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Lenten Meditation: Excerpts from Noonday Sermon, 1939

O.P. Kretzmann

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*So - John
Copy for Adam & San Diego*

EXCERPTS FROM NOONDAY SERMON -- Monday, March 13, 1939 -- St. Louis, Mo.

Lenten Sermon

O. P. Kretzmann

*The Power and the Glory.
(Excerpts from San Diego address)*

Today we again hear loud voices that the day of Christ and His Church is done. This is not true. The Church is perennially young. The promise "I am with you alway even unto the end of the world" was spoken not only to the Church of the year 33 or 1517, but also to the Church of ^{1938.} 1939. It is an eternal truth and a present reality, as true here in ^{San Diego} ~~Saint Louis~~ today as when it was written down nineteen hundred years ago. Everything else may change, the truths by which men live may sink into chaos and night, the world may grow weary and old, but in the Church is the fountain of eternal youth.

It is true that today the Church seems to be beaten back from one area of human life after another. It must often live on the crumbs of man's time and talents. It bears the sad weight of thousands of souls who have never even understood her life and mission in the world. And yet God has never lied and He will not lie to us. It is the day of His power. Behind every Christian in the modern world stands the glory and power of two thousand years, the song of the angels over Bethlehem, a young man out of Nazareth, a new hope for the hearts of men, a bitter hour on Calvary, and a shining hour in a garden. This is our history.

And the end is not yet. Today we may feel that the center of power has finally shifted. Surely men no longer live and die for God and Christ and His Church. They live by guns and fear and hate. They follow hypnotic voices who shout to the ends of the earth. They die for blood and race and soil. And yet it is still the day of God's power.

Excerpts from Noonday Sermon -- Monday, March 13, 1939 -- St. Louis, Mo.

O. P. Kretzmann

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It is strange how often modern man, pausing for a moment in the madness of life without God, sees the power and the glory of the Crucified on the dark horizons of His world. The very forces now aligned against Christ and His Church are the most striking testimony to His continuing power. Somehow they cannot leave Him alone. No one in the world today hates Caesar or Napoleon. Men do not hate the dead. Hate dies when the object hated dies. Men no longer clench their fists against a Bismarck or stand guard over the tomb of a Nelson. But they still clench their fists against Christ and they still stand guard over His tomb. They say He is helpless and dead. But they pour out literature against Him and His Church, they build philosophies of government and life constructed to shut Him out, they clench their fists when His very name is mentioned. Why? It is the day of His power. Men do not fight ghosts.

This absolute confidence has always been the secret of Christian faith and courage. Only the believing heart has the courage which will make our succession of common days a triumphant march to a better world. Men have always sought the fountain of eternal youth. It is today where it always has been, in the eternal fountain of the atoning blood of Him Who still rules the universe with the hand of His power. He is Lord of His enemies.