**December 20, 1931**

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

Let us turn back the pages of history to two thousand years ago. We will see a bleak, sad and painful image. This is the time that the prophet decried: “darkness covers the earth, and thick clouds cover the peoples.” The whole world succumbed to a pagan darkness, faith in the true God disappeared, and nations bowed down before gods and goddesses created by the darkened minds of the pagan wise men. Entire nations built temples for cattle, vipers, dragons and repellent monsters and in these temples, on costly altars, they offered up public sacrifices. Others put up golden calves in honor of human crimes and let themselves be lead by heroes famous for their immorality and debauchery. And so the Romans worshipped the god Mercury, patron of thieves; Bacchus, the patron of wine and drunkards; the goddess Venus in honor of whom the most disgusting and lascivious ceremonies were perpetrated. On remembering what took place during the so-called Bacchanalia, humans blush with shame. The nations had so many gods and goddesses, so many guardians and protectors that even the people did not know all their names. Others went even further; the gods were offered the sacrifice of human beings, for instance in Carthage, where the Moloch was offered the children from the best families. The god’s outstretched arms were heated up and innocent children placed on them, and the terrible moans and cries of children burning alive were drowned out by lively music. Truly darkness was over the earth, and the earth walked in the shadows! Here and there, however, there were noble souls, such as Plato, Socrates and Aristotle who tried to raise the people from the darkness and above the level of depravity and immorality they had sunk into; but to no avail. And we heard how one of them fell to his knees and wrung his hands with despair, crying out: “Oh supreme being, you who stand above us, I know not who you are; I know not where you are; I know not what you are called; but whoever you are, have pity on me.” In this prayer of the noble pagan there is a thirst for the true God, the God of light, goodness and truth.

That was the time when darkness ruled the world, it was a cold and repulsive night. During such a night two thousand years ago in tiny Bethlehem a miracle happened… an incomprehensible and amazing miracle. A child, the Son of God and our Savior, was born. Dear listeners! In a few days the whole world will be celebrating the remembrance of this event. Every believer and nonbeliever, learned and simple man, rich and poor man, the young and the old… everybody, with no exception, will be rejoicing and celebrating. Let us also speak today about that miraculous event, Christmas.

**Christmas**

It was past midnight. A strange and delightful silence reigned. The birds, animals and people rested. In the neighborhood of the small and unknown town of Bethlehem, herds of cattle moved slowly over a pasture, interrupting the deep nocturnal silence only by their chewing of grass. Shepherds, snugly wrapped in coats, threw themselves onto straw in huts and were sound asleep. Only a few were on night guard, looking after the cattle. The night was bitter and dark. Over Bethlehem was a sky dotted with stars which looked with surprise and shyness on the place where the miracle of miracles happened, where the Child Jesus was born. Suddenly the sky opens, an immeasurable multitude of angels, with an otherworldly radiance and brightness about them, rises above Bethlehem valley, humming a new hymn: “Glory to God in the Highest and on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased.” (St. Luke, Chapter 2). In the blink of an eye nature itself is awakened. The night turns into day; the darkness is dispelled. “And there were shepherds in the same country abiding in the field, and keeping watch by night over their flock. And an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people: for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this *is* the sign unto you: Ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger.” (St. Luke, Ch.2). When the heavenly host had disappeared, the shepherds said to each other: “Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing that is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found both Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in the manger.”

Dear listeners! I lead you in spirit towards that destitute stable; there let us kneel before the manger in which lies the Savior and Teacher of nations, Supreme Wisdom and Preacher of God’s Teaching, hidden in the form of a helpless child; let us listen to what He will say to us: “My beloved people, I am the Lord your God; I am the Creator of heaven and earth, and in spite of this I am not only your friend, but also your brother. I come to you, taking on a human body with all its weaknesses; I will suffer with you as I have already suffered here in the stable among cattle. Love for you has compelled me to leave the heavens, to come to the earth. This same love will nail me to the cross! I beg you only to love me, to listen to me and to want to follow my example! First all of you poor, destitute and suffering from hardship… let me dry your tears and comfort you! You who frequently weep bitterly, complain of your poverty, curse your hardship, curse yourself, the world and even God! How will this help you? Will this bring you relief? And I, your God, took on the same poverty of my own free will. My life in the home of my adopted father, the carpenter Joseph, was a poor and penniless life. I could have been corn in a rich palace; I could have chosen a gilt cradle for myself; and yet I chose destitute parents, a flimsy stable and cold manger. Do not be envious of those richer than you! Your poverty, if accompanied with hard work and prudence will provide you with a bit of daily bread and the help of Divine Providence. Do not complain about your difficult and harsh fate, for your cross will never equal My cross, and yet I carried mine patiently! And now you to whom God has given more; whom he has generously provided for… you should serve God zealously, show your gratitude for His gifts and graces. To you cries the prophet Isaiah: “Sharing your bread with the hungry; Clothing the naked when you see them, and not turning your back on your own.” Woe to you if you offend God with your fortune. I call to you from my hard manger. Seek God’s mercy…show not only justice, but also pity for the poor and the destitute. This will speak most loudly in your defense before God!

Come to the manger, you fathers and mothers. Do you hear what the Infant Jesus is saying to you? God’s grace has let you become parents. How do you fulfill your duties? Do you set a good example of piety, industriousness and sobriety for your children to follow? Do you bring them up to be virtuous and useful citizens of heaven and society? Do you pay attention only to forming their minds and forget about their souls and hearts? Are you interested only in the worldly happiness of your children? Remember that God gave you human souls to care for and will ask for an exacting account of your actions.

Come to Me you children, always so dear to My heart! I ask you: do you listen to, respect and love your parents? Do you help them in their work? Do you give them the necessary help and support in their old age? Do you not sadden them by your behavior? Do you not push them to irritation and justified anger? Maybe a few of you should shed a few days today because by your behavior you shortened the life of your beloved mother or dug the grave of your dear and work-worn father?

And now come to the manger you drunkards, bad-tempered men, gamblers, foul-mouthed men, robbers, swindlers, proud and doubting men. Your Creator and Redeemer, born today, wants to remind you of your dignity. “Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart.” Your soul is immortal and will last forever; your life is short and your life’s fortune is changeable. What will be your earthly end and what will be your eternity? You must give an account of your most innermost thoughts, of all your speeches and deeds. Your soul, redeemed by My blood, is a priceless treasure in the eyes of heaven. And what have you done with it? You have thrown it into a mire of anger and crime; you have broken it and trod upon it. Look at me! This soul of yours was made in my image and likeness. I have loved you even unto leaving my celestial home and taking on your nature; I have come to suffer long and hard, and you?... For vanity, for trinkets, for a moment of so-called happiness you debase yourselves, and turn away from me for now and forever. You must come to your senses! Leave this way of life, return to me, I will forgive you, I will pardon you, I will comfort you.”

Our times, dear listeners, are similar to the time before the coming of Our Savior. Darkness reigns; strange rules and vicious theories are proclaimed. Human minds go astray and claim to look for the truth, but instead spread errors and untruths. Faith in the real God is disappearing, and lack of faith and paganism spread far and wide. The deterioration of customs, breaking not only the laws of God but also natural laws under the cover of progress, and false education excites and enslaves human minds. Two thousand years ago decadence, exploitation, power and violence reigned. A child, a woman, a laborer, the sick and the poor were all condemned to a sad, difficult and painful fate. Today decadence is called the freedom of speech and deed! Today the exploitation of male and female workers is practiced the world over. Power and violence sit on their thrones. Two thousand years ago, children were thrown away onto the street or garbage piles to die of hunger; today already in their mothers’ wombs they are poisoned or murdered other ways. Two thousand years ago a woman was regarded as a man’s plaything, as a soul-less being, was deprived of honor, fame and virtue; today the columns of newspapers are filled with descriptions of shameless divorces. And the heroes who receive the most worship are women who have divorced their husbands several times. Two thousand years ago a pagan philosopher and wise man wrote: “A laborer does not deserve to be called a citizen, as he has no nobility of disposition and is no different from slaves.” – And today? Merciless employers earn colossal fortunes not only thanks to the sweat but even the blood of laborers. They are treated without mercy or justice. A poor laborer is treated as a tool for the employer’s own personal goals and benefit! Two thousand years ago the poor and destitute lead sad and harsh lives. In our times, some of the so-called progressive scientists advise giving the sick pills of morphine or other poisons to shorten human life; in our times the poor, and those who are poor not out of their own fault are despised and made fun of! Two thousand years ago the times were sad, but the twentieth century is equally miserable. Today entire nations think that they can manage without God and govern themselves godlessly, and laws are based on some natural religion that God openly rejects!

What is the cure for all of this evil which has taken over the world? The Holy Father Pius XI gave a cure when he wrote: “may society […] return to our loving Savior!” Or as Pope Leon XII wrote: “It will at length be possible that our many wounds be healed and all justice spring forth again with the hope of restored authority; that the splendors of peace be renewed, and swords and arms drop from the hand when all men shall acknowledge the empire of Christ and willingly obey His word.”

Yes, dear listeners, in a few days the whole world will celebrate the remembrance of the coming of the Savior – may the whole world wish to quickly return to the Savior – may all the nations unanimously sing: “Glory to God in the highest” and angelic choirs sing “and on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased!” to the tired and pained world!

Dear listeners:

On the eve of Christmas, Polish families exchange Christmas wafers and give each other their best wishes! Today I too would like to do the same. In spirit, I exchange wafers with you and to all listeners without exception, with all my heart I wish you not only a merry but also a happy Christmas.

Lift Thy Hand, in blessed tender

Infant Savior o’er this nation.

To all mankind deign to render

Gifts of faith, joy and salvation.

Grant to earth Thy peace again

As we hear the sweet refrain:

Now indeed the Word made Flesh has

Come on earth to dwell among us.