March 21, 1948

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

As an introduction to today’s radio talk, I will read portions of a letter sent to me, at the beginning of September of this year. I was born in September, 1906 not too far from Wieliczki, Poland. My father possessed one (morga= 5600 m2) of land. It was insufficient so he worked in the salt mines. In the summer, my mother would sow vegetables and took them to the market when the time came for which she earned a small amount of money. I remember that my father went to work and mother went to take the vegetables, she left the four of us in one bed. Occasionally we would wake and find that we were the only ones at home. We tried to go outside but the doors were locked to prevent us from going outside and we had to wait in fear, looking out to see when mother would come home. She would bring bread and fix us breakfast. Our breakfast consisted of slices of bread, potatoes and cabbage. For lunch we had soup from buckwheat. For supper we had potatoes with water or borscht. We had tea and bacon twice a year on Christmas and Easter. For three years I tended geese. When I was nine years old, I went to school for one winter because my father had died of an illness. In 1917, an epidemic of typhus broke out and I had to be the bread winner. Mom caught typhus and after eight day left us orphans. Some relatives took my three brothers and me in my very young age to America to get us out of our sad state. So I arrived. I got a job in a hotel. I worked in a kitchen washing dishes. For that I received board and a room for 30 dollars monthly. How I scratched out my living. I got married at 24. We lived together for seven months. My wife liked to go out to entertainments. I begged and reminded her of responsibilities. It was for nothing. One morning she was coming with two friends for a dance. The driver was drunk and ran off the road and turned over killing my wife and her two friends. I had a nervous breakdown. I thought I would lose my mind. I was ill for two months. The doctor and the pharmacy ate up all my savings. I went into debt. Despite my health, I had to go back to work. I worked with poverty stricken workers. I looked at their plight. I saw their bitter tears. I listened to their complaints, and sometimes I dealt with rebellious thoughts. There was so much injustice in the world. But these were just transient thoughts. What was the wisdom if crying over someone else’s troubles when I’m exactly in the same situations? I know and understand that we must move forward to survive until that ultimate time when that ultimate joy maker sister death, takes us away. With these thoughts in mind, today’s talk:

 “THY WILL BE DONE”

Let’s look at life reasonably, soberly, and practically. In order to understand what it is in reality, it is necessary to look at it practically with the eyes of a realist not as a poet or a romantic. People’s life is a mixture of the good and the bad. It is a combo of faring well and faring badly. It is a mélange of sadness and joy. It is a chain of tears and laughs. It is a passion of sadness and ecstasy. It is the way of the cross and an alleluia. It is the cry of “Hosanna” and “Crucify Him” It is a piece of paradise and a prevision of purgatory. It is everything, but always in pieces, in portions, and percentages. But it never was and never could be, and will not be either heaven or hell. Was there ever a day when one person’s life was totally without pain? Name me a man, who was visited in his crib by the presence of a star of happiness, which never abated, never brought unhappiness, never a moment of sadness, never any disappointment in life? The days of a man’s life is short, changeable, full of pain, trouble, and suffering. The warm pleasant sun of Eden only shone for a short period of time for our first parents. From the time in which Adam and Eve broke the commandment of the creator, from that moment, as we read in Eccasticus: “a great concern is created for all people and a heavy yoke is on the sons of Adam, from the day they left their mother to the day of the burial of the mother of all. Their thoughts and fears of heart, tracking, waiting and the day of the end; from the one sitting in the capital to the lowest on earth in ashes, from the one who uses purple and wears a crown, to the one who clothes himself with raw cloth; wrath, envy, expectation, and the fear of death, anger and durable strife, and during rest on the bed, night sleep alters his knowledge. It seemed like he didn’t have any rest at all and then in his dream a day of fire. Above that, death, blood, quarrelling, sword .. rape, starvation, destruction and plagues.” – Yes, appropriately the land is called a vale of tears and sadness. And where would you find a man to whom everything goes well with his plans and according to his will? Listen to what Thomas a Kempis has to say: “There is no one on earth without any kind of trouble, even if he was a king or the pope. The cross waits for us everywhere, and finds us everywhere. Go wherever you wish; seek where you will; plan everything to go as you wish you will find suffering. You will either suffer physical pain, or emotional difficulties in the soul which you will have to face. You may feel abandoned by God at one time or trouble coming from another. Sometimes you yourself are the object of your trouble. Be it that you deliberately fall into sin and suffer the consequences mentally. Perhaps God wants to refine you like gold in the furnace. God may send you a black cloud to further you in eternity. Once you feel the pangs of guilty. You will not escape the small crosses sent to you. Another time, the tongues of people turn against you and irritate you. Here again wrongly but greedily and unrelenting, mud, vile and filthy slander turns to trample your glory and your good name. Another time severe impotence catches you in the bed, or the death of the beloved person confronts you. Perhaps you good friends leave you, and your enemies triumph as traitors over you and plan against you. Deprivation, poverty, doubt, fear of tomorrow, lack of work and a whole legion of worries, big difficulties – grows as you advance in life. And therefore in whichever direction a person goes everywhere he sees less or greater suffering. And so sufferings are always present to us from the crib to the coffin. – Let me, if I may throw out a short question. How do people respond to these sufferings, worries, pains, and vicissitudes of life: I will explain and underline the situation? I wish to present to your imaginations a certain portrait or view. – Our Savior rose from the great and memorable Last Supper. It was hard for him to part with his Apostles. He foresaw their dismay and fear. He wanted to strengthen them and support them. And so in talking to them, he said: ‘Let your hearts not be anxious. Believe in God and in me… I will not leave you orphan I will come to you… If the world hates you know that it hated me first before it hated you.” And lifting his eyes to heaven and fervently prayed for his disciples. Finally He said let us rise and go from here! He left and went to Cedron and then to the place of Gethsemane, to his beloved garden where he had conversed with His Father in Heaven in order to pray before he went into his agony. As he entered the Garden, he said to his disciples: “Wait here for a while, while I go into the Garden to pray.”
And He took Peter and the two sons of Zebulon and began his sad prayer. Then He said: My soul is sad unto death; stay here, with me, for a while.” He moved away from them, and seemed to want heaven to know that He was in fear and pain. In the town, the night lights were going out and a lamp was flickering here and there. The evening was dark and cool. Thick clouds were moving along the horizon; the wind was blowing them around the sky. The moon could shy at times but lean slightly to the outside of the curtain of their faces as if the moon was afraid to look full of eye between the shadows of the olive grove and the stream that reflects the blood of the Son of God's own floating. It was very quiet in town. Blissful sleep lulled and made eyes weary and tired in preparation for the solemn day. The apostles, though so carefully reprimanded and encouraged to sleep, slept a deep sleep. Only the Savior was on watch in the Garden of Gethsemane. He was on watch in sadness and longing, in pain as part of his passion. He thought of the inhuman terrible passion which He was to shortly undergo. The Savior sways and falls on the face with bitter longing and sadness, whispers: “Father, if it is your will, take this chalice away from me, but not my will but yours be done!” An angel appeared to Him consoling Him. Being occupied in the seriousness of thought, he prayed very fervently. Drops of blood in perspiration fell to the earth. When He rose from prayer and joined his disciples. He was saddened when he found them sleeping. He spoke to them: “Why do you sleep?” Get up! Pray that you do no enter into temptation” - What an example…something to meditate upon! Our Lord and Our God, suffering for your sins and mine, in deep sadness foreseeing His Passion in detail, sweats blood! He does not abandon His suffering; he does not push his chalice away. “Father, not my will be done but yours.” - And we? We see the chalice at a distance and turn away, complaining of the injustice of God. Since when is up to us, since when we have the right to prescribe to God, when and how to visit us and convince us? Does the patient prescribe the doctor with what ails him and tell him what’s wrong with him? The physician would be wrong if he was concerned about the likes and dislikes of the patient. The prudent and caring doctor cares little for his crying and pain; he bandages the wounds despite the crying and complaining of the patient; his concerned out the healing of his patients. He is not only very knowledgeable in his craft but also a kind Father and the best caring doctor. God knows the human predicament, fought with worries and crosses on the road of life. He loves; us with a borderless love. He wishes our eternal happiness. He sees our need in His love. The Apostle cheers us up: “Life’s crosses are not comparable to the glory which God has prepared for those who love Him. The true Christian despite his suffering and worries does not blaspheme but rather totally agrees with the will of God and His providential care. God is not a tyrant, he does not forget about His creation, nor let us be tempted beyond our endurance. Always, when tempted beyond our means to defend, His right hand is ever there mercifully and lovingly to help. Besides, does it do us any good to murmur and complain? By giving in to the will of God by bearing patiently and accepting daily crosses it is easier to take. Gruff gripes, hard struggling, whether we want to or do not want, whether we like it or not like it, while doing the will of God – we suffer and we will suffer. Complaining and blaspheming are characteristic human birthmarks of a troublemaker and a rebel against the divine order and against his wonderfully wise Providence. Here's how one expert advises: "When oppression and terror will strike at you, when your friends leave you and become sworn enemies, when they throw wicked sharp projectiles of slander and envy at you, the impotence of the torments, sickness is with you, devastating famine hits you, you are cold, when any affliction will fall on you, then with Christ our Savior go to the garden, in place of quiet, and have a warm and sacred conversation with God. Tell your troubles to the Creator as in the words of the author of The Imitation of Christ, “Blessed be your name forever, Lord who willed to permit this test and trouble. I am in no position to remove it but I need to come to You with it, in order that you may help me and turn it into a positive thing. I am now oppressed and my heart and soul worries me. What else can I say, Heavenly Father? Liberate me from this sorrow. You permitted this to be my fate to show me your goodness so that when I humble myself, I might be liberated by You. May you see fit to do so for I have no other place to go. Give me Lord, patience to deal with it. Support me, Heavenly Father, and I will not fear further trials. But your will be done. The hour has come when your servant is convinced of your goodness. Let me be battered and humiliated in front of people; Let my suffering be alleviated so I could rise from it. You so arranged it, Father, that’s the way you wanted it, and it came to be as you wished. Without Your knowledge and Providence nothing will happen on earth. In your hands I am, bending under your will. Keep my stubbornness and unwillingness at bay. Make me your servant, humble and obedient in order that I could accept your wishes. I ask you to help me to accept correction. Better to suffer for my sins here rather than later. “ Whoever has this manner of praying to God will surely hear. As the psalmists says: “Hear me Lord God. Have mercy on me. God has helped me out. He will strengthen my will and give me peace. He has turned my tears to joy and given happiness to my soul. No one except God can quiet man’s worries. The world knows how to gladden but only with those who are glad. The world knows how to empty cups with happiness and delight to the bottom but the world does not want to share our sufferings and doesn’t know how to share them. The world runs away from suffering. It finds the unlucky ones as unsavory. Their cup of hurt, worry and pain is distasteful to them. Recourse is from the Lord alone. Look at the Lord in the Garden of Olives. His disciples, those closest to him abandoned Him. One, Judas, betrayed Him. God the Father sent His angel to buttress against his Passion with courage. Always where there is hurt, the Father sends strength to face the suffering. God is ever with us in our difficulties. And when everyone abandons us, He is there with His help. The Lord suffered for all of us in the garden. He sweats blood. For what? For the sins of mankind. The soul of man in the eyes of our Creator is a treasure. For all He has done for us, he expects some good will, some recognition of His worth and to work for our salvation. Do people of the present time appreciate what He has done for us? There are those who work for money and make it their God. They pay no attention to the spiritual life and their immortal souls. They work not for the love of God and neighbor. What are all the treasures of the earth in comparison with the salvation of our immortal soul? Some and wind come to an end. It is worth the work that has to be done for our soul’s sake. Who are the people that are with the Lord as He staggers and falls to the earth in His Passion? With bright gleams of torches and lanterns placed on sticks, it is not difficult to recognize cruel, ruthless, hard and grim faces. In the lead is the traitor and seller of the Lord, Teacher and Savior. The Savior goes meekly, knowingly past his sleeping disciples. “Could you not have stayed up with Me in My sorrows?” To Judas: “What have you come to do, my friend?” Judas: “Greetings, Rabbi!” and he kissed his teacher! And the Lord answers, “What you have come to do, do quickly!” You have betrayed the Savior with a kiss! What a dramatic scene? A smile on his face, and poison in his heart for the Prince of Peace! I return to my original intention to ask those who for various pretexts have put aside Confession. Confession is an institution for sinners, and not for saints. Why is it then and man by nature fallible and weak, does not admit what part he has played in the drama? What is the great shave, to sin in the presence of God, but will not come to a priest as a channel to confess his waywardness? St Bernard reminds us: “You have soiled your soul and was not ashamed and now you are not ashamed to admit it!” – St. Augustine says: “”Is it not better to humble oneself before one priest who is mercifully present to heal?” St. Ambrose maintains: “Sin attacks the mind and renders the heart filling the soul of the whole man with fear! – Would there be at least one who would wish for eternal life? If quickly each person come to the tribunal of Penance and admits his or her transgressions and quickly fined forgiveness and peace of mind and heart. Fear not, nor be ashamed of the priest. True he is in the service of the Lord but he is still a frail human being as we all are. He has mercy. He will welcome you with joy as a father would receive his erring children. Forgiveness comes will the big sins as well as with the small. It matters not how long ago you had confessed. The Lord loves and welcomes back all his errant children. A sincere confession wipes away all your sins. A sincere confession returns peace to a repentant soul. Do not delay this cleansing because the longer one stays away, the deeper the wounds become. The soul becomes hardened to sin the more we stay away. Awareness of our situation becomes dimmer. The enemy tied Jesus’ hands with heavy ropes... “And his friends left Him – ran away! All of us surely have a host of friends. But when? Always? When does fortune stay with you forever? When does the world welcome you with rewards? When are your tables filled? What happens when it all falls apart and you lose you happy state? Your heartfelt friends, when they disappear and their words are not expressing the happiness you knew. When you are young, you have countless friends ready to share the good times with you. Your friends will stay with you until they so no use keeping the friendship open. But there will come a time when you will stand alone like an oak tree in a clearing. Not to wonder that so long ago the pagan poet sang: “When you are happy, a multitude of friends will greet you; but when the good times go away you are left alone.” The wise man of the scriptures says: “You friend is there for a time but will not stick with you in the day of tribulation. “And there is a friend who becomes unfriendly. And there is a friend who has hatred in his heart. And there is a friend at the table who disappears when there is a time of need. Did not the Savior feel and understand this in His day of trial? His disciples were His friends. They did not remain so in His time of trials; they left Him. Jesus was with Him at the table when Jesus said, “One of you will betray Me.” Judas not only abandoned Him but betrayed Him, furthering Him to His Passion and Death. Similar scenes occur on this earth where man becomes animal; he first smiles and then betrays. Such friends ruin health and treasure giving up piety and virtue and poison sincerity, sweep away justice, bring minds to sadness and despair. Masked with lips of honey, they render poison that destroys. It is way the wise man says:

Find a friend through experience; not too quickly! Have many acquaintances,” he continued, "but on the advice keep one of thousand.” A dear faithful friend is a treasure; you cannot easy you obtain such a treasure. A faithful friend is a strong defense and a treasure. There is no comparison for a faithful friend, and one who is a decent weight of gold is there is goodness in his or her faithfulness. A faithful friend is healing for a lifetime and into eternity and those who fear the Lord will find one.” Truly a friend like this is to be sought, one who in bad times would not abandon us, who would faithfully share our sadness and pain, and who could put up with our deficiencies, who could share our dreams, who would see only the good in us and love us in our virtues would not leave us. Such a friend needs to be honored and held onto through thick and thin. “Three crosses,” said St. Augustine,”are seen raised in one place; on one of them a thief, who was to be saved; on another a thief, who was to be condemned; and in the middle, Christ, who saved the first and condemned the second. I turn you attention to the second cross, and the thief’s words: “If you are Christ, save yourself and us”. And today one may say: “If you are God in heaven, show us yourself.” Unless you are Providence, rescue us both. If you are Providence, save us.” The thief on the right did not blaspheme but said, Are you not afraid of God, even though both of us are guilty of the same crime.” And about Christ: “And he has committed no crime.” And he said to Christ, “Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” There are three crosses erected on Calvary! Which of these is your cross? If you are suffering needlessly, listen and remember the advice of the Savior: “The servant is not bigger than his Lord. They persecuted me and they will persecute you” – If you wish not to suffer, and in your weakness and stay within the order created by your Creator and blaspheme at your misfortunes, listen to the prophet: “Remember your anger do not let it endure. Lower yourself in humility because the punishment of the flesh is fire and the bug.” Unless you suffer and subject you will to the will of God and say, “Remember me Lord in your kindness. Keep me in your mercy, merciful Lord. It is then that you will hear the soothing world coming from the lips of the Good Christ: “I will remember about you in life and in eternity.