

THE HOLY NAME SOCIETY

It often seems to us who view the Church from within that the primitive simplicity of her organisation and life has developed into something quite unnecessarily complex. The mind almost reels before the numerical vastness of the different religious orders, congregations, societies, institutes, companies, etc., especially when considered in conjunction with the yet vaster number of lay associations, sodalities, societies, guilds, confraternities, etc. Yet this is not all, for hardly a week passes that one does not read of some new movement being proposed by someone or other. Very bewildering sometimes even to those of the faith, and certainly incomprehensible to those outside the Church. The explanation, however, is quite simple and natural.

The Church is an organic growth, a living thing. It is natural that, like the mustard tree to which Our Lord Himself compared His Church, it should grow from a small seed, a simple cell into a great tree: the living and life-giving sap flowing from the trunk into a multitude of branches of all shapes and forms. So, as the Church grew and developed, its life always one and the same, ran out like living shoots in all directions taking a multitude of forms to suit different times, places, people and problems. Here, however, I am not concerned with that substantial growth of the Church which is expressed in her doctrinal and liturgical development. My subject rather deals with that integral part of the Church which we call her devotional life, together with her various ways and means of apostolic activity. It is this life and this activity that find external expression in the innumerable societies referred to above.

Now it is precisely because the Church is living that we have these many signs of life, and the tendency to be con-

stantly developing new ones. Both in theory and practice this is absolutely natural and right. But, as with all good things, in this fallen world, there is always the tendency to go to extremes; therefore, to go wrong. In this regard it seems to me there is a threefold direction in which abuses have always tended to creep in. First, there is the tendency, quite deep rooted in human nature, to pursue after the new and the novel. Thus, perfectly good societies which have come into being to fill some need, are allowed to languish, for no other reason than that people find perseverance in right-doing a very difficult virtue. Then along comes some zealous person and, seeing the urgent need that has again developed, and not realising that there is already in existence a society to supply just this need, another movement is begun and, because it has a new title and a different lay-out, it gets its following. When the novelty has worn off, it too will languish. Thus we often have two or more half-dead societies with exactly the same scope and purpose. Thus we have overlapping and waste of energy. People that should be united by the fact that they are seeking to achieve the same object, are divided by nominally belonging to two different societies. Pride leads each one to seek prestige and privileges for his own society, and so in seeking to exalt the means, the end is lost sight of; jealousies and unseemly disputes vitiate any good work that they might still be doing.

Every priest who has had any experience of pastoral work knows all this from sad experience. How often has one heard a parish priest say that he had a dozen confraternities or societies in his parish, and that while they were often a nuisance, they were a doubtful asset to the spiritual life of his flock. We know what the Holy Spirit has said about the lukewarm and tepid servant of God: 'I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. I would thou wert cold or hot, but because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will begin to vomit thee

out of my mouth.' This brings us to the second source of abuse in the matter of these societies within the great society of the Faithful; namely, that while we condemn the founding of new societies just to have something new and so to satisfy somebody's vanity, we must realize that it is the very nature of the Church as a living body to be always generating new life. The world changes from age to age; and what suited one generation may be unsuited to later generations whose whole manner of life and thought has undergone complete change. New problems, too, undreamt of before, may now have arisen and must be dealt with by the Church. Even in our own day we have seen what a difference there has been between the mental outlook and therefore the problems of the pre- and post-war (1914) generations. When, then, such legitimate demands for new organisations do arise, as they constantly will: when the right society is founded by some humble zealous and far-sighted priest or layman, to meet the new conditions, then the new venture for God should be given the whole-hearted support of every one of the faithful, whether bishop, priest or layman.

Here we must admit that there is a lamentable lack of really spiritual insight. Yet to the really spiritually minded person it should not be difficult to distinguish the chaff from the wheat in the crop of new schemes that are constantly springing up; and so to reject the merely specious and useless, but to receive gladly the real thing and to promote it with vigour. It is upon the hierarchy and clergy that this duty first devolves. It is surely a reversal of the right order of things when we see the laity the zealous promoter, and the clergy the principal obstacle, to some excellent society which in its young life can point to an outstanding record of achievement. For the final test of worth which will never fail is: 'by their fruits ye shall know them,' so that when the fruits are already visible there is no longer excuse for the failure in the 'discernment of spirits.' Yet such failure is not infrequent.

A third way in which abuse rather than use creeps in to vitiate in practice the fundamentally sound principle of continuous growth through new and varied forms, is the dog-in-the-manger attitude of the older and established societies to some new and necessary organisation. This opposition comes sometimes from ancient, fossilised remains of once flourishing societies, which being founded for the special needs of their own time have had their day and done their work. They are no longer a living and active force in the work of the Church, but because they still occupy the field they are an obstacle to this new bursting forth of life. These should be firmly removed and consigned by proper authority to the museums or scrap-heaps for which they have now qualified. Others which are not yet fossilised or moribund, but still have a job of work to do within the scope of their original object, easily become jealous because these new societies with their ideal of Catholic Action presume to do work that the others were never designed to do. Instead of realising their own limitations and the vastly increased scope given to the lay association, especially since Pius XI launched his great appeal for Catholic Action: instead of seeing that their own work has its own value and leads up to this further objective of practical work for the souls of one's neighbour they look on the new organizations as interlopers. They proceed to take energetic action, but not with the worthy motive of putting their own house in order and serving God better, but with the sole unworthy object of ousting what they consider quite erroneously as a rival. God alone knows the bitterness that is created, and the energy wasted by this internecine strife. We have constantly to deplore such pride and prejudice.

But to conclude this introduction to my theme, I will sum up. Societies guaranteed and tested by antiquity of their origin and the essential nature of the work that they have done in the past and do so efficiently to-day should not be allowed to die out through mere inertia on the part

of the Catholic body. Nor should they be abandoned in favour of the latest spiritual novelty. New societies that fill a modern need not otherwise supplied, and whose fruits soon speak for their soundness, should be promoted by all with the maximum of energy. Societies whether ancient or modern, which have either done their work, and so passed the stage of their usefulness, or which have never produced any fruit but only a brave show of leaves, should like a dead or dying branch be ruthlessly cut away so that the tree may remain healthy, and send forth new and vigorous branches. Our Lord has Himself told us all this in his parables of the true vine and the husbandman, and the barren fig-tree; 'cut it down therefore; why cumbereth it the ground?' (Luke xiii, 7). The true spirit of the Church which is a corporate body, nay is the very Mystical Body of Christ, is that natural co-operation of part with part, member with member (of which St. Paul speaks), and so of society with society for the good of the whole body, which is the good of all its members.

But what, you will ask, has all this to do with the Holy Name Society? Just this: to show where it stands, and what an honourable place it has carved out for itself amid this welter of organisations. For, as we shall see, it is no modern novelty to satisfy the modern craze for novelty. It has stood the test of ages. But neither is it one of the fossilised remains of the dead past. Old indeed it is, and so carries the guarantee of antiquity, yet as ever new it satisfies the most pressing needs of to-day. It is just the type of society which should be everywhere and receive the support of all.

It is one of those societies which should hold the primacy of honour amongst all our devotional and apostolic organisations, because they have had the longest and most distinguished record of service in the Church. I propose now to give, as far as one can in a brief space, something of its origin, history and scope: but especially to bring out the remarkable fact that though it is almost

seven hundred years old, it is as young and active, and as powerful a force for good as ever in the world to-day. The reason of this is that it is concerned with safeguarding the honour due to the sacred Name of Almighty God and His only-begotten Son Jesus Christ, 'yesterday, to-day and the same forever.'

The first commandment of God, first not only in order but in importance, makes explicit what is the fundamental and natural duty of the creature to the Creator, the duty of giving to the one true and living God fitting honour and worship. But this will only be done if the very Name of God is held in the highest respect. Therefore, the first commandment will only be kept if the second, 'Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord Thy God in vain,' be duly observed. For if one treats the holiest of Names with disrespect, one thereby insults and dishonours the person whom that name signifies.

Now for the Christian, the name of Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Blessed Trinity, truly God because one in nature with the Father, demands all the honour due to the name of God. The primary object of the Holy Name Society is to concentrate the attention of Catholic men on the obligation of keeping the second Commandment of God. They are asked to pledge themselves to refrain from all perjury, swearing, cursing, blasphemy, and profanity and obscenity of every kind in speech. And if we are tempted to think that this does not seem to be a very lofty ideal to be upheld by any society, we must realise that it is not the ideal, but rather the essential condition without which none of the ideals in the realms of faith or morals would exist. For as we have seen, unless one has the proper respect for the name of the Almighty, one will hardly bother to worship God, to pray to God, or to have any respect for the other laws of God that regulate human relations. Thus the whole moral law will fall to the ground. Again, if one blasphemes the name of Jesus Christ, and mingles it with cursing, swear-

ing, and all manner of filthy and obscene language, as is so commonly done to-day: how can such a one be thought to have a strong faith in the Divinity of one for whom he will deliberately show such contempt? And if he have that gift of faith by his baptism and upbringing, how long will it remain with him before it is lost?

On the other hand, once engender in a man deep reverence for the Holy Name, and a determination in spite of what he hears around him to refrain from every mark of disrespect, we shall have gone a long way towards strengthening his faith and building up his loyalty and love for the person represented by that name. The Holy Name Society does all this and more, as we will see anon, for it appeals to the very best and most manly side of man. To his sense of decency and fairness: to his sense of fidelity and loyalty to his liege Lord and Leader.

The thirteenth century has been hailed as the greatest of all the Christian ages. Yet while it gave us the best that any century has given to the world in men of genius in all departments of learning, art and culture, it also produced the worst in the way of irreligion and the general debasing of morals, which in turn found vent in wars and political disruption, rapine and plunder. It was a century great in Saints and sinners.

The endeavour of the great saints was to bring the sinners back to the knowledge of God and to reverence and respect for His Name and His laws. So we read in the second nocturn of St. Louis that amongst the laws that he made in order to reform public morals, was one against blasphemy. This law alone gives some indication of how the name of God and of Jesus was being dishonoured at the time. The severity of the punishment imposed on culprits—they were to have their lips branded with a red-hot iron—shows the horror in which this sin was held by the saintly ruler. With that simple directness of those Ages of Faith, when first things were put first, St. Louis well

knew that no reform of society would be effected until men returned to due reverence for the Sacred Name of God.

But men are never converted to God by the force of law or the fear of punishments, so we are not surprised to find towards the last quarter of the same century that the reformation of this same abuse is given consideration by the highest authority in the Church—a General Council with the Pope at its head. It was indeed at the instance of the Supreme Pastor Gregory X that the Second General Council of Lyons passed as its final decree a measure calling for reform in regard to the reverence due to God in the churches, and especially that greater reverence be shown to the Holy Name of Jesus Christ. So eager was the Pope to make this statute of the Council efficacious that he himself immediately (September 20th, 1274) sent the following letter to the Master General of the Friars Preachers, Blessed John of Vercelli. This remarkable document constitutes the Charter of the Holy Name movement. It runs:

'GREGORY, Bishop, servant of the servants of God, to our beloved son, Master of the Order of Preachers, health and apostolic benediction: Recently in the Council of Lyons, we have judged it meet to order the frequenting of the Church with humility and devotion, and that there should be delivered pious instructions, calculated to please God, and to teach men and to nourish their souls. We have enjoined on the faithful who would there assemble, to revere in a particular manner that name which is above all names—the only name under heaven by which those who believe in it can be saved—the name of Jesus Christ who has purchased his people from their sins. And as it is written that every knee should bend at the Name of Jesus, we have recommended to each one to fulfil this precept, and that when they celebrate the sacred mysteries, they would give some honour to that glorious name by bending the knee of their hearts and by proving their devotion by the inclination of their heads. For this purpose we pray and earnestly exhort your charity, and we *enjoin*

on you by our apostolic authority that when you and your brothers announce the Word of God, you will endeavour to lead the people by the most efficacious discourses to perform what we have said, in order that you may receive the reward in the day of eternal remuneration.'

The Master General in his turn wasted no time in addressing on November 4th of the same year a strong encyclical letter to all the Provincials of the Order, commanding them in the name of the Pope and Council to preach everywhere this devotion to the Holy Name. 'Thus was born the great Holy Name Movement. It constituted the Church's answer in the thirteenth century to those who denied the Divinity of Christ, blasphemed His Holy Name and repudiated obedience to the Ten Commandments of God and the civil law of the land' (Rev. M. J. Ripple, O.P.).

Nothing could have been more in harmony with the mind of the Order of St. Dominic founded for the very purpose of teaching *Truth* to men who had been led astray by false teachers. Like the Apostles of old, they had been sent forth in the Name of Christ Jesus, and to preach His Name, for He alone is the 'way, the *truth* and the life'; and 'there is no other name under heaven whereby men must be saved.' We can imagine, then, how they rejoiced in this further commission of the Vicar of Christ to try and exalt this Name to the highest place of honour in the minds of men. They have been faithful to this commission, so that the obligation of promoting this devotion became part of the very Constitutions of the Order, and remains so to this day. In fact, Statute No. 804 of our Constitutions gives us the best summary of the primary aim of the Holy Name Society, and of how seriously the Order has taken its obligation to promote it, persevering in this work with greatest zeal until the present day. Here it is:

'Let our brethren take pains to spread the Society of the most Holy Name of God and of Jesus, established since the first century of the Order's existence to uproot the vice

of blasphemy; since it has the greatest power to rouse the minds of men to worship and reverence the same Holy Name with due religious devotion. And subject to the approval of the Bishops, we encourage the formation of diocesan and provincial federations of these societies, without prejudice to their canonical constitution, to *promote devotion to the most Holy Name and to increase faith in the divinity of our Saviour.*'

Nor were the Dominicans the only Order which helped the spread of the movement during the first centuries of its existence. The other great Order of friars, the Franciscans, were not slow to realise the key nature of this devotional movement, and how it struck at the very root cause of the irreligious spirit of the day. So we find two such mighty preachers of that Order as St. Bernardine of Sienna and St. John Capistran propagating this devotion and using the Litany of the Holy Name as an antidote to the havoc caused to the religious and civil life of Italy by the wars of the Guelphs and Ghibellines. They thus became the champions of the movement in that country.

It was, however, especially when the great Spanish empire reached the summit of its power under Charles V that the movement received its greatest impetus. His far-flung dominions in the old and new world embraced a multitude of different peoples, whose one bond of union was their common Catholic Faith. To a man as wise as Charles, it was a mere commonplace that the more reverence a man had for the name and authority of God, the more he would have for his King who was the Lord's anointed receiving authority from God. He saw in the Holy Name movement, which then as now inculcates reverence for all authority both civil and religious, something that was calculated to make men not only better servants of God, but better subjects of the King. 'Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's'; a society that fosters this twofold loyalty is constructed on the soundest lines. The Emperor gave it, therefore, his

strongest support, and it soon spread to all parts of his dominions, even unto the new world.

The great champion who did most to help this spread in Spain was the Dominican Didacus of Victoria. He realised that by its very nature and its primary object, by the constant need of some such instrument to achieve this object, this was no mere ephemeral movement, but one that would be as permanent as the Church itself. He set to work to provide such permanency by drawing up rules and constitutions, and so forming it into the society that we know to-day. On April 13th, 1564, Pope Pius solemnly raised the Holy Name Society to the dignity of a confraternity. It has been designated by various names such as, 'Confraternity of the Holy Name of God and of Jesus,' 'Confraternity of the Holy Name of Jesus,' and 'Confraternity against Oaths.' To-day it bears the simple but beautifully expressive name of, 'Holy Name Society.'

Few if any other societies have been backed so strongly and constantly by the highest authority in the Church. To a certain extent it can be said to be papal in origin, and it received constant encouragement from the Popes, especially those of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, who enriched it with many privileges and a great number of indulgences. No less than twenty-seven Popes have at one time or another given their blessing and approval to the Society. Pius V restricted its canonical erection to the Dominican Order.

I mentioned above its element of permanence. This is seen in what may be called its perpetual youth. Its history is not that of so many movements, *i.e.* origination, successful spread and then gradual decline. The Holy Name Society has come down to our own day, if anything, more vital and stronger than ever. If we wish proof of this we need only consider the remarkable success that the Society is having in some of the newer countries of the world at the present time. It will be sufficient for our purpose, and more pertinent to demonstrate this point, if we con-

fine ourselves to those three English-speaking countries whose people are predominantly of the same races as the inhabitants of the British Isles—namely, the United States, Australia and New Zealand.

If in the spiritual realm of the Church there is such a thing as a modern world, with modern problems, we should surely find it best exemplified in such countries as these; countries which, having no roots in the traditions of antiquity, have become most progressively modern. In their mental background these peoples are not so linked to the past as the older nations of Europe. Is it not, then, truly remarkable that the Holy Name Society, nearly seven centuries old, and not just any one of the innumerable present-day societies, should have made such a strong appeal to the manhood of these young countries—should have, indeed, captured their minds and hearts? This is exactly what it has done. It is THE society for men in these three countries, and it unites the Catholic manhood into a great phalanx, a vast army under a banner which bears the Holy Name of Jesus Christ their Leader. *Three million* there are in U.S.A., *one hundred thousand* in Australia, and even in New Zealand, where it has only been established a little more than a decade, and where the total Catholic population is only one hundred and eighty thousand, it yet numbers *ten thousand*. Neither are these mere names on paper, but represent enthusiastic members, who feel that it is a privilege to be the guard of honour to Jesus Christ their King, and who to the best of their ability fulfil their obligations. In this I speak from personal experience, having been in charge of two city parishes which between them could muster a thousand strong in Holy Name men.

The difficulty of getting the present generation of Catholics to attend evening services is the same all over the world. Priests, already tired by a heavy day's work, are anything but stimulated by half-empty benches. Small wonder that their sermons are uninspiring. Holy Name

Sunday, the second Sunday of the month, was the one outstanding exception. In the morning there would be the monthly general Communion (one of the four obligations of the Society), always a consoling sight for the Pastor, this coming of the youth and manhood of his flock in their hundreds, to receive and be strengthened by the Body and Blood of the Lord Jesus, whose name they delight to honour. Then in the evening their monthly Service in honour of the Holy Name. (This is also one of their undertakings, the other two being cleanness and decency in speech and conduct, and the wearing of the Holy Name badge—a very neat and artistic affair—constantly, and so professing the name of Christ before the world.) Normally the service consists of the *Office of the Holy Name*, Hymns in honour of the Holy Name, sermon, the renewal of the *Holy Name Pledge* and Benediction. It was the one Sunday night on which one hoped one's turn to preach would fall. In one parish there were five of us, but all were of like mind in this, so one had to play fair. Any missionary will tell you that there is nothing more inspiring both to see and to address than a fine gathering of men. And when five hundred voices had finished singing with spirit that deep-toned sonorous martial hymn, worthy of being the marching song of this great legion of Jesus Christ:

Holy God we praise thy name ;
Lord of all we bow before thee !
All on earth thy sceptre own,
All in heaven above adore thee.
Infinite thy vast domain,
Everlasting is thy reign ;

then one could ascend the pulpit, borne up, as it were, on the crest of this inspiring wave of devotion which has just surged forward to break at the foot of the Altar as before the Throne of God.

The climax of the service was reached when at the end of the sermon the men sprang to attention and like the

thunder of heavenly artillery came the renewal of the Holy Name Pledge:

Blessed be God :
 Blessed be His Holy Name :
 Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true man :
 Blessed be the Name of Jesus.
 I believe, O Jesus,
 That Thou art the Christ
 The Son of the living God.
 I believe all the truths
 Which the Holy Catholic Church
 Believes and teaches.
 I proclaim my love
 For the Vicar of Christ on earth.
 I promise to give good example
 By the regular practice of my faith.
 In honour of the Divine Name,
 I pledge myself against perjury,
 Blasphemy, profanity and obscene speech.
 I pledge my loyalty to my King,
 To the flag of my country,
 And to the God-given principles
 Of freedom, justice and happiness
 For which it stands.
 I pledge my support
 To all lawful authority,
 Both civil and religious.
 I dedicate my manhood
 To the honour of the Sacred Name of Jesus,
 And beg that He will keep me faithful
 To these pledges
 Until death.

But if five hundred men gathered together to profess and praise the Holy Name of Jesus Christ is something inspiring, what must it be when we have five thousand, or fifty thousand, as happens frequently in national Holy Name Rallies? In the United States the number at one of these Rallies has even reached half a million. The effect of such demonstrations of faith, like the men's night at a Eucharistic Congress, must be seen to be realised fully,

but at least we have imaginations, and it would be an excellent thing if we used them along this line.

As far as I can ascertain from consulting the Catholic Directory, the Holy Name Society, for reasons quite unknown to me, does not seem to exist in this country, at least as an active society of laymen functioning as described above; although it does exist as a confraternity canonically erected in all Dominican churches and perhaps in some others. Indeed, most people, including the clergy (I am open to correction here), know little or nothing about the larger life of this Society. What little they do know, in view of its phenomenal success in America, has inclined them to think that it is a product of American big business methods in religion. So they have perhaps not unnaturally conceived an instinctive antipathy towards it. Here is a paragraph from the letter of a London priest on the subject, which speaks volumes: 'Some time ago a young Australian sailor came to see me with a grievance. He wanted to know why there was no Holy Name Society in this parish. I could faintly remember the name in connection with something or other, but to gain time I asked him how it was getting on in Australia. He spoke, not eloquently, but with intense fervour for twenty-five minutes in reply to my question, and from being a little tolerant I became very interested.' I may add that he became not only interested but very active in the matter. I feel sure he will not mind my using this without his permission.

The reason, then, why I have instanced, and perhaps 'rubbed in' the facts about this Society in America, Australia and New Zealand, is not that, as many erroneously think, these countries have given this society to the Church, and that we should receive it from them. If this were so, it would no doubt be the right thing to do, as the value of a thing must be judged by its fruits, not by its nationality. But this is not so. As we have seen, the new world received this society as it received its faith,

as its best gift from the old world. But what the new nations have surely done, with their genius for the practical and progressive, is to show how something we have apathetically neglected can be made one of the greatest instruments for the good of religion and society at the present time. We must not forget Our Lord's warning about the stone which the builders rejected becoming the head and corner-stone. Neither must we forget the fact that all the hierarchy and clergy of these countries are at one in their support for and loyalty to this Society which has always justified itself in their eyes. Even as in New Zealand where there are no resident Dominicans to promote it, I have seen how it will travel on its own steam.

Australians we know are famous for their remarkable gift of bad language and blasphemy. Given an even break the Australian sailor, I assure you, can hold his own even with the proverbial trooper for swearing. What an eloquent testimonial, then, to the influence of the Holy Name Society, and to the fine spirit of loyalty it begets in its members, when we find that it is an Australian sailor who lands in England and seeks not the pub, or the brothel, but a branch of the Holy Name Society, and 'findeth none.' The saddest part of all is to think that just because he is a Holy Name man he would be severely hampered in expressing just what he thought of this England. But all joking aside, we must not forget that this sailor with a grievance was voicing the sentiments of hundreds of Catholics from 'down under' whom the ghastly business of war has brought once more to these shores. In their own countries, where they are not so much in need of the hand of fellowship and friendship, they can always find it. For the Holy Name man wears constantly his Holy Name badge or button. It means nothing to anyone else, but what a joy to the lonely soldier or sailor wandering homesick amidst the crowds in London to see the familiar badge and to know that here is one who is already his friend because of the common tie of brother-

hood in the Holy Name of Jesus. Perhaps it is not too severe to suggest that the Australian sailor and those hundreds for whom he may be considered to speak are scandalised in this regard, and that some of us in this country are responsible for being the cause of that scandal.

Much could be said about this Society from the point of view of the true spirit of patriotism, and the real civic virtues for which it stands and which it engenders. No more eloquent testimony could be given than that of one of the great men of modern times, one whose name is known throughout the world, and one, surely, who was qualified to judge and speak on this side of the case—namely, the late *President Theodore Roosevelt*. In 1903 he himself, a non-Catholic, attended a Holy Name Rally and spoke as follows:

‘I am particularly glad to see such a society as this flourishing, as your society has flourished, because the future welfare of our nation depends upon the way in which we can combine in our men, in our young men, decency and strength. I hail the work of this society as typifying one of those forces which tend to the betterment and uplifting of our social system. Our whole effort should be towards securing a combination of the strong qualities which we term virtues in the breast of every good citizen. I expect you to be strong. I would not respect you if you were not. I do not want to see Christianity professed only by weaklings; I want to see it a moving spirit amongst men of strength. I do not expect you to lose one particle of your strength or courage by being decent. On the contrary, I should hope to see each man who is a member of this society, from his membership in it become all the fitter to do the rough work of the world, all the fitter to work in time of peace; and if, which heaven forbid, war should come, all the fitter to fight in time of war.’

And to-day it is war. Not an ordinary war between nations for who shall rule Europe or the world, but a war to the death between the forces of good and evil, between

the forces of God and anti-God. Each side has its prophets, for we know that the masses of men have ever been influenced by the personality of a great leader, the power that is conjured up by a magic name, rather than by a theory or a system. For the spread of evil and falsehood there always arises the man of evil genius, the false prophet who deceives very many and leads them to destruction. It has happened to-day more violently than ever before. False loyalty to false prophets has plunged the world into the horrors of this super-war. Millions of men have been captured by the evil magnetism of a great name. Little in reality do the majority know of the true meaning of Nazism, Communism or Fascism. But they do know, they have been well taught, the name of Hitler, Stalin or Mussolini. They hail it raising the hand aloft as the supreme name which is above all names; to them it is the name of a deity to which they give blind faith and a fanatical loyalty. The slightest dishonour to that name receives the severest punishment, and even death.

There is only one way these leaders can be conquered, that is by the power of the Name of Jesus Christ. It is the 'one Name that is above all names'; it is a name known to all, on the lips of all, but for most as a blasphemy. If men in Germany dishonoured and befouled the name of Hitler as so many do that of Christ, they would die. Surely there is here a great work to be done to teach this lesson to the world, for until it is learnt there will be no solution of our problems, and no peace. This is the very work the Holy Name Society would do if it were established in this country. Never before was it so badly needed as to-day. Listen to the words addressed to it by our late Holy Father Pius XI: 'The men of the Holy Name have a valuable contribution to make towards the solution of the problems that confront modern society. By word and by deed, by advice and by example, they can aid their fellows who have not the clear light of faith, to rediscover the truth that the only goal worthy of human striving is

God, and the only way to reach that goal is by the following of Christ'

The Sovereign Pontiff invites the members of the society to come even closer to the One whose name they bear, to enter into ever more intimate union with Him by frequent and devout use of prayer, the Sacrifice and the Sacraments. Let them give themselves to a fuller study, according to their abilities, of the everlasting truths of their holy religion, and to the study of the problems that agitate the minds of men to-day in the light of these unchanging truths. Thus under the authoritative guidance of their bishops . . . and of their priests . . . they will prepare themselves adequately for the tasks of to-morrow in the fields of Catholic thought and Catholic Action. If we may judge from the signs of the times, those tasks will be so heavy and so demanding as to call for the best efforts of which this magnificent body of men is capable.

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