DECEMBER 29, 1946

I greet you all, noble countrymen and countrywomen, with the words: Let Jesus Christ be praised.

Has anyone not heard of the famous water fall, Niagara, located about 22 miles from Buffalo? Visitors not only from America and Canada but from various parts of the world have to pay a visit and be at awe of the might, power and majesty of this waterfall. They stood in wonder at the sight. They left gripped with the memory of it. The Falls are known by millions. However, very few viewers of the Falls is familiar with the Niagara River which flows from Buffalo from Lake Erie and falls with a tremendous roar at the Niagara gorge and proceeds to Lake Ontario.

 The river in its beginnings was in the form of a narrow neck. Here the water flows swiftly through the cataracts on which fishermen would not be able to avoid the dangerous fall into the gorge below. The cataracts flow for about five miles. After falling into the gorge, they the waters flow placidly until they reach Lake Ontario after about seven miles. Standing here at the sight, we see the wide and shallow corridor of the river. The bottoms are strewn with boulders and rocks. The waters seek the banks wondering what dared to cause its flow. With anger, it splashes among the rocks filled with anger and it flows into eddies and flows on. The Niagara carries the branches of trees as it heads for Lake Ontario through the chasm created over centuries and dissipates itself. Curiously, we may compare the above description into a simile comparing the life of man. The first years of our lives flow placidly and peacefully under the eyes of our parents. The next ex tent of our youthfulness, is very active and gripping. After several years it flows in at a more moderate pace. However it does not last long since old age comes on quickly and it loses its power and state of health. In addition, man must face a thankless future, the loss of companionship garnered throughout the past, coldness and forgetfulness. The people start developing hindsight and look into the future. Then people look back as well as into the future. They see the yesterdays as tomorrow. Both are greeted with alarm. They ask themselves: “What will tomorrow bring? What will it bring?” – Lost in these thoughts they wait, time goes on, until their lives reach the chasm of eternity, whatever it will be: disturbing or peaceful.

**“YESTERDAY AND TOMORROW”**

 Five years ago, in one of today’s hotels, there was a noisy entertainment. At the affair, the elite of the town but many invited from even the smaller bergs of the city. Men in tuxedos and women in gowns and furs. I note that our country has just come out of a world war. It seems that this segment of our society had not made anything of the war that had just past and the sadness it bore. Overseas, the dance of death. Here, at home with us, people swirled thoughtlessly through the easy going happy life. It was the eve of the New Year, 1941.The orchestra played waltzes, tangos, and foxtrots. Midnight was about to occur. The host of this social affair was in good humor. He joked at every opportunity. His eyes were fixed on the clock on the wall. When the indicators on the clock were coming close to meeting at twelve midnight position and the clock rang out 12 midnight, picked up his glass of champagne and gave the toast: “Ladies and Gentlemen I toast…..” At this he hesitated and his face blanched. He began to weave and the glass left his hand, fell on the floor and smashed to smithereens. The host tried to stabilize himself with his remaining energy but, before anyone could help him, he fell underneath the table. When the bystanders came to the realization what was going on, they came to his rescue, but to no avail. A doctor was called. He declared the host to be dead. This unexpected occurrence, sudden and unforetold so shocked the attendants of the entertainment that in fifteen minutes there was no one in the hall.

 At the present time, I beg sincerely, listen to my words; perhaps they are somewhat harsh. However, I think that they will be the moral and effective cure for suburban sluggishness, laziness and negligence, while still there is time. What was our life like in these months from January to this moment? One continuous entertainment. Nothing else but long lasting playtime. Only an unbreakable period of playtime. One unin terrupted ball. You would say that these 52 weeks this year was an eternally lasting dance. Almost no one paid attention to the Lenten Period, to Advent or the Fridays. People whatever state of life did not pay attention to Lenten days or times of mortification. Everyone entertained themselves: men, women, and children. All was in a whirl – everything was in turmoil. Beer foamed forth, vodka sparkled, and wine glistened. Money was squandered left and right, bread was trod upon. Dance went on and on, without thought. It seemed that the legs didn’t have the stamina to go on, that no breath would last. Forget it. Despite all the reprimand they said, “Don’t confuse us. There will be time enough. Despite the fact that missions do not have a roof over their heads; the millions die from hunger. That millions exist on eating roots. Millions of veterans lie in hospital beads. “It doesn’t interest us” they danced without end. But sufficient for those observations.

 The Jews of the Old Testament at the admonition of God, celebrated the end of the year. First they asked God for forgiveness. Later they gave thanks for gifts received. In the end the prayed for future needs on the road of life.

 This Tuesday, the clocks will ring out the New ear and our life will push on for another year closer to eternity which is unknown and uncertain. Some say the time moves forward as if they wanted to say that it will move slowly step by step. They are mistaken. Time does not walk but runs and speeds ahead as if eternity wanted to swallow it. Perhaps you don’t believe it. Good. Was it that long since you went to school? How was it that you finished your studies? How long ago was it that you finished school and went into the world and reform it. And do you remember when you began your married life. Maybe 15, 20, or 30 years ago? And that day stands before your eyes as if it were last year! Was it not just a while ago? Grey headed now, do you not say” Where did it all go”. Or you, mother, who so often complained that, because of your children, your hands and feet were tied to the house and you had no chance to go out. It was like yesterday. Today the children went their way At home there is only your husband and yourself. At home it is quiet and sad. Today you don’t even have that ambition to leave home for a break. And look in the mirror. Is that the same face you saw yester-year. Yesterday the passerby would admire your beauty; today their glance is swift if any. Today that gray head is grayer and the face is filled with the lines and cares of the past.

 Because of the years the soul of every human are bears sober thought of the past and fear of the future. Our times are filled the scenes of the World War. There are wars between God and the war-torn world. Mankind has added its errors to the laws of God and masked itself. He chose only certain laws of God and added its errors and so created a mish-mash half-Christian and half Christian. One of the Polish Bishops observed: “What is wisdom according to Christ is idiocy to the world. What Christ directs, the world avoids, what Christ forbids, the world permits. And so the Lord says: Know the truth and the truth with give you joy; the world says: Avoid the truth of God because it does not exist; it is a manufacture of man. The Lord says: Love God above all; the world says love yourself above all. The Lord says: Seek first the kingdom of God and his justice; the world says: seek above all domestic goods, happy times, and honor. The Lord said: Remember your accountability to God; the world says: Seek the approval of people. The Lord said: Deny yourselves, mortify yourselves. The world says: Take it easy, relax. There are further virtues besides these according to the Lord and those of the world. The world calls simplicity, ridiculousness; dedication to God and neighbor idiocy; the world regards mortification as suicidal, prayer, as a waste of time; humility a lowering of self; obedience, an imprisonment; self-aggrandizement as smartness; pride, a recognition of one’s worth. The world suggests to cover the heart’s betrayal, the bad thought with a lying word; present the truth as a falsehood; present falsehood as the truth; seek honors and climb with false pride and be pleased with empty glorification; if someone does them harm, give them ten times what harm they gave you; if they lack strength, do not step aside; it there is a lack of strength, whatever they do not do in anger, be evasive.

 “Do not love the world or the one who is part of the world” advises the Apostle. Very few abide by these words. The rest stick to the principles of the world. They live similar to the river’s flow which is hell bent to get to the ocean and takes people with them into the ocean of problems and suffering. The world lures the unfortunates with false promises with its goods and entertainments. What are these “goods”? The world promises riches since it has power, honor. Instead, Christ the Lord, who does not forbid choosing the temporal necessities of life when used with restraint and for the good, advises the prudent use of them, avoiding excess which gives delight but curtails salvation. The world considers of worth, natural gifts such a health of body, ability and virtues of the mind. Surely, those are God’s gifts, worth acknowledging, but only as worth as God advises, so as to attain our ultimate goal, that of eternity with God. However, the world judges these gifts as preferable to spiritual good, which it lowers and avoids. The world cherishes fame and honor and those whose name is famous; the world also tells all to strive higher and higher to attain world glory. On the contrary the Savior teaches us in word and deed – humility. The Lord hides his Divinity first in a helpless child, later in his vocation as carpenter and does not seek the well-known status and avoids those who would make him king or set him on a pedestal. The Lord says, “Whoever among you would wish to be first, should be live to serve others. The world deems worthy all delights and seeks them in excessive pleasures; have fun while you have time; give your soul and drink from the chalice of earthly pleasure for it is an admirable goal in which you will have satisfaction. Does the world hold its promises? No! The world lies without purpose. So millions drink of this chalice and in the end drink of its bitterness. All in the end consider it a vanity of vanities. I find in this chalice a lethal poison. Where is this promised satisfaction? The truth is only in God for God is the source of happiness, the eternal source and who drinks of this source will never be thirsty.

 The Apostle said: “without faith it is impossible to please God.” Faith therefore is the first step to God – faith is the root of Christian life – faith is the fundamental way to virtue – faith is the light, the power, and the delight of the soul. What then, does it mean, “To live in faith?” It means to arrange one’s life in the light of this faith – to arrange the external as well as the interior life, your personal as well as public life in order that you may think, judge, desire, act and suffer according to what you believe.” He who lives in faith regards all riches, joys, praise, honor, and all activities both joyous and sad by looking on them with the eye of reason and less with the eye of personal love but through the eyes of Christ’s teachings. Whoever lives with faith, the faith becomes that which the soul is for the body, that is, it becomes the operating force and gives life to all activity. He cannot fail. He lives through the vicissitudes of life and finds an unbelievable peace. At this time we will look into our hearts and perceive our souls and look at our conscience. We ask ourselves in complete sincerity how we spend the current year. Have our thoughts, spoken words and action corresponded with the principles of Christ or directed into the worldly scene. Let us take a looks backwards – at our obligations. Not only you wife and mother. Not only you husband and father. Not only you daughter and son, but all of us without exception. In the eyes of our creator, our duties are important and holy. In what spirit were they carried out? In my past, I wee an immense collection of transgressions, guilt, vices, insufficiencies and inadequacies. A deficiency of virtues and noble actions – a handful of good. And I become fearful. Life passes swiftly a deficiency of good and noble activity – so many thorns. So much wasted time, which cannot be recovered. What am I left with? What is my course of action? Come to the Lord and beat my breast – “my fault, my fault, my most grievous fault! I have wasted graces – wasted opportunities. I have not profited. I believe, Lord, that you will have mercy on my soul. I come before you with crushed and sorrowful heart.

 Today we ask ourselves another question: Was not God a good, caring, and protective father for us? Had He not endowed us with generous gifts? But wait! Let me journey with you through countries waged by the little god Mars god of war. There the terrain is devastated, in ruins, with burnt out towns, cemeteries filled with sacrificial victims. Fields of grain destroyed and abandoned. Diseases increased. People dropped like flies. Mothers witnessed the death of their sons. Children became orphans and cried over dead parents. Devastation wherever you look. Even animals and birds have left these environs. Her and there you will see groups of crows circling over human remains. And that’s not all. After sickness follows hunger, deprivation and death from hunger. Look upon the skeletons dressed in various ways thin as rails – a miserable sight. Ask yourself if you are thankful for your gifts and that he spared our country from such devastation. During the past year, perhaps someone who sat near the radio, listening to my voice god sick, perhaps went to the hospital, perhaps faced death and the cemetery. Perhaps a cross happened across your shoulders, perhaps God gave you the strength to battle the sickness and survive. Thank God in humility for his mercy which was great indeed.

 Finally, standing at the door to the New Year, it is our obligation to ask of Providence blessings and graces. Ask for what? Ask for much. Ask for many graces. In the first place, ask for peace for mankind, freedom from war. In all sincerity, I must admit that very many people haven’t the foggiest notion of what makes up true and lasting peace. Agreements, treaties, peace conferences, and the directives of powerful nations are helpful but not lasting. They do not create true peace or produce people of good will. They cannot produce peace in the inner heart. No use dreaming of a real peace unless it can be conceived in our hearts in a Christian way in our family lives. There cannot be talk of peace unless not only diplomats and politicos talk about it but nations get rid of self- aggrandizement, greed, and hypocritical thinking, speaking and behavior. The Spirit of Christ has to get rid from the hearts of people feelings of egoism and replace them with a yielding disposition, dedication and sacrifice. Erroneous is the directive: “outmaneuver the other guy.” Instead, make room for the virtues of the soul, among which is love… patience… understanding and attention to the directives of God and his Spirit. The spirit of evil, and well-dressed and practiced craftily is controlling the heart of man, even though we have the assurance that good will win out. It is time right now to determine the various customs which obstruct our way to a more noble life. Secondly, looking at the future with a deep faith and aim for perfection and enlighten the souls of others. Thirdly, believe heartily that God is the wise advisor and just care taker of the world, and our savior is available to help us amend our ways and is a just judge to judge our ways in the end. Now is the responsible time to put our hands to the plow of Christ and in peace make our way through 1947. We will walk unto now unknown paths. But we can say that in the future we will come across roses as well as thorns.

 We ought to look to the future calmly and not be afraid of tomorrow. At least that is what the Savior recommends: “Do not be concerned about tomorrow, tomorrow will take care of itself. Each day has troubles of its own.” “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you shall find; knock and it will be opened to you. Which of you who asks his brother for bread will give you a stone or ask for a fish would give you a snake. If then you know how to give good things to your sons, how much more your heavenly Father who is in heaven will give you who ask. - The human being is indeed a curious creature. It is not enough to worry about today. No your thoughts reach into the tomorrow and further. Man asks himself: “What will happen if one of the family becomes ill? Where will we get the money to buy food if I get laid off from work. What will happen to the children when they grow up? Who will take care of the elderly when they grow old. “What? Who? That kind of worry of the future is worse than the difficulties of today. The future paints itself black! That kind of pessimism leads to mental problems, fright and worry and finally to despair.

 The Care Taker of the world does not wish our troubles and worry go behind the day at hand into the distant future. If you want to worry, worry about today and that should be enough. Why carry the unattained burdens into today. Today, worry about today. If tomorrow comes, worry about tomorrow. In the scriptures Christ advises in the Our Father: “Give us this day, our daily bread” not tomorrow or in a week or in a month.” The Savior advises against worry about tomorrow, about things that may not happen in reality. Try to have in mind that working and what is worrying are two different things. The Lord could very well have turned the stones into bread; however, he did not do this miracle for himself. He worked hard as a carpenter. Somewhere I read this heart-warming story. Into one of the Italian churches, entered a poor woman. She did not know that the pastor was reading his breviary in back of the main altar. The lady knelt on her knees under the crucifix and spoke thus to the Savior: “Dear Jesus: I came here to complain because I am despairing. Help me, Lord. My husband was in bad shape. They took my two sons into the armed forces. At home I still have four sons. I have bills and my health is not good. So I am in bad straits. Look at my distress and my many difficulties. I know that you are merciful and good, and you can take these on your shoulders for they are not that much for you. When the pastor was taken with the sincerity and depth of the woman faith, helped the family. The woman repeats her prayer, ending it tearfully: “My Lord, it seemed to me at that time that Jesus took my little bag of troubles, I had to chuckle. Let us remember as we stand at the door of 1947, without fear, that we will go forth from day to day profiting by each day for a whole year by peace of heart.