

ADDRESS DELIVERED AT EAST PROVIDENCE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS ANNUAL
COMMUNION BREAKFAST ON SUNDAY, APRIL 20, 1947 BY JOHN E. FOGARTY, MC.

I am deeply impressed with the solemnity of this occasion.

The abundance of grace which is ours this morning because of our having received our Creator in Holy Communion constitutes, I know, far greater inspiration to all of you - than any poor words I might say at this Communion breakfast.

I am grateful to the Committee for having invited me here and I hope I can contribute some little thought to this splendid gathering of Catholic gentlemen.

While I pondered what I might say to you this morning - I recalled having read a few days ago in one of our leading New England newspapers, a statement made by one of the Senators engaged in the debate over the Truman Doctrine. That Senator stated - as the newspaper put it - to a hushed gallery and attentive Senate - that the time has arrived when the United States of America must accept or surrender world leadership.

The senator talked of dollars and ideas - of technical and political skill - he spoke of the hard, realistic things which this Nation must contribute to the world's society if we are to direct the feet of the less fortunate along the path to genuine freedom and democracy which we in the United States enjoy.

It was impossible to deny that the Senator spoke the truth about World leadership. It was impossible to deny that many things are needed to support that leadership. But I couldn't help thinking that there was one thing he omitted when he spoke of what we must do to help other peoples gain their rightful place in God's great scheme.

To my way of thinking there is more than dollars and ideas involved. Maybe Dreams and ideals would be the words I search for. But, in simple

language, I think our way of life - the manner in which we make our democracy function - is far more important than dollars and bread and equipment and skill.

We might make a great show of industrial and military might. We might demonstrate to all the world the great wealth we possess, in money, resources and scientific skill. By doing so it is likely we could prove our ability to dominate - but it doesn't follow we would prove our right to lead.

But if we so lived that all the world could see that here were people who knew and understood the meaning of genuine brotherly love; that here were people who appreciated and supported the rights and responsibilities that are part and parcel of the Democratic way - then in truth, there would be inspiration for men everywhere to resist oppression, to shun the sirens of Godless Ideologies, to follow in the footsteps of this last great hope of man.

Why do I talk of this here? Because, here are gathered men who today have received into their hearts the Body and Blood of Him who created this mortal sphere.

This mortal sphere - on which the immortal bard said we all must play some part in the drama of life. Where there is room for comedy and serious scenes - but where today the theme is tragedy. Where brother conspires against brother - and the great and noble sentiments which bound most of the globe into a single unit determined to overthrow tyranny and hate and greed - now shake like reeds before the wind and are in danger of being banished from our mind's eye. Do I paint a gloomy picture of the world today? Do you know one corner of the globe where tragedy doesn't stalk?

Abroad great minds struggle for a formula for lasting peace. But while they meet and talk and plan, their work is undone by the deceitful minions of Communism who seek to impose the will of the superstate on hungry, suffering peoples who do not have the physical strength or material resources to resist.

At home the social progress which has been developed through painstaking efforts requiring many, many years - is threatened by thoughtless and selfish interests who seek only the advancement of their own ends - regardless of the effect on others.

But, why mention that here, you say? Because here in this group of Catholic gentlemen is the greatest possible hope that this Democracy can be made to function in such a manner that it will in fact become a shining beacon to guide the steps of all men who seek freedom and justice under the law.

Was there ever a more auspicious occasion for men highly to resolve that henceforth their lives shall be epitomes of militant Catholicism? Have you ever felt more courage and strength to defend Catholicism? Have you ever felt more pride in the knowledge that you are a Catholic gentleman?

Then strike with all your might at the enemies of the sacred institutions which are the foundation stones of this Republic. And in your efforts have the knowledge that those institutions are the physical creations of the Natural Law of which Holy Mother Church is the greatest teacher.

This Nation didn't come into existence by accident. The documents which declared its creation and basic law were not spontaneous in origin. The ideals which prompted the Declaration of Independence and the language

which is used in the Constitution were the result of the teaching of the great Doctors of the Church through hundreds of years.

When you speak as a Catholic you are proof that the noble language of those priceless instruments have a real and definite meaning. When you live as a Catholic you are an example of that noble language put to a practical and useful purpose.

As a Catholic you believe there is a God who made you - to His image and likeness - to work out your destiny here on this globe - enjoying the blessings and benefits of God's handiwork - in preparation for the day when all must stand before the Final Judgement seat. And just as you believe - so did the founding fathers believe and solemnly declare that all men "are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness".

Life is more than breathing and sighing. Liberty is more than the privilege of walking the streets unafraid of the descending truncheon. Happiness is more than a fleeting smile produced by some artificial form of entertainment.

Life, Liberty and Happiness embody the right to live like a man in every sense of the word. Man endowed with dignity by his Creator - unafraid of all forces as long as he abides by the law of his God. It is the right to enjoy to the fullest possible measure the phenomenal outpouring of gifts from the hand of God which permeate this planet on which we have our temporary abode. It is the right to live decent honorable lives - to raise a family - to have a home - to be proud of what you've done for your own and your neighbor - to be secure in the knowledge that God is good - and there are no spectres of poverty and misery lurking around the next bend in the road.

There, to my way of thinking - is the greatest contribution this land of ours can make to the peace and stability of the world. And there, again to my way of thinking, is the greatest contribution you men can make to the ordering of this society of which we are important parts.

You were taught as boys that it was important to feed the hungry and clothe the naked - to visit the sick and bury the dead. Don't wait til their cheeks are gaunt and the bodies exposed to the storm. Don't wait til the fever has ravished their frames or the body's cold.

They hunger for the truth and they're naked because justice is denied them. You possess the power and the knowledge to make them well. If you're poor Catholics they'll die because you were late in raising your voice.

The most powerful injunction, perhaps, of all time was the admonition of St. Paul - an admonition which should constantly burn in our minds. "Be a Man" he thundered. Be a man in the fulfillment of your nature - know and use the power and the glory and the dignity of your being - Live in the full stature of your manhood in justice, in honesty and in truth.

You'll make a positive contribution to society - you can be proud you've lived - and as you gaze - with your mind's eye at the shining beacon of democracy which you have helped to build you can paraphrase the immortal words of Daniel Webster, uttered before the newly erected Bunker Hill monument - "Thank God that I --I too -- am a Catholic".