

through the routine of going to Mass, Holy Communion and rattle all the small faults of daily life in the confessional. And yet he or she can miss out and omit the more important, the real essentials like justice, honesty, respect for the rights of others and a long, long list of positive, dynamic truths. Why What's wrong?

Human weakness, human greed, things, possessions, usually make a Christian follow the line of least resistance. Greed and pride make him a Christian shell without a Christian soul. And so Christianity always becomes an opium, a drug, a sedative, an escape for our people. But the real Christian who is the salt of the earth, he sees the full message of Christ. He treats all people with rights — the right to live, the right to be happy, the right to be free, — rights given them by God because they are human beings with a future in God and working with Christ in transforming this world. The real Christian, the Christian who is a revolutionary Christian, sees confession as a means for self-reform with the view to be a better Christian not for his own image but towards a better relationship with others. He sees the Mass and Holy Communion as the focus of his oneness with all people, his identification with them and therefore his sharing with them of Christ and the riches Christ bestowed specially in the goods of the earth. The real Christian sees that the world and all its riches as ours to share, not mine alone to use. This will mean, if he sees this in all his daily affairs, that he will have less of the goods of the earth because he has shared them with others. But he will have more of the intangibles — peace, fulfillment, happiness deep, deep down. He will be a Soul Christian. He will put guts and blood in his Christianity. Christianity is not meant to be a wishy-washy affair; a goody-goody affair with God and us. It is life. And life is joy, life is sorrow, life is sharing, life is giving, life is receiving, live is living and life is also dying.

**Trinity Sunday (May 24)**

### SELF-IMPROVEMENT

Sometime ago I read something like this: "Before building a wall around yourself, find out first what you're keeping out and what you're keeping in."

High wall around residences are signs of insecurity, of fear. An outstanding sociologist, Fr. Senden, of the Asian Social Institute tells us this: "really, when we build walls of hollow blocks or mental walls of aloofness, shyness or indifference, we lock ourselves in and others out. We think we are secure within our island with the shorelines of walls. We say thank God, they can't get in. I am an island. Who needs friends anyway." Well, we all do need friends. We all and everyone need someone to talk to, someone to listen, someone to care.

High walls of hollow blocks and concrete are only signs of the mental and emotional walls we have, unconsciously perhaps, built in our minds and hearts. These mental and emotional wall have grown out of fear, greed and selfishness. Why will, for example, a landowner be aloof and distant from his tenants. He says he's too busy. Yes, so he says but underneath it all, he is afraid to find out for himself, the real miserable conditions his tenants are in. He is afraid that the truth will break the seeming peace within the island he has surrounded with walls. He is afraid that the dirty fingers scooping rice, breaking off a piece of dried fish might point at him in his dreams.

Thus with our landowners, so with our business leaders, so with our Church leaders and political leaders too. Why build walls? We are really very much alike. Same fears, same doubts, troubles, worries, joys, ambitions. We are hungry to be loved, to be respected and accepted. If we only break down these mental and emotional walls and get out of ourselves, we will feel more free. If we only go to people as persons, then we will realize that people everywhere, like ourselves, have the same basic needs, emotions and dreams. Then perhaps when we realize this, equity and justice will follow. Is this being idealistic? No. It is being realistic. But when we tear down the walls we don't, of ourselves, tear them down and later the walls will come down with the flood of hatred and resentment. And this is being realistic too.

We have to build this person to person bond between landowner and tenants, between employer and employee, between priests and people, between parents and children, teachers and students, government officials and people. It will mean just talking, listening and giving one's self to one another. It will mean not a bond of "utang na loob," it would mean a tie of respect. Respect for the person is the approach. If we

give respect, then we would get respect. It will mean that we will abhor any "utang na loob" relationship. No doubt this relationship as part of the relationship and not abuse it, or capitalize on it, then it is kept in its place. There is Christian humility also, true Christian love because we do not seek ourselves but we seek the other. In today's Gospel Christ said to us: Go therefore, make disciples of all nations. He says: "Go to people, go baptize them, go teach them." In other words to open out, go to people, to persons and make them disciples of the God of love, by being yourself the agents of love. And it must be love not based on a respectful attitude, a respect for the human person in everyone, yes, in all and each one.

**Corpus Christi Sunday (May 31)**

### GIFT OF SELF

Last Christmas I sent a card. It is homemade card which says: "this is my best Christmas gift to you — ME."

Yes, the first Christmas gift was precisely that. The first Christmas gift was the giver Himself.. God gave Himself to us in human form that is acceptable and visible to us. When He went back home to his father, he still gave us Himself. He said to us; "Take this, it is my Body, drink this, This is my Blood." His Body, his Blood he gives to us, Himself, in the form of food, food for ourself, food to be digested and to become one within us. We use things to express the giving of ourselves to others, hence gifts, things but there must be the giving of ourselves. So often we have people in business, people who own land, who give out, who dole out gift to the tenants to the employees but to them these gifts, are meaningless because they don't give of themselves, their gifts only tie down their people, their tenants and their employees, to themselves. Often, we have heard these words coming from business people and land-owners and others; "Sure, I know what they are like, good for nothing, always wanting to have everything done for them, this I know what they are like, they are opportunists." Once we talked like that, then we eliminate any possibility of discovering who they are, we eliminate the possibility of being friends, we eliminate dialogue. A solution to a social problem is certainly this: to start to think of people as who, and not as what, as persons not as things, not as votes, not as savings on expenses, not