December 16, 1934

Dear fellow countrymen and countrywomen, I greet you with the words: Praised be Jesus Christ!

Humanity in the Twentieth Century is a curious mixture of happiness and disaster. On the surface, the number of unhappy outnumber the happy. It is a frightening appearance. Never in the history of the world, even in the middle ages, named the dark ages, was there this much dissatisfaction and lack of peace, hatred and disagreement as there is in our times. Hence, many questions. Did civilized ways licentiousness liberate people from the threat of barbarism only to shove civilization backwards into the abyss of wantonness and licentiousness of the Romans. Are we headed in the wrong way as a civilization? Are we headed into darkness again. Class struggle, equality unraveled itself into a prison, hatred, war, and a decline into darkness. The fundamental building of a society, as everyone knows, is the family. If the family is in good standing and healthy, then the accompanying society which consists of a multiple of families is in good health. As much as the family structure falls apart so does the structure of the social life in the society we live in. What is the state of the family today? It's material situation is in a sad state. Often the problem is neither the fault of the parents of the children. The fault is the structure of the system, which is inimical to the family in sucking the life-giving blood from its members. It nurtures a spirit of doubt and hatred. And the spiritual dimension isn't any better. Man's purpose and nature in this life is faulty and false. The wish for comfort and plenty with the least effort and sacrifice works on the minds of both young and old in a destructive way. It works on the human mind and militates against the goals of a truly well-working society. The family is attacked at its very root system. The mother and the wife, under the illusion of equality, seeks life beyond the home, for some things it has to right to. The father and the husband, generally without a job, uncertain and without patience, curses. The children, sons and daughters, discouraged, happily seek fun, and forgetfulness outside of the family home. This introductory statement, maybe a bit too rough and brutal, yet truthful, brings us to our talk titled:

PRODIGAL WANDERERS

At this moment, as I talk to you about prodigal wanderers, in some families, someone dear and beloved is missing from the home who was associated with peace and happiness for some persons. Some more or less important misunderstanding, trivial and ephemeral, with fury flared mind - the heart was set afire with hate, the thought arose for throwing away everything and everyone. The door was slammed and yet another being went into the world of doubt and forgetfulness, leaving behind bitterness and broken hearts. Today in more than one home, the wife weeps because the husband abandoned the home, leaving several children at a loss. Today more than on husband rails and pull his hair out because his wife disappeared nowhere to be found and unheard from; today some parents kneel in some corner complaining to God, because a scared daughter or thoughtless son, believed the sweet promises of the world or of their friends, and not thinking and taking lightly the cautions of their parents left their mother , father, brothers and sisters, in order to shortly experience, and eternally suffer. Today as many children are happy with their families at the coming of the holidays, thousands of other children neglected and abandoned, look with tearful eyes, folding their hands and quietly murmur the prayer, "Child Jesus, have mercy on us and our misery. Make our Dad, who abandoned us, return home and take care of us. Or: "Child Jesus, w beg you for only one gift at Christmas: that our mother who left us, come back to us. Other children have mothers and we are helpless orphans." How many of such supplications pass the throne of God, only God knows. In order, my dear listeners, that you not think that my head is somewhere in the clouds, I would like to read you several letters which demonstrate that what I am telling you is the truth and life's reality.

Buffalo, N.Y.

Dear Father,

Have mercy on me. and say a few words to my husband, who left me and went his own way. I come from a good family. I did not traipse to dances and fun. I was a housewife. My husband was good to me at the beginning. Then he met this lady at work. It seems to me that she turned his head. He started to dele out money to me and wandering out at night, drinking and beating me. I cried and suffered; after a few months he left everything and went his way. People advise me to get a divorce so he could live with the woman who broke us up. I am ready to take him back if he shapes up and stops drinking. If only he would return home and show his good will, I am sure that we could get together as before.

This letter is too clear and meaningful to comment on it.

Detroit, Mich.

Dear Father,

I am the mother of three children. Three months ago, my husband left home and has of yet not returned. Although he worked all the time, he gave me little money. He went out evenings and lost money through drinking, cards, and horse race betting. Even though he persecuted me, I hung on because of the children. I could not satisfy him. I was faithful to my responsibilities in keeping house; the children were always clean. Everything was in his way. More than once when coming home drunk, he threatened that he would beat me and the children. Because of this, I could not eat or sleep because I was afraid.

Wilkes-Barre, PA

The following letter is written in Slovak; here is a translation.

Reverend Father,

Two of our older daughters ran away from home and went to New York. They weren't bad children. As they were growing up they started to go out in the evenings. Three years ago, the eldest left home without letting us know. She did not write for a whole year. When she returned, we thought she was back to stay, but she was home for three days and the left with the younger sister. My husband cursed her and me. What can I do? I sent them to school and to church. They got worse because of their acquaintance with bad company. I could not be present to them all the time. We still have three daughters. My husband told me buy some poison and poison them because he says that he would rather see them in coffin than waste their lives traipsing through the world. I sometimes think that that would be better too. I loved the children and worked for them. Is it worth it?

Listen my dear mother. Keep caring and be a good mother to the children who are still home and pray for those who wander the streets of New York because they have not stopped being your children and you there mother. One good child would be a great gift to relieve you of you sufferings and reward your dedication in your old age. Remember to that God gives life and God has a right to that life.

Chicago, Ill.

Reverend Father,

I am 45 years old; my wife is 40. We were both born in Poland. We were married for 20 years. I deliberately took on a old world girl, because I didn't believe in marrying an American woman. However they are all of the same cut. My wife, as she got older, also got stupider. She clothed herself and bought clothes because she could. God gave me children; my wages were good. I thought I had it made. Forget it. Three years ago she began to have fun with her friends. She was never home in the evenings. He became an elite. She called me an old man etc. She could not sit at home. The neighbors said that she changed to such a degree that they though and evil spirit took her over. I just watched and waited. And One day while I was at work, she took all the furniture without telling me and took off in undisclosed places. Please tell me story on the radio, perhaps she will hear it and come back.

Milwaukee, Wis.

Reverend Father,

I am skeptical about sharing my woes with people because I can't trust anyone. I am 50 years old, so I've seen both evil and good in my life. I thought that old age would bring me some peace. My daughter is the reason for my problems. When she was working and going to church regularly going to the Sacraments. Two years ago she was laid off from work. She began a partnership with two other girls whose parents do not believe in God. I asked her to refrain going there. I forbid her to go; she became stubborn. Nothing helped. I didn't have it in my heart to punish her in any way; after all she was a grown up woman. She became bold and disobedient. What hurt me the most was that she began to laugh at the idea of a God. That was the state of affairs four months ago, when angry, she began cursing me saying that she was American and is of the age of majority and that she could do as she pleased. She left and went to the other side of town. She lives there with people known to us and curses her own mother. A repayment for the care with which I brought her up. Father, you remember us when you were with Fr. Fudzinski in Milwaukee. Please, Father, talk sometime on your program to these kinds of daughters who have more respect for strangers than their own families. The doors of our home are always open to our daughter. Perhaps she will return when she feels like it. I don't want to cause her hurt and unhappiness, just so she would return and listen to me as she did once before.

Detroit, Mich.

Dear Father,

Our story is long and painful. In our old age we have to cry as a result of the behavior of our daughter. She is 22 years old and does not live with us for one year now. When she listened to us there was peace in our household. Two years ago she became acquainted with a Polish girl who lived in town. Three or four times a week she left in the evening and they used to bring her home in the morning. Often drunk, she murmured something when I opened the door for her. I didn't want to throw her out of the house; I gave her time to come to herself. However, week after week it got worse. I thought she was taking some kind of poison because she complained of a headache and at times shook as if she had a fever. About a year ago she disappeared. I heard that she left town with a Polish man who has a wife and children here in Detroit. We cry and are ashamed. Please talk about this and tell the children to have more empathy for their parents, because neither I nor my husband have earned this humiliation. Parents would give their blood to protect their children from evil and them the children abandon them and go to strangers.

Gary, Ind.

Gracious Father,

Please hear us out: me and my five children in the family. For some years we do not belong to any parish, because my husband would not permit it. He worked and did not drink, although he dealt brutally with me. I can't list the details. I did not complain because of the children. Two months ago he came home like a different person and frightened me. The next day he left for work but did not return for supper. He took his paycheck with him and disappeared. He left me and the children without a penny. We have a home but still have payments to make on it. If they take it away, where will we go? If my husband would return, we would be able to survive. My parents died when I was 8 years old. My blood relatives took me and treated me worse than a dog. My relatives forced me to marry. Now, I am abandoned again with my children.

Chicago, Ill.

Reverend Father,

Our 20 year-old son ran away from Home. He didn't have it bad; I only was afraid that his gallivanting with other men would bring him to some unhappiness. He said he was wise enough already and didn't need to listen to his mother. During the day he looked for a job, but did not stay with us in the evening. My husband talked to him to no avail. Three years ago, angry, he started to curse at us - he said he would go where his eyes would lead him, and if something happens, it would be our fault. He left and to this day I know not where. Perhaps you could help us, Father, and when you talk to sons, who ran away from home to have mercy and return home.

My Dear Radio-Listeners: Throughout these letters, some soaked with tears, comes pain, sorrow and complaints of wives and mothers, fathers and husbands, sons and daughters; at the neglect and ingratitude of those, from whom is expected caring, protection and gratitude. Above all that dominates the heart-felt plea for a return home, to persons caring and loving. First of all, you, husband and wife, a willing wanderer, remember the day of your marriage ? You made a solemn vow to God, I repeat, a solemn vow to a "loving, faithful, hones t marriage" and added "and to death do us part." You post scripted that with "so help me God." Remember those words. And what have you done now? You behaves like the first best coward. You forgot about love, faith, and honesty; after neglect you threw away that which you one swore. Maybe at home are waiting for the return of Father, small innocent children. Will you be that stone-hearted that you will be forgetful of you own flesh and blood and reject your own children or permit them to be given away to strangers. Why are you breaking your vows to God and leaving you proper husband? You say that married life is a heavy burden. Needlessly you posture you self defense in order to deceive. You can't deceive God. So much more, if you have left children behind who hunger to have you back. If you have not mercy for your husband in pain, have at least the drop of mercy on your children who complain to God. Return immediately to your husband and to your children. The Divine Child will help you to manfully bear the weight of life, and the eternal gratefulness of you children will weave a crown of satisfaction and peace upon you! So come back! The Child Jesus will make it easier for you and bless you.

Listen, wife: Remind yourself of the day when you knelt at the altar and in the presence of your parents and relatives, made the oath of love, faith, and undying loyalty. Did you forget about that oath? Why are you breaking that vow given to God and leaving your lawful husband. You say that the married life is an unlivable burden. Again you uselessly justifying yourself to deceive people. But never God. Even more serious is your leaving your children who perhaps at this very moment are asking God for your return. If you have no mercy on your suffering husband, have a drop of mercy for the children who complain about you to God. Return to your husband and children. The Child Jesus will help you to manfully put up with the weight of life and crown you with satisfaction and peace by your children's gratitude for your return.

Listen, son, willful pilgrim! Was it bad for you to be at home among your loved one, and is it better among strangers! Have you improved your life? You know better. You speed from place to place, unsure of your going. Where are you going? How will you end up? Isn't it better to admit that you made a bad choice? Isn't it a better thing to say: "I have sinned against God and you father and mother," and head for the homestead? The Christ Child will help and reward you.

Finally, listed, daughter, who ran away from your parents, on whose most loving hearts, you inflicted great pain. Convince yourself of the great harm and damage you have done. You believed the world and your companions or friend more that those who brought you up, cared for you? Have you not yet understood that the promises of those Cains and Judases who promised you so much cannot give it to you. Remind yourself of days and years of peace, happiness and satisfaction spent under the roof of your father and mother's house. Compare the days and nights of no peace, unhappiness, and dissatisfaction spent outside of your home. At this moment, your parents await your return. If only I could present a scenario to your soul, the thousands of similar victims who pass through hospitals, jails, orphan homes, good shepherd homes who in the end are abandoned and forgotten and carried through the gates of cemeteries, you would not wait any longer. Return pilgrim daughter to father and mother. You will find a joyous reception and the God Child will heal your wounds and grant you perseverance to battle against the misfortunes of life.