

Liturgy and Sociology

By Dorothy Day

The Catholic Worker, December 1935, 4.

Summary: Distinguishes between individuals in society and persons in society. The former are isolated monads who are “weak and adrift”, the latter are a part of a body, (the Body of Christ) which draw strength from each other. The liturgy teaches this unity, which is indispensable for social regeneration. (DDLW #16).

The age of individualism, laissez faire industrialism and self-seeking capitalism is dead and gone. Embers of the charred structure built up by the Protestant Revolution remain but it is nevertheless as dead as a doornail. Men are beginning to realize that they are not individuals but *persons* in society, that man alone is weak and adrift, that he must seek strength in common action.

The Mystical Body of Christ is a union – a unit – and action within the Body is common action. In the Liturgy we have the means to teach Catholics, thrown apart by Individualism into snobbery, apathy, prejudice, blind unreason, that they ARE members of one body and that “an injury to one is an injury to all.”

What of the success of Nazis, Communists and Fascists who have been only too successful in making clear the idea that they are bound together with a common philosophy and a common purpose? We must recognize the fact that many Nazis, Marxists and Fascists believe passionately in their fundamental rightness, and allow nothing to hinder them from their goal in the pursuit of their mission.

Our faith is stronger than death, our philosophy is firmer than flesh, and the spread of the Kingdom of God upon the earth is more sublime and more compelling. We Catholics must pray, act and sacrifice together for Christ the King, for the spread of His Kingdom and the salvation of the world. We Catholics, together, can conquer the world.

The Liturgy, then, is common worship, concorporate worship, worship in one mind and with one heart, and with one mouth. Our common action in the Sacrifice of the Mass, impersonal, anti-individualistic is the best weapon against the world.

"Pius X tells us that the liturgy is the indispensable source of the true Christian spirit.

"Pius XI tells us that the true Christian spirit is indispensable for social regeneration.

“Hence the conclusion: The Liturgy is the indispensable basis of Christian social regeneration.”

PRAYER FOR PEACE AND UNITY

O Lord Jesus Christ, who said to Thy Apostles, “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you”; look not upon my sins, but the faith of Thy Church; and

vouchsafe to grant her peace and unity acoording to Thy will: Who livest and reignest, God, for ever and ever. Amen.