November 7, 1948

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

Today, we begin our nineteenth season of Radio broadcasting. I speak to you with the permission of the diocesan authority as well as the religious order of the Conventual Franciscans. Our Bishop, as well as the Provincial of our order, value the worth and effectiveness of the work through the medium of the radio. And more because the religious talks are broadcast in the Polish language. I, for my part, say this sincerely without reservation and stand before the microphone with all humility, and at the same time with some fear and trepidation. I see before myself many difficulties, plenty of obstacles, which truly terrify me. I no longer speak of suspicions, of the allegations, the crumbling of the charges on my head from all sides. I trust however in the protection of Providence with the help of material and spiritual help of my listeners. I am a soldier on guard. My superiors, instead of a bayonet gave me a pen. My post: the radio. My assignment and guard the honor of God – the truths of God – the Catholic Religion – Man, who nevertheless is made of the earth, and has within himself a spark of the Spirit of God, that spark of God, which so brightly differs from unintelligent animals a lifts man to the worth of being a child of God. As a soldier, I am not permitted to leave my post. I am not permitted to neglect my given post. Therefore, my intention is to forge forward without regard to the formidable task ahead of me. As in previous years I will talk to you in plain talk which will be easy for you to understand. Mysteries - which I myself do not understand which is so because they are mysteries; they are not my intention to dwell on with you. Instead, I will talk much, very much of God’s relationship to people and people’s relationship with God; I will speak of the worth of human life! I will speak of the conversion to God and about the laws of God. I will be speaking of the effects of a virtuous life as well of a wicked one. In a word, I will traipse through the world with you! I will strive to teach you – explain, persuade. I will speak to your reason, to your consciences. Perhaps God will grant that here and there the conscience will be moved and the heart will seek and the soul will be moved. If my talks will be able to open the eyes of one or the other to open a better way of life, it will be a most worthy payback for my feeble efforts to communicate. And so I get to work with the conviction that working for God and the Faith, I also work for people and for country. Today’s talk I entitled:

THE TWENTIETH: A SAD CENTURY

The first fifty years of the twentieth century is coming to a close. Before our very eyes the tracings of this age are named in various terms. Some say that this century is a time of knowledge explosion, of teaching, of progress. Others maintain it is an age of discovery. Still others that it was a time of prosperity. The level-headed and wise man cannot close his eyes to the reality. And therefore, looking over the tracing of the times or rather the last forty eight years must look in wonder at them but cannot at the same time be sympathetic to the suffering. In no other age did people receive for the hands of Providence, more gifts and greater blessings, and in no other age have they known so many bloody tragedies, so many terrible events, so much poverty, so much misery and hunger. No other century saw so many discoveries but at the same time no other century stood on the edge of a deep and dark precipice, in which there was such churning and seething of fear, suspicion, and mistrust. In no other age were peoples so intoxicated with personal power and never did they reach the degree of delight in the achievements of reason as in the twentieth century and at the same time so discouraged with self as they are now. Despite promises that knowledge, learning, and progress are changing the world into a utopia, Eden, and heaven as people went through two global wars and lived to see the creation of an atom bomb. Knowledge prolonged the thread of life but, in concentration camps, the lives of millions were taken. The airplane was meant to be humanity’s servant but was turned into an instrument of destruction and killing in war. In spite of knowledge, teaching, progress, and inventions, we have neither Utopia, nor Eden, nor Heaven. It is obviously apparent that our century lacked someone or something that would satisfy people, give them a peaceful existence and happiness. Whom did it lack? It lacked God. It still lacks Him. And this lack of God broke and destroyed happiness and gave our age a deathly wound. Our age suffers because it bears that wound in its heart – a wound of restlessness, doubt, disquiet. Perhaps this age did not attempt to find a means by which that disquiet could be removed. Oh yes, it tried – it thought of many theories, and gave a multitude of recipes to achieve that but they were always without effect because no one went to the true and only source of peace, satisfaction and happiness –namely, God. Instead, it ignored the belief in a God, it scorned God, and by-passed Him. Our century depended on knowledge, education, and material progress. Those three sources of happiness, in reality are not able to satisfy human wants which entail the seeking of truth, virtue, hope and peace. Only God can supply and satisfy those urges. It is why souls, hearts and minds without God are sad, unsettled, suspect, unsatisfied, and suffering. Life became soured and full of disappointment. The present dressed itself in a gown of impermanence, uncertainty of future was foreseen, and life welled up in gray and mourning. Intelligent people, often inherently noble, but deprived of the light of faith, sadly were overwhelmed in secrets of their consciences and hearts. It was time that this age which is so disturbed, stormy and dangerous, and at the same time, so absorbed in material things and discoveries took its eyes away from them and lifted them to God. It is time that people of the current age believed less in the their self-sufficiency and trusted more deeply and heartily of the Father’s help, in the Providential care of the Creator. It is time for man to sober up and expect from his fellow man something that is specifically under the aegis of God. Let man manage and beatify creation, and take from the earth the treasures that are there but let them not seek neither the Garden of Eden nor heaven because the earth cannot give you these. The earth will always be as it always was according to the laws of a just God: “you will eat from the land that you will work all of your life.” The earth will bring you suffering and thistles. By the sweat of your brow you shall earn your bread until you return back to the earth from which you came because you are dust and into dust you will return.” For the person who knows the history of the world, it is no mystery that humanity ought to return to God and to religion. Our twentieth century was a victim of its own devices. It inherited certain weaknesses and sicknesses and is paying for its idiocies and madness of the prior age of the nineteenth century. The twentieth century took on the storm that was planted in the nineteenth century. A hundred years witnessed wise dreamers who, under the roots of the tree of the happiness of mankind, began to erode and explore under the roots of the tree to see what's going on. They behaved like a child who takes apart and ruins a watch in order to see what makes it tick! It’s easy enough to take the watch apart; putting it back is another story. He does not prefer to put it back together again. Everything is disturbed falls apart and is upturned like a ship which is which is assaulted by wind and wave. In these days, no government is without doubt and is unprotected. Read the daily papers! In every country there are conspiracies, assassinations and coups. And it goes for the order in societies as well. God himself dictated the moral order. But what do we see in this supposedly enlightened age we live in. Personal possessions, marriage, family, authority is torn apart like the first clothing of our lives. Everything is in the eyes used to extremes. Everything needs to be razed, turned upside down and destroyed. The upshot of this is that morality and religion are tyranny, which needs to be weeded out and by force if necessary. In our times everything which was recognized as an obligation is pushed into doubt; even self-evident truths; minds half-baked, light, bold, chasing novelties. The is why the derailed intellect does not know what to hold on to, and asks disquietedly whether there is anything on this earth that one can hold onto?

 In religion we can find principles which are able to uphold and rescue society, namely: a respect for the law, a break on excessive satisfaction, the responsibility for reasonable obedience, and the every present family and private property. These principles are necessary, since with them, society cannot exist and no human being can achieve peace of mind and does not know how to live. In the past who taught these principles. Who insisted they be respected? In our times, who teaches, who reminds? Religion! The laws of God. The world cannot expect true and complete peace, societies cannot expect a lasting order unless there is a hasty return to God’s principles; it is then that the world will be renewed, peace will reign, and order will be restored. If religion had not been scoffed, lowered and regarded as an enemy of teaching and behavior, our eyes would not have seen such brutally barbarous scenes which we had been forced to see in the last quarter century. People would not have experienced the disasters in which they are now preoccupied and from which the two or three generations of the future has not escaped.

 When I was in Great Britain in 1942, Monsignor Michalski gave me a brochure containing homilies of several chaplains. The talks were commemorative. Among others I found "In these sad changes turnabouts and uncertainties, interspersed with changing ways, in order to raise the spirits and prevent disillusionment, it is worth to think about the great flood and about the ark. The skies were very much occluded from the sun as they are now. Great and heavy clouds threw sinister shadows over the earth. That same earth was covered with people’s anger “and all thoughts of the heart were pinned to the earth!” – The creator, moved with pain, felt sadness that He created mankind. And so He said: “I will erase mankind from the face of the earth. From man to the animals; from the land to the birds of the air, because I was sad at the result of my creation!” And the Lord said to Noah, “Go into the ark and take with yourself whatever you would need to sustain your life.” Noah did what the Lord asked him to do. Then all the springs of heaven opened up and it rained for forty days and forty nights. And the more swiftly blew the winds, the higher the Ark floated on the water. Under the ever falling rain, the pressure raised the ark “And in the gathering of the waters, the ark rose to the heights.” The waters pressed against the walls of the ark and it rose steadily high above the ground. How much time had been devoted to the building of the ark? For the great length of time when the times were bad. Noah went into the ark with faith and he kept it throughout the turmoil. Now and then a green branch of a tree appeared. There was hope for civilization to establish itself anew. The hope stayed with the ark dwellers. The faith of those in the ark sustained them as they were buffeted by winds and rain. For 50 years the Lord had spared those in the ark. Although there are tough times, the society would rebuild Itself. We see sickness in the society but we also see hope – God’s promises are there. The issue was: return to God or be lost. Our century may go down badly; however, it might find its healing in the God who was abandoned. As Lazarus was resurrected, so with the promise of God and the faith and hope in the Creature all will be patched! It will take time through blood, sweat and tears but souls will return to God and hopefully generations to come will realize where the solution is to the problem. It may take a long time from the perspective of earthly dwellers but through the storms in the earthly ark. What is it then that is needed to return to societies’ peace and goodness. A lively and powerful faith, a return to religious morality, intellectual sanity, religious and society return to God. History could tell the solutions and sanity will return. No one knows exactly when or how but the Lord could direct the road. Dependence on one another is not enough to create a new, reborn world; it is in the hands of God. Perhaps suffering will be able to convince us that it is needed to demonstrate to God the seriousness of the situation. Would not God have some extraordinary cure for that situation of ours amidst our inabilities to begin help cure ourselves.? Religion? What is Religion? Man with his mind, heart and conscience seeking God, -A God who lowers himself to the Creature he has created – that’s Religion. It is after all a relational thing between God and man – divine and human. It is a most significant relationship. And because religion is the essence of divine and human at the same time, nothing can reduce its value! Every age brings new witness that after that sacred relationship between God and man - the human remains void, is dissatisfied, has anxiety of mind, heart doubt! And for the family, society, only misfortune and ruin! So much of our time and the benevolent truths provide new and compelling arguments; on the other hand, belief is poisoned, and it is so difficult for us to get rid of the pernicious poison as well and man can say to himself, "true, man needs religion, reason, conscience, self-respect, honor, care about the future will not let me live - That raises the second question. Man needs a religion, but which one? Is it not preternatural? Such as just described above, in which man lifts himself with reverence to God, requests, thankfulness and God comes to man with invisible help. Or do you need a revealed religion, the data contained in formulas by God? - Any external religion whose architecture is external, to which God has put his visible hand by which He commands mankind. Listen, twenty centuries ago a man appeared in Jerusalem. He lived, He taught, He died. From that time on, an amazed populace saw in him something that made them kneel before him. Was this man, God? Because if He really is, if he instituted a religion, why talk about a preternatural religion. He is God. What is left is that we listen to his voice in teaching, follow His example and adopt His religion. It is a significant thing, the man already from nature wish to make contact with God and feel that this is possible and believes that God hears his voice and without looking at the distance, certain callings of the human heart dictate that they have to come to Him. He firmly believes it. Faith is curious to a point but it is eternal, universal and inexhaustible. Nothing could tear it away from man. And secondly: The human being wants and judges that he is able to come to God, but what is even more amazing that God could visit him. And that second longing is as strong as the first one. – “Let Him come!” Plato exclaimed, and all the old tradition calls out the same: “Would that the heavens would open and You would come down,” called Isaiah, the prophet, and with him the whole old testament tradition. Even nature calls out, “Open that vault hidden by the created world, O God, and lift the veil of the heavens. Show yourself as just and good since each deeply-sensed need has to create a common and persistent symptom of what we see on the entire surface of the globe?” And so, churches, altars, devotions, prayers and heaven-directed eyes and bent knees. You can try to explain this fact with boredom, exaltation and can recall some abuse, falsehoods, but you cannot deny the existence of faith. That need of a relationship with God is inborn and not separate and age-old, common and eternal is part of human nature. One pious man once wrote: ”Is that yearning for God, that need to interact with Him, inborn within our nature. This need for an active relationship with Him, is it a significant relationship, common, occurring in every time, place and before all the people? I witness humanity which believes in God, puts its hope in Him, prays on its knees, lifts itself up on the wings of faith and hope, asking Him for help! Please note that this phenomenon never hiding. It was and still is apparent. It has constituted and still constitutes part of the glory and grandeur of nations. It is constituted by even those who do not want to know him. And the people who do not pray, understand the need sometimes of people publically putting on the appearance praying. It references to the saying “those who do not pray never. There is no one who would not pray never. In other words, there is no ne, who would never pray. There is no one who would never thank heaven. That’s prayer, that’s really prayer, sincere, thankful, and often the most eloquent of all prayer. There is no elderly person who when the years bend the head and back who would never recognize the need for a prayer of hope in the time of grouping with death and the grave. And you, who considers yourself the greatest, can conceive of some kind of trouble or disappointment which will bring grey to your head? Then with pain you will shout, “My God!” and that will suffice, when prayer is needed! It is of some worth to keep in mind that faith in God becomes stronger through suffering. Pain unravels useless musings, puts out the lights of empty illusions, the artificial persists. Pain, leads man from delusions to reality. In painful moments the need toward God becomes the greatest. It is known that happiness and well-being distances us from God; but we return to God with our problems and experiences. Tearful eyes themselves lift us to God. And one in the midst of thorns, in the midst of pain and crosses, as he comes closer to the grave, and his hope is intensified, he comes closer to God? Was it ever heard that a man who believed in his lifetime, was sorry for it on his death bed? Or gave up his faith on the doorstep to eternity? The opposite happens. We see many of those who in life doubted everything when at the doorstep of death, discover God. Man, therefore, tends to God. He tends to Him with mind and heart and conscience, with joys and sufferings and the recognition of his own weakness. His entire life is a constant tending to God as the only being and source of life and supplies the needs and hopes that only God could supply. From the other side, God lowers Himself grants man what he truly need to attain eternal life - greatness, goodness, fatherhood, justice and love. Therefore if God seeks man and man seeks God why do we have so many faithless people and so many who do not pray? Material goods, material satisfaction, pride, and negligence are the reasons! Man comes from God and belongs to God. He ought to, therefore; to recognize the authority and omnipotence and base his life on God and in everything that his life needs to jive with God’s law. God should have a place in man’s mind and soul. Listen to what the chief of the F. B. I., J. Edgar Hoover said: “Unless there is hope in the future of America, unless there is peace and happiness in our homes, then we as a nation must return to God, to the daily religious practices, to daily common prayer in our families. Our nation generally in these times needs to return to ordinary good living. Are we able to build our homes without God, or have good children, who do not know how to practice God’s laws. The nation has to return to the times when God was our portion, part of the family – when families started their days with prayer on their lips and ended the day similarly thanking God for the blessing and protection. The home without God is built on sand and is a nest of moral degradation and crime. The future of the nation, it seems to me, depends on belief in God, demonstrated in our families.” Can one underline truly the meaning of faith in God and demonstrating that it family life than did the chief of the secret service of inquiry? He came to understand that in his personal experiences in investigation the reasons for criminality. There where the home has no God is the spawning place of crime and bad behavior and its spread. And that is verifiable in every nation and in every social condition. Where there is no God, there is no peace, neither in the nation, nor in the family, nor in the individual citizen. Today the representatives of nations advise from time immemorial the promised and awaited peace. Instead of coming closer to that peace, they approach new wars. Why? Because they got rid of God from the meeting room. God and religion has been thrown outside the door. On old German flags the words were written, “Gott und Uns!” and it was replaced with “Uns und Gott. Need there be an explanation for this change! Long ago, written on the flags was, “God and Fatherland”. They didn’t care for that logo so they took out God and put, “Honor” and Fatherland. What happened to that “Honor”? Where is today’s Fatherland? Long ago, on the walls of our homes hung the picture of the Sacred Heart with “God, Bless This House.” Someone in the family didn’t care for it so they took it off the wall and threw it out. Someone wrote: “If the world turned sincerely to God and to His bidding, today we would not be swimming in uncertainty and fear. People would be better off and our life would be more livable and happier. Because of the lack of faith, the world is turning for the worse and loses its bearings, and heads for destruction. It is important that every family remember this every day and every hour. Going forward with God, we will be heading for a better future for our nation, our world, and our society.