
Is Christianity Returning?

In line with everything he has said and done for the restoration of Christian principles of social justice since his inauguration last March, President Roosevelt's speech to the Catholic Charities Convention fires the imagination of those who believe that now is the time to right the wrongs of industry. We quote significant paragraphs:

"In the midst of problems of material things - in the machine age of invention, of finance, of international suspicion and renewed armament - every one of us must gain satisfaction and strength in the knowledge that social justice is becoming an ever-growing factor and influence in almost every part of the world. With every passing year I become more confident that humanity is moving forward to the practical application of the teachings of Christianity as they affect the individual lives of men and women.

"It is fitting that this annual national Conference of Catholic Charities should celebrate also the centennial of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. I like to remember the taunts of atheists in the Paris of 1833, when they demanded of the churches, 'show us your books.' I like to think of the acceptance of that challenge and the decision to show that Christianity was not dead, and that the deeds of Christians were in accordance with their faith. When I realize that this one society, last year, in their task of visitation and relief of the poor in their own homes, in hospitals and institutions, aided more than 150,000 families, and that other great organizations of men and women connected with all the churches in all the land are working with similar unselfishness for the alleviation of human suffering and the righting of human wrong, I am confirmed in my deep belief that God is marching on....

"... back of the cooperative leadership which is showing itself in every part of the country, there are two other vital reasons for the maintenance of the efforts of the churches and other nongovernmental groups.

"The first of these is that, much as we strive for the broad principles of social justice, the actual application of these principles is, of necessity, an individual thing--a thing which touches individual lives and individual families. No governmental organization in all history has been able to keep the human touch to the same extent as church and private effort. Government can do many things better than private associations or citizens, but in the last analysis success in personal matters depends on the personal contact between neighbor and neighbor.

"The other reason lies in the fact that the people of the United States still recognize, and, I believe, recognize with firmer faith than ever before, that spiritual values count in the long run more than material values. Those who have sought by edict to eliminate the right of mankind to believe in God and to practice that belief, have, in every case, discovered sooner or later that they are tilting in vain against an inherent, essential, undying quality, and indeed necessity, of the human race.

"I can never express in words what the loyalty and trust of the nation have meant to me. Not for a moment have I doubted that we would climb out of the valley of gloom. Always have I been certain that we would conquer, because the spirit of America springs from faith--faith in the beloved institutions of our land, and a true and abiding faith in the divine guidance of God."

One Student on the Pledge.

"Although I don't drink, I didn't sign last year. I see it all in a different light now. It was a matter of pride and a false sense of liberty that caused me not to sign. Since then I have discovered the cost of such an attitude. I am a total abstainer, but I sign to help the statistics along."