER ... all meaning, He is appointed to restore us to the joy rightfully ours. The Church commemorates this in its hymns to Him: "In fletu solatium" ("In weeping Thou art solace"); "in aestu temperies" ("In heat Thou

art refreshment"). The Holy Spirit is the LUMEN CORDIUM, the light of hearts — He soothes our soul in affliction, braces it in trouble, cheers it in depression. He is the final proof that while sorrow is the sequel to sin and is a condition of time, joy is a condition of eternity.



The God of Joy was a man who died on a cross betrayed and forsaken by His friends and disciples, abused, scourged, spit upon, mocked, considered a failure and an impostor.

The Blessed Virgin is called CAUSA NOSTRAE LAETITIAE — cause of our joy — yet her other name is just as significant: MOTHER OF SORROWS. She is the Comforter of the Afflicted, the Queen of Joy, yet her heart was visited with the seven swords of sorrow....

Upon this paradox of sadness and joy is the Christian faith founded. Christians alone have the formula of the quintessence of joy — and a mighty large ingredient in all joy is sorrow.



Here is an old note I found in my breviary:

"It behooves not the servant of God to be sad and ill-humored before men. He should, on the contrary, be always of good cheer. If you have sinned, go and examine yourself in your cell and, weeping over your sins before God, confess your faults to a priest. But when you return to your brothers, put aside your sadness and be cheerful like the others."

Let us go and do in like manner. With John Peter de Caussade, let us say: "Come, my soul, let us pass with head erect over all

that happens within us or outside us, remaining always content with God, content with what He does with us and what He makes us do."



Every priest knows how much harm and mischief discouragement does to people. Do not get discouraged: it may perhaps be the last key in the bunch that will open the door.

"Can't" is a bad enemy; stick to that sweet and stubborn friend of man: "I will." The refusal to look on the dark side of nature and of life is one of the greatest graces vouchsafed to those in the religious life. How many cheery faces are to be found in convents and monasteries! Why? Happiness is the harmony of the soul. The religious knows that, in the words of the sacred writer, "The steps of man are guided by the Lord; but who is the man that understandeth his own way?" With Blessd Henry Suso, the religious comes to know that "suffering is a short pain and a long joy." And in more homely fashion, the words of the Curé of Ars still are the finest paraphrase of the Gospel passage about Him who takes care of the sparrows lest they fall: "Do not mistrust the providence of God. He who made your corn to grow will assuredly enable you to gather it in."



There is a book by the Abbé Tissot called "The Art of Profiting from Our Faults."

This reflects a great truth. Our woes can be our wings if we use them properly.

The first voice which we utter is one filled with crying. Properly used, all that noise

one day becomes speech, the audible expression of our thoughts.

If there had been anything better for people's souls than suffering, God would surely have offered it to us. St. Francis Xavier knew this. He entreated from God the favor of abundant suffering to enable him the quicker to gain heaven: "Still more, my God, still more."

Remember St. Paul's admonition: "Rejoicing in hope. Patient in tribulation. Instant in prayer" (Rom. 12:12).

And St. James warns us against temptations that make us feel the struggle is useless: "My brethren, count it all joy, when you shall fall into divers temptations; knowing that the trying of your faith worketh patience" (James 1:2-4). And further on, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he hath been proved, he shall receive the crown of life, which God hath promised to them that love Him" (James 1:12).



Father Doyle, S.J., says pertinently someplace in his spiritual diary that discouragement is the devil's pet walking-stick.

The next time you go strolling along life's highway use the Christian staff: CHEERFULNESS.



God never promised that we should be free from trials and temptations.

He did promise us His aid to carry us through them.

He asks us often to follow His plan, not ours.

We cannot understand His plan now ... and so many of us refuse to follow it.

If we had followed His plan, how happy we would have been in times gone by! If we start following it today, how happy we shall be in times to come!

Going through a tunnel we do not mistrust the engineer. He surely must know the way out of it. We have no subconscious fear.

Why, then, mistrust God, even if you cannot see whither the track leads?

Say to yourself with the Apostle: "I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me." It is true that man is born to trouble as sparks fly upward, but repeat this now and then, and your heart will be lifted up: "Though I should walk in the midst of the shadow of death, I will fear no evils, for Thou, O God, art with me."



A king placed a heavy stone in the middle of a road.

People thronged by, stepped over the boulder, kicked it angrily, murmured, grumbled, none removed the stone... Finally one man came along, saw the obstacle, picked it up to make the way easier for those who came after him.

Under the stone the king had placed a purse filled with gold.

How many such hidden blessings did you spurn in times gone by? God places suffering in your path to enrich you... have you helped move the stone first?



Even Shakespeare admits someplace that old age is "crabbed" ... and it is a frequent

experience to find that few people know how to grow old gracefully and pleasantly.

It is so easy to be morose and crabby.

Some years ago, I went to visit Msgr. Willmes, formerly pastor of St. Peter's Church in St. Charles, Mo., who was then retired from the active pastorate in O'Fallon, Mo.

I tried to be cheery, knowing how often elderly people grow soured on life, living only too much with vain regrets.

But Monsignor fooled me. "Oh," he said with a twinkle in his eye, "I admit I am not any more what I used to be. I try to keep spry and alert. . . . My hair is thinning away; my teeth are dropping out, my hearing is failing; my eyes are dimming, and my legs do not want to carry me much longer. OTHERWISE I AM O.K."

Isn't this a much better way to look at things than to tell others your ailments and headaches? . . . I hope to live to be 85, but if I do, I shall never be an inmate of an old people's home. Too many of them expend their time telling one another their ailments, until all of them have something wrong, mentally or physically.



YOUR MIRROR

Life is the mirror of king and slave,
'Tis just what we are and do.

Then give to the world the best you have,
and the best will come back to you.



STOP FRETTING

The bird that flutters least is long upon the wing.

"God deliver me from sour-faced saints!" Teresa of Avila once wrote to a friend. Of course, she knew very well that there are no sour-faced saints. There could not be. Nor did she mean that one must go through life grinning from ear to ear on fit or unfit occasions. But in some way or the other one can always tell when another person has a true sense of humor though he may never exchange more than a glance in all his life. A man who can laugh at himself is pretty well fortified against the world, the flesh and the devil.

We must not, however, make the mistake of confusing wit with true humor. For almost invariably your witty young blade has a barbed tongue. Wit itself always carries a sting. But your humorist — ah, there is the man for you! He is kind. He does not laugh at you, but with you, and perhaps at himself. I might almost add to St. Teresa's exclamation "God deliver me from witty saints, too." For it is scarcely the business of a saintly person to go about hurting people. A little thought on this subject may make all the difference in the world in our lives, so let us learn the difference between kindly humor, which indeed may lie close to tears, and barbed wit, which, from the very nature of it, robs one of simplicity, a necessity of saintliness. "True simplicity is to hurt nobody," said Albert the Great, and simplicity is a saint's boon companion.



"A cheerful temper joined to innocence will make beauty attractive, knowledge delightful, and wit good-natured." Mr. Addison of Tat-

tlar fame, seems to have all but taken those words right from the gospel.

And not so long ago I was reminded of them while visiting a sanitarium for tubercular sisters. I must have returned home with as beaming a face as these gay sufferers had shown, no matter what their untold agony, for I was asked: "Why, Father, where have you been? You seem very happy!" "Well," I replied fervently, "I am happy. I have just returned from *Sunnyside*, where the patients were practically turning somersaults in their beds."



A nervous breakdown usually originates from brooding over real or fancied wrongs, overcriticalness of others, darkening of many precious hours simply through looking for the gloomy side of things — plus too much work, and too much living on our nerves, which includes insufficient sleep and insufficient food, — or too much sleep, too much food, too much drink.



Did you ever hear this story about Edwin Booth, the renowned actor?

It happened one miserable, stormy night that when it was time for the curtain to rise upon the first act of his play there was no audience, save a few rain-spattered fellows near the back of the theater. The cast was most discouraging and was all for postponing the play until a more auspicious evening.

But, "No," said Mr. Booth, who was as disappointed as the rest, "no, we shall go on. Remember, the King sits in every audience.

Play to *him*." And that night he gave the best performance of his life for the bedraggled roisterers in the back row.

A day or so later he found himself famous. The King sent for him and made his deed public. For among those roisterers who had sought refuge from the storm in the playhouse he — the King — had actually been sitting on the night Booth played his best.

What a lesson for all of us! It is so easy to do our best under the stimulus of an applauding crowd, or an admiring friend, or when we are certain of some material reward. But when our "playhouse" is empty, and we play to rows of empty seats — so to speak — we make a pretty poor showing if indeed we have the courage to "let the show go on" at all. Yet that is just the time to remember that "the King sits in every audience." The King of heaven and of our hearts always holds a box-seat in our life-theater, and rain or shine, good days or bad, He occupies it. And if we are discouraged or happy, if we would become famous in His Kingdom and joyful in our own, let us say on every play-day or night: "The King sits in every audience. Play to *Him*."



Says the "Beloved" in the "Imitation of Christ": "He who loveth, flyeth, runneth and is glad; he is free and not hindered." Are you out of breath today, from flying, from running, from good cheer? And whom do you love? All in God and God in all is the best recipe for that.



Wherefore, when you find yourself in this simple and pure filial confidence with our

Lord, stay there — without moving yourself to make sensible acts, either of the understanding or of the will; for this simple love of confidence, and this love-sleep of your spirit in the arms of the Savior contains by excellence all that you go seeking hither and thither to satisfy your taste.

ST. FRANCIS DE SALES



Coming down to a hero of today, or a saint in the making, who is among the army of shut-ins joyfully serving the Lord, I recently received this small (or is it big?) heart-lifter in a letter:

"As I lay here looking down at the parking lot, something caught my eye. It was a little child just learning to walk. I watched him for a long time. He would fall down, then get up and take a few steps — and fall again. And so on, while I thought to myself how easily we grown-ups give up — to worry, despair and God knows what not. But this little lad will not be defeated. He will keep on trying until he masters that job of walking."

Here is just another instance of what our Blessed Lord meant when He set a little tot up before the crowd and said: "Except you become as one of these little ones, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven."



Do you suffer and feel lonely? Is your heart weary and afraid? Is the burden of life so heavy you are sure no one ever has had to bear what you are bearing?

Do you feel it is about time for you to give up the trust in God that has carried you thus far? Read Archbishop Goodier's encouraging words:

"Nowhere has Christ our Lord come nearer to us than in His loneliness and ours. Nowhere has He shown Himself more human. Nowhere has He more condoned the cry of pain, the appeal for some relief; nowhere has He done more by promise, to nerve us to endurance. And the truth of His promise, who that has tried does not know? St. Paul speaks for such as these, and they echo his words which have for them a meaning all their own: 'I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come nor might nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord.' "



We all like rewards. . . .

As children, many of us were trained on a system based partly on good marks, prizes, praise, approval of various kinds.

To us, His children, God gives rewards. And when we have confidence in Him, and show our complete dependence on His will, He showers us with graces and aids to happiness.

From the time of the Old Testament we find the injunction to have trust in God written again and again in the pages of the Sacred Books. In Proverbs (3:5, 6) we read: "Have confidence in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not upon thy own prudence. In all thy ways think on Him, and He will direct thy steps." Here God Himself expressly states that by having trust in God, we are making sure of having Almighty Omnipotence and

Almighty Wisdom guide our steps.... And two hundred years before Christ, an inspired writer declared (Eccl. 2:11): "Know ye that no one hath hoped in the Lord and hath been confounded." What a wonderful assurance of ultimately reaching our heavenly goal!

And St. Paul, writing to the Hebrews, urges them: "Do not therefore lose your confidence, which hath a great reward."



YOUR BANNER

By being a Christian you automatically fling to the winds of life's battle a pennon inscribed: "I TRUST IN GOD."

Came the day for the Little Flower of Jesus when she knew she was dying. To those to whom life is a record of frustrated hopes and dreary disappointments the end of life seems a further and complete denial of all that is worth while.

To the Little Flower it was just another occasion to reveal the secret of her complete happiness on earth. Said she, "I suffer much, but I am in an astonishing peace. I am full of confidence." With world-famous General Radetzsy she could say: "What God wills, is my law" ... and in that serene unshaken trust, find her promise of heaven.

Our age has lost most of the beauty and charm that filled the Ages of Faith... just because we glory in the loss of faith, in the absolute trust in a God who knows what is best for His children. The arch-pagan Goethe, commenting on the increasing growth of this spirit even in his own century, said, somewhat wistfully: "Every era in which faith

dominates is brilliant, uplifting and productive for its contemporaries and for future generations." What can our times promise to future ages? Great mechanical achievements; magnificent inventions and ingenious contraptions; stalwart adventures into the unknown realm of science and of exploration... medical progress and alleviation of disease unknown to former eras; but nowhere that development of the spirit of confidence and trust in an almighty provider which enables man to have a divine goal for his short life.

Without faith, self-denial is only a form of self-torture, such as fakirs employ in mysterious India; without faith the sorrows and griefs of this world would only be borne without any ultimate reason but sheer necessity; and without faith Christ Himself would have been the rankest charlatan in history for discussing man as pessimistically as He did and then offering him a solution based on implicit confidence in the Father.

Christ knew how prone to evil is man; every expression of His proves it. Yet the very fact that He chose to become our Redeemer also proves that He, relying on the Father, had absolute trust that man could and would be saved....



Out of suffering come strong souls. The Last Day will probably show us a motley battalion of people, all with one common characteristic: they are seared and seamed with scars.

The martyrs will, of course, have their coronation robes of fiery splendor; but many lesser souls will have even more regal robes

earned with bitterness and sweat and patient enduring.

It is always those faces which have had the most tears course down the cheeks, that seem sweetest and most noble.



FROM THE FAR EAST

come words of wisdom and one of the noblest of Oriental philosophers to listen to is Mencius (who lived around 731 *Before Christ*) —

"To dwell in the wise house of the world;
to stand in true attitude therein;
to walk in the wide path of men;
in success, to share one's principles with the
people;
in failure, to live them out alone;
to be incorruptible by riches or honors,
unchangeable by poverty,
unmoved by perils or power.
These I call the qualities of a great man."



Have you got faith?

Do you believe?

Don't tell me your fellow man does not
Just think once of all the people who wind
up the alarm clock every night.



At the New York World's Fair several years ago there was an enlarged X-ray machine which demonstrated on a life-size screen the manner in which a human heart works.

Any individual could step behind the screen and the spectators could observe every tremor

and pulsation of his heart. The demonstrator would frighten, soothe, amuse, horrify the person, and the audience literally gasped to note how rapidly the heart responded to the different reactions and throbbed, now easily and regularly, now with fierce, almost daimonic energy.

The thought came to me: there are certain cardiac muscles in that heart which, from the moment they are created in the womb, until they are stilled in death, are never allowed to rest one moment. 3,600 times an hour; 86,400 times each day, they labor, never once resting from their appointed task.

If just for one weary moment they decide to quit their job — we say a man has died.

How many times a day do you allow your courage to die?



Did you ever stop to reflect how much good cheer you can bring to your own life through altruism — doing good to others? Perhaps this little verse will remind you of this the next time you feel "blue":

"OTHERS"

Lord, help me to live from day to day
In such a self-forgetful way
That even when I kneel to pray
My prayer shall be for others.

Help me in all the work I do
Ever to be sincere and true,
To know that all I do for You
Must needs be done for others.

Let self be crucified and slain!
And buried deep! and all in vain
May efforts be to rise again
Unless to live for others.

Others, Lord, just others!
Let this my motto be!
Help me to live for others
That I may live for Thee!



A double-bassoon player went to Toscanini a few moments before the symphony was to commence. He complained that his instrument was out of order; that it could not reach the note of E-flat. The Great Master of Music bent his head in thought for several moments. Then he patted the musician on the shoulder. "That's quite all right," he said; "the note of E-flat does not appear in your music today."

The Master Conductor knew — better than any of the men who played under his direction — the part each had to play. He knew each instrument's fullest possibility of expression, also its limitations.

Like the bassoon-player, we all come up against a *despairing note* at one time or another in our life — some sorrow, temptation, or other affliction which we feel we can't measure up to. At such a time, we can't do better than to go with the bassoon-player to our *Master Conductor*, He whose Great Symphony is the Music of the Spheres, He whose instrument we are, and who knows the part we can play and can't play better than we do ourselves.

God would no more let us be confronted with a temptation beyond our powers to "stand

up and play our part well" than a Toscanini would give the violinist's part to the man at the kettledrums.

In our every temptation and distress when we get to feeling that it is *too much for us* we must turn, for confidence, to that *supreme assurance* given by the Master to the instrument-player — "The note of E-flat does not appear in your music today."



HOPE

A little while the labor,
Eternal the repose;
A little while the trials
That with this life will close;
And then unending gladness,
And an unfading crown,
A day on whose calm beauty
The sun goes never down.

A little while in exile,
With no abiding place,
And then the Home eternal,
Unveiled the Bridegroom's Face.
Is any cross too heavy
Or any task too hard
That Jesus lays upon thee,
And Jesus will reward?

One night the shadows linger,
And then the morning breaks,
And God's own Hand the burden
From weary shoulders takes;
And thou shalt see His glory,
And hear His words — "Well done!"
The strife forever over,
The battle fought and won.

CONSOLING THOUGHTS

Dearest Lord, make me remember, when the world is cold and dreary and I know not where to turn for comfort, that there is always one bright and cheerful spot — *the sanctuary*. When I am in desolation of spirit, and when all I hold dear to me have passed away like the summer flowers, when none are left to love me and care for me, whisper to my troubled soul that there is one Friend who dies not, One whose love never changes — *Jesus on the altar*. When sorrows thicken and crush me with their burden, when I look in vain for comfort, let Thy dear words come from the tabernacle: "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavily burdened, and I will refresh you." Thy friendship, dearest Lord, henceforth shall be the dearest treasure I possess. It shall compensate for the treachery and ingratitude of men. It shall be my consolation when the wild flowers are growing over my best-loved ones, and when all who hold a dear place in my heart are withered and gone. With Thy friendship the world shall never be dreary and life never without charm. Would that I could realize the pure happiness of possessing Thy sympathy! Would that I could feel — when I am crushed and humbled, when the hope I have lived for has vanished, when sorrows and trials that I dare not reveal to any make my soul sink well nigh unto death; when I look in vain for some one to understand me, one who will enter into all my miseries — make me then remember that there is One on the altar who knows every fiber of my heart, every sorrow, every pain peculiar to

my own nature, and who deeply sympathizes with me. Compassionate Jesus! my heart craves sympathy. To suffer seems nothing to the bitterness of suffering alone.



THE LONELY HEART TO THE HEART OF JESUS

Heart of Jesus, I am lonely.
Let me come to Thee awhile.
All my bitter pain will vanish
in the brightness of Thy smile.
Let me cool my burning spirit
in the blood that flowed for me
when Thy Sacred Heart was opened
on the hill of Calvary.

Thou, most true, wilt never leave me;
Thou wilt ever be the same.
Never Thou'lt chide my deep affliction,
never despise my hidden shame,
never frown when others name me,
never wilt Thou bid me go.
Oh! my God! my God! Thou knowest
all my soul's unspoken woe.

When the tears fall thick and heavy
from my fixed and burning eyes,
let Thy Sacred Heart beat kindly,
in Thy radiant home on high.
"List," Thou sayest, "poor soul-trying child
I have willed that this should be;
Bear thy cross a little longer,
then thou'lt come and dwell with Me.

"Well I know the draught is bitter —
I have drunk the same sad cup.

In the garden grove of Olives
when I saw no gleam of hope.
Then I loved as thou art loving,
those I loved — ah, where are they?
Child, I found them calmly sleeping,
while my life's blood ebbed away."



From old England, the England of the Faith, comes the sound advice in the "*Rule for Anchoresses*" (women hermits). It goes:

"The whole world is God's smithy, in which He forgeth His elect. Wouldst thou that God had no fire in His smithy, nor bellows, nor hammers? Fire — that is, shame and pain; bellows — that is, they who speak evil of thee; hammers — that is, they who do thee harm.



Keep up the courage of those about you. They may be already discouraged when they come to you — do not let them go away feeling even more depressed. Be like the little Irish boy who was out walking with the parish priest when a weary farm-hand asked the distance to the next town.

"Four miles," replied little Mike.

The farm-hand brightened up and went on at a brisker pace.

The priest remonstrated.

"Why, Mike," he said, "you know it is nearer eight miles than four to the next town!"

"Sure, your reverence," explained Mike, "but the poor fellow was tired, and I wanted to keep his heart up. If I had told him the truth, sure and he would be down-hearted intirely."

The firebrand of the Church, Savonarola, speaks impassioned words about the strife that is living:

"Man's life on earth is a perpetual warfare—this is especially true of the real Christian, since he must fight against whatever hinders his spiritual welfare. He must fight against the world, the flesh and the devil, and he is continually fighting. Thus it was with the Apostles and the Martyrs, and thus it will be with good Christians; God so desires, in order to give them greater glory in the life to come."

And another great Italian writer and mystic writes: "This alone is thy concern, to fight manfully, and never, however manifold thy wounds, to lay down thy arms or to take to flight." This was Father Lawrence Scupoli who wrote the immortal "*Spiritual Combat*."



Our Catholic belief of the Guardian Angel is a consoling one indeed.

No matter where we are, we believe we have a guardian angel watching and warding over us.

Believe this and you abolish many of your troubles. In the words of the old poem:

"To me remains nor place nor time;
my country is in every clime;
I can be calm and free from care
on any shore, since God is there.

"While place we seek or place we shun,
the soul finds happiness in none;
but with a God to guide our way,
'Tis equal joy to go or stay.

"Could I be cast where Thou art not,
that were indeed a dreadful lot;
But regions none remote I call,
secure of finding God in all."



The opening chapters of the Scriptures (the New Testament) roll by so rapidly we often miss the complete meaning of many a little scene.

Simeon did not only act as a symbol of the Old Testament.

He acted as a prophet of things to come.

He assured Mary her son would be a sign to be contradicted, and he prophesied that a sword would pierce her heart.

Symbol of the new faith given us with the advent of Christ, she endured and suffered gladly, and silently.

Would you call her a failure?



God permitted even His Mother, Mary, to suffer in an unendurable way.

Scripture expressly tells us she did not understand all the things said to her.

God knew too that she would carry all those words in her heart — for eighteen years. And even after His death she would keep pondering them, until her own departure from this vale of tears.

What cause do you have to be upset, that things do not seem clear to you?



THY WILL BE DONE!

My God, my Father, while I stray
Far from my home, on life's rough way,

O teach me from my heart to say:
"Thy will, my God, Thy will be done!"

Though dark my path, and sad my lot,
Let me be still and murmur not;
But breathe the prayer divinely taught,
"Thy will, my God, Thy will be done!"

If Thou shouldst call me to resign
What most I prize — it ne'er was mine;
I only yield Thee what is Thine —
"Thy will, my God, Thy will be done!"

CHARLOTTE ELLIOT



One of America's most colorful statesman, John Randolph, said once: "Mean spirits, under disappointments, like small beer in thunderstorms, always turn sour."

Are you small beer?



Clemenceau, the "Tiger" of France, was asked for a definition of happiness, and replied briefly: "Not being bothered."

St. Philip Neri was seated at his table when a student bounced a ball which inadvertently knocked ink all over the saint's papers.

"It is nothing," the saint waved the matter away — "let them chop wood on my back if they wish, provided they offend not God."

Would you rather be Philip, willing to be cheerful in spite of annoyance, or Clemenceau, who, like the actress Garbo of our own generation, wanted "to be let alone"?



Who would find heart enough to begin to live if he dallied with the considerations of death?

R. L. STEVENSON

“IN THIS SIGN”

On the fuselage or wings of the planes fighting over Europe these days, observers note symbols painted.

Some aim at sardonic humor; some portray a mascot; others stress terror; others have a crusading touch.

These symbols are the identifying marks of the various squadrons of the opposing forces.

Men have always had a weakness for symbols. In the early caveman days, a savage would take a stick and draw a rough idea of something in his mind — a picture, without words to amplify it. In time, civilization took over the process and we had books, printed and illustrated. But in striking symbols man will always penetrate quicker to the heart of his meaning than through the media of all the classics ever written.

What shall we say, then, of the symbols of suffering bequeathed us by Jesus?

He could have given us signs of splendor to denote which paths we should take ... instead He gave us the cross — “in this sign shalt thou conquer” — and after this, He made us see that the reed, weakest symbol of all, could be more sovereign than a scepter of gold, and a crown of thorns (most bothersome of all plants) was held forth for us to acknowledge as the rarest diadem of the world. And in the Middle Ages, the Kings of Lombardy were proud to have worked into their royal crown one of the nails which pierced the hands of Jesus, — a nail made of cheapest metal such as were used to fix a common criminal on the cross in supreme punishment.

Accept the symbols of your Faith, Christian, and realize what meanings they foreshadow for you.



There is a beautiful song which starts:

"All through the night there's a little brown bird singing..."

Why not memorize it and remember to sing or hum it now and then to remind yourself that even in the nighttime some creatures are happy? And reflect that in your most depressed moods, you have a right to maintain your cheerfulness.



Often enough we are so blind to our good fortune that we overlook possibilities right under our noses. We are confirmed pessimists and hence believe that nothing good could happen to us.

H. C. Hony is an Englishman who recently took an old family heirloom from the wall and sent it to be cleaned of dust and grime. When the cleaners removed the dirt they were amazed to find the painting was by Thomas Gainsborough, whose "Blue Boy" brought the highest price ever paid for a painting. Mr. Hony was informed that his painting, formerly considered valueless except as a family heirloom, was worth between a quarter- and a half-million dollars.



There are roughly 518,000 minutes in each year. Most of those minutes each year are spent in joy. Happiness fairly crowds our short span on this earth, if we but realized it.

Just how many sad minutes do we suffer from each year? And are they so bad?...



There comes an ebbtide in every man's life, just as surely as there comes also a flood-tide, whether he be beggar or baron.

It is a proof of the immortality of our soul to know that, in St. Augustine's words, "Thou hast made us for Thyself and our hearts are restless until they find rest in Thee."

The search is different for every man. And the ebb and the flow of life leave us alternately "on top of the world" or lower than the beasts of the field, who can fortunately pursue a complacent course, undisturbed by despondency or ecstasy.

To get to the heights you must ascend from the plain — and once on the heights, you must descend ultimately to the plain again.



An example of the strong courage and submission to the will of God which missionaries often display is evinced by Bishop Berlioz of Hakodate.

The Bishop was touring France trying to raise funds to keep his mission going, when news reached him of the absolute destruction of his cathedral in Japan by fire — and this was the *third* time that this had happened!

Wouldn't you have shrieked and ranted and pulled your hair and become hysterical? It was a blow calculated to prostrate anyone not of giant confidence in the Lord.

Calmly, the Bishop accepted this buffet. In a spirit of complete abnegation he said: "Incensum istud a te benedictum, ascendat ad te, Domine: et descendat super nos miseri-

cordia tua." "May this incense, blessed by Thee, O Lord, ascend unto Thee; and may Thy mercy descend upon us."

What a grand sense of humor the Bishop had! The building, consecrated to divine worship, had been blessed by God, and now as it burned, the Bishop offered it up as patriarchs offered up holocausts in the Old Testament, unto the greater glory of God!

It reminds one of that peerless story of St. Lawrence, martyred for the faith in ancient Rome. His persecutors stretched him out on a red-hot gridiron, but Lawrence was too much the Christian to find fault with their methods ... until his humor got the better of him. Then, "Turn me over now," said he, "I am quite done on this side."



I love the story of St. Joseph of Cupertino, who, having formed the habit of praying with men in the fields, came one day to find the meadows deserted. Disappointed, but nothing daunted, he called to him the sheep and their lambs and set earnestly about saying the Litany of the Saints — or maybe it was of the Holy Name — admonishing the little animals to answer him devoutly. Which they did! "Lord, have mercy on us," begged St. Joseph. "Baa!" responded the sheep. "Christ, hear us," supplicated he. "Baa," answered the sheep — and so on to the end.

All of which shows us that if we have faith enough, and simplicity enough, we not only lift up our own hearts but the hearts of the world.



Did you ever meet a convert? Did you notice the complete peace and joy which possessed him? It is as if you chanced across a man who had finally come into his heritage. The long years are over, and he is master of his Father's mansion.

When the man is a scholar such as Cardinal Newman or a man of culture such as Charles Stoddard or a figure such as John Moody, it must have been a real experience to have met the man, and observe how the gift of faith rounded him out and made him a complete man. Like Chopin, pressing the crucifix to his lips as he lay on his deathbed, they can say: "Now I am at the source of happiness." Like St. Augustine, they can exclaim gaily: "My Lord, here smite, pierce and burn as thou wilt, only in eternity be merciful." And like St. Ignatius Loyola, they have come to assess the world in the light of time without end: "All the honey that can be gathered from the blossoms of the world does not contain as much sweetness as the gall and vinegar of our Saviour."

In his book, "Twelve Years in the Catholic Church" Stoddard describes his happiness as a Catholic:

"I also affirm the absence in my heart of even the shadow of a regret that I took the step. . . . Yet, as I am not likely, as an octogenarian, to write anything more about this subject, I wish, before it is too late, to bear my testimony to the blessed peace which the unity, authority, and Sacraments of the holy, Apostolic Catholic Church have given me, and still give me."

What a contrast with so many of our Catholics — how little do the latter appreciate the

precious gift of the faith, their joyous legacy of gladness, their magnificent heritage of joy! How gloomy and sour of face do they go through life, forgetting that the key to a life of happiness on earth and of eternal beatitude in heaven has been placed within their hands, not earned by them and not, sad to say, treasured by them. A convert is often jeered at because of overzeal. People smile pityingly as if to say: Isn't he overdoing it? But he is the wise man; all others who do not equal or go beyond his enthusiasm for the creed of the Cross shall be judged for their lukewarmness by the fervent Heart of Jesus.



St. Benedict Joseph Labre is an example for us to remember when next we feel that life is a complete failure, and we begin to lose our trust.

The urge towards religious perfection was strong within him, and he tried to be accepted for studies leading to the priesthood. He was refused.

Next he tried the Trappists, but was soon sent away.

He then approached the Carthusians, and was rejected no fewer than three separate times over a period of years. He approached the Trappists again, but they refused to reconsider their verdict. The Abbey of Sept Fons finally took him in but sent him away after only eight months.

Soon after this, Benedict decided his vocation was to be God's pilgrim, traveling to all the principal shrines in Europe, and living on what he could beg. For personal appearance and cleanliness he cared nothing, and his con-

fessor admits that, when Benedict came to confession, he (the confessor) would be compelled to protect himself against vermin. When Benedict approached the Communion rail, the rest of the faithful took good care not to be too close. If Benedict received a coin more than he deemed necessary for his own wants, he straightway gave it to the next beggar. For this he was once soundly thrashed, the donor thinking Benedict was mocking him for giving too little. Benedict said nothing.

The sequel of his apparently futile life? Within a week of his death Rome, then Italy, then all Europe, resounded with the cry: "A saint is dead!" God loves a cheerful giver — and Benedict gave his all. Benedict trusted implicitly in God, and God did not forsake him.



Some people are literally frightened to death by the thought of death. It casts a black pall over their entire short period on earth.

Have confidence! Death is only the portal to eternal life. In the Preface of the Black Mass we read: "*vita mutatur non tollitur*"... life is changed, not taken away.

Do not be afraid of death. The lesson imposed on us in retreats is not to cultivate a fear of death. Far from it! All the various comments on death by Catholic clerics from time immemorial are intended to make us see life in its proper relation to death, not death as the ferryman waiting to snatch us forever away into nothingness.

The futility of amassing money . . . treasures, coins, earthly wealth of all kinds, was expertly portrayed for the world in these latter years when refugees, pouring from the stricken lands of Europe, retailed their experiences. Men who had hoarded wealth for a lifetime were suddenly forced to flee for their lives . . . and thought themselves lucky to save them. Again, even by earthly standards, such wealth has a most transitory value, for in many districts everything is now on a barter base, and currency is more or less outlawed. Pity the poor men who thought their riches made them invulnerable against the knocks and shocks of this world!

Of course, it is good now and then to ask ourselves "Cui bono?" To what avail? . . .

To what avail all the beauty of body, of raiment, of jewels, of speech, of all the precious items attributed by man as necessary to his happiness?

To what avail the dignities and titles and trappings of poor mortality which decks out its frailty and perishableness in tissue-thin figments?

To what avail the pomp and pleasure of this world . . . to what avail the silly vanity of vanities which men call fame . . . to what avail all the seductions and perfumed allures which dog humanity in its progress to the tomb?

But the carillon of life which sounds in our ears from our infancy until it changes into the passing-bell has a melody riding higher than the mere notes it sounds.

If death were ONLY what we have just described it to be; if life had no ulterior ending but the rotting bones of saint and sinner

alike; if the gifts graciously granted to man during his brief span were given *only* to be snatched away — surely, then in all truth would men be justified in calling life a cruel jest, and in naming God in their imprecations as a malign power rejoicing in the wholesale misery of millions.

But death is only one episode in life, as revealed through the life and words of our Saviour.

Death is the window through which we view vistas of eternal beauty and happiness.

Death is the turning of the page of life's music hurriedly while we continue the song of blissful harmony.

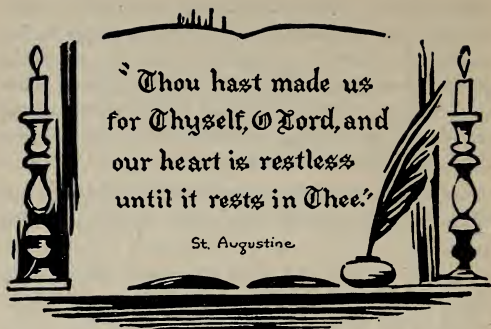
Death is the vessel which cuts loose from the shore of our plague-ridden, feverish life to sail across quiet seas to the shore of unending repose.

Death is the door opening one of the many mansions of the Supreme Father, in which we shall continue our existence in perfect peace.

In times gone by, have you feared death? Have you let the thought of his benign presence chill your heart? Have you dreaded death, and cried out in your thoughts at the awe of him? Have you worried about death — and allowed your heart and your confidence in God to falter?

Do not fear death. He is only a guide to the arms of the Divine Shepherd of Souls, in whom always have complete and unending confidence.





'Thou hast made us
for Thyself, O Lord, and
our heart is restless
until it rests in Thee.'

St. Augustine

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This booklet, "HAVE CONFIDENCE!" is the third in a series of five which includes the following: CHEER UP!; "BE OF GOOD HEART"; "HAVE CONFIDENCE!"; "TAKE COURAGE!"; "LIFT UP YOUR HEARTS!" While CHEER UP! is intended for people in every walk of life, the succeeding four booklets have a special appeal for all those who desire a more ascetic spiritual approach to the problem of discouragement and pessimism.

Readers are urged to pass on their copies of these booklets to their friends and acquaintances — all of us need such encouragement in our daily lives.

