

Evangelisation

'The delicate, difficult, unpopular task of revealing that Christ is the Saviour of the World.'

Pope Paul VI

Conversion is the test of our Catholicity. The attitude of very many Catholics on the question of conversion is disturbing to the point of causing wonder as to whether they have the Catholic faith at all. Throughout the greater portion of the Church conversion has been turned off, just as much and just as deliberately as you would turn off electricity. But to turn off converting and to turn off electricity are two different things. Electricity is meant to be turned on and off according to our convenience and handy switches are provided for the purpose. But converting is no matter of our convenience. It is in the Catholic system what the heart is in the physical order. The heart is not meant to be switched off and neither is converting. Converting is basic and essential to the very life of the Church. It was the subject of the last instruction

left to the infant Church by Our Lord. It was the very peak-note or crescendo of his preaching, delivered in circumstances as dramatic and as awesome as those of Mount Sinai; such that his words must have burnt themselves into the very brain tissue of everyone who heard them. And the sequel was that everyone went off and did what he told them to do.

Then how does it become possible that Catholics can dispense themselves from what Jesus so overwhelmingly laid down? The only explanation must be that they regard non-Catholics as being all right where they are. But in this explanation there is the fatal flaw that they also show no inclination to convert the non-Christians.

So let us fact up to the supposition that such people have in their minds a totally different conception to ours of what the Catholic Church is; so different indeed that it would be a sheer waste of time even trying to imagine what their conception is. At best it could only coincide with the broad Protestant definition that the Church is the collection of those who believe in Christ in a sense which does not concern itself with his nature nor with the particular Christian doctrines.

But at worst it could resolve itself into a mere Humanism which does not believe in the Holy Trinity nor in the Divinity of Christ; which would not regard doctrines as essential or stable things but only as opinions and helps to right living. But this is so far removed from the Catholic Church as to be a caricature of it. No, worse than a caricature. A caricature, while indulging in mockery, is supposed to catch the real likeness. But there is no likeness between that mere Humanism and Catholicism. The two are in fact opposites. Humanism is no more than a refined paganism.

So we have to be very definite in regard to what faith is. A programme of going to Mass, or even of saying Mass, does not necessarily prove the presence of true Faith, as millions of examples testify today. It would appear that persons can offer such prayers to deity without admitting in their hearts that Catholicism is the one true religion.

Whatever conception of Catholicism those non-converting ones may have, their policy has for the moment succeeded in forcing itself on the Church. The position is that the Legion of Mary is one of the few societies in the Church which just now stands uncompromisingly for conversion. It has nailed those colours to its mast-head. It has animated its members with the urgent desire to go out and convert. It has caused the Lord's command to echo in their hearts.

As the Koran commands every Moslem to go at least once in his life to Mecca, so the Legion urges its members to do another sort of Mecca; that is to travel off at least once on what Pope Paul describes as 'the delicate, difficult, unpopular mission of revealing that Christ is the Saviour of the world'. This appeal has struck chords in hearts. The Legion of the world will soon be literally obeying – for a short spell at least – that global commandment: 'Go out into the whole world and give the Gospel to every creature' (Mk 16:15). If that approach is made in *all* places, it would mean even as a merely human proposition that the little, universal ripples would add up to a tidal wave which could carry great multitudes into the Church. But it is certain that God would then cap that process by doing something bigger still; that is bestowing the grace of mass conversions.

We are now witnessing the development of that idea. At the outset it was only a little stirring from Ireland. But

that was like the well-spring which grows into the mighty river. The Amazon begins with a trickle on the watershed between Brazil, Peru and Bolivia. Already this idea of travelling for Christ, what we call the *Peregrinatio*, has caught on in many countries. We have not to be prophetic to say that soon it will be fermenting in them all.

But God has not to await for the final accumulation of drops of water. Nor is he hampered by the operation of any law of nature. If his conditions are met, he can give the ultimate result instantaneously. He does not insist on the co-operation of absolutely everyone. He is content with the response of a substantial number. In a current article I have ventured to say that our operations in Asia and Africa are already setting the stage for multitudinous conversions from Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam within a century.

By 'setting the stage' I mean presenting Catholicism to the people on a scale sufficient for them to be fully aware of it and to enable them to see how far its stature ascends above their own poor shadowy, primitive conceptions of religion. This process of showing them may have to begin with 'symbolic action'. Soon it will be running big and deep like the Amazon. An incidental idea is that having worked intensively for weeks on a project, a fuller realisation will have been gained, firstly of the extreme need for such work and secondly of their own capacity to handle it. They return home with that supercharged outlook which then expends itself on the domestic tasks.

The further impression gained – a melancholy one – by those travellers is that almost nobody but themselves attaches any importance to the winning of conversions to the Church. This applies even to higher quarters. How often is the permission to approach non-Catholics only

grudgingly given? Worse than that, in very many cases that permission cannot be obtained; in which event our policy dictates that no party will be sent to that place.

Perhaps at this there is the protest: What about the great numbers of lapsed Catholics in that place to whom you *could go*? Is not their plight grave enough to justify you going, even though you are cut off from the non-Catholics? *Certainly* their plight is grave but vital principle is at stake here.

It is that there is something radically wrong in the set-up where very many Catholics are lapsed and where non-Catholics are not even being thought of. It would not do to condone that policy by aligning ourselves with it. True Catholic instinct would and must embrace both problems. There is something disastrously astray when one of them is deliberately left out.

It is significant that just in the places where conversion is ruled out; Catholicism steadily loses its spirit. Life is lived at the lowest routine level and non-practice and then unbelief begin to take over. So both problems are really united. Attention to one or neglect of one affects the other.

I give an example from a neighbouring country over a great portion of which there has been no Catholicism since the Reformation and no desire to convert. In excuse it used to be said that efforts to convert would be resented to the point of retorting with violence. That suggestion has been disproved 200% by which I mean that the presentation of the Faith is welcomed. Yet the barriers remain. There are to be no conversions! The legionaries of that country will not be let attempt it. Neither will the legionaries from outside! Surely it is a very great sin thus to deny the Faith to the people!

Or take the current case where the English legionaries went to Norway with the orders of the local bishop that they were to call on all the non-Catholics. The priests sternly refused to have anything to do with the enterprise and would give not the slightest help. A fine example of defiance of their bishop and of the words of Our Lord!

Now I specify a particularly gross instance. One of our teams, by the cordial invitation of the bishop, entered a certain territory in which there were no Catholics at all. They were evicted by the Parish Priest. He declared as follows: 'Can you not leave those people alone? They are all right as they are. In my whole life I have never spoken to a non-Catholic on the subject of religion.'

I ask: what effect are those priests having on the Catholics? Answer: they are devastating them. They are perverting them. Perceiving that outlook in the shepherd, what can the outlook of the flock be?

If the majority of them are not already lapsed, they are soon going to be.

Those instances sound pretty awful, but are they exceptional? You know that they are not. In what way different to them is the present-day prevalent attitude of deliberate abstention from converting? I cannot see any difference between the two. The one declares its attitude in words. The other refrains from uttering the crude words but puts them into crude effect. Those things denote an indifference to souls, and those who perpetrate them are a barrier to the Church. They are saying 'STOP' where Jesus says 'GO'.

Even if there were no visible results from attempts to evangelise, that would not dispense from trying. But there *are* results on a big scale, frequently very dramatic ones. Instant conversions, baptisms on the spot, cases akin to

that of Mary Magdalene – and these proved by the lapse of time to have the quality of the conversions described in the gospel itself.

Is it not dumbfounding to have our returned peregrine assure you that they could see faith coming into the eyes of those to whom they were speaking; or to hear one balanced legionary assert that he was convinced that his party left five hundred believers behind them in an atheist land. Or when the lady, whom you have asked if the thought of becoming a Catholic had ever come to her, replies with unutterable earnestness: 'Oh yes, often. I greatly want to be a Catholic.' But all that seems to mean nothing to many of those above us. What is wrong with them? It is bad enough when those above us refuse to give us a lead. It is impossible, tragic when they prevent us from undertaking that necessary work.

I repeat: ordinary Catholics could not possibly stand up against such an attitude which amounts to a blunt affirmation that one religion is as good as another. This not only denies the unique position of the Catholic Church but it destroys all religion whatsoever. How can true religions contradict each other down into detail? Nor would it be any use to the Catholic Church to be labelled as having the edge of superiority over all the others. To be the best of a poor lot is no classification of excellence, and above all it is not a hallmark of the Truth.

How such attitudes can persist among people who seem to be sensible and sincere is not comprehensible. It shows that the human mind is far from being an instrument of precision and that it can be caught up by every wind of thought that blows.

Take the older Protestant outlook on the Bible which held that the Holy Spirit interpreted it to the honest reader.

This rule of Faith was long held onto in spite of the fact that it produced not only a thousand formal religions but really a different set of beliefs in each individual. That this could be is evidence of the baffling quality of the mind.

Obviously the divine truth must be clear-cut and reasonably exclusive of contradictory interpretations and fringe matter. It must stand out to the extent that a seeker will be forced to think: 'I have to investigate that.' It cannot be a freak product like the Mormons or the Jehovah Witnesses or the Seventh Day Adventists or the Pentecostals. It may be decried but not just laughed off the stage. It must be a religion and not merely a social gospel, but at the same time it must exert a revolutionary, purifying effect on society. It must be based on faith but likewise it must be logic; for otherwise how are we to get at it? Moreover, the Faith and the logic must interweave and balance nicely so that the greatest mind can comfortably submit to it. Pascal says that we know the truth not only by the reason but also by the heart. And while it must appeal to the intellectuals, it must have the common touch so that the ignorant will feel at home in it. It must suit all times and all men, and the child as well as the man. It must be able to tame the successors to the ruthless Goth and the Vandal while simultaneously attending to the little and the lesser ones. It must be able to teach the primitives while at the same time forming the arts and inspiring genius. It must be able to stand up in each generation to some new philosophy, brilliant and convincing but proud and materialistic, which hits at the roots of the spiritual and usually at human conduct, and even at civilisation itself. The Church has withstood all those earthquakes of thought and it will continue to do so.

Then on the other hand the Church is able to forsake human paths altogether and to work miracles prodigally – just as the Lord himself did, and for the same reason: to prove its divinity and to confound the one-sided science which denies its divine architect.

Then it must be catholic, that is worldwide, everywhere. It must fit in to that text of scripture about the city set on the hill which is visible to the whole world.

The Catholic Church and it alone conforms to such exacting requirements. Likewise alone it complies throughout two thousand years with the Lord's promise of permanence. Vexed from the very beginning by internal ailments and external assault from every angle, it has survived in such a way that the every-lengthening testimony of history has endorsed the various promises of Christ: 'The gates of Hell shall not prevail against you ... I will be with you all days even unto the consummation of the world.'

Few nobler sentences than those of Lord Macaulay have been spoken on that aspect. They are all the more remarkable inasmuch as he disliked the Church that he was praising. Since then, well over a hundred years of history full of convulsions of every kind have flowed by and those have only served to reinforce his argument.

He says: 'Nor do we see any sign which indicates that the term of her long dominion is approaching. She saw the commencement of all the governments and of all the ecclesiastical establishments that now exist in the world; and we feel no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all. She was great and respected before the Saxon had set foot in Britain, before the Frank had passed the Rhine, when Grecian eloquence still flourished at Antioch, when idols were still worshipped in the Temple of Mecca. And she may still exist in undiminished

vigour when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a great solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St Paul's.'

Those are vastly picturesque words which will live as long as the Church itself. But the fact that they are picturesque does not lessen their force and their truth. For they *are* true. We do not know anything about that traveller from New Zealand nor of the future fate of St Paul's, but we do know that the Church will outlast every existing institution and will be there at the end of the world according to the divine promise.

That Catholic Church is the institution, which the false ecumenists and like belittlers would reduce to the rank of one among the others. Their crime is great, for thereby the Church would be demoted from teacher to pupil and therefore deprived of any credentials to teach the nations. In such circumstances it is a rare joy to find the Legion as a special standard-bearer of the Church, with no doubts in all her far-flung hosts about its unique, divine position and playing a foremost part in extending it. To be part of the Church in that way is indeed to be privileged.

We possess a treasure, but it is one to be shared. The opportunities which we have of offering it to those outside the Church are fleeting. We must present it effectively. We have a mere snapshot chance of influencing souls. We must make the most of them.

The message from Christ which we deliver must not be a mere lesson because that would leave the listeners cold. Moreover, it must tell of a person rather than an institution, because institutionalism is a bad word in these days which think that institutions are of their very nature static and always in need of reform; that they stifle initiative and cripple even common action.

Accordingly, present the Church so that it shines as Christ, for it *is* Christ. In that short innings of ours we must go straight to that essence of the Church. Explain that by baptism there is established a union between Christ and the soul such that they live a sort of joint life with sharings of mission and of goods. The Mystical Body which is thus built up of Christ and the believers is the Catholic Church. Christ's mother is likewise its mother. She who played a necessary part in Redemption continues to play an analogous part in the salvation of each man. The Pope is the visible head of that body; through him, Christ's voice speaks authoritatively, infallibly. That body re-enacts the life of Christ from the cradle to the grave. It is filled with the Holy Spirit and its food is the Eucharist. The other sacraments admit us to Christ's forgiveness of sin, unite us in matrimony, prepare us for death, and bestow the function of the priesthood. The Mass is Calvary in our midst; it is the divine expedient which enables us to be repeatedly present at Christ's sacrifice. Thus built into Christ and helped along the way, the Church must seek to extend its life to all men.

Such a presentation might be called the living core of Catholicism. Do not overload it with secondary things which may only obscure. Plumage decorates but it is not the living bird. I think that is all that can be got home in a hit-and-run progress. Brief though it is, it delivers an appealing message which represents the essence of the Church.

'Great is the truth and it shall prevail,' goes the proverb. 'We are conquered by the truth,' says Erasmus. Another saying bids us to arm ourselves for the truth. *Our* special arming should be the putting into order of our motives and interior dispositions. I give principal mention to one

ingredient which can spoil things. It is pride, the great original sin which continues to take a universal part in human affairs, seeking to enter in just as much as the air we breathe.

Without intending it, we insert self into every situation. To the degree that this happens we are the less fitted to carry grace. It would be a sad thing if by thus taking credit to ourselves we rob God of his glory and at the same time prevent him from using us.

Here lies a bundle of anomalies: the Omnipotent desires most ardently to convert the world but it is his arrangement that it has to be effected through the Mystical Body, and the members of that body can limit his operation. We want earnestly to help him and yet we can disqualify ourselves for that role by taking pride out of what we do. Thus we can turn our good will against itself so that it can do us harm.

In this connection may I plead for a re-reading of the handbook section on humility? It deserves better than the passing attention and joking which it usually receives.

Perhaps the very simplest formula, which we can propose towards safeguarding our apostolate, is that God will avail of us to the extent that we permit him; that is to the extent that we do not appropriate his glory to ourselves. Our action is necessary in its order, just as are the wires, which convey the electrical energy. But God it is who gives the grace. We are only the recipients and transmitters of it, but unspoiled transmission *could* mean the conversion of China.

Here enters also the operation of the Blessed Virgin whose role in salvation was treated by the Vatican Council in such a dynamic way that the Holy Father describes it as the culminating point of all the legislation. She is

mother of all men without exception. She is the Queen of Apostles and also of apostleship. She is the co-operator in Redemption and the Mediatrix of all graces. Therefore she *must* as the very justification of her existence reach out to every soul and clutch at every suitable aid which offers itself.

We might say that it is her providential function to protect us from that corrosive pride. It is her special mission to crush the serpent's head – which we could paraphrase as the overcoming of pride, the arch-sin of mankind.

On the lesser level of the psychological it is obvious that if we regard ourselves as working in a close partnership with her, or in a dependence on her, we will tend to ascribe to her the results which otherwise we would inevitably be claiming for ourselves. So the best way to keep self out is to bring Mary in.

The importance of this cannot be over-estimated. In my observation of legionaries at their work, and particularly when considerable achievements were in question, it was evident to me that they were attributing to Our Lady the fruits which were issuing. I have concluded that this was why such great things were proceeding from their work. They were simple and selfless in the transaction. I think that therein lies the great legionary secret. They see Jesus and Mary working through them. They understand what their own share is, and what is the share of Jesus and Mary. In spite of her grandeur, Mary did not magnify herself. She understood her true place. By conscious union with her, we assign ourselves to our proper rank and she helps us to keep it.

I believe that the problem of converting the world resolves itself down finally to this aspect of motives and

purity of intention. If it has been easily possible to teach legionaries their true place in the scheme of God and to mobilise them towards fulfilling it, then all mankind can be equally taught and utilised; because the Legion is typical of mankind.

The Mass: A Thrilling Adventure

I am going to talk to you about the Mass. It is a subject which I have not previously included in the many which I have discussed at congresses, reunions or on other occasions. So perhaps it is time to do it, all the more so as it is so seldom treated in a simple way. Even the experts seem overawed by the intricacies of theology and hold off from it. But as the mighty Mass is the last thing on earth about which we should be silent I am going to be the fool who rushes in where angels fear the tread.

My approach may seem to be a little round-about, but in reality not so. I properly put the horse before the cart. The Mass is the culmination or growth out of certain things. This setting must be presented first if the Mass is to be understood.

The Mass sacramentally reproduces the Passion and death of Our Saviour. Here we are faced with a profound mystery: *Mysterium Fidei*. While there is no question of Jesus dying again in the Mass in the physical sense,

neither is there any question of a mere symbolism after the fashion that the immolation of the ordinary paschal lamb was a type of the future Sacrifice of Christ. Calvary and the Mass are one and the same sacrifice (1 Cor 11: 26).

The sublime narration of the New Testament nears its climax on Holy Thursday in the Last Supper. This later is described by the four Evangelists, but Our Lord's moving discourse to the disciples is only given by St John. All the accounts begin with the betrayal by Judas. Obviously an importance is attached to it. We are caused to wonder as to this. Of course it has its place inasmuch as it, so to speak, sparked off the tragic events which followed. But there seems to be more at stake than that. Such a major stressing of the false apostle's part denotes that it possesses a highly mystical significance and that Judas and his sin enter in as something strictly necessary.

One might think: why? Because humanly-speaking that betrayal need not have taken place at all. The hostility of the priests and scribes towards Our Lord had been boiling up. In such circumstances there is always some event to cause an explosion. Could not Judas' treachery have been in that accidental category? No, it is made too prominent in the Four Gospels to be only that. Even very important items are often chronicled by one Evangelist only whereas all of them emphasise Judas' role as a primary circumstance.

Firstly, Judas is shown as conspiring with the priests and the scribes, this episode being introduced by the dread statement that Satan had entered into Judas. Then in the Last Supper itself, there is a further stressing of his action as if it belonged to the essence of the mystery. Jesus alarms his disciples by announcing that not all of them are clean; that one of them is about to betray him. He

follows up this by telling St John that the traitor would be the one to whom he, Jesus, would give bread. And this he gave forthwith to Judas, upon which we are again told expressly that Satan entered into Judas. The phrase is repeated by the Four Evangelists and St Thomas Aquinas interprets it as meaning that Judas had now finally given himself into the power of Satan.

Judas said to Jesus: 'Is it I, rabbi?' And Jesus replied: 'Thou hast said it.' That exchange between Jesus and the faithless one was private so that the others did not notice. But the narrative goes on to say that Judas went out quickly and that now it was night.

I repeat: Surely there is a profound significance in this process of Judas giving himself to the devil and thus becoming part of the process by which the plan of Redemption was effected. In it are we not looking at a repetition of what took place in Eden in the original Fall, which the Messiah is now about to repair? Then Satan likewise besieged Adam and Eve and succeeded in gaining possession of them so that in them the human race collapsed. The very part which the devil took then, he renews by taking possession of Judas. But with this radical difference that it now becomes part of the process of the divine mercy whereby the new Adam and the new Eve reverse the Fall in precise detail. Then Satan initiates things. Here again he is shown in that capacity. He was an essential part of the tragedy, so he is now made an essential part of the restoration. That is what I would venture to read into that strange scriptural insistence on Judas as the tool of Satan. It has been made plain that Satan, who was the instrument in the original Fall, has now by his own malice become the instrument of his own undoing: Satan inaugurates the Redemption; Judas is the wretched instrument which he used for this.

And after that, Jesus took bread and wine and blessed them, using the words which we hear invoked over the same elements in the Holy Mass. It is by those sacred words that he institutes the Mass and with it the Catholic priesthood with power to perpetuate the same act.

After that unique supper, Jesus accompanied the 11 disciples to the Mount of Olives where he told them of his impending arrest; thence to the Garden of Gethsemane taking with him Peter, James and John to be witnesses of what was to follow. Retiring from them a stone's-throw, he entered into his agony which was of such an extreme nature that he, the strong and perfect man, the headline of patient, brave suffering, the model of martyrs, is forced to cry out to his Eternal Father those poignant words: 'Father, if it be possible, remove this chalice from me. Yet not my will but thine be done.' And his sweat became as drops of blood running down upon the ground. The explanation of this extreme ordeal given to us by the Church is that he, the innocent one, had formally assumed the sins of the whole world, and that the contemplation was such that it surpassed even his power to bear, so that the angel had to come to his side to strengthen him.

When that passed, he rose from his prayer and awakened the disciples of whom it is pathetically said that they were sleeping quite overcome with sorrow. And then that summit of betrayal arrives in the shape of the chief priests and captains of the Temple and the elders, led by Satan in the person of Judas. And there is the ultimate horror of the kiss which formed the sign and which has become proverbial to designate the deepest depths of treason, and which echoes throughout all time as symbolic of unsurpassable outrage.

They seized Jesus and led him to the high priest's house where they mocked him and beat him. The gospel says that they kept striking his face and reviling him. For how long? Apparently this devil-instigated performance went on all night, for the account says that when day broke they brought him into the Sanhedrim and began their savage interrogation as to who he really was.

They secured his admission that he was the Son of God, whereupon he is taken off to Pilot and accused, because the power of putting him to death is reserved to the Roman authority.

There follows the confrontation between Pilot and Jesus by which the governor is impressed to the depths of his nature, so much so that he determines that he will not ally himself with the proceedings. He tries to release Jesus, first through recourse to Herod, and then by seeking to satisfy the hatred of the accusers by the shocking scourging of the victim, followed by the crowning with thorns and arraying of Jesus in the mock symbols of monarchy.

Finally Pilot unavailingly offers the people the privilege of freeing Jesus according to the special privilege of the Passover. But as St Luke says, the mob persisted with loud cries demanding that Jesus would be crucified. That clamour prevailed. Pilot delivered Jesus to their will and he was led away to execution. And when they came to the place called Golgotha or the Skull, they crucified him there, and two other malefactors with him.

How afflicting it is to read that expression of the Scriptures: 'Two other malefactors!' But that was really the position. As Isaiah had prophesied seven hundred years previously, 'Jesus has delivered his soul unto death and is reputed with the wicked, and he has borne the sins of many' (Is 53:12).

Our beloved Lord has so united himself to us and so has steeped himself in our sins that he has veritably become sin. The Lamb of God has assumed that burden and is now about to be immolated in order to take away the sins of the world.

The three hours of torment on the cross ensues, punctuated by those utterances which we call the Seven Words. Perhaps the most significant is that one which Jesus spoke to his mother standing at the foot of the Cross: 'Woman,' he said, 'behold in the disciple your son,' bridging in that phrase the great gap of years since kindred words were delivered to the serpent by Almighty God: 'I will set enmities between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed. She shall crush your head' (Gn 3:15).

Now has come the fulfilment of that promise. Mary is the prophesied woman. Her seed is the Messiah who speaks and is about to die, and who will in that dying crush the serpent and turn the world's sorrow into joy. St John, now hailed as her son, is truly so by the union of the Mystical Body.

After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished said: 'It is consummated' and gave up his spirit (Lk 19:30).

Of that the Mass is the living memorial. But how disregarded can it be! How seldom one hears it urged upon people other than as a Sunday obligation! Even when it does receive attention, its wonders are inadequately disclosed. Sometimes the vestments and the sacred vessels are discussed in minute detail as if they were the things that mattered. Of course they are important because they are the trappings of the great ceremony. But they are only trappings, much in the same category as the clothes we

wear. It is the central idea or essence of the Mass that I am discussing.

Today there are many who are trying to tone down on the Eucharist on which the Mass depends. The idea at work is to propitiate Protestantism, to devise a formula which they would accept. That must obviously mean that we have to give away to some extent so as to meet them. But how can we abandon one inch of ground in regard to the Eucharist? It is either the Real Presence of Jesus or it ceases to be that.

Luther was one of those who interfered with the doctrine of the Eucharist. His definition substituted for Transubstantiation what he called Consubstantiation. But the prefix 'trans' denotes a change of substance. 'Con,' which means 'with,' denotes that there has been no change of substance and means that Our Lord somehow comes to us alone with the bread and wine whose substance is not changed. Moreover his coming depends on the faith of the recipient at the moment of communion. As he is not present in the elements, there can be no adoration of them and therefore no reservation. It is a case of the Real Absence of Jesus. There is no parity or approximation there to the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist.

Formulae which seek to bridge that gap or to disguise its existence are but devices aimed at deceiving either one side or both. It is a transaction equivalent to putting paper across a hole to hide it.

Consubstantiation is more like what we call a Spiritual Communion, but Consubstantiation is far removed from the Eucharist.

The Council of Trent was emphatic in its condemnation of Luther's formula. It did not represent the Eucharist. The

modern tendency towards that error would deprive us of the Eucharist and of the Mass, our most precious heritage.

The Mass is the divine expedient which obliterates the distance and the two thousand years which separate us from the event of the Crucifixion. It places Calvary in our midst: or if you like – transports to the moment and spot of the actual Sacrifice of Our Lord. Through the Mass we take part in the reality; we are present there along with his mother, St John and the others. It is no symbolism, no mere pious idea such as Consubstantiation would offer.

All Masses meet in Calvary just as the rays of the sun find their centre in the radiant sun: so that when Our Lord hung on the Cross, his eyes rested on all who would attend the Masses which would ever be said.

The Mass is the fullness of the Sacrifice of Christ. There is the difference that at Mass we do not see the underlying reality. If we could, we would be rent with sorrow, such as could kill us. Today our faith substitutes our eyes and our ears, but the merit which comes through the medium of faith is the greater.

As a help towards comprehending that finite mystery of the Mass I propose television. Of course it is a weak image inasmuch as it only projects into our homes a copy of what occurs in the place of origin. It does not actually station the persons before us. But the Mass reaches the celestial height of setting the drama itself before us in its utmost completeness, though without its sight and sound, for an essential idea of the Mass is that it be an exercise in faith. Between it and us is a veil which the senses do not penetrate, but never, never let routine prevent us from trying to pierce that veil without thought.

Strange to say, the venerable prayers of the Mass tend to distract one a little from the hidden reality. If

during the Mass we could keep our mind concentrated on that reality, it would be wise to put aside the prayer books and let the drama absorb us utterly. That would be a justification for the old-time use of the Rosary at Mass. It enables the mind to devote itself to what is there happening to Jesus and Mary; and that is the centre point.

Possibly by reason of the popular devotion of the Three Hours' Agony on Good Friday, it is commonly thought that the Mass comprises from the time of the nailing of the Victim to the Cross on to the moment of his death. But there is more in the Sacrifice of Christ than his dying. That Sacrifice was enacted precisely according to the ritual of the Old Law. Of that ritual Our Lord had to fulfil every detail because that sacrifice looked forward to it and prefigured it. He said he had come to fulfil it. Therefore his fulfilment would be perfect, descending into detail which no thinking of ours can probe.

The special efficacy of that old sacrifice lay in the fact that one day the Redeemer would incorporate it into his own pure sacrifice. He would reproduce every item of it and thus unite it to himself and to his own sacrifice. In that way did the *old* participate in the merit of the *new* for those Jews who reposed their faith in the old sacrifice originated by Abraham which looked forward to the Redemptive Sacrifice.

One will be struck by the fact that the liturgy of the Mass is chiefly drawn from the Last Supper and we must understand why. One explanation is that the Last Supper is an anticipation or pre-staging of Calvary, just as the Mass is a prolongation or post-staging. This idea would present us with, so to speak, a three-storied house; the stories being the last Supper, Calvary and the Mass. It is

the one house; we would be in it whether we are at the Last Supper, Calvary, or at today's Mass.

A great Jesuit writer, Maurice de la Taille, has popularised a different conception which amounts to a two-storied house; the ground-floor being the Sacrifice of Christ extending from the Cenacle to the Cross; the other storey being the Mass. It is much more than a captivating theory of his own. His work, *Mysterium Fidei* quotes for us abundant statements of the great ones of the past who held the same view. Higher than any exalted testimony would be the fact that it was a proposition approved of by the Council of Trent.

Examining the ritual which Jesus fulfilled in his sacrifice, de la Taille contends that it was not discharged on Calvary alone and that we have to go back to preceding stages to supply all the ingredients of a true sacrifice under the Old Law, which is what Our Lord intended to enact precisely. That missing part of the recognised ritual is the oblation or formal offering of the victim to God by the priest. Jesus is both the offering priest and the victim. It is certain that in the pivotal event which would terminate the Old Law and usher in the new sacrifice he would fulfil the stipulated requirements in a manner which could not be questioned.

De la Taille holds that on Calvary there is no utterance of Jesus which can be construed in that sense of a formal offering of himself and he declares that to find it one must go back to the Last Supper. On that occasion Christ Our Lord, in all due form according to the recognised ritual, did make such an oblation of himself to God. He pledged himself to his passion and death for many unto the remission of sins (Mt 26:28). The Sacrifice of Christ began at the Last Supper but the immolation of the victim did not take place then.

Thus offered and bound to sacrifice, the Great Victim gave effect to the oblation by entering immediately afterwards into his passion which was consummated by his death. What was begun in the Cenacle was completed on Calvary, or rather on Easter morning in the glory of the Resurrection.

The Mass contains the Sacrifice of Christ in its full essence and completeness. Therefore, according to the foregoing comprehension of things, we assist at all that dread liturgy when we attend Mass. We are really present at, and part of, all that train of events which I started off by quoting to you from the pages of Holy Writ. I recapitulate them briefly: We mingle with the Twelve Apostles at the Last Supper and receive with them the Body and Blood of the true Paschal Lamb. And then we go with Jesus and the disciples to the Garden of Gethsemane where the most excruciating part of his suffering is submitted to by him and given visible expression in his agony. That is his contemplation of the sins of men which he, the Divine Scapegoat (Lev 16:8-10) had taken on himself. That ordeal ends in his arrest, made more-bitter by Judas' betraying share in it.

Then unrolls all the grievous paraphernalia of ill-treatment: the tormenting by the soldiers, the scourging and crowning with thorns, the trial and sentencing, the Way of the Cross, and the Cross itself. Jesus dies and the world's ransom has been paid.

All that came within the compass of the Sacrifice of Christ. Therefore all of it is comprised and compressed by divine power into the Mass. What a thrilling adventure, therefore, it is to assist at Mass! We enter then into the order of the supremely miraculous. Time and space are set aside and we are back in the world of Jesus and Mary.

We are at that eternal moment designated by God when he told the serpent that his head would be crushed by the woman and her seed. At Mass that crushing is in progress. Jesus is dying on the Cross, and Mary, the woman, stands at the foot of it. Look, all who pass, and see if there is any sorrow like unto that sorrow!

Those exciting contents of the Mass are no affair of meditation only or imagination, but are fact and sheer reality. The sacrifice of Our Lord is not worth more than the Mass, for the two are one and the same. Or to put this in a way which will compel thought: If by an impossibility the two were severed without depriving the Mass of the value which it draws from the original sacrifice, then the Mass by itself would be our sufficient ransom.

It was the Mass which the prophet Malachi, speaking for Almighty God, foretold four hundred years before Christ in these tremendous words: 'From the rising of the sun even to its going down, my name is great among the Gentiles; and in every place there is sacrifice and there is offered in my name a clean oblation. For my name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of Hosts' (Mal 1:11).

And it was to the same Holy Sacrifice of the Mass that St Anthony the Apostle referred when he was about to be crucified like his master: 'Daily do I immolate to Almighty God not the flesh of bulls nor the blood of goats but the Immaculate Lamb of God himself, whose flesh is then partaken of by every believing people. For the Lamb which was sacrificed remains living and entire.'

That amazing and supremely important experience of the Mass is there beckoning to us at practically every hour of the day, pleading for our participation.

Pride

'In pride, in reas'ning pride, our error lies;
All quit their sphere and rush into the skies.
Pride still is aiming at the bless'd abodes.
Men would be angels, angels would be gods.'

'Essay on Man', Alexander Pope

We live in a time of intellectual arrogance. Man thinks he knows everything. The immediate cause of this is the stupefying progress of the last one hundred years. The intimate secrets of nature are being probed into and are yielding progressive fruit. The unthinkable has happened: man has careered off into space, has landed on the moon and has placed instruments there which are now relaying information of every kind back to us. This is only a first step. Space vehicles, not yet manned are now touring through outer space, circling around the planets, and taking photographs of them from comparatively nearby. Next thing those vehicles will be manned and will be carrying their human cargoes off on journeys into the outer stellar systems lasting years and going goodness

only knows where. All this is leading on to something special but what it is we cannot even guess.

Side by side with that, we are penetrating into the knowledge of matter. Already we possess a fair working idea of the atom which is the unit of substance. We know approximately what goes on inside that infinitely small body. We are aware that it is a universe in itself, imitating in design the solar system of which the Earth is a part. Our existing knowledge has enabled us to tap the hidden forces of nature. Nuclear power is already harnessed and holds promise of performance so great as to make us dizzy. On the plus side, this would place us in control of energy so unlimited that we could re-shape the Earth practically to our own liking. Then on the minus side it is alleged that the stock of nuclear bombs is already at this early stage large enough to devastate the world.

Of course those departments do not exhaust what is to be discovered. What wonder then that a man should become a little un-balanced. He behaves as if he were the cause of all that knowledge and power; that he has created it. He is convinced that he is destined to dominate nature in a still more extensive way, and that one of his future feats will be to produce human life, not in the common way of human generation, but directly by chemical reactions in test tubes. Here one has to comment that it is ironic for science to be thinking of producing new human life while at the same time concentrating on preventing it and destroying it through contraception and abortion. This apparent inconsistency is explained by the fact that the scientists do not really want any more life on the earth, especially as what they would produce might be monstrous – perhaps in the order of Frankenstein, without a soul. What they want is to give a supreme manifestation

of their own genius and prove incidentally that science is sufficient to explain the origin of man and the universe, and that there is no need to suppose a Creator.

They realise fully that so far they have only been assembling things and they desire greatly to do something which could be claimed to be a creating. The production of life from inanimate matter would have that appearance and that is why they have set their hearts upon it. But it is most certain that whatever they may eventually contrive in that direction, it will not be a genuine creation of life such as God effects.

But all that achievement and confident talk has had the result of turning heads not only of the workers of those wonders but of the general body of the people who are looking on with mouths wide open. These overlook the fact that all that has been done is only in the mechanical order. Man is only delving like a miner into what is already there and he has been so engaged since he was put on earth. He has been finding out things that he was intended to find out. He did not make those different items of science. He only discovered their properties and utilised them. Flight is only the utilising of the supporting power of the air, just as the boat was based on the supporting power of the water. The camera, television, etc. proceed from a knowledge of the laws of light. Space travel depends on the knowing of the laws of gravity and attraction. Electricity was always there, showing its presence in dramatic ways and practically pleading to be harnessed. And so on.

There is no creation in all that. There is only progressive discovery. Man has been walking along a pre-ordained path. He is only putting things together in a somewhat ambitious fashion than earlier man made a hatchet, a

wheel, or a bow and arrow; or in a later way that man utilised steam, electricity and the different rays. Man is only picking up those things and learning how to exploit them. He is threading his way through a complex system of forces and laws which were already there from the beginning of Creation. He has not made one of them. He has not made his own brain which is the means whereby he has done all that capable researching. He has not even a glimmering as to how that brain functions, nor why nor in what way it is different to the animal brain.

Man boasts of his inventions as if they were creations of his own. Also one would think from the style of his talk that it was a single individual who had built up the structure of a discovery instead of its being a long line of men, each one adding a little to what he had received from those before him in the line. One of the most intriguing features of humanity is the helplessness of the individual man. Each one requires the co-operation of many in any task of construction. No one seems to make an outright discovery even though he may appear to do so. He may make something work which the line before him had not succeeded in doing, and for this he is hailed as the inventor. But all he really did was to put on the topmost brick or fit the missing screw.

When one surveys the final product, if indeed there is a finality in it, one can usually see clearly how that result has been inevitable from the very first; that it was part of the plan of God, and that from the beginning of Creation all that progressive invention was intended to be at the service of man in general. It is no happy accident but part of the method of God that human brains develop them.

A master-mind, which was not that of man, had originally conceived that goal and had disclosed it to that

long line of seekers little by little, item by item, link by link. To each one had been revealed a note of inspiration or a section of a law. In all that chain of discovery so ingeniously and laboriously pieced together there was not a thing which could be called a creation. It was all a matter of finding and mixing and forming.

But man cannot be made to see all that. He has convinced himself that he is a sort of creator even though he has no idea how all that substance of the universe came into existence, nor how its complete but consistent and harmonious system of laws was born. He takes that for granted as if it were a minor matter, and on it – as on a foundation – he proceeds with his own little bit of building up as if it were of the same classification as the original Creation, as if he were a new Creator taking over from one who had retired from the business!

Of course the disproportion of that way of thinking is colossal. It is a little like as if a spider having built its web in the corner of a room, believes itself to have constructed the whole house. The tragedy of it is that man, having exaggerated himself to that central position, is incapable of receiving the simple Christian story.

And here, I think, we are catching a glimpse of what took place ages ago in the fall of the angels. To us it is almost inconceivable that those splendid intelligences, so close to God and so much more capable than we of understanding the infinite gap between them and him, should be found asserting themselves against him as if there were some sort of equality. It is possible for us to behave in that audacious and ridiculous manner because we know so little that we can even tell ourselves that God does not exist. But the angels were closer to him. The picture painted by Holy Writ is that they were very near

to him so that they were able to talk to him face to face. Yet they calmly insisted on their own point of view.

It is into a frame of mind somewhat of that order that scientific man has climbed. He has been allowed by God to play his part in the gradual unfolding of the wonders of the world but he has identified himself so completely with the process that he imagines himself to be the producer instead of merely the projector. With that contorted conception of his role he is making a dangerous approximation to following in the footsteps of Lucifer.

Let us humbly inspect that mysterious situation of the rebel angels and the similar one of our first parents. Why did they act so incomprehensibly? I will venture on an explanation based on our own methods of behaviour. The moment we discover that we have a talent, or as soon as we get power into our hands, we become proud about it. We have achieved greatness. We make ourselves the equals of those who previously seemed to be above us. What we have got from others belongs to us! Everything springs out of our own quality! We have become proud in the theological sense of the word. We are self-sufficient. We are satisfied that if enough authority was given to us we would revolutionise our surroundings.

Arguing from that mental quirk of ours, I would say that it was that same want of balance – admittedly in a graver form because they had greater intelligence and more control of their will than we – that brought down our first parents. They must have been tremendous persons, their bodies and intellects proceeding straight from the hands of God, unsullied by sin, of matchless perfection. They were very close to God and scripture tells us that they conversed with him. He had extraordinary plans for them. We may be sure that they enjoyed remarkable

powers. God lavished things on them. In that set-up we can see a distant likeness to the more privileged ones among ourselves and we can reasonably draw a line from ourselves to Adam and Eve, and we see that they let themselves be borne away, just as we would, by their apparent greatness. They appropriated to themselves the gifts which God had poured out on them and in a minute the cutting edge of a wrongful independence had entered into them. Independence of what? Independence of God. They considered that they were capable of making their own judgements and of holding a different opinion to that of God, and finally of insisting on it.

That, I suggest was the manner in which the trial came to them. They had embarked on the slippery slope of pride and down they slid to the dreadful bottom. And now in turn I reason from them to the rebellious angels. They too are bathed in the radiance of God. Their gifts and their powers far exceeded those of Adam and Eve. They had peerless intellects containing all knowledge. They could move through space with the speed of light. They could do practically what they liked through the power which God had placed at their disposal. Can we not conclude that their fall derived from precisely the same ingredients as those which brought down Adam and Eve?

They really reckoned, in spite of the common sense which formed part of their intellectual endowment, that they had a position of their own; that they could assert themselves against God. They failed to grasp the completeness of their dependence on him, and that incomprehension turned into pride. Their fate was like that of the ship which drags its anchor and goes on to the rocks.

Here let me clarify things. It is not pride to recognise that we have capabilities. It would be a false humility to

affect not to have them if they were there. It is legitimate to take pleasure out of having gifts or at being used by God for important purposes. But this is quite different from pride which is a glorifying in those things as if they were exclusively our own possession, for which we are beholden to nobody and which we may use as we think fit. This is full pride.

It is that posture of independence as against God which constitutes pride. It is as much a folly as if the electrician were to claim to be the author of the light and power which he is only guiding. This offence puts the soul into an incorrect relation with God that he has, for the very sake of that soul, to bring it to its senses in some way, usually by the diminution of what he has been giving to it.

If in the light of the foregoing we read that section of the handbook on humility, which usually comes in for jocular treatment, it will stand out as of primary importance, perhaps as the chief one of all. In a sense it is the foundation stone of the Legion because without a proper humility our work is of no value. It would only be an exercise of self, and the seeking of self is turning away from God.

That first sin of all, Original Sin, was an assertion of self. Our first parents had received the most solemn command that they were to avoid one thing and apparently one thing only. Yet, unbelievable as it may seem, they went off and disobeyed that commandment. Moreover, they did it with a degree of determination and deliberation which does not enter into our transgressions; because they were un-fallen nature and had a perfect control over their passions – which is not the case with us. We are not the authors but the victims of that Original Sin which has

darkened our understanding and weakened our will. Our resistance is feeble and we fall easily before temptation.

That was not the case with them. They had full power to choose. Furthermore, there is a legend which you will find in Milton's 'Paradise Lost,' which describes the fallen angels as learning of God's creation of a new order of beings which would fill the places in Heaven which they had forfeited. The normal sentiment of jealousy is poisonous and causes people to do extreme things. But in those angels it would have been a like a devouring fire; the notion of others taking their places would be unsupportable. They have to do something about it. Milton depicts a council of war being held and the decision being reached that they will somehow thwart this new scheme of God.

Scouts are sent out through space to find the new creation. The book shows a nice appreciation of what space means although it was written more than three hundred years ago. Travelling at the speed of light, those spirits consume long periods in their ransacking of the universe.

Eventually our own little spot of territory comes under notice and our first parents are found. Satan is sent to deal with them. Milton's narrative, and the exquisite illustrations by Gustave Dore which ornament expensive editions of the book, show Satan carrying out a careful reconnaissance, what the detective stories would call 'casing the joint'.

The plan which is determined upon is based on their own experience. They will use against Adam and Eve the same means which had been their own un-doing, that is the sin of pride. If it had been so efficacious in their own case, it could hardly fail against beings whom they regarded as vastly inferior to themselves. So the

plan was that Adam and Eve would be led into pride and disobedience.

Thus far Milton's account follows the traditional one, but at this point he introduces something which is novel. I do not know if it is based on a legend or if it is an embellishment of his own. He shows God as taking cognisance of the plot and sending the Archangel Raphael to Eden to give solemn warning to the menaced pair. One of Dore's pictures shows the conference between the couple and the archangel in scenic surroundings of incomparable splendour.

The idea of this warning, whether it took that shape or not, is good. For it brings out the essential note that if Adam and Eve were in danger of such a special kind, they would somehow or other be placed on their guard against it. It would not be the divine method to leave them exposed like a pair of babes in the wood to the wiles of utterly evil and astute intelligence; for such had become those former angels of light in the second that they divorced themselves from God's grace. It is quite certain that those first humans would be sufficiently forewarned and provided against the trial which they were being permitted to encounter.

The solemnity of that one and only commandment to which they had been subjected would be further stressed. We may be sure that the two listened intently and gave firm promise of their loyalty to God. But in spite of all that, they failed. They committed the grave offence of a brazen, inexcusable disobedience. It was a case of the fall of the angels over again, and for the very same cause. They know best! This was a special case where they felt able to judge better than God! His commandment had not contemplated that particular situation which the Serpent

had put before them! This was something unique! Of course they would argue it out plausibly between them. Really God – because he was God – could not see things from their standpoint. If he did, he would understand and agree!

This sounds ridiculous, but it is precisely the way in which pride reasons. Pride tells us that we know; that we are the best qualified to judge; and that we must insist on our opinion.

That was the Original Sin, and the entire Christian dispensation follows from it. But it is too simple a story for many of the mighty modern minds to accept. If it had been dished up as an obscure psychological process suitably decked out with the current coined words, those minds might condescend to accept it. But as it is, no.

Pride is an independence of God which can go so far as to take up a position of opposition to him and which can cut us off from him – much as rubber would insulate us against electricity.

By reason of our very weakness, it is not so easy for the common run of us to err to that grievous extent. But we can fall into the lesser degree of pride. We can be a little against God. We can claim as our own what he has given us. We can neglect to render due glory to him. Thereby we prevent him from giving to us. We shield ourselves from the sunshine of grace and leave ourselves cold, in darkness, un-provided for.

That is not God's will in regard to us. He wants to give us everything. He will use us for his purposes if we will but let him. But there must exist a compatibility or connection between him and us, for him to act fully in us. That compatibility lies in the recognition by us of our relationship to him, which is one of total dependence. We

are essentially evil. The good which is in us is his gift. If we arrogate that good and its consequences to ourselves, we are only ministering to the pride in us and in that way turning the gift and the grace into a hurt to ourselves; so that in mercy to us God has to withdraw those things. It is not his plan to accomplish something great through us if it is only going to prove a poison to our souls.

So at all costs we must preserve ourselves from the slightest attitude of independence from God. We must see his operation in everything holy that comes to us. That establishes the compatibility which enables us to put forth his power in us.

But there is a further requirement. It is that the Blessed Virgin be permitted to enter in. For it is her particular prerogative to combat pride. As the serpent was the abode and symbol of pride, so was she the embodiment of the contrary virtue. Therefore God's reversal of the serpent's victory began by utilising her. His plan depended on her because she was the only human being in whom pride would have no dominion. God built on her absolutely perfect humility and was able through her to launch the work of Redemption of the whole human race.

In a different form, her role remains the same. Then she was a maid and now she is our mother. She continues to contribute to the total scheme of Redemption that vital element of dependence on God, of compatibility with God, which we call humility. God imparts that element to us through her and not otherwise.

This is part of what St Louis Marie de Montfort entitles the great secret which is unknown to the world. Mary is our mother in a sense infinitely beyond that of earthly maternity. She sees that wilfulness in us and knows only too well that it can strike at our whole spiritual life. It is

her special concern to protect us from it, and this she will do most efficaciously if we give her due place in our lives.

This holds to such an extent that I would imagine that the downward course into the more serious forms of pride always begins, and continues, out of a superior attitude to Mary. That is why one must regard with a real fear the current improper demeanour towards her. Despite the unequivocal statement of her role made by the Vatican, the progressive elements are found depreciating her. The end of that policy is sadly certain. They are giving unrestrained scope to the pride that is abundant in them and it will operate as surely as the law of gravity. They will end by despising the Faith itself.

God began his whole scheme of Redemption by placing it on her as its foundation. He knew that no ray of his grace would be obscured or deflected by her; that she would fully give as she had fully received. That is the primary reason why she could be used to save the world. In its measure the same law applies to us. If we are willing to pass on what we receive without appropriating any of it to ourselves, we will likewise be entrusted with very great graces. Jesus and Mary are anxious to associate us to themselves in their task of spiritualising us and of saving the world, but the imperative stipulation is that we do not appropriate God's glory to ourselves even in the smallest degree.

Therein lies the most compressed formula which I can present for making something of our lives. It cannot fail if used.