

growth in faith	activity in love
leading by grace	free choice
holy fear	holy love
"inseparably one"	
not wedded to one method and one direction	
but broad as she is	
in whom is manifest	
God "all in all."	

Lo, such is the love of Jesus Christ
 in which you are elevated to God Himself
 that "love of our God and Lord Jesus Christ
 which binds Head and members
 into one whole
 uniting Head with members
 members one with another
 the same love which returns from God
 to spend itself upon all our fellow-men"
 G o d
 who is Love.

(To be continued.)

THIRD ORDERS AND THE APOSTOLATE OF CHRIST THE WORKER

BY

GERARD CORR, O.S.M.

The Apostolate of Christ the Worker merits high rank among the associations of the Church because it sees social work and holiness in their right perspective.

The apostle of Christ the Worker does not draw a great distinction between being holy and helping other people. His (or her) work for others is an essential part of the quest of sanctity.

To understand this fact it is necessary to recall that there are two kinds of associations. First, those which help us to be holy ourselves; second, those which are intended to help others. Of the two the former are the better. Thus it is better to enter a Religious Order than to help the Foreign Missions.

But the two kinds are not in practice separate, though they are different. We cannot become holy ourselves without helping others, because the perfection of one member of the Body of Christ draws others towards perfection; and we cannot easily—though, absolutely speaking, we can, alas—help others to be holy without growing holy ourselves.

The ideal, of course, is to give all our hearts to God and to love others because loving them is a part of the love of God. The nearer an association draws to this spirit the better it is. If its emphasis is on helping others it will be, by comparison, sub-

siary. If its chief message is the love of God it will rise, by so much, in dignity.

That is why the Apostolate of Christ the Worker ranks very high. It stresses the fact that to serve God means to take our part in the solution of the Social Question, and that wise social activity is service of God. It tells us that these two things, when both genuine, are never apart. They are joined, not as a "proper accident" is joined to its "substance," but as activity is joined to health.

A word on the title will perhaps clinch this. In the phrase "Apostolate of Christ the Worker" the last two words are *specifying* words. They tell us what kind of an "Apostolate of Christ" it is; they give us the shape of the association. But the stuff of which it is made is expressed by the words "Apostolate of Christ." It is a case of the matter being nobler than the form. It was, however, impossible for any form to improve on this matter—Apostolate of Christ. We may look upon the words "The Worker" as bringing out an aspect of the Apostolate of Christ, the essential thing than which nothing could be nobler on earth.

Which brings us directly to the connection with the Third Order idea, for a Third Order is a lay Apostolate of Christ in the world.

If it be true that the Apostolate of Christ the Worker is really the Apostolate of Christ in modern phrase, there must be not only a connection worth noting, but also something in the definition and nature of the two things. Catholic excellence has only one standard of graduation. Things measured by it cannot *ascend* on parallel lines; they tend to meet in one essential thing, the love of God and of our neighbour. The higher things are, the nearer they are to one another.

The comparison, then, is worth making. In fact it seems to me that, having made it, one may conclude that the Tertiary, *as* a Tertiary, is not only the right kind of person to invite to the Apostolate of Christ the Worker, but should be led to it by the Tertiary ideal.

Tertiaries may be described as people who, living "in the world," strive to progress towards Christian perfection (under the guidance and rule of a Religious Order, and in accordance with its spirit) in a way that is practical for people in their circumstances. (cf. Can. 702) (1).

Such people, therefore, realise that to be a Religious (with a capital R) does not mean to find a *new* purpose in life, but to seek the same object that all mankind must have—the love of

(1). There are nine Third Orders: Premonstratensians, Dominicans, Franciscans, Carmelites, Augustinians, Minims, Servites, Trinitarians, Mercedarians. The Oblates of St Benedict, who are of course a more ancient institution, are essentially the same.

God—in a special way. It is a more difficult way, this "Religious life," a steeper path, but more direct and encumbered by fewer obstacles.

Holiness always means the same three things: detachment from what this world offers, and this is poverty; detachment from what the flesh offers, and this is chastity; detachment from our own will, in submission to lawful authority, and this is obedience. "Religious," by the great renunciation of the three vows, create the milieu where these things are relatively much simpler, promising, with that advantage to seek holiness in that way.

But there isn't any other way.

People in the world have to be echoes and images of "Religious" (in their own circumstances) if they would be holy at all. The Church has wisely sanctioned the use of the word "Religious" as a proper name for those who have the vows, but the name remains quite accurate for those who love God and seek holiness in the world. (2). A Tertiary is one who, remaining in the world, recognises that the Religious life is the life of one who should be a "professional" in detachment. He attaches himself to these "professionals" that they may help him along the way they are going. He knows that there has never been a time when a Christian could become holy without renouncing himself and imitating Christ; he recognises the Evangelical Counsels as Everyman's beacons on the way to heaven, as common property.

The Apostolate of Christ the Worker has no lower ideal. It intends to take literally and seriously the teaching of the Popes that the Social Question cannot be settled without a re-Christianisation of society. (3). It does not take re-Christianisation of workers as a means to an end (the end being social betterment) but simply as the will of Christ; therefore (harking back to our definition of a Tertiary), as the way of progressing towards Christian perfection that is practical for people in the world.

A Tertiary is expected to recognise in "circumstances" the will of God and the conditioning background of the way to holiness. "Circumstances" shape the rule of daily life. The Apostolate points out that nowadays "circumstances" send out a positive call, a vocation, to the Apostolate of Work. The Apostolate has for its purpose to *bring back to God the mass of the workers and to render their lives holy.* (*Statutes*, c.2). First among the means to be adopted comes "an intensive personal sanctification through prayer, works of charity, frequent communion—at least once a month—and periodical retreats, etc." (*id.* c. 4). **Spiri-**

(2). Cf. The Epistle of St. James, 1, xxvi, 27.

(3). "The 'Social Question' is first of all moral and *religious*, and for that reason its solution is to be expected mainly from the moral law and the pronouncements of religion." (Leo XIII—*Graves de Communi*). .

tual and practical acts of reparation in "worship and imitation of Christ the Worker" (4) are its natural expression. It takes spiritual activity not as an auxiliary, but as the central thing.

In brief, the Apostolate of Christ the Worker is not "a following of Christ as a means of helping others," or "helping others as a means of following Christ," but simply "following Christ," with the realisation that the re-Christianisation of work and workers is part of the following of Christ. The stress on that identification gives it its meaning.

Except through the imitation of Christ the Tertiary cannot fulfil his vocation. Except through the imitation of Christ the Worker, the Apostle of Christ the Worker cannot fulfil his. It is because the ideal of Christ the Worker is most fitting for our time, and because that ideal is placed before us by Authority, that the two aims coincide.

Years ago Francis Thompson made an eloquent plea that the Franciscan Tertiaries should enter the field of Christian social work like an army in battle-array. His words are worth quoting:

"In the name of the Mother of Sorrows, our derelict Catholic men and women shall not have to wait till the Salvation Army have bruised our heel . . . this street-preaching, in which the Salvationists are so energetic, received its first special extension from the Franciscans. Mother of street-preachers, where are your street-preachers?"

"He who penanced Brother Ruffino because the visionary was overpowering in him the worker, with what alacrity would he have thrown his Tertiaries on the battle-field where reserves are so needed.

"They, therefore, if their founder live at all in them, seem the organization ready constituted for this work.

"Let us put this thing to the test in God's name! And except in God's name it were indeed wanton to try it.

"What sword have they, but you have a keener? For blood and fire, gentle humility; for the joy of a religious alcoholism, the joy of that peace which passeth understanding; for the tumults, the depths of the spirit; for the discipline of trumpets, the discipline of the Sacraments; for the chiming of tambourines, Mary's name pensile like a bell-tongue in men's resonant souls." (*In Darkest England*).

That last sentence—as also the opening words—should raise an echo in Servite Tertiaries, who serve under the banner of the Mother of Sorrows.

Much has been done since Francis Thompson's day, and much remains to be done. Among those who have not "waited till the

(4). From the letter of the Dominican Master General appened to the Statutes.

Salvation Army had bruised their heel' are the energetic Catholics who brought to England the idea and practice of Houses of Hospitality. It is significant that St. Joseph's House of Hospitality (at 129 Malden Rd., London, N.W.5) has come to be looked upon as the headquarters of Christ the Worker. Tertiaries gravitating towards centres like that one are not leaving their proper Tertiary orbit. There they will find spiritual life and works "in the world"; they will find a sense of the union that should exist between the Laity's social and liturgical apostolate; a real attempt to practise the spiritual and corporal works of mercy in the Gospel spirit.

The Lay Apostolate is an indispensable means. As Mgr. Antoniutti said: "Priests can no longer alone accomplish the work of re-Christianisation with success; they must accept the collaboration of the laity." (5). The spirit of this great movement towards Christ is therefore the indispensable spirit. It is the spirit of this great movement towards Christ the Worker. It should be the spirit, also, of the modern Tertiary. The Third Order (to quote Pius XI) is "an *apostolate* of Christian life, of Christian faith, of Christian peace, carried into the family and into *every department* of life in the world." Every department. The words are well worth noting.

The Apostolate of Christ the Worker does not appeal only to, or for, those who take off their coats and get grimy in a factory, but to men and women in "every department of life in the world." It needs, and surely it deserves, the support of every hundred-per-cent Catholic, clerical or lay. A Tertiary Congregation, in any parish, can find in it that active expression of the love of God which will give them the feeling, the assurance, that they are *doing* something, *as* Tertiaries. The Apostolate of Christ the Worker was founded by a Tertiary (Fr. Schub, a secular priest belonging to the Third Order of St. Dominic); it would be fitting if Tertiaries took a leading part in establishing it throughout the world.

(5). At a conference in connection with the J.O.C. in Canada. Mgr. Antoniutti is Apostolic Delegate to Canada and Newfoundland.

A TREATISE ON THE INEFFABLE MYSTERY OF OUR REDEMPTION

BY

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(Translation by a Nun of Stanbrook Abbey)

CHAPTER IV

THE REMEDY FOR THIS DISEASE: CHRIST'S PERFECT SATISFACTION
AND REDEMPTION.

Man being in this miserable state, God, who could have left