March 31, 1935

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

Often, especially after the last several weeks, I am asked, on the programs of this season, why I do not devote more time to the working class; why I don't criticize the various projects initiated for the reformation of the present system and why I did not come out against the current plan of President Roosevelt. I have had and have reasons for that even though I have touched on the injustice and silliness of certain means, illogical and controversial, sometimes going against the lows of God and nature which the government had taken upon themselves in order to help the farmers or lighten the burdens of the workers. When, for example, they slaughtered millions of pigs, calves, sheep and cows to be conserved in tins, or lost in the slaughter houses, and which the government had to pay for needlessly. Whom did that help? Or when by decree of the government, farmer had to plow under fields of grain, oats, and even cotton, clover and hay? Who benefited from that? Or when, for the government's benefit, it was taught and encouraged that farmers to reduce their crop. Doubtless, I considered these endeavors helpful or economically feasible and I spoke about them openly. I definitely knew that in more than one program of the New Deal imposed heavy weights upon the shoulders of factory workers, grocers, butchers and other professions but I thought that it would help in the long run.

because instead of going on alone, they will go with reason, and for their own self-defense, will fuse together their forces, abilities and pockets, creating warehouses and cooperatives, and float out of the stormy sea, stronger and more powerful than they ever were. But they forgot that helping themselves, God would also help them out. I kept quiet because the programs of the New Deal in general was for the good of the citizens and more importantly they were good for workers and their families. In the New Deal, which is based on Christian principles, President Roosevelt, show a hundredfold greater understanding of the state of the lowly worker than the presidents before him with the exception , perhaps, of the father of our country, George Washington and the father of the underdog, President Lincoln. Despite the best efforts of the New Deal and the noble intentions of President Roosevelt, the progress to normalcy is not the fast as one would think. Whose fault is that? The New Deal is like a new car on a farmer's road filled with ruts, stones and other hindrances. The New Deal is on one side the enemy of the socialists, communists and the old guard, and on the other side the capitalists, bankers and millionaires. Added to that, throw in a good portion of the representatives and senators, politicians in committees and commissions, and we will stop wondering that in spite of the good sheriff, the New Deal drags along. Besides, it is easy to criticize and make waves; it is difficult to get things straight and build. In these times, I dare say that finding fault in anti Christian and Godless principles on which this crisis was born, is being built, exists and will exist. Doses or injections will not only remedy , but even will not help to improve the shoes and the happiness of the working class, unless there is a step down from selfishness so that charity will ensue, and all join hands in fraternity to chose God as their Father.

THE WORKER - THE WORK - THE PAY

Despite the incessant ravings of some agitators and crowers, the fact remains that the Catholic Church, following in the footsteps of his Divine Master, and holding on to his teachings, has always stood by the workman, not only preaching to him his duties, but at the same time the law. I have in mind, in particular the worker who works with his hands truly earns the upkee of his family and his their bread! History teaches us that! The wise men of the Greek School as well as the Roman philosophers and writers taught that the worker is not a human being but a thing or at least a prisoner, not meriting any kind of consideration. Government laws claimed the worker as equal to the horse, the ass or the donkey. When contracting a job the worker was listed as executing a job like a prisoner or other cattle. Aristotle, the great Greek philosopher taught that the worker is in a different class from the teacher, the diplomat, the soldier, of do-nothing. The worker is not worthy of citizenship, because there is no room for higher taught or noble feelings. Among the Romans it was the general impression that a worker could never be an authentic human being! Church teaching differs from these pagan views like day and night. Every living being has to work. Even the smallest seed has to expend effort to rise from the hard earth in order to see light. The oyster attached to its shell opens and closes it to feed; the spider weaves his net, the bee makes it honey, the squirrel picks nuts, the ants seeks nourishment, even the wolf goes hunting. There undertaking we name "work". Rational man is born to work like a bird to fly. Every person has not only the right to work but has the obligation to work. The reason is obvious. Every person has the right and obligation to believe and to live humanely as a creation of God. Our God is a God of the living. We ought to ask God "thy kingdom come" and "give us this day our daily bread. Work in its largest meaning means a physical and emotional outpouring whether it is useful or not. The strict meaning of work is a physical and reasoned outpouring which creates something useful. Work has within itself elements. 1. Collective welfare, which perfects culture and progress, the level of daily exist once. 2. The Moral element: work prevents idleness and laziness, lessens the possibility of vice and gives occasion to patience, perseverance, humility and dedication. 3. The supernatural element, which gives prominence to the worker reminding him that the Lord was capable of living without work, but spent thirty years as a carpenter. The workshop of his earthly Father was his sanctuary, and a plane, chisel, saw and hammer, the blessed tools of earning the daily bread. History tells us that the pagan philosophers wanting to denegrate Christianity claimed that Jesus being a carpenter, his mother a seamstress and his father a carpenter, could not be neither true God nor true man. Someone wrote that Christ made plows and wagons." From this time on, the worker was able to say with noble soul to the rich of this world: "Christ wanted to be compared to us more than to you. Christ wished to be similar to us. With us and like us, he was a worker. He who saved the world on a cross, was God's worker. I repeat that every man has the right and obligation to work. Such is the dictate of God. Despite the fact that God created our first parents to live happily in the Garden of Eden, once judged for their transgression, directed them to work. We read in the book of Genesis: "The Lord God placed man in the paradise of pleasure for his protection? that is to say, not to prepare livelihood for himself by labor but for his own enjoyment without worry. Later, however, since our first parent were unfaithful, the easy and entertaining work, became oppressive and unbearable? "You will work for your food by the sweat of your brow." God's law clearly indicates that man has to earn his sustenance by tedious toil. Natural law obligates men to work. Without work man cannot sustain his life. It is bad when man by his own fault lives at cost to others. Parents have to take care of their children. Relatives must care about their own and so have the right and obligation to work. Man is also morally obligated to dodge laziness. The aphorism rings the bell: "The lazy man's head is the devil's workshop." Thus, the obligation to work. Besides every person has a obligation to the society in which he lives. He is obliged to pay back what he gets in terms of freedom, law, contentment, and livability. He cannot do this without contributing in working for it. According to St. Paul, "tell the rich of the world to do good and become rich by doing good" and again "whoever does not want to work should not eat. We heard that some of you are walking about like busy bodies, not wishing to work." To those I say in the Lord Jesus Christ to work quietly and in humility eat your bread."

Talking about the worker, I have in mind not only the person who works physically but also the man who works for a living using his mind. It is unjust to exclude the teacher, priest, lawyer, doctor, engineer, pharmacist, secretary etc. Without these efforts there wouldn't be any culture or civilization. No one can say that using the mind is not difficult and at times frustrating. In order to be good garbage picker, you need strong hands and back. you need not go to school to be a garbage picker. He works his eighth hour shift. On the other hand, to be a good doctor, how much education do you need. Lower school, middle school, high school, college, university, post graduate courses, office hours etc? Is this type of work even more had and difficult than the garbage picker. But let us go on. What is the status of the Catholic Church in regard to the worker? Society, or rather the political system and social system of the twentieth century, argues that the case of the workers is a matter of material, machine, and stomach. The Catholic Church always taught and still teaches that the case is moral since it encompasses the whole worker, worker as a human being, not a machine or a prisoner or cattle. The worker not only has his life from God, but has the obligation to sustain that life on a human level. These means are obtainable through work and give him not only the security of a livelihood but a means to support a family day after day from hand to mouth, and security after retirement. Others say that no one forces the laborer to work, unless the worker agrees to work for pay. However, especially nowadays, the honest worker generally will take work at any pay because he is ashamed to beg and he does not want to see his family starve to death. Often the work giver will tell him: "If you don't like it, go to hell." And so the worker has to agree on an unfair wage. Over and above the willful follower of a conscienceless system, there is the will of the creator and loving God and Father of the defenseless worker who demands the return of the held wage for the blood, sweat and tears of the laborer. Others say that if the wages are not enough to sustain the family, there are good people or organizations who will help. I say that the laborer is not, and doesn't not want to be, and should not be, a beggar. God, having given him life did not hang a beggars sign around his neck of a beggar's cup but gave him health and other graces, sending him into the world, and told him to work for his keep by the sweat of his brow. Thank God the worker understands that he neither wishes to live as a beggar and not out of pity but that he has the right to work. Naturally it is understood that on certain days like on Sunday or national or church holidays, workers should be able to be dispensed from work in order to satisfy their obligations in regard to God, the Church, the soul, and the family. However what hours he ought to be obliged to work depend on the situation, time and locations and the health of the worker. Miners and workers have very heavy working conditions which are more deleterious than other occupations and should be expected to work fewer hours. And the seasons are more demanding at one time or another. What can be accomplished very easily in the summer is very difficult in the winter. Also abilities of women or children are also a consideration. Therefore it is important to watch that children do not go to work in the factories before they reach the proper age for it will have consequences in later life.

Some exceptions are necessary for women whose job is home making, those who were born to raise families. From the very nature of a family, the raising of children is of prime importance. Considerations for maintaining health and conservation of strength for vital duties should be taken. Generally those workers demand respite in order to regain strength lost through work and the reason for rest and relaxation is to regain lost strength. This was maintained by the inimitable Leon XIII. In his writings he not only wrote but urged the capitalists and even the governments to be conscious of the needs of workers. Pope Leon XIII urges the shortening of the work day, rest days on Sunday and Holy days, efforts in protecting the worker. Pope Leon XIII warns the social order about: 1. Monopolies in the hands of the few. 2. the tearing of society into two hostile camps. 3. The abolition of professional circles and not the creation of new forms of organization. 4. Conferring the working class with theoretical freedom but in reality with slavery. 5. Demoralizing society. Here I will read some passages from the Pope's encyclicals. "These two classes, labor and management by their nature are for the purpose of creating social harmony and equally co responsible to each other for that harmony. One cannot exist without the other. The communications between capital and labor is not always on the up and up. It is up to both to secure the natural right to justice, which is a more important and older dictate." The responsibilities of the laborer: "totally and faithfully carry out the responsibilities of their work which were freely taken on, not to harm management in its making money or neglecting to be also fair, to refrain from violence and not cause riots, not to associate with people who engage in upheaval, stirring up immoderate hopes and shedding great promises, whose consequence is worthless disillusionment and a ruin to the economy". On the other hand, the obligation of the rich management: do not look upon the worker as a slave and respect the worth of the worker, to dictate work that is beyond the ability of the worker, or which is not in the sphere of age consideration or sex. Among of all the responsibilities of management toward the worker is this - to give each what he or she justly deserves, not to seize the property of the proletariat both by deceit and usury, and so much the more that workers are less able to protect themselves, and their property is less worth, that it should be more sacred because it was harder to come by. " If management is unjust to the worker then the government has the obligation to make sure justice is done to the laborers. From his talks and encyclicals it follows as Reverend Cardyin writes, "workers should not be machines, or slaves, or beasts of burden but should be: people created in the image of God, conscientiously and rationally hard working. Workers should not be: without work, be without a country, without a home, without rights, without religion and God, but should: have honest work have a country, have a home, have rights, have a religion and have God. The work of these people should not be: their exploitation, their curse, their shame, and their commodity but should be their vocation, their blessing, their nobility and their prayer. In the end, their work should not be their alms, or injustice, but honest recompense, their sacred due, and their subsistence. The work place should not be a bog, or a prison, or a house of ill repute, or death place, but a clean place of God, a Church and a field of virtue and religious apostleship." It should be under the aegis of the church for the capitalist and the worker. If God so permits, in the coming season, I will return and expand the theme of today's talk with further observations. In the meantime believe those who maintain the Catholic Church is not remiss in care about the worker and the working class. The teaching of Christ as well as the teaching of the Church claims the error of the self- proclaimed advocates and pseudo-protectors of the worker and his affairs.