

How To Get The Right Point of View on Catholic Action.  
by Burton Confrey.

To understand Catholic Action we must know on what basis it rests, what motivates it, who guides it, and what lay men and women can contribute to the Movement. In the Encyclical Ubi Arcano Dei, Pope Pius XI tells us that this apostolate of the laity "will bring about the re-birth of the individual, the family, society, and the whole world." To realize that such a result is possible, we need but turn to the early history of Christianity where we find the followers of Our Lord incorporating His principles in their daily lives and putting them into practice in public life as well. That procedure is Catholic Action.

After two thousand years, we still draw inspiration from the story of how gloriously those Apostles, selected from the ordinary trades and stations in life, overcame paganism and brought Christ's teachings to nations so effectively that those peoples became Christian. Certainly their task of influencing the idolatrous and the depraved to accept what Jesus taught was not less formidable than ours of getting our contemporaries to accept Christian principles in social, industrial, economic, and national life. But, with little education and few of our advantages, they succeeded. Having the same Source of Strength as they, we, too, can succeed; and we need not risk our lives (as did the early Christians), although religious on foreign mission today are willing to do so.

Should we pause a moment to survey, we shall see in the conversion of Europe the greatest educational work ever accomplished. Stupendous as is our problem of helping America to Christian living, it is not so gigantic as that of winning Europe from paganism. We inherit the ever-renewing source of energy, of endurance, and of survival that an intelligent reading of history will reveal the Church has always had. ... The Church, of which we must be dynamic members, is the Mystical Body of Christ...

Christ made this doctrine of the Mystical Body clear under the figure "I am the Vine; you are the branches." He is the Head; we are the members - a marvelous partnership which carries with it privileges and correlative obligations... We must take active part in her life....

Union with God through Christ inspires, uplifts, and draws us into concerted action with the Head and with our fellow-members in the Mystical Body; but to be dynamic participants in that union we must not only accept the law of Christ but put it into continuous practice.... Unfortunately, misguided, or vicious individuals may fall away from the Church; but their shortsightedness and defection cannot affect the threefold union of the Head with the members, of the Holy Ghost with the body, and of the members with each other. The Reverend Doctor Karl Adam holds that "the Sacraments are the most faithful expression of the central idea of inseparable union with Christ, of a constant being in Christ..."

Through Baptism we become members of the Mystic Body; "we are all one in Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). Through frequent reception of other Sacraments and through praying the Mass and other official prayers of the Church, we increase the intimacy of that union and strengthen it. We forget self and selfishness. We realize our obligation (as members of the Church, the Mystic Body) to render glory and homage to God through public and community worship. The best means of meeting this obligation is through active participation in the liturgy.

... "Catholic Action," I, 1.

Prayer:

Paul Avoy's father was seriously injured in an accident yesterday. Wm. H. Kelly, of South Bend, old student, asks prayers for his father-in-law who died suddenly Wednesday night. A brother of Joe Sincule who underwent an operation recently is not doing so well. Four special intentions.