

## THE APOSTOLATE OF THE ROSARY HOUR

The English translation of a program given by Fr. Justin Figas on Nov. 7, 1937

Witam Was zacni Rodacy i miłe Rodaczki słowami: Niech będzie pochwalony Jezus Chrystus!

**O. Marcel Sokalski:** Dzisiaj rozpoczynamy nowy sezon nadawania programów Godziny Różańcowej. Pierwsza audycja o naszym apostołacie będzie wyjątkowo nadana w języku angielskim. Zaszczycił nas swoją obecnością Prowincjał naszego Zakonu Franciszkańskiego, O. James *McCurry*. Za tydzień audycja będzie znowu nadawana w języku polskim.

Today's program entitled "The apostolate of the Rosary Hour" is the English translation of a program given by Fr. Justin Figas on Nov. 7, 1937, the presenter of this program is Fr James *McCurry* OFM Conv. Fr. *McCurry* is the provincial of the St. Anthony province of Franciscan friars in Ellicott City, Maryland. In the talk today Fr. Justin explains the role of the Rosary Hour in promoting the Polish language and their heritage while living in America.

**Fr. James *McCurry*:** I greet all of you my dear fellow country-men with the words: "Praised be Jesus Christ.

It was more or less seven years ago that I was called to the office of the Archbishop in Montreal, Canada I hadn't the faintest idea why Archbishop Deschamps had summoned me by telegram to come to meet with him. As I was on my way there I felt irritated and a little frightened.

Shyly I presented myself at the door of the Archbishop's palace. After I had celebrated mass at the cathedral, I learned that the archbishop was waiting for me. After greeting me, he immediately began to complain about the problems and the misunderstandings among the Polish people in Montreal. Embarrassed I listened silent.

When he had finished, with the respect due to a person with spiritual authority yet, with an understanding of the Polish soul, I began to explain to the Archbishop that our Polish people had their faults, but they also possess many virtues. One must only learn how to get along with them and learn to understand them. Despite their apparent unruliness, our Polish people are truly honest, peaceful and hard-working people who love God and their neighbor.

Now it was the Archbishop's turn to listen to my explanations and arguments. When I had finished, and I had been speaking for quite a while, the Archbishop smiled and said, "The Polish people have a good lawyer and a defender in you. Do you know what I shall do? I will place these Polish people under the protection of your Franciscan Fathers. I will see what they will do with them! However, I insist on one thing – That your Franciscan Fathers teach them religion, but, only in the Polish language. If they will love their Polish language, they will also love their faith and they will remain faithful to their faith as long as they remain faithful to their language. You must all speak to them about these affairs not only in church, but go to them on the street corners, go to their homes, go to all their meetings and everywhere else where they are so that you may reach everyone, convince everyone and convert everyone!

As I was returning to Buffalo, I couldn't forget the words of the Archbishop. It was then that I conceived the idea of speaking on the radio as a way of reaching the widest audience of our fellow-countrymen. Today, I see the finger of Divine Providence in this because, despite various difficulties and unpleasant circumstances, with the help and cooperation of intelligent people, it will soon be seven years that we are broadcasting the program of "The Rosary Hour". Today, allow me to simply and sincerely explain the aim of this program: "The Apostolate of the Rosary Hour".

The affairs of God, national affairs and matters pertaining to being good citizens and then explain to you the importance of the meaning of all these matters – This is the aim of this radio program:

The times that we live in are significant, critical and decisive. Probably never like today has there ever been such an endless battle over the conquest and the possession of human souls. It seems that suspicion, hatred and desire for revenge have opened wide their wings in order to cover all of humanity and compel her to enter their ranks. The world is full of Apostles of strange and deceitful teachings. These people do not spare total destruction of the idea of God. Within the boundaries of states they call out that there is no room for God. Besides they say that today God is unnecessary and useless; therefore there is no need to confuse people with a teaching that has long been obsolete.

People who are caught up in the pursuit for daily bread and bewildered by the battles for prosperity have no time and often do not even want to waste time in order to determine who is speaking the truth and who is spreading lies.

They listen to the promises of those who want to create here on earth some kind of paradise that up until now has been unknown. In reality, these lessons only destroy those qualities which up until now had ennobled man and brought him happiness – as much as was then possible.

I repeat, they only destroy and they do not know how to build anything. Instead of paradise, they create hell on earth. Individuals lose their sense of being free people and they become slaves in the full sense of the word. These people cease living as noble and intelligent individuals. They not only fall to the level of unintelligent animals, but they fall even lower than that! For what can a person be in whose soul God has been murdered? Or in whose heart that weak spark of faith has been forcibly mothered? Or one from whose mind that feeling was stolen of being a creature that belongs to God? Or one in whose conscience all responsibility before Divine and natural authority has been stifled? A person who has been so robbed and denuded loses all sense of human dignity and becomes an animal. Therefore, he lives like an animal! These words may sound arrogant and crude. However, they agree with the facts of life.

Besides all that, the Rosary Hour aims to announce the truth. It aims to announce the truth that is not new but to announce it in a different way – different from the usual, accepted way. It aims to discuss matters referring to God as they are involved in matters referring to people. It aims to point out the relationships and connections joining the 'Creator with his creatures. It aims to point out that God is good, merciful and caring about the happiness of people, not only after death but already here, on this side of the grave. It aims to show that man is the masterpiece of all of God's creations for man possesses something which elevates him above all other creation and brings him close not only to angels but to God Himself. It aims to show that is only man; if he holds on to God and conforms his life to the commands and prohibitions of the Lord he can partially enjoy peace, satisfaction and happiness.

Every one of us is in this world just like a little child. Can it be possible that this little child can behave in live more intelligently than we who are older and more mature? Just look – a child never believes in himself for he understands that he is helpless and weak. So, what does he do? He begs his father or mother to give him their hand. He believes in their love, their strength and their protection. He places his little hand into the protective hand of his caring father and his loving mother. Now he feels safer and happier.

If everybody today, instead of listening to persuasions and deceitful envoys and would listen to the Divine teachings and would place their work-worn hands into the Hands of their Loving God, God would guide them on the road of life and light. People would be filled with true and lasting happiness.

On this program of the Rosary Hour, we will also deal with matters that refer to our nationality. It is true that our Polish people are good and possess more virtue and good points than many others. Our people praise God, love their neighbor and love their family. They are as industrious as bees and a thrifty as a squirrel! Our simple folk possess so many, so very many virtues! However, since they were created from clay, they have a long way yet to go to perfection and they themselves admit to having many faults. They want to rid themselves of all gullibility, sluggishness, suspicion and jealousy! This Rosary Hour aims to help them to do that! It will also serve to remind them that they should be proud of their Polish heritage and that they should speak in Polish and read Polish newspapers and good Polish books. Let everyone say what they want but two holy things given us as a holy legacy by our parent s are these to heavenly gifts: Our Polish language and our Faith!

We need our Polish language and it is very useful –just like our daily bread. The renunciation of our nationality does not help us in any way. I have never in my life heard of an incident in which a person had renounced his language and Polish nationality and became a better and exemplary American citizen. But – on the contrary, I personally know of a few cases where they repudiated their nationality and they not only ended up behind bars but they ended up in the electric chair!

Finally, on this Rosary Hour, we shall discuss and review matters pertaining to our American citizenship. You, my fellow country-men should strive to become model citizens of the United States and conscientiously fulfill all your duties for our fathers and mothers, and we, too, have chosen this county as our homeland. This country has opened for them and for us the road to freedom of faith and of speech. It gave them into their hands a piece of hard and dry bread and it gives us the opportunity to better our existence. Therefore, out of gratitude we should love this country, obey all of its laws and respect all authority! We should all, the young and the old, be interested in American affairs.

We should all not only learn to speak the English language but become so proficient in English so that no one would be able to sell us out, either politically, socially or otherwise. Our Polish people, 'till this day still do not understand their own power and their own talents! Instead of standing hard and demanding not only our privileges but what is justly ours by law as citizens of this country, our people out of habit still go the old way, trampled down by the heavy feet and torn boots of our peasant fathers about whom during three annexations it was said that a Pole is like an ox who was created in order to be pushed or driven throughout his life. Therefore he walked patiently with a pickax, a pitchfork and a shovel in his hand. Our forefathers convinced themselves that a piece of dry bread and a piece of poorest quality of meat was sufficient for them.

Meanwhile, there were the others who ate the softest bread that was spread on one side with butter and on the other side with jam. Besides that, they were gorging themselves on the most delicious steaks and other meats.

It is high time that we abolish that idea of our inferiority once and for always. This also is in aim of this Rosary Hour. You tell me that the plan of this program is great, profitable and praiseworthy. However, we doubt that anything can be done for our people who are divided into camps and parties that assemble under banners on which various slogans are written which are pompous and sublime yet they are mostly false and deceptive.

In my talks, I will try to rise above all of that. I come to you, my dear fellow country-men and women with the crucifix in my hand and with God's truths on my lips. I will stick by the principles of our poetess, Konopnicka:

"My road is neither to the left nor to the right

I go straight to that poor little hut

That reflects its misery openly

Without loud slogans, divisions and fights!"

"My words, like the swish of a whip on those who are pliable will jar your ears" which want to lull your conscience in an elusive peace. My words will be a beating on the heart, on your corpulence that is settled and clotted by your personal lack of movement! I will not stand before a microphone to speak in order to win you applause, but in order to awaken you, to frighten you and to force you to think. I will not speak in order to delight your ears with sweet phrases or with a refined and educated talk, but in order to look into your conscience to examine your heart, to reach out to souls that are worried, uncertain and anxious. My voice may seem to be the voice of one calling out from the wilderness, but through this voice, all those will speak who are dying from spiritual and physical pains; all those who are burdened under the weight of the laws of society and all those who are held in contempt by the merciless

"I will fly like that wounded bird

Close to the ground where it is dying in pain

So that I may enfold the sad millions in my living arms

And though everyone is silent

I with my blue color

Will shake them up with my protest!

I hope to sow quiet, harmony and warmth.

I hope to turn your eyes towards heaven and convince you.

The stars are shining; they shine in the high heavens

Just want to believe, sir, that that is all for you"

In exchange for the work in this day, I beg all of you, all without any exceptions, for help. May it be the very smallest, but please send it. With your material and kind cooperation, we will accomplish much –for God, for our Polish character and for our citizenship!

**Fr. Marcel:** This was just one of hundreds of talks that were given by Fr. Justin on his weekly programs. We are currently translating these talks into English and we have many posted on our web site for you to read or download. Please visit our web site at: [www.Rosaryhour.com](http://www.Rosaryhour.com) for these and many more interesting topics and links. Donations to help the Rosary Hour continue with its radio ministry can be made to: Father Justin Rosary Hour, P.O. Box 454, Athol Springs, New York 14010.