

Western Europe be repeated, with its virtual loss of the working classes to the Church ('the scandal of the nineteenth century', as the popes have called it), the golden grandeur of Salvador will avail very little: the temples of later Incas that had their day, marks of a past irrecoverable now.

But there can be no Christian penetration of a society unless there be men and women trained to achieve it. There are many signs that Rome regards South America as crucial to the contemporary history of the Church; and secular and religious clergy alike are being increasingly reminded of their opportunity and are being helped in many ways to pursue it. But an integrated Catholic lay life, with its generous acceptance of what the Incarnation means at this moment, must be the indispensable condition of a new conquest, as enduring as that of the Portuguese long ago. The new conquest demands generosity, but here, as in so many other Latin American republics, the spiral of too recent and too rapid an industrial revolution has soared out of reach of the traditional pieties, casual and simple though they might have been. And yet there is a symbol—the immense Christ of Corcovado—which shows where the final reconciliation will be found. At night the statue, floodlit on its mountain behind the city of Rio, is inescapable, and as the ship sails down the incomparable harbour the outstretched arms seem to enclose the whole city. But at last the city itself is but a blur of light along the bays, and only the figure stands clear and identified above, unchanging, the point of reference for all change.

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