**November 13, 1932**

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

Mount Sinai was covered by heavy dark clouds. From time to time they were pierced by lightning and one could here the thunder of thunderbolts. The leader of Israel was speaking to God. “And the Lord said: I, the LORD, am your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that place of slavery. You shall not have other gods besides me.” [[1]](#footnote-1) While Moses listened with alarm in his heart and fear on his face to God’s commandments, strange things were happening at the foot of the mountain. The Israelites were losing their patience. They muttered. They began to rebel. Finally they came to Aaron, saying: “Come, make us a god who will be our leader; as for the man Moses who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has happened to him." Aaron replied „Have your wives and sons and daughters take off the golden earrings they are wearing, and bring them to me.” So all the people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron, who accepted their offering, and fashioning this gold with a graving tool, made a molten calf. Then they cried out, "This is your God, O Israel, who brought you out of the land of Egypt." On seeing this, Aaron built an altar before the calf and proclaimed, "Tomorrow is a feast of the LORD." Early the next day the people offered holocausts and brought peace offerings. Then they sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to revel.

With that, the LORD said to Moses, "Go down at once to your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt, for they have become depraved. They have soon turned aside from the way I pointed out to them, making for themselves a molten calf and worshiping it, sacrificing to it and crying out, 'This is your God, O Israel, who brought you out of the land of Egypt!' I see how stiff-necked this people is," continued the LORD to Moses.” [[2]](#footnote-2) Therefore the Lord punished the people for the sin of the calf, which was made by Aaron.”

This shocking Biblical story is an introduction to today’s talk which I will entitle:

**The Golden Calf**

From the time of Israel, humanity has frequently turned away from God, frequently abandoned God completely, and bowed down deeply and mindlessly and made sacrifices before – golden calves! I omit ancient Greece and Rome, and come to our times. The bloody French Revolution placed a prostitute on the altar of Notre Dame, crowned her the queen of reason, and not only Paris but all of France bowed down before her and worshiped her! The arrogant and proud Teutonic Knight placed Mars, the god of war, on the altars of his country. He loved and worshipped him. The Russian giant for the immense expanse of the country made one wide and tall altar, placed on it some weird god, and in its honor sings laudatory hymns and mists the foot of the altar with streams of human blood.

And maybe our country has behaved better and with more reason? Far from it! On the national altar we have the national calf in the form of the “omnipotent dollar”. Who does not bow down before him? Everybody, with no exception. This “omnipotent dollar” was in everyone’s thoughts and on everyone’s lips. It became a god, a motto, an emblem, the banner of everyone. People forgot about God, about the soul, about the goal of mankind… taken over by the love of the golden calf. Love of neighbor disappeared, and egoism and selfishness spread like a forest fire. At this moment I remember the scene from the Redeemer’s life, when Satan led the Son of God to a high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a single instant. The devil said to him, "I shall give to you all this power and their glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I may give it to whomever I wish. All this will be yours, if you worship me." Jesus said to him in reply, "It is written: 'You shall worship the Lord, your God, and him alone shall you serve.'" (Saint Luke) [[3]](#footnote-3)

It seems to me that Satan behaves the same way with the American nation. And the people believe the promises of the tempter, so instead of bowing down before God – they fall to their knees before the liar. A mindless and fanatical race for the ‘omnipotent dollar’ has started. This frenzy of coveting gold has taken over the whole of society. Newspapers devote whole columns to how this or that man earned millions or billions in a few short years. God was in the way of some of them. What could they do with him? Throw him off the altar. On the entrances to palaces and on the doorways of houses; above the entrances to schools and universities, offices and bureaus an audacious sign was hung: “Access denied to God”. God was thrown out of minds and hearts; thrown out of public and private places. It was claimed: “if God exists, let him stay in Heaven; we do not want Him here on earth.” It was written: “We do not need God; we manage on our own.” There was even blasphemy: “Who is this God of yours; we do not know and recognize the Lord.” And so on without end! And really, it seemed for a certain time, that this golden calf would make our generation happy. It seemed as if some magician, or historical Midas, had spread over us a magic wand, and changed everything into gold! Not only tycoons, bankers and millionaires bowed down before the golden god! The middle class, and even the working class, not only knelt down, but fell down on both knees before him! You should have seen the houses – the clothing – the food – the games and entertainment! Did anyone worry about tomorrow? Did anyone think of the future?

Who paid attention to warnings and admonitions? – I remember a few cases which I will mention here: 1. One day I had an errand to run at one of the local banks. I needed to pay interest. Leaving, I met a certain friend I hadn’t seen for a long time. I started to talk to him, asking about his health and how he was doing in general. At last he took out from his pocket a handful of dollar bills, which he kissed and said to me with a scornful smile: “This is my God, my banner and my life!” 2. A certain man was brought to my office who neither plowed nor sowed – but reaped benefits and wasted them. I explained various things to him and predicted his future. It was a waste of breath! I tried once again, from another angle. “Look, in our country you had less, and yet you were a better man!” “True, in our country when we ate meat only once a week and were poor, then we had the time to think of God, and pray. Here there is an abundance of everything, you can have meat three times a day; so there is no need of God or of prayer.” 3. Another time I tried to convince a certain Polish aristocrat lady that it is the duty of every reasonable person to remember God and go to church. Listen to this smart answer: “When we went to church, we had nothing, and we couldn’t earn anything! When we stopped going to church, our luck changed and today we have more than those who go to church diligently every Sunday.” 4. To yet another person I explained the need to show God gratitude for health – employment and success. This know-it-all answered: “What I have, I have earned by my own ten fingers. Nobody helped me!” 5. One day, a well-thinking mother brought her daughter, who had the most modern ideas of life and the world! Cunning and resourceful, the model type of our century! I had chanced upon a hard heart and a bold mind!

The ending was as follows: “I don’t care what Father preaches! I know myself that today money is everything in this world. Without dollars, you can do nothing. My mother can’t give me the life I want, so this house is not for me. I’m not old-country, but American.” - Today I ask myself: what happened to her? Where is she? With even more anxiety and fear I look at our young people; if they think this way about life and the goal of life – what will happen to these young people? – Up to three years ago, people blindly bowed down before the golden calf, and with their own heads they beat down a wide path to spiritual and moral poverty! – Gold and money instead of being a servant – became a lord, and an omnipotent lord! A thousand years ago so wrote God’s Wise Man: “Nothing is worse than to love money, because such a person’s very soul is up for sale.” “If you will be rich, you will not be free from sin.” “Many were lost by gold and silver, which reached even the royal hearts and turned them inside out.” The golden calf, has thrown a dark and heavy curtain over the eyes of his devotees. Formally he has blinded them. Diplomats and politicos; merchants, industrialists, tycoons, national and international bankers, they knew how to change thousands into millions, millions into billions; gold flew in the stock markets! Dubious exploitation and seedy speculation became more and more common; suspicious corporations, false societies came into being. Falsified literature was sent out by the ton, even widows and orphans were cheated! Railways, mines, companies sold workers their own shares, promising one hundred percent profits!

Today we have before our eyes the sad and painful results of this national devotion to the golden calf! There remain a few thousand conquerors and the gray masses of the conquered! Three years ago the god started to suffer a deadly disease, today he is dying! Treatment and the efforts of specialists, all for naught; the injections of various commissions are useless, the requests, threats, curses and imprecations of the masses, all to no effect! Today? Poverty and destitution such as citizens have not known until now; as they had never could have imagined! The masses without employment, ask what will happen next? They do not believe in promises which have let them down so many times already, uncertain, their lives are full of cares and mistrust! The golden calf lays broken, and from the grasp of this giant, humanity tries to escape! As once “the Lord punished the people for the sin of the calf, which was made by Aaron” so in the twentieth century God punished us for the sin of the calf, which was committed by our society! This society includes those who rule and their subjects; there is also included the one-sided and unjust system, especially in what concerns workers and their families.

In their chase after the ‘golden calf’, God and His principles and teachings were rejected; the commandment of love for neighbor was forgotten, and not only that, but even the justice which is due to the neighbor and even pity and mercy! So God became not only useless and superfluous, but simply stood in the way of progress and civilization of the twentieth century! – Humanity took the tablet with God’s Ten Commandments and broke it into a thousand pieces! God’s commandments were to be replaced by some strange human laws, often on the principles of paganism and materialism, which were supposed to perfect and make happy not only a few nations but the whole world. The blind men did not see or know that like the swelling waters of nearby Niagara, all of this ends in the precipice of the famous waterfall; today, even today after three years, they do not want to admit their error, that they had gone wrong, that they suffer and they will not stop suffering until they change their own erroneous opinions! In this place, let me recall the following example: “In a certain town there was an exposition and at the same time an auction of paintings from under the brush of the famous artist-painter! There were hundreds of paintings presented! There were horses, dogs, cats and other animals; there were kings, governors, and armies. There was too a painting of the crucified Christ. The first evening of the exposition, all of the paintings were sold except one.

Only the painting of the crucified Christ remained! It so happened that the next day in the morning a young boy guiding a blind man to his begging place passed by the exposition. The little boy said to the blind man: “There was an exposition here; all of the paintings were bought, only the painting of the crucified Redeemer was left!” The blind man asked to be taken to the merchant, he bought the painting saying: “Let everyone buy his own God, I will buy me my own too.” The merchant, a disbeliever himself, asked with a scornful smile: “But old man, you will not see your God!” Upon hearing that the old man replied slowly and solemnly: “On the contrary, I see my God, but they who have their sight do not see Him!” – Yes, everyone turned their eyes from God towards the national altar on which stood the “Golden Calf.” – I am thinking about only our country and our society! The god fell, and he brought his idolatrous and arduous disciples poverty, destitution, and despair! What is worse and for us even harder to understand is that the innocent must suffer with the guilty! What did the children do wrong that they must beg for bread today, and there is nobody who will give it to them? What did the mothers of thousands of families do wrong that they are forced to look at the pale faces of their children, who faint from hunger? What did the peaceful and just workers do wrong that, willing to work and sober, for months now or some even for two or three years, every day in the morning they stand before factories and offices, with tears in their eyes, waiting to be summoned to work?

If those whose duty it was and still is to care for the good of their subjects, if they would turn their eyes to God, I not only firmly believe, but am convinced that they would find a solution. If those in ruling position would follow the teaching of Jesus Christ, and the magnates would remember the commandments of loving God as their neighbors, quickly the present sad image would disappear, and the crisis with poverty and destitution would belong to the past! But some are heartless figures, and others consider themselves to be immune, for whom the working class in only an instrument to greater riches! They point to the present system about which already in 1891 Leo XIII wrote: “As the result of unfortunate relations an immense number of people live lives which are oppressed and unworthy of humans. In the course of the process of laws and public systems getting rid of the Christian spirit, the craftsmen became the victims of inhuman capitalists and competitors whose greed knew no limits. Production and trade became the monopoly of the few, and in this way a handful of rich men put an almost servile yoke on the working class.” So much said by Leo XIII!

The present Holy Father, Pius XI, has spoken in this matter a few times, openly condemning the present system, which allows for the unequal division and proportion of gains and burdens! “The seed of evil, that a too large amount, one can say the vast majority of humankind, will not have any property at all, or have an insufficient amount of it, becoming the so-called proletariat. Instead of knocking down the present wealthy classes to the level of the proletariat, would it not be better to raise up the proletariat, allowing it to possess some property, through the division of goods which would serve the common good and social justice.” – Cardinal O’Connell blames the “greedy worshippers of the golden calf” and adds that “a large number of rich men should be whipped; this is the only punishment adequate for them, as they are completely insensitive to any appeals.” – The American bishops at a meeting in Washington declared that they “Demand a decent payment for the worker to support his family, the just division of payment between different categories of workers, employment for as many of the working masses as possible and an equal share in the profits from such abundant industrial production. Being brothers in Christ, we consider it to be our duty to stand by our opinion that the rich are obliged by their conscience to share their riches with those who suffer poverty, and so much more that the system, because of which they suffer, gave enormous riches to others.” – I add also the words of Saint Augustine: “The superfluous goods of the rich are the necessary goods of the poor.”

Archbishop Kordacz of Prague wrote: “Woe to those nations which are not aware of the present situation and do not see the impending catastrophe. Our time is ripe for a global revolution. As long as our government and our capitalists do not accept the principles of Christianity, the whole world will be destroyed by a red sea of flames.”

Moses threw down the golden calf from the altar and said: “"If I find favor with you, O Lord, do come along in our company. This is indeed a stiff-necked people; yet pardon our wickedness and sins, and receive us as your own." "Here, then," said the LORD, "is the covenant I will make. Before the eyes of all your people I will work such marvels as have never been wrought in any nation anywhere on earth […]You shall not worship any other god, for the LORD is 'the Jealous One'; a jealous God is he.” [[4]](#footnote-4)

We should make a promise today before God, bind ourselves by a solemn vow: Not to kneel down before the golden calf; throw him out of our minds and our hearts. Let us throw him off the altar of our soul! Because he is only a god, and not Our Lord and God! God will work miracles for us, as have never been seen in any nation anywhere on earth! Prosperity and earthly happiness will return, and God’s peace will enter our hearts and souls.

1. Exodus 20: 2-3. New American Bible. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Exodus 32: 1-9. New American Bible. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Luke 4: 5-8. New American Bible. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Exodus 34: 9-10, 14. New American Bible. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)