February 25, 1951

Witam Was Zacni Rodacy i Miłe Rodzaczki Słowami: Niech Gędzie Pochwalony Jesus Chrystus!

During the summer season, I was invited by a certain organization to speak to its members because of my recent annual tour of Poland and Great Britain. The topic given me was: The position of the worker in in regard to the Communist controlled worker.” I bring to your attention that the organization was not Polish. My departure was also not from Buffalo. I make this observation in order to bring to attention to the state of affair so that I prevent the possibility that various possible malicious approaches and assumptions, and accusatory indications. I took my place at my assigned position, somewhat ahead of the appointed time. I just about took of my hat and coat, and already some guy stood before me and without any introductory salutation began the conversation. He did so as if he had befriended me long time ago. His sincerity, kindness and outgoing manner amazed me. I immediately recognized that this was not natural virtue, not inborn characteristic, but was fuel with a glass and a bottle. Passers-by looked at us as an eclectic pair. I did not want to be a boor and so I stayed, and I listened to arguments of just-found friend. This is his commentary on life: “I’m an official from a small town. I have a secure position but the pay is very low. From my regular income, I can just about make ends meet and feed my family. So I had to look for additional ways to increase my income. It couldn't been harder to do! I had an understanding with various agents, who supply materials to institutions, school, hospitals, and other institutions with food or fuel. A couple of cents higher in price here or there so that at the end of the year the gain was sufficient to exist on. I didn't harm anyone. I was criticized and told that I was cheating. Theft is immoral according to the commandments of God. Listen to the answer that this lay theologian said: Ah! Father what are you telling me?" In our times, everyone is doing it! He threw me and unbelievable look as if I were an FBI agent and went into the hall where they hit on topics of justice and the honesty of people and about giving to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and what belongs to God. To this day the words ring in my ears: "In these times, everyone does this! Has it really come to this: that in the twentieth century, people took the liberty to remove the commandment of God: "Thou shall not steal!" The goodness and the concern of God established the commandment to protect the ownership, private, social and national. No one can take this ownership unto themselves. The desires of people either private of persons, governments or nations is historical in nature. This was ingrained in our first parents, existed at the times of Moses and no pagan philosophy could remove it from the Decalogue. It holds true today as well as throughout ancient times. But enough! On to our theme for today:

 YOU DID NOT RETURN - WHAT YOU HAVE STOLEN

The seventh commandment is very short, it consists of two words: "DO NOT STEAL." I does not make a distinction about how much, what, and from whom! It forbids stealing absolutely without condition. The seventh commandment stands as a guard against personal and collective ownership with no regard to how much, who owns it: personal, corporate, or national. It forbids the taking something unjustly, or destroy it, or keeping it. Very few people give proper attention to this commandment of God which is a protective wall and guard of one's possessions. Especially in current times, when things referring to the Spirit of God are looked upon in barbaric and pagan ways. After all, you are aware that such communism and its communal ownership is politically rampant and goes back to pagan ideas of barbaric ages past. This perverse, inhuman doctrine says that only the state and the state only maybe the owner of the land, or all sorts of factory products of whatever nature are for man as a separate entity, is to receive from the state a generous, only a part designated for, whether the estate, or products or profits. Otherwise it's a shot in the head or a long prison sentence or hard labor or exile to Siberia! According to this perverted teaching, this is supposed contribute equality everywhere, in everything and most of all in possession of the goods of the earth; only the entire government may possess treasure, and the individual person may participate in the good fruits of the earth in order to fulfill his or her needs. Is this in accordance with God's plan? After all such complete equality, the angels in heaven do not have. There, in heaven, are choirs of existence and grades of being. And so much the more, here on earth there will be ranks of existence and must be. And we must admit there have to be. There always will be the good, the bad and the ugly. People from birth have different capabilities Therefore we will always have distinctions. Let then the government give every citizen his own ownership equal treasure and we will return in a short time to the history of biblical talents. Some will work hard and be industrious and build their own fortune and others will be wasteful, drink, gamble and lose what they ought to have in possession. Do we not see this in our daily lives? This is what an intellectual writes: "People are varied in their moral outlook. One has a propensity to be a money saver; another is lazy and wasteful! Give them equality and one will multiply his ownership; another will lessen it. If all the divide the goods of this world to all, tomorrow there would be no equality; the drunk would drink away what he had; the thrifty man would multiply his possessions. Communism inverts God's order and the natural order. It is unfair to families and nations - People have the right to ownership given the by God who maintained: "Mine is the earth" and "Mine is the silver and mine is the gold." Everyone who has, has it from the Lord. The Lord created the land for people to live in. He created it for man to live in it and use it according to his plan an give an account of his use. What do you have that you have not from the hand of God. Read Genesis and the story of creation. It will be sufficient. We read the Able owned a herd of sheep, Cain owned land. Abraham and Lot agreed to ownership on one side and the other side of the Jordan river to possess enough pasture land. In sacred scripture of the old testament in many places that God assigned more or less of worldly goods. It is obvious and clear that man has a right of private ownership, is proved by the seventh and tenth commandment of God. The Catholic Church from time immemorial protected the right of private ownership. The followers of the opposite teaching of the church even excluded from the church. The popes have generally in the past, especially Pope Pius IX, in his talks and encyclicals sharply underscored that those who taught that only the government or the country as the right to ownership. Besides, private ownership is not only useful but necessary. It is a stimulus for greater striving. Otherwise man would fall into the position of a prisoner and status of an animal or bug. One does not have to go too much farther for examples. It suffices to read about Soviet attempts to covert nations under control of the USSR State. In moral theology, I read: "The easiest way to do harm to a person is to rob him. What is thievery? To secretly take away a foreign person's property whatever kind it is, whatever kind it is, or whomever owns it, without his or her knowledge or permission. A thief is anyone who takes another's goods, belonging to another not only money but other possessions whatever they may be. A thief is a person who steals the possessions of a totally unknown person, whether they are parents, bread winners, whether rich, whether poor, an individual or a company, or a society as from a town or a geographical area. I call to attention to, for examples a wife who wastes family money, a family gambler who loses family money, or a drunk who does the same. It is always condition by the fact that the family needs the money to live on. The starving person who is in danger of death, and taking food is not in serious sin. The victim of the theft would be understanding of this special condition and the love of neighbor is here exemplified. Robbery is also without doubt wrong. It is taking, as your own someone else's possessions, either secretly or violently with force. The worst action is that of a nation which assault another and takes it as their own. Of such nations, St. Augustine said that they are "cave men". - Those who fail deliberately to pay taxes or repay what they have borrowed are robbers. And the Old Testament confirms it: " Many will kiss the hands of the giver and giving a promise will lower their voice." And when the time comes to pay back, an extension is asked and will complain that not enough time was given for the pay back. And when he could pay back he will hesitate to do so and when he has given back half of what he owes, and consider the rest as found. And if he uses up the borrowed money, he does not pay back the owed amount. And with rebukes and ill will repays what he owes instead of gratitude for the loan. Some don't borrow because they fear that they will be cheated. - St.Thomas adds that a thief is he who does not repay in due time what he has borrowed and even more when he uses the borrowed money badly and for other means such as is used for drinking alcohol instead of repaying what is owed while he maintains that he doesn't have enough to repay. Who knows how many dishonest debtors of this type? One is also guilty who in selling cheats on weights or sells inferior products but sells them as if they were ok., or charges absorbitant prices for wares. In the Old Book of the Law, God reminds us: "Do not do anything deceptive like rigging scales in weighing what is sold. Keep the scales accurate, that you any live a long life which God has given you on this earth." The worker is also at fault that he cheats on the time he works. He works less than he should to kill time. It is wrong for management to pay too little for the work laborers do. Usurers are also thieves. Gregory the Great said to them: Do not be bloodsuckers or like spiders who suck the innards of the fly after enmeshing them in a web. God spoke through Ezekiel: He who cheats, his blood will be on him". These are the various types of thievery. I'm sure there are others which I haven't touched upon.

How do thieves talk themselves out of thievery or justify the actions in their favor. There are as many ways as there are thieves. Some say: "I am poor and have several children to feed. I cannot let any of them die of hunger." Wait a minute... By robbing??? Would it not be better to get to do some real work! Times are not that bad and there is plenty of work. Time to roll up the sleeves, spit on your palms and get to a prayer and get to work. Leave the rest up to God. - I'm sick, I can't work, I am compelled to steal. - Wait a minute - You are too sick and too weak to work and have to steal, but you are not weak enough to steal? What an argument. We have many avenues, many institutions for the down and out and help could be obtained without solving problems by thievery. " I was in need so I took it" is another defense." Well and good! Perhaps others need things which you have? That's a bit forward! and I agree that it holds for others." I reject the argument that all people steal so it's ok to steal. Others break the other commandments. Does that permit you to do what they do? I don't think so. The faithful person does not think that way. Others argue "If I don't steal it, somebody else will." Good, don't steal; then he will face the guilt and not you. Sometimes the argument says: "What I take is inconsequential and doesn't hurt anybody" But the Commandment of God does not say:
You can take if it's little but not if it's a lot!! However in the time of Moses it said, "Thou shalt not steal!" - Some people believe that it's ok to steal from the rich who have a lot more than you. Again, the commandment states, "Thou shall NOT STEAL". The commandment does not distinguish between rich and poor. If God did not distinguish in the commandment, we do not have the right to make the distinction. In our times, sometimes steal from their parents and justify it "what I take is not from others from what is ours." Again I say, "God in the seventh commandment forbids every theft without regard to the person, or persons, who rob or are robbed. Besides, as long as the parents live, their ownership is the ownership of the children and belongs to the children? In proverbs: When the child is the child it is classified as a servant for it is totally dependent of the parents for its existence. In Proverbs it says: Who steals from his or her father or mother and says that it is not a sin, hobnobs with patricide.

 In theology: "He who built up debts and refuses to pay them back because he claims poverty. Why then, did he promise sometimes by oath that he will pay back.

Remember then that until you have debts, you have an obligation to temper your entertainments and comforts and even in needed things until you pay back what you owe. The prophet Elisha when he multiplied the oil for the widow told her to take care of her obligations of repayment before she used it. The thief, cheater, and wrongdoer is already punished in this world. The Holy Spirit warns us: "On the thief is shame and sadness! Wrongdoing to others, as we can observe leads neither to fame, or riches but to jail or the home for the wayward. Similarly the mouse steals, harms and behaves destructively and ultimately end up in the trap. It happens that people steal hurt others over many years but in the end they slip up and the ear on the jug full of evil breaks and the thief in the end lands up incarcerated. St. Basil reminds us in these words: "Three elbows of earth. Why do you begin to live unjustly and pile up wood for the eternal fire?" The old man Tobias, reminded his son, "Fear not my son!" In poverty we know eternity, but ahead is much good, if we fear the Lord, and refrain from sin and act well" Ultimately the thief and evildoer has not only sadness, ahead justice triumphs. God's law and Natural law is to be contended with. On the decree of God, in the old testament, thieves were compelled four or five times to compensate, to compensate four times four times against whom they sinned." The conscience of the thief on the basis of the following: "Don't do to others what you yourself dislike." It shouts formally, day and night: Give back what is not yours!" St. Augustine teaches us that "our sin will not be forgiven unless what has been taken is given back." The question then arises who has to give back? In the first place, who possesses the borrowed or stolen, from the person. If that person does no long live, then to his children. There are cases in which restitution may be made to good cause, an act of mercy. Or one cannot find the person because he has moved or in the case he may be alive but his location is not known. One can make restitution to an orphanage, old folks home, hospitals. If the entire borrowing can be restituted the piecemeal may be rendered. But restitution must be made - and that will suffice. In our times the seventh commandment is ignored. Let us keep in mind that ill-gotten goods will not receive the blessing of God.