



# The Holy See

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## *RADIO MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS PIUS XII\**

*Sunday, 16 November 1947*

*Beloved Children of America*

Another Winter is approaching, heartless and relentless, which promises to cut a wide swath through the ruined, ineffectual tenements of hundreds of cities in Europe and the East, opening the way for grim death to follow fast on cold and famine and stark exposure unimpeded. But, no! There stands Christian charity, rising to the full stature of its nobility, to block the path; and thousands of doomed victims, freed from a hopeless terror, will live on to thank God for the spirit that unites all men as children of their Father who is in heaven, and makes their hearts beat fast with sympathy for their brothers in suffering and distress.

Under the tireless leadership of a large-hearted, devoted Hierarchy you, beloved sons and daughters of America, are in the vanguard of that army of Christian charity. This year you have chosen, and chosen well to amass your resources during a week characterized in your country by the dominant note of thanksgiving to God. The highest authority of the State has summoned you—and what an ennobling and refreshing summons it is to hear in the world today—to pause in the midst of your varied occupations to render thanks to Almighty God, the Father of Lights from whom is every best and perfect gift (*Jac. 1, 17*).

In the words of the Angel of the Schools, your gratitude must first be an acknowledgment that you are the recipients of gifts, unnumbered gifts; then it demands that you give thanks for the gifts received; and lastly that you in turn make whatever offering your position allows to your benefactor (S. Th. 2<sup>a</sup>, 2ae, q. 107, a. 2 in c.). But what can you offer to God? « What hast thou that thou hast not received? » (*1 Cor. 4, 7*). Must you not pray the prayer of King David:

«Lord God of Israel, our Father from eternity to eternity:

Thine, O Lord, is magnificence and power and glory and victory; - And to Thee is praise.

For all that is in heaven and in earth is thine; - Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art above all princes. - Thine are riches and thine is the glory.

Thou hast dominion over all, in thy hand is power and might,

In thy hand greatness and the empire of all things. - Now therefore, our God, we give thanks to thee And we praise thy glorious name » (1 Par. 29, 10-13).

What indeed can you offer to God but your thankful praise and faithful service? For Himself God asks nothing more.

But in His infinite love for the human creatures of His omnipotence He has wished to identify Himself with those who do need your offering. « For I was hungry », He says, « and you gave me to eat; was thirsty and you gave me to drink: I was a stranger and you took me in, in prison and you came to me ». Because « as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me » (Matth. 25, 35-36. 40). What loving condescension on the part of God! Because of it the generous response that you will make to the appeal of your Bishops for those who are living in destitution and hunger and whose future is so darkened by the ghastly shadow of disease in body and soul, will lift your souls up from the common chorus of grateful acknowledgment of God's gifts to the holy imitation of that divine bounty which has enriched you with so many blessings. Your thanksgiving will be purified, perfected and made beautiful by charity.

Beloved children, you have been made acquainted with the appalling condition of millions of men, women and children, guiltless prey to the cruel, often unnecessarily cruel, aftermath of war; nor is there any need to tell you how Our heart, the heart of the common Father of all, bleeds with anguish for His children who turn appealing eyes towards Him in hope that He will save them from their hopelessness. But We would tell you how consoled and grateful We are for the bounteous and never failing assistance you have given Us for Our crusade of world-wide charity. Your sacrifices make that charity possible.

As a pledge of God's eternal reward and as a token of Our affectionate and abiding gratitude We impart to all the faithful, to the Religious, Clergy and sacred Hierarchy of the United States the Apostolic Benediction.

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