Where Catholics and Non-Catholics Should Unite

Bishop McFaul Says They Should Work Together for the Stamping Out of Evil in a Spirit of Patriotism and Service

By the Right Rev. James A. McFaul,
Father of the Federation

In my mind there is yet the slightest doubt that if the Catholics and the non-Catholics, the Jews and the Gentiles, united for the stamping out of evil excesses would crown our efforts in many directions.

The American Federation of Catholic Societies, which has as its declared object the promotion of spiritual and religious standards, is the indispensable support. In

with citizens of every creed and racial strains in the furrows of sound morality. There is such wonderful ac-

cCORD in many ways that all who believe in decency and honor should be allies.

The Catholic Church has been assailed in some quarters as a sect, but the answer to this charge is that the Church has been a dictatorship of the people. Religion is a private affair between the individual and his God. The

would be involved. It does stand with them, however, on a broad platform of American citizenship. Although the founders of the Republic avoided with the utmost care any acceptance of a mission to the Church and State, this is a country which is governed and inspired by ethical and religious standards.

General Washington said that all dispensations and orders of society must rest on a foundation of reason; and, for the sake of the commonwealth, the endeavor is indispensable.

In recent years by my old friends in the homeland. We learn that the present conditions and the meetings of the Catholic laymen were held in other European countries and served to bring the people in as leaders for the discussion of questions affecting the well-being of the Church.

To prevent disaster falling upon any

land, those on the watch towers of reli-

gion should be ever on guard. It is their duty to sound the alarm before it is too late. In a vein where there are so many evidences of material prosper-

ity, where wealth and luxury abound, we must sound the horns for signs of peril. It is in the spirit of patriotism and of service, therefore, that the American Federation desires to bring itself to its religious and its national

so that when any great question arises, when any moral danger is described, it can extend the hand of cooperation. The Federation can say, for instance, on the matter of divorce to the Episcopalians, to secular or civic societies, to legislators, to all citizens: "Come, let us work together. In hand for the maintenance of moral standards, for the education of youth, for the uplifting of humanity,"

vain, as he well expressed it, "would any one claim the tribute of patriotism who would labor to overthrow those great pillars of human happiness?" It is es-

sential to the weal of the State that the counsel of the leaders of religion should be heard. I need hardly say that moral decadence means national deterioration. The disregard of domestic ties, the loosening of restraints remit in the death of character.

The clergy are consulted regarding the policies of the Church, but in reality not under the direct control of the hierarchy, although the Bishops are on the Advisory Council. The non-Catholics have with their fellow-citizens in business and in all relations of life give to these deliber-

ations a broad latitude, and often enrich their value. The inflation which, during the past few years, has been felt by our citizens to the extent of the nation and enable them to impress upon all with what smallness of life is that a church has a message for the community at large. Therefore, the Catholic Church is without its fold—and without its fold—that it would aid in every phase to advance pure govern-

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The American Federation of Catholic Societies is primarily a laymen's move-

ment, and was the direct outgrowth of the Knights of St. John. From the first, I thought would sponsor the Catholic Church and previous to the active steps, as I did, in the organization of the movement, I con-
municated with prominent leaders of the Church, who induced it as a move in the right direction, and I turned to the idea of joining the federation was Archbishop Messmer, who firmly believe that German co-

religionists counted for much.

The first general convention was held in February, 1890, and it was decided at that date the federation had been steadily increasing, and has been steadily increasing. I doubt not that the coming convention in the City of New York will be the largest of the kind ever assembled.

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In the past been much misunderstood for
taking the position that religion and
secular instruction should go hand in
hand, and yet its view is good American
document. Was it not Daniel Webster
who pointed out that the school should
inculcate the fear of God as well as train
the intellect?

Should children be brought up without
the knowledge of the Decalogue and the
Golden Rule? Lately there has come
into the public prints much discussion of
the so-called Gypsy system, which strives
to correct what is in reality a serious de-
fect in public education by providing
that children may receive religious in-
struction for a part of the day, but not
in the public school buildings. The
Catholic Church has consistently stood
for its parish schools. The federation has
for years sought to demonstrate to the
American people that it is unjust to tax
the Catholics for the support of schools
to which they do not send their children.
This is the issue which has been made
clear by the federation, and it is well
worth considering by all classes of the
community.

It is far from our purpose, however,
to be the carping critic. We are not
seeking any undue advantage and would
antagonize none. We, as Catholics, know
the average non-Catholic American to be
a man of broad mind and large heart.
The Catholic is no alien in the United
States, for his ancestors, as did those of
men of other creeds, fought for the lib-
erty of the nation. The spirit of our fed-
eration in so far as it reaches out to the
non-Catholic citizenship is one of frank
discussion among those of the same birth-
right.

We are not devoted to any political
purpose, for as there are men of all
parties in the organization, it is mani-
festly absurd that such an organization
should seek to control through partisan
activities. Catholics, as do all other citi-
zens, safeguard their interests and re-
cord their convictions at the ballot box.

There is nothing which the federation
may ask which is not in accordance with
the principles on which this République
was founded. It does not consider Cath-
obles as a law unto themselves, but as
free men entitled to rights and privi-
leges. It does not demand, it does not
seek to carry its point by assault—it ap-
peals to enlightened public opinion. The
federation looks upon publicity as a
searchlight. It has no secret policy. It
does not sap and mine. It is frankly an
organization of societies for the advance-
ment of the civil, religious, and social in-
terests of Catholics. It is an instrument
attuned by conservatism for radiating
throughout the world the waves of Cath-
oblic opinion on important issues of the
day.

Its object may be described as twofold.
It is of value not only to the authorities
of the Catholic Church to have its laity
freely discuss matters of vital interest.
Through the medium of the press it
serves to give non-Catholics a clear idea
of what the Church means. It shows
many points where men of all ports and
conditions—may agree on policies for the
betterment of the human race. It is a
powerful organization which is growing
every year in influence, as its purposes
are better understood both by those with-
in and those beyond its ranks.

Its function is through publicity and by
precept and example to uphold the ten-
ets of the Catholic Church, and if neces-
sary to become its champion. If we can
make the meaning of Catholicism clear
through the federation and similar agen-
cies, the Church will need no defenders.

It has been fifteen years since the fed-
eration came into being, and in that time
it has banished the ogres of distrust and
the demons of prejudice. The men of
America, Catholic and non-Catholic, are
realizing more and more the marvelous
and beneficent influence of a Church
which for ages past has been the con-
servator of liberty and the puladin of
free institutions.