Denis the Carthusian

COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Enarratio in Evangelium secundum Lucam

From the Latin of the Montreuil edition of his works

English translation

Contributed to Mind of the Church by a friend of the library who wishes to remain anonymous

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About this translation

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Tome 11: The Prologue and Luke 1–9

Luke 1A: Prologue and Law of the Gospel

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Prologue

"I will yet enlighten all men as the morning light, and I will declare it even to the far off, and I will enlighten all that hope in the Lord, and will leave her to them that seek wisdom" (Ecclus. 24:44–46).

As Ambrose says, divine Scripture makes void the discipline of worldly wisdom, which is more tinted with the ambit of words than supported by the reason of things—that is, it is more emptily adorned in words than established by reason and truth. For many errors and contrary opinions are found in philosophical science; but in sacred Scripture the highest concord and inviolate truth are contained. In holy Scripture, finally, even those things are found which the philosophers thought wonderful. For they esteemed three things chief, namely a threefold wisdom—natural, moral, and rational—which are known to be and to be contained far more excellently in the divine Scriptures, in the Old Testament as in the New. This is shown in the three books of Solomon: in the book of Proverbs he wrote moral or ethical wisdom, in Ecclesiastes natural wisdom, in the Canticle of Canticles rational and moral wisdom together. In the New Testament also, natural wisdom shines forth chiefly in the Gospel of St. John, moral wisdom in the Gospel according to Matthew, rational wisdom in the Gospel of Blessed Luke. For Luke is more of a historian, and relates more fully the miracles of Christ by which evangelical truth is proved. Matthew, however, has set forth more clearly the precepts of living and the moral teachings of Christ. John speaks more sublimely of the divinity of Christ. Yet each of these wisdoms is found in each Evangelist.

For the clearer understanding of this it is needful to observe that, as Augustine recounts in the eighth book of *The City of God*, the pursuit of wisdom is concerned with two things, namely action and contemplation. For this reason one part of wisdom is called active or practical, the other contemplative: of which the active belongs to the ordering of life and the forming of morals, the contemplative aims at beholding the natures of things and the causes of nature. Socrates therefore devoted himself more to the active, Pythagoras to the contemplative. But Plato, joining both, is praised as having perfected philosophy, which he divided into three parts, namely: the moral, which is concerned with action; the natural, which is assigned to contemplation; the rational, by which the true is discerned from the false, which, though necessary for action and contemplation, belongs yet more to contemplation. Therefore this threefold division of philosophy does not contradict the distinction by which it was said that all the pursuit of wisdom consists in action and contemplation.

Finally, according to Augustine in the book aforesaid, the more celebrated Platonists thought something of this kind about God: that in Him is found the cause of subsisting, the reason of understanding, and the order of living; of which three the first belongs to the natural, the second to the rational, the third to the moral part or species of philosophy. Since therefore theology, revealed from above, considers these three things concerning the sublime and blessed God far more brilliantly than philosophy invented by human study, it is plain that that threefold wisdom is contained more eminently in the divine Scriptures than in the books of the philosophers.

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Moreover, the moral teachings of all the philosophers can in no way be compared with the moral doctrines of Christ, because Christ's moral instruction leads to the full uprooting of private, proper, and perverse love, which is the origin of all vices, and to the most humble contempt of oneself, and to the most intent and purest love of the Divinity: of which perfection, doctrine, and reality the philosophers were ignorant and mute. For by the natural light of human reason one does not attain to such doctrine and perfection, at least in that

manner in which it is taught by Christ, namely as it leads to supernatural felicity. Furthermore, no human science so certainly and effectually proves its conclusions as evangelical wisdom proves the articles of the sacred faith, which in the Gospel are most efficaciously proved by the oracles of the Law and the Prophets, by the miracles of Christ, by heavenly revelations, by very many witnesses, and by other most powerful ways. Again, philosophy by no means treats so excellently of the nature, property, perfection, and operation of the Creator and of creatures as does evangelical contemplation, to which all natural science with ineffable humility ought to be subservient and subject. Therefore the Apostle says: "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty to God, … destroying every height that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every understanding unto the obedience of Christ, and having in readiness to revenge all disobedience" (2 Cor. 10:4–6).

From these things the authority, certitude, and excellence of sacred Scripture, especially of evangelical wisdom, become known. Of this wisdom the glorious and most lucid Evangelist Luke was the describer, so that he can speak the words of the theme set before. For like a most abundant fountain he elucidated the doctrine of evangelical truth for all, and with most liberal charity poured out to all the streams of wisdom imparted to him from above, and taught all who hope in the Lord, and left to each one eager for true wisdom the copious rivers of heavenly wisdom. This Luke is rightly so called, having received by future presage his name with Daniel. For he was truly in the primitive Church, yea is until now, a most luminous Luke—light-formed, light-flowing, irradiating the whole world from the fullness of his light: who wrote his Gospel with a certain excellence and more graceful style, and beyond the other Evangelists is a historian; and wrote the Gospel after Matthew and Mark, and what was omitted by them concerning the annunciation, conception, nativity, circumcision, and infancy of Christ and of His precursor, he elegantly supplied. He was a native of Antioch, and in Bithynia migrated to Christ.

Of him the Greek expositor relates: "Luke, being of good disposition and of vigorous capacity, acquired the learning of the Greeks, and attained grammar and poetry perfectly. Rhetoric also and the charm of persuading he gained fully, nor was he without the endowments of philosophy. Lastly, he acquired medicine also. And since by the quickness of his genius he had tasted enough of human wisdom, he flies to a higher. He hastens therefore to Judea, and visibly and by word approaches Christ. And when he recognized the truth, he was made a disciple of Christ, conversing very much with this Master." — From which it is plain that Luke saw and heard Christ in the flesh, and was His disciple. Theophilus also testifies that he was not a disciple of Christ from the beginning, namely of Christ's preaching, but as time went on. Jerome, however, confesses that the style of Luke the Evangelist, both in the Gospel and in the Acts of the Apostles, is more ornate than the style of the other Evangelists and Apostles, and savors of secular eloquence. Such also is the style of Isaias among the Prophets; and the book of Job is written rhetorically.

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Article I. On the Perfection of the Evangelical Law

"Behold, God is high in His strength, and none is like Him among the lawgivers" (Job 36:22).

As Thomas shows in the *Prima Secundae*, law is the rule and measure of acts, by which one is directed or induced to act or not to act well. For it belongs to law to regulate the acts of men in due order according to the demand of the end intended by the lawgiver.

Now a manifold law is set forth, namely: the eternal law, which is the dictate and reason of divine wisdom, as it is directive of the actions and movements of all creatures. Of this law the Wise Man says to God: "Whereas Thou art just, Thou orderest all things justly; for Thy power is the beginning of justice" (Wis. 12:15–16). This law therefore is really the same as the supreme and uncreated Wisdom, "reaching from end to end mightily, and ordering all things sweetly" (Wis. 8:1): which law, according to Anselm in the book *On Truth*, is the origin of all rectitude and virtue, of all truth and law, and its fontal and causal principle. — Another is

the natural law, which is a participation of the eternal law, naturally implanted in the natures of created things, by which each tends to its own end appointed to it by divine wisdom, and performs its own actions. Now this natural law in man is the dictate, or ordination, or judgment of practical reason, by which man is induced to do or omit something. And this law would suffice for man if man were ordered only to natural felicity and end; but because he is created and ordered to supernatural beatitude (which is the vision of God by species, or face to face, according to the Apostle [1 Cor. 13:12; 2 Cor. 3:18]), therefore he needs a supernatural law, which is called the divine law, by which he may be instructed concerning true and supernatural beatitude, and enlightened about the precepts and acts of attaining it. Which law is the measure and rule of human acts in order to eternal supernatural felicity. For by this law reason knows and dictates what is to be thought of God, how He is to be served, to what end all our exercise is to be referred. Of which the Psalmist says: “The law of the Lord is unspotted, converting souls” (Ps. 18:8).

Moreover, besides the eternal and natural and divine law, there is set forth the human law, which is a certain dictate of reason by which human acts are directed in order to the end of the common good in the present life for living together peaceably: which law proceeds from the natural law, and is a determination and explication of it concerning the particular works of men.

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For as speculative reason draws from first and indemonstrable principles the various conclusions of the different sciences, so practical reason from first operative principles, or principles of things to be done, which belong to the natural law, proceeds to more particular things, inquiring and discussing what is to be done in certain affairs; and such particular dispositions found by reason are called human laws, the other conditions which ought to concur for law being observed. For law concerns the common good. Isidore also says that human law, so far as possible, ought to be honest, that it may suit religion; just, that it may proceed according to reason; possible, that it may be able to be borne and fulfilled by subjects. It will finally be according to the custom of the country, and ought to be fitting to place and time.

Finally, the divine law is divided into the old or Mosaic law, and the new or evangelical. Which division is not by diverse or opposite species, since of both there is one end, namely Christ (Rom. 10:4), or to be joined to God and enjoy Him; in both also the principal precepts, that is, the moral, are the same: but it is as something is divided by the perfect and the imperfect, which are nevertheless of one species, as man by adult and boy.

Now therefore the excellence and perfection of the evangelical law above every other created law is to be shown. That it exceeds every human law is certain and clear, and will be proved below. That it surpasses the law of Moses in perfection and dignity is shown first on the part of the lawgiver. For the old law was given by God not immediately but mediately, yea through a double degree of ministers, namely through an angel and through Moses. For at God’s command and appointment the angel spoke to Moses (Exod. 3, 20), and at the angel’s command on God’s part Moses set before the people the law received immediately from the angel. Yea, not by the ministry of one angel only but of many angels was the old law given, according to the Apostle: “The law was set because of transgressions, ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator” (Gal. 3:19). Whence in the Acts Stephen, reproaching the ungrateful Jews: “You have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it” (Acts 7:53). But the evangelical law was conferred immediately by the true God, namely Jesus Christ, the Only-begotten of the eternal Father (of which Christ John writes in his Canonical Epistle: “This is the true God and life eternal” [1 John 5:20]).

Secondly the same is shown, because the old law is compared to the new as the imperfect to the perfect, as the means to the end, as disposition to form or habit; yea the evangelical law stands to the old law as noon to dawn, light to shadow, truth to figure, mistress to handmaid. For since the end of the divine law, namely of the old and the new, is to lead to true felicity, or to be united to God and enjoy Him, that divine law is called

perfect which includes those things by which beatitude is acquired, to which without grace making pleasing no one is led. Now the old law did not contain grace but promised it. But the evangelical law includes and confers grace, because its sacraments not only figure or signify grace but also confer and effect what they designate. Therefore the Apostle says: “The law brought nothing to perfection, but a better hope is introduced, by which we draw nigh to God” (Heb. 7:19); again: “The law was our pedagogue in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:24); and likewise: “If there had been a law given which could give life, verily justice should have been by the law; but the Scripture hath concluded all under sin” (Gal. 3:21–22). The reason of this is assigned: because the sacraments of the old law neither contained nor conferred grace; but the law itself was dispositive for the evangelical law, prefiguring it, foretelling Christ, reproving idolatry, and therefore, the law of Christ being promulgated, it ceased. Wherefore the Apostle says: “Before the faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto that faith which was to be revealed; but after the faith is come, we are no longer under a pedagogue” (Gal. 3:23, 25). He speaks similarly to the Hebrews:

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“There is indeed a setting aside of the former commandment, because of the weakness and unprofitableness thereof” (Heb. 7:18).

Thirdly, the same is proved, because the evangelical law manifestly foretells, figures, promises, and immediately introduces to the heavenly and future goods in the fatherland. Of these goods the old law had not an express and near signification but an obscure and remote one, as it is written: “The law having a shadow of the good things to come, not the very image of the things” (Heb. 10:1). Hence, according to the divine Dionysius, the state of the evangelical law is midway between the state of the Synagogue, or old law, and that of the fatherland: so that the sacraments and ceremonials of the new law have a perfect image and evident likeness of the heavenly goods, of which the sacraments and ceremonials of the Old Testament bore the shadow, because in the old law those goods to come were promised and figured under a veil and confusedly. Finally, the evangelical law is said to contain and give grace through the inclusion of its sacraments, that is, inasmuch as it includes the sacraments of Christ, which are spiritually medicinal vessels. And since the old law did not have such sacraments containing grace, therefore it did not justify by its own power, but by the faith and grace of Christ then to come, through faith in whom the works of men placed under the law were meritorious. Hence it is said by the Apostle that that law entered in, that sin might abound (Rom. 5:20; 7:9), and that through it sin revived; and likewise that it was a ministration of death (2 Cor. 3:7)—not certainly causally and directly, but occasionally and consequently, and because it did not supply grace; and again, because sin after the giving of the law was graver than before, and because such is our perversity that we strive towards the forbidden, and the more desire the things that are prohibited to us.

Fourthly the same is declared, namely the excellence and perfection of the evangelical law above every other divine and human law, because the properties and acts of law belong more eminently to it than to any other law. — For since it is the office of law to make men virtuous, and first it is necessary to decline from evil (Ps. 36:27), therefore it first belongs to law to uproot vices by threat or infliction of penalties or otherwise: which on account of the vicious, the froward, and those prone to evil is most necessary; and as to this the Apostle says: “The law is not made for the just man, but for the unjust and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners” (1 Tim. 1:9). But human law does not perfectly accomplish this: for since it is set before a community in which there are many imperfect, vicious, and prone to evils, it permits certain evils lest worse occur, namely harlots and usurers, which nevertheless it leaves to divine judgment to be punished, as Augustine asserts: “The law which is given for ruling cities concedes many things and leaves unpunished many things which are avenged by divine providence.” The Mosaic law also, divinely given, since it was given to a rude people prone to the greatest evils, permitted some evils, such as giving a bill of divorce and lending to strangers at usury, as appears in Deuteronomy (Deut. 24:1; 23:19), lest greater evils be incurred, namely lest the Jews kill their wives or refuse to lend to their brethren. Hence Christ says to the Jews:

“Moses by reason of the hardness of your heart permitted you to put away your wives” (Matt. 19:8). But the evangelical law, as perfect, permits absolutely no evil, but excludes every sin and testifies that it is to be punished, and even declares that account must be rendered to God for every idle word (Matt. 12:36). — Secondly, it belongs to law to introduce virtues, or form morals: which human law does not do perfectly. For man does not look into the interior of others, and therefore cannot judge of the secrets of hearts: so human law can only order and judge exterior acts. But to reform and rectify interior affections and thoughts belongs to divine law; yet the Mosaic law also does not do this fully. For which reason the doctors say that it restrains the hand, or the work, not the mind: which is not to be understood as if it by no means prohibited an evil will, or did not consist in thoughts of vices,

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since Moses says in Exodus, “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s wife, nor his ox, nor his handmaid, nor his field, nor anything that is his” (Exod. 20:17); but this is said because the law of Moses does not so fully and evidently prohibit disordered affection and thought, nor is it so much concerned with interior reformation as the new law. Nevertheless in many things it ordered the interior affections, nor does it regard disordered affection only in the vices of avarice and lust, as some say, but also in many others. Whence in Leviticus it is read: “Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart, nor bear in mind the injury of thy citizens” (Lev. 19:17–18). And in Deuteronomy it is had: “Take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul carefully, lest thou forget the words of the Lord thy God, and they fall from thy heart all the days of thy life” (Deut. 4:9). Again in Deuteronomy it is commanded: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole strength” (Deut. 6:5). Nevertheless, if the whole law of Moses be run through, it will appear that, comparatively speaking, it speaks very little of the direction and ordering of interior things, but is chiefly occupied with exterior things. And what is little is reckoned as nothing, and so it could be said that the old law restrained the hand, not the mind. — Besides, since virtue is ordered to beatitude, therefore it belongs thirdly to law to lead to felicity. But man’s true beatitude is supernatural: to which human or natural law cannot lead, but only supernatural law. Again, supernatural felicity is not attained except through grace making pleasing, which (as was shown) the law of Moses neither contained nor conferred, and therefore neither did it by its own power lead to felicity: which the law of Christ effects through its sacraments, which flowed from the side of Christ sleeping on the cross, and obtained their efficacy, so that through them the virtue and merit of Christ’s passion is applied to men. Therefore in John’s Gospel it is introduced: “The law was given by Moses; grace and truth came by Jesus Christ” (John 1:17). — Moreover, since law is given for the common utility, it belongs fourthly to it that it be promulgated to all, and set forth clearly and intelligibly, because in a community the greater part is gross and does not penetrate subtle, difficult, and profound things. Now the evangelical law is given and proposed most compendiously and succinctly. But the Mosaic law is covered with many veils (2 Cor. 3:14, 15) and wrapped in figures; in which also the same things are often repeated, and it was most difficult to keep its single precepts in memory and effectually fulfill them. For which reason Peter the apostle says in the Acts of the burden of the law: “Which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear” (Acts 15:10).

Further, the eminence of the evangelical law is evident from this, that the old law openly and commonly promised only earthly goods, not evidently speaking of the heavenly reward. But the evangelical law most openly and most copiously promises heavenly goods, spiritual opulence, eternal and deiform beatitude. Whence at the beginning of evangelical preaching it is said: “Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matt. 4:17). — Lastly, the law of Christ induces to its observance by love of the good; but the law of Moses, by fear of punishments: therefore, according to Augustine, the brief difference between the Law and the Gospel is love and fear. Whence the Apostle: “God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of sobriety” (2 Tim. 1:7).

Therefore of our one lawgiver, the Son of God, is truly understood what was said at the beginning of this article: “Behold, God is high in His strength, and none is like Him among the lawgivers” (Job 36:22). Of whom Isaias says: “The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; He will come and save us” (Isa. 33:22). Meanwhile, the greater the dignity of this lawgiver, and the greater His charity, beneficence, and condescension toward us, in that for our salvation He descended to us in His own person and with His own mouth delivered the law to us; the greater also the excellence and perfection of this law: so much the graver is our ingratitude, perversity, and impiety, if we are disobedient to this lawgiver.

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Wherefore the Apostle says: “A man making void the law of Moses dieth without any mercy under two or three witnesses: how much more, do you think, he deserveth worse punishments, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath esteemed the blood of the testament unclean, by which he was sanctified, and hath offered an affront to the Spirit of grace?” (Heb. 10:28–29). Hence, therefore, the more sublime our lawgiver is, and the more kindly He has dealt with us, and the more illustrious a law He has conferred on us, the more diligent, fervent, and effectual let us be in the worthy observance of His law, serving with fear and reverence (Phil. 2:12): knowing that to whom much is given, much will be required of him; and the servant who knows the will of his lord and does it not shall be beaten with many stripes (Luke 12:48; 47).

Luke 1B: Luke’s Prologue, Zachary and Elizabeth

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Article II. Elucidation of the prologue of St. Luke and of the first chapter: “There was in the days of Herod the king of Judea a certain priest named Zachary.”

St. Luke prefaces his book with a brief prologue, in which he intimates the cause moving him to write, saying: *“Forasmuch as many have taken in hand”* (Luke 1:1) *“to set forth in order a narration”*—that is, to describe in order histories or discourses—*“of the things that have been accomplished among us,”* that is, of the works, teachings, and mysteries of Christ, which were done and exhibited among us His disciples. From this it seems to follow that St. Luke too was one of the disciples of Christ, and was personally present at His preaching and miraculous works, at least for a time, as was touched on above, and as some assert; or he says this in the person of the disciples who were present, with whom he himself afterwards was associated. Some, however, expound it thus: “Which have been accomplished among us,” that is, which have been fully written by us: because Luke supplied many things omitted by Matthew and Mark. Those many who took in hand to write a gospel were certain heretics, as Basilides and Apelles and some others. For one wrote a gospel which he feigned to have been written by the twelve Apostles; another affirmed that it was put forth by Thomas; others, by Matthias. So also some

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wrote epistles under the name of Paul, as he himself touches in his epistles (2 Thess. 2:2). These things they did from presumption, and that they might thus persuade their heresies: who are rightly said to have “taken in hand,” because they were helped not by the illumination of the Holy Spirit but trusted in their own powers, and therefore had labor, not fruit. But one who is divinely illumined writes or speaks promptly and easily, and pursues fruitfully: for the more he is enlightened, directed, and helped from above, the more quickly, easily, and fruitfully he works, and what he begins humbly he prosecutes and consummates salubriously.

Finally, for composing sacred books, for making Catholic expositions, it is necessary for a man to be divinely illumined and, as it were, flooded with the light of wisdom with a certain exuberance—speaking of the wisdom which is numbered among the gifts of grace freely given: of which the Apostle testifies: “To one indeed by the Spirit is given the word of wisdom, and to another the word of knowledge” (1 Cor. 12:8). The

more copiously, therefore, a man is divinely taught, the readier he is in writing, dictating, expounding. For there, in teaching, there is no delay, but to have touched is to have taught. So certainly wrote Jeremias, of whom Baruch his scribe says: “Out of his own mouth Jeremias spoke, as if reading all these words, and I wrote them in a volume with ink” (Jer. 36:18). Hence Ambrose says: “Without endeavor are the donations and grace of God, which, when it has poured itself in, is wont to water, so that the writer’s genius does not lack but overflows. The four Evangelists did not take in hand, but, the divine Spirit furnishing abundance of sayings and deeds, they completed what they began without any effort.”

Moreover, according to Origen, the Evangelist says “accomplished,” because Christ did not exercise His bodily coming phantastically, as the heretics said, but, being truth, truly carried through the business. Luke indicates his own disposition by saying: “Which have been accomplished among us,” that is, which have been most manifestly shown in us. For he knew these things with certain faith and reason, and wavered in nothing.

“According as they have delivered them unto us” (Luke 1:2)—that is, told us and taught us—*“who from the beginning”* of the evangelical preaching of Christ *“themselves saw”* with bodily and mental eyes the magnificent works of Christ, namely the Apostles, to whom Christ says: “Blessed are the eyes that see the things which you see” (Luke 10:23). Of whom John says: “The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, the glory as it were of the Only-begotten of the Father” (John 1:14). Whence in the beginning of his first Canonical Epistle he writes the same: “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life” (1 John 1:1). — But to this seems to be opposed that, according to Jerome, Luke was chiefly a disciple of Paul, as Mark of Peter; and in the legend of Luke it is had that as Mark wrote from the information of Peter, so Luke from the instruction of Paul, who did not see the works of Christ, wrote the Gospel. And the answer is that Luke first received instruction from the other Apostles who from the beginning of Christ’s preaching had adhered to Christ; then, Paul expounding, he was more fully instructed. Hence Theophilus says: “He obtained the truth, either Paul expounding, or the other Apostles who had seen from the beginning.” Moreover, according to Bede, not only Luke and Mark but Matthew also and John learned many things of the infancy and boyhood and genealogy of the Savior from others narrating. — Again it is asked, if Luke wrote the Gospel from the instruction of the Apostles, and likewise Mark from the information of blessed Peter the apostle, how are they said to have written from the inspiration and instruction of the Holy Spirit? And the answer is that the Holy Spirit infallibly directed them in writing, and perfected, certified, and governed by His deifying illumination the instruction they had gained from the other Apostles, and induced them to write.

“And ministers of the word”—that is, of the evangelical preaching, which at Christ’s command and the Holy Spirit’s filling they faithfully preached: and they ministered to this preaching inasmuch as they were subject to it and by Christ’s command presented it to others by preaching. Hence in the Acts the Holy Spirit says: “Separate me Paul and Barnabas, for the work whereunto I have taken them” (Acts 13:2). And Peter testifies: “He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that it is He who was appointed by God to be judge of the living and of the dead” (Acts 10:42). And the Apostles also say: “But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word” (Acts 6:4). It can also be understood of the uncreated Word of God the Father, to which the Apostles ministered: of which Paul says to the Hebrews: “For the word of God is living and effectual, and more piercing than any two-edged sword; neither is there any creature invisible in His sight” (Heb. 4:12–13).

“It seemed good to me also” (Luke 1:3)—that is, it appeared reasonable to me, both from divine inspiration and from human reason. For Luke considered by his own reason that it was expedient for a gospel to be written by him in which things passed over by others should be inserted. *“Having diligently attained to all things from the beginning.”* What he says, “all things from the beginning,” can be referred to the participle

"having attained"; and the sense will be: It seemed good to me having attained—that is, having acquired by knowledge

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all things which Christ did and taught from the beginning of His preaching—that is, having obtained knowledge of all the works and teachings of Christ, both by divine illumination and by the Apostles' information. Not that any of the Evangelists has simply described all the deeds and teachings of the Savior in species and individually, but all things requisite for the instruction of the faithful, or all in genus, or some of all, so that the distribution is for the genera of individuals, not for the individuals of genera: after which manner the Psalmist says, "I will praise Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will relate all Thy wonders" (Ps. 9:2); and in the Acts Luke says: "The former treatise I made of all things, O Theophilus, which Jesus began to do and to teach" (Acts 1:1). That it is not simply all things is clear from what is read in John: "Many other things Jesus did, which if they were written every one, the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain the books that should be written" (John 21:25).

Finally these words, "all things from the beginning," can be referred to what is subjoined, "to write in order"; so that the sense is: It seemed good to me also, having attained—that is, having imitated Christ and the Apostles, chiefly Paul, bodily and spiritually, or at least the Apostles themselves bodily also, not spiritually only—all the mysteries, words, and deeds of Christ, according to the sense touched on, from the beginning of the annunciation of Christ's precursor, or from the beginning of the incarnation of Christ, *"diligently"*: for the height of the matter of this book and the dignity of Him of whom this volume treats require it, namely the excellence of Christ, of whom as of true God one must speak only circumspectly and reverently; and as Jeremias confesses, "Cursed be he that doth the work of God deceitfully" (Jer. 48:10): yea, the more divine, lofty, and salutary the things that are written, so much the more reverently and diligently are they to be written, not precipitately and fearlessly, boastfully or presumptuously. *"And in order,"* that is, orderly, namely according to the order or course of the thing done: which helps to avoid prolixity and to have clearer understanding. And as the Apostle says: "Those that are, are ordained of God" (Rom. 13:1). For it is of the wise to order, and in words, deeds, and writings to conduct oneself in order. Wherefore the Apostle says: "Let all things be done decently and according to order among you" (1 Cor. 14:40).

"To write to thee," not only for thine own but for the utility of all Christians: as the Lord says, "What I say to you, I say to all" (Mark 13:37); *"most excellent Theophilus."* Concerning which Theophilus writes: "He writes to Theophilus, a renowned man, perhaps also a prince, because what he says, 'most excellent,' was said to princes and governors, as Paul said to Festus the governor: 'Most excellent Festus' (Acts 26:25)." Against which someone argues that (as he says) such a manner of speaking is proper to prelates, who ought to excel others in goodness; again, it is not likely that, passing over the bishops, whose office it is to inform others, he would write to a secular prince. But these objections do not proceed. For in the canonical Scriptures it is not found that anyone so speaks to a prelate. That it was then the custom to address secular princes thus is clear from the fact that in the Acts also Lysias the tribune thus writes to such a prince: "Claudius Lysias to the most excellent governor Felix, greeting" (Acts 23:26). Besides, in the primitive Church secular princes were commonly very religious, and so it is quite probable that he wrote these things to some such. To the same Theophilus he wrote also the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 1:1). Now Theophilus is interpreted "loving God" or "loved by God." Whoever therefore loves God, or desires to be loved by Him, let him think this Gospel written to himself, and receive it as a gift given him by God, and keep it as a pledge commended to him.

"That thou mayest know" (Luke 1:4)—*"of those words,"* that is, of the evangelical discourses in which thou hast been instructed by Christ's disciples, whether by vocal instruction alone or also by the Gospels of Matthew and Mark already written (which perhaps he saw, though this is not certain)—*"the truth,"* namely that thou mayest be instructed more certainly and fully concerning the words and deeds and

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mysteries of Christ. Now frequently in the Scriptures "word" is taken for the deed or the thing signified by the word, as when in the books of Kings Ezechias says: "There was not a word in my house that I did not show them" (Isa. 39:2, 4).

Consequently Luke begins the narration. *"There was in the days of Herod the king of Judea"* (Luke 1:5) *"a certain priest named Zachary."* Fittingly did Luke begin his Gospel from the precursor of Christ: because from what is read of the Precursor faith is not a little strengthened, and what is read of the marvels of Christ is rendered more credible. So, at the time when Herod was reigning in Judea, this Zachary lived. Now there were three Herods mentioned in the Scriptures. The first was the Herod of whom there is now question: who was called the Ascalonite, because in the city of Ascalon in Palestine he built his palace; who killed the infants (Matt. 2). The second was his son, called Herod Antipas, who mocked Christ in the passion and beheaded John (Luke 23:11; Matt. 14). The third was Herod Agrippa, who beheaded James and imprisoned Peter, and on account of his pride was struck by a holy angel and consumed by worms (Acts 12). Three Zacharys also are read to have been holy. The first was Zachary the son of Joiada the high priest, of whom it is had in the books of Kings (2 Par. 24:20). The second was Zachary, one of the twelve Prophets, whose book is most sententious and beautiful. The third, of whom there is now question.

Aptly is mention first made of the first Herod, to show tacitly that under his rule Christ truly came. For Jacob in Genesis prophesied that the Messiah would be born when the dominion of the Jews had been wholly transferred to a foreigner: "The scepter shall not be taken away from Juda, nor a ruler from his thigh, till He come that is to be sent, and He shall be the expectation of the Gentiles" (Gen. 49:10). Now Herod was of the race of the Idumeans, and by the Roman emperor was made king of the Jews. Who, when they had entered the promised land, were first ruled by judges up to Saul exclusively, or Samuel inclusively (1 Kings 8); then by kings up to the Babylonian captivity. Afterwards they were ruled by pontiffs up to Hyrcanus, king and pontiff at once: he having been killed by the first Herod, Herod reigned, and the Jews henceforth were under the principate of foreigners, as they are until now.

"Of the course of Abia"—that is, of the seed of Abia the priest, and of his place in the temple ministering, or succeeding him in the ministry of the temple, as then, the father priests dying, the sons succeeded them in the ministry of the temple. For, as is read in the book of Paralipomenon, King David, desiring to enlarge divine worship, appointed twenty-four principal priests of as many priestly families born of the seed of Aaron (1 Par. 24). Then were found sixteen families born of Eleazar the son of Aaron, but eight of Ithamar the son of Aaron: of each of which David ordained one chief priest, who should preside over his whole family and minister in his own week; and the eighth lot fell upon Abia, to whom this Zachary lineally succeeded (1 Par. 24:10). Yet over all these there presided one high priest, who was called the pontiff, and prince of priests.

"And his wife of the daughters of Aaron, and her name Elizabeth." The husband and wife, therefore, namely Zachary and Elizabeth, were Aaronites. And although in the Old Testament it was commanded that men take wives from their own tribes, and vice versa, lest the distribution of lots or the division of inheritances be confounded in the jubilee, that is, the fiftieth year, in which every inheritance returned to its former and proper possessor (Num. 36:6, 8; Lev. 25:10); yet in the priestly tribe this was not observed, but men of that tribe could be matrimonially joined with men of the other tribes. For they did not, like the rest, have an inheritance, but the Lord God was their inheritance, because they were sustained from His sacrifices (Deut. 18:1, 2; Jos. 13:14; 21), nor had they certain hereditary places, except for dwelling and feeding cattle: so indeed Jeremias, prophet and priest,

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testifies that he had a field (Jer. 32:9). In this, therefore, the dignity of the Precursor is shown, that on both sides his parents were of Aaronic and priestly stock, yea the son of a principal priest in his family. For the

priestly and royal tribes were then principal, and used to be matrimonially joined, as from the beginning the wife of Aaron was Elizabeth, daughter of Aminadab of the tribe of Juda (Exod. 6:23). Yet Thomas alleges Theophilus saying here: "Zachary was not permitted to take a wife from another tribe."

"And they were both just" (Luke 1:6), with a threefold justice indeed, namely of life, and of truth, and of virtue: so that they were children of Aaron not only by propagation of flesh but by imitation of virtues, of whom it is said in the Psalm: "Aaron, the holy one of the Lord" (Ps. 105:16); *"before God,"* that is, truly, not feignedly, but by divine judgment they were such: such as now all are who desire to please God in all things, and continually in all things aim at His glory and honor. But there are very many just before men, as hypocrites, and all lovers of vain glory, dissemblers and cunning, who provoke the wrath of God (Gal. 5; Job 36:13): of whom the Savior says: "They have received their reward" (Matt. 6:2). But since it is written in the book of Psalms, "In Thy sight no man living shall be justified" (Ps. 142:2), and Job says, "Man compared with God shall not be justified" (Job 9:2), and likewise the Wise Man, "Be not justified before God" (Ecclus. 7:5): how is any mortal said to be just before God? And the answer is that for a wayfarer to be justified before God, or to be or be called just, can be understood in three ways: first, that his justice be pure, having nothing of fault mixed in: and thus no one living in mortal flesh is justified before God, because "in many things we all offend" (James 3:2) and "all our justices are as the rag of a menstruous woman," as Isaias says (Isa. 64:6). Secondly, that he be called just by comparison with divine equity: and this again cannot stand, according to Job, "Shall man be justified in comparison with God?" (Job 4:17). Thirdly, that he be judged just by God, and be just in His sight, according to a manner proportioned to human condition: and thus the elect and all existing in grace are in some manner just before God. Properly, however, those are called just who are notably virtuous, especially perfect and holy men, divine and heroic, whose hearts are turned to the affection of goodness and equity, and with all keeping guard themselves before God (Prov. 4:23): of whom Christ speaks: "Blessed are the clean of heart" (Matt. 5:8).

Moreover, it was very fitting that the precursor of Christ be born of holy parents, that his testimony of Christ and the conversation of his holiness might from the holiness of his parents be judged the more credible. For offspring frequently follows the goodness of parents. Whence now the holiness of John's parents is described, that John himself may seem to have obtained justice as by hereditary right.

"Walking"—that is, hastening to beatitude, drawing near, or spiritually passing on—*"in all the commandments,"* observing the precepts of the Decalogue which are called moral. Rightly does he say, "in all," because it is not enough to observe some if one be omitted, according to James: "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, but offend in one point, is become guilty of all" (James 2:10). *"And justifications,"* that is, in the observances of the judicial precepts, which were certain determinations of the moral precepts as to the manner of keeping justice toward neighbors, and also in the observances of the ceremonial precepts, which were determinations of the moral precepts as to the manner and rite of worshipping God. *"Without blame,"* that is, irreproachably: so that no one raised, or could reasonably raise, a complaint or accusation against them; for even if they sinned venially every day, yet for this they made satisfaction every day: fulfilling that of the Apostle, "Giving no offence to any man, that our ministry be not blamed" (2 Cor. 6:3). Whence he exhorts the Philippians: "Do all things without murmurings, that you may be blameless and sincere children of God in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation" (Phil. 2:14–15). So of Judith

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it is written in her book that she was most renowned in all things, and there was none that spoke ill of her (Judith 8:8).

Finally there are certain moral virtues by which a man is rendered acceptable and pleasant to his neighbors, namely: meekness, humility, patience, modesty, liberality, affability (*eutrapelia*). Whence Augustine says in his Rule: "In all your movements let there be nothing that may offend any man's sight, but what becomes

your holiness." Therefore one who lives among others should not by indiscreet rigor show himself burdensome to them, but conduct himself sociably and sweetly, the order of equity always saved. Hence Seneca says: "So conduct yourself wisely, that no one hold you as harsh, nor despise you as vile." But those who do not so act are called by Aristotle hard and rustic. For too hard an equity of men provokes complaint, according to Ambrose. To this kindliness especially ought those to give themselves who, abounding by natural inclination in the irascible power, are always borne toward the rigor of equity.

Furthermore, in these few words Zachary and Elizabeth are magnificently commended, and in the abridged word an exuberant sense is contained. For so great was their justice that they are proved to have fully borne that yoke of the law (which was so heavy that Peter testifies of it, that neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear it [Acts 15:10]: by which words the principal difficulty, not absolute impossibility, of observing it is insinuated); and they were like Josue, of whom it is read: "Josue left not one word undone of all the commandments of the Lord" (Jos. 11:15). Whoever therefore wishes to imitate Zachary and his wife, let him fulfill that of the Apostle: "Providing good things, not only in the sight of God, but also in the sight of all men" (Rom. 12:17). — Besides, according to Ambrose: "When we obey the heavenly commandments, we walk in them; when we judge fittingly, we seem to hold the justifications of the Lord. There is no complaint where goodness of mind and of deed agree." Origen also says: "Something just can be done unjustly, as when alms is given for the sake of boasting, which is not without blame."

"And they had no son" (Luke 1:7), that is, any offspring: for "son" in this place designates not so much sex as germ, so that it is not distinguished from daughter: in which sense it is referred to the father. Now the Lord frequently withdraws offspring even from the just, that all their hope, affection, consolation, and occupation may be established in God. *"Because Elizabeth was barren."* This is one cause, and a special reason on the part of the wife, why they had no son, since she was by natural disposition infecund, even in the time of youth. Another cause is subjoined: *"and they both were well advanced in years,"* that is, they had come to such old age that they were naturally unfit for begetting. Hence John's conception was miraculous or supernatural on his mother's side doubly, namely on the side of barrenness and old age; on his father's side it was miraculous simply, because of his age. So also the wives of the holy Patriarchs are read to have been barren, as is clear in Genesis of Sara the wife of Abraham, Rebecca the wife of Isaac, Rachel the wife of Jacob (Gen. 11:30; 25:21; 29:31).

"And it came to pass, when Zachary executed the priestly function" (Luke 1:8)—that is, performed the acts of his priestly office or order in the temple—*"in the order of his course,"* that is, in his ordinary week, or as it befell him by the order in which the aforesaid priests succeeded one another in office, *"before God,"* that is, in the sight and presence or good pleasure of God; or, "before God," that is, in the temple where God specially dwelt, as it is written: "The Lord is in His holy temple" (Ps. 10:5); *"according to the custom of the priestly office, he went forth by lot"* (Luke 1:9)—that is, according to the exigency of his lot, which was the eighth, as was shown. For the distributions of the weeks, in which the twenty-four priests often ministered in the temple, were given by lots: and so each of them went out according to the exigency and order of his lot, either to the house of his habitation or to a place near the temple in which

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he put on the priestly vestments. For these priests, in the week in which they ministered in the temple, gave themselves to chastity, and did not enter their own houses, but slept in little houses situated around the temple which were called exedrae. *"To offer incense, going into the temple of the Lord."* Incense is wont to be taken for a holocaust, namely for the sacrifice which was totally burnt for the honor of the divine majesty, to figure that the rational creature ought wholly to devote itself to the service of its Creator: by which sacrifice, however, the state of religious was specially prefigured, who offer themselves wholly to divine worship and vow themselves to God (Exod. 30:13). Sometimes, however, it is taken for the incense of spices.

The holy fathers Ambrose and Beda seem here to think, soberly however, not very assertively, that this Zachary was the high priest or pontiff, because to put incense within the Holy of Holies once a year belonged to the pontiff (Exod. 30:10; Heb. 9:7). Whence also the Gloss says that he entered the temple, namely first into the Holy Place, secondly into the Holy of Holies, with incense and blood; afterwards he returned into the Holy Place to the altar of incense: which, according to Josephus and all the Saints speaking thereof, was in the place of the temple called the Holy or Holy Places; but according to Augustine was within the Holy of Holies. But since Josephus and the other writers describing the pontificates and priesthoods of the Jews make no mention (it is said) of the high priesthood of this Zachary, others rather, and perhaps more probably, think that he was not the high priest, nor entered the Holy of Holies, but the Holy Place, and the incense which he placed was that which was done every day on the altar of incense (Exod. 30:7, 8). For, the sacrifice being completed on the altar of holocausts, which was in the court where the lesser priests ministered, the priest who ministered and sacrificed there, having first washed his hands and feet (Exod. 30:19, 20; Lev. 16:11), took coals from the altar of holocausts, and entering the first part of the temple which is called the Holy Place, burnt in it the perfumes upon the altar of incense, and then the sacrifice was consummated. For by that evaporation or incensing the devotion of the offerer was designated. And since those legal sacrifices were not accepted by God of themselves, but from the devotion and faith of the offerers, therefore in the aforesaid incensing was the consummation of the sacrifice already touched on. Finally, there seems to favor this that in the book of Paralipomenon Ezechias speaks to the priests: “My sons, be not negligent; the Lord hath chosen you to stand before Him, and to minister to Him, and to worship Him, and to burn incense to Him” (2 Par. 29:11). This incense, therefore, which the younger priests could do, Zachary placed, burning the perfume by the aforesaid coals, and putting that incense upon the altar of incense, which is also called the golden altar (Exod. 40:5).

“And all the multitude of the people was praying without” (Luke 1:10), that is, outside the temple, namely in the court, because according to the law it was not lawful for the people to enter the Holy Place or the Holy of Holies, that is, the first or the second part of the temple. Now, in the temple there was daily a double sacrifice, one in the morning, another in the evening (Exod. 29:38): and according to this there was daily a double hour of incense, namely morning and evening. Nevertheless, by antonomasia, the day of Expiation was called the hour of incense, because then it was offered more solemnly, all the people flocking together, yet remaining without, to intimate that the priest ought to penetrate divine things more deeply than the people: which belongs chiefly to the prelate and pastor, in comparison with whom the people is called a flock (Lev. 16:17; Jer. 10:21; Ezech. 34; Mich. 5:4). And of this hour of incense some expound what is subjoined, “at the hour of incense,” etc.; for the Gloss says: “This solemnity was celebrated in the seventh month, that is, on the tenth day of September, and was named the day of Expiation or propitiation, when the pontiff alone entered the second tabernacle, namely the Holy of Holies, with blood” (Lev. 16:29). But this Gloss proceeds according to the exposition of Ambrose and Bede, who think Zachary was pontiff. Whence Bede also says: “Incense is carried into the Holy of Holies by the pontiff, all the people waiting outside the temple, on the tenth day of the seventh month,

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and the Lord commanded this day to be called the day of Expiation or propitiation: the mystery of which day the Apostle, laying open to the Hebrews, shows Jesus the true pontiff, as signified by the legal pontiff: which Jesus entered into the secrets of heaven by His own blood, to make the Father propitious to us, and to intercede for the sins of those who still wait praying before the doors” (Heb. 9).

It is therefore to be noted that besides the aforesaid incense, which was placed by the inferior priests, there was yet another incense, which the pontiff alone was permitted to perform, or place within the Holy of Holies on the day of Expiation. But this was not placed to be offered, but that the cloud ascending from it might cover the oracle, while the priest sprinkled against it with the blood of the calf and of the goat offered for the

sins of the people (Lev. 16:12–15). Of which incense there is here no question, according to those who say Zachary was not pontiff: which, even if it were conceded, they are nevertheless not held to affirm properly that he was a simple priest and one of the lesser, because, as is plain from what was said, he was at least one of the twenty-four principal priests, and also superior in his own family which descended from Abia, though in comparison with the pontiff he could be called a simple and lesser priest.

"And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord" (Luke 1:11), namely Gabriel, as will appear below. Finally, according to Ambrose, in the Scriptures God and angels are said to appear because they are seen unexpectedly and suddenly, so that their aspect cannot be foreseen, or felt beforehand, or foreknown. *"Standing,"* in the body which he assumed, *"on the right side of the altar of incense"*: of which altar and incense it has already been treated. He stood by the right side of the altar upon which Zachary was placing the incense. And fittingly he stood at the right, because a worthier position befitted the angel of light, and by the right hand prosperity, piety, and consolation are designated. Now the angel came to announce most salutary and most joyous things, because he announced the birth or coming not only of John but of Christ, and declared that the supreme grace of divine mercy was at hand. Again, since he appeared to a priest, and announced the coming of Christ, who is the high priest and the true sacrifice (Heb. 7, 9, 10), the angel rightly appeared in the temple; likewise, to show how pleasing it is to God that a priest be devoutly and assiduously occupied in the service of the temple, and how great the dignity of the priestly order and office.

"And Zachary seeing him was troubled, and fear fell upon him" (Luke 1:12)—that is, fell upon his heart, and from a higher cause, from the unaccustomed vision. For it is connatural to human frailty vehemently to marvel, be changed, be troubled, and fear at the sight of heavenly citizens or spirits of the departed, because what befalls is unknown, rare, and unusual, and because what appears is of another condition or higher power: so that a man frequently at the first encounter does not know what it is or why it has come, on which account he often fears for his own peril and trembles for the outcome of the matter. Angels too are wont to appear with unaccustomed splendor and a lightning-like countenance. Whence Daniel also says to the angel: "O my lord, at the sight of thee my joints are loosed; my breath is stopped, and no strength is left in me" (Dan. 10:16–17). Hence the Prophets, having seen the wonders of God, were wont to fall, according to Ezechiel: "I saw, and I fell upon my face" (Ezech. 1:28). Ambrose also says here: "Would that an angel might stand by us also when we bring sacrifice to the altars—yea, show himself to be seen. For doubt not that an angel stands by when Christ is immolated." Again he says: "We are troubled and estranged from our own affection when we are struck by the encounter of some higher power." Chrysostom confesses the same, saying: "No man, however just he be, can behold an angel without fear." Hence Zachary, not bearing the aspect of the angel's presence, nor able to endure that brightness, was troubled.

With which Origen agrees: "A new face" (he says)

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"presenting itself to human gaze troubles the mind and dismays the spirit. Hence the angel, knowing this to be human nature, first heals the perturbation."

For it is added: *"And the angel said to him: Fear not, Zachary"* (Luke 1:13). For Athanasius says in the life of St. Anthony: "The discernment of good and evil spirits is not difficult. For if after fear joy follows, let us know that help has come from the Lord, because the security of the soul is a sign of present majesty; but if the fear struck in remains, it is the enemy who is seen." Hence Bede asserts: "As it is of human defect to be terrified, so it is of angelic dignity to console, with soothing words, one afraid at his sight. On the contrary, the demons, whom they perceive terrified at their presence, they move with greater terror."

So, *"Fear not,"* that is: let immoderate fear, which impedes the act of reason, and every disturbance of mind which takes away quiet, depart from thee, and be consoled and rejoice in the Lord (Isa. 61:10). It is therefore of angelic goodness, charity, and piety to quiet, console, and strengthen a good man—not hardened and

reprobate—disquieted, trembling, troubled, overcome, and cast down by his vision: as it is of diabolical impiety to increase the fear struck in, that the judgment of right reason may be impeded. Yet very often Satan, transformed into an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14), is read to have appeared to men, and nevertheless to have uttered soothing and consoling words, that thereby he might be believed to have come from above, as is narrated in the life of St. Martin; but he cannot directly console and strengthen the mind interiorly, because he does not act immediately and directly on it, as an angel does by illuminating it.

"For thy prayer is heard," which now, in sacrificing and placing the incense, thou hast poured forth with heart and mouth. Some say that he prayed not only for Christ's coming but also for a son. Augustine, however, in the book of *Questions on the Gospel*, contradicts and says: "No one prays to receive what he despairs of receiving. Now he despaired of having a son so long that he did not believe even the angel promising a son." Yet it is probable that before this he had frequently prayed the Lord for this thing: as also Isaac prayed for offspring, seeing that his wife was barren, as is plain in Genesis (Gen. 25:21); Anna also, as it is read in the book of Kings (1 Kings 1:10); and other Saints of the Old Testament. For then it was a great reproach before men to lack the fruit of marriage. Moreover Zachary, as some say, prayed also for the liberation of the Jews from the dominion of Herod and foreigners and the tribute of the Romans. But it is more certainly to be held that he prayed with his whole heart for the coming of the Messiah and for spiritual salvation.

And since God is a most liberal giver and hearer and most munificent benefactor, the abundance of His piety exceeding the merits of suppliants and their vows or desires, He not only shows that He heard Zachary but testifies that He will give more than he asked, namely a son so elect and such charisms of graces to the whole Israelite people through him. For it is added: *"and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son."* Fittingly the angel expressed the name of Zachary's wife, lest he think he should have a son by another, because she was old and barren. *"And thou shalt call"*—that is, shalt say, or by calling shalt express—*"his name John."* Or, "thou shalt call his name named," that is, the thing itself or thy son, John, that is, by this name which is John. So because of the certainty of the prophecy the name of the son to be born is expressed, and because of his future holiness and dignity, and also on account of the interpretation of the name fitting the thing signified. For John is interpreted "in whom is grace." Rightly therefore is he bidden to be called John, to whom so great grace was to be given that Christ testified of him: "Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist" (Matt. 11:11). Who also foretold Christ, through whom grace and truth were made (John 1:17), would come, and showed Him present. Finally, the names of six men are read foretold in the Old Testament, namely:

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Isaac (Gen. 17:19), Samson (in the book of Judges, according to another translation, as some say: for Jerome's translation does not have it so [Judg. 13]), Josias, as is plain in the books of Kings (3 Kings 13:2). These three were holy. Likewise Ismael, Agag, and Cyrus (Gen. 16:11; Num. 24:7; Isa. 45:1, 4), who are asserted to have been reprobate: which is certain of the last two.

"And thou shalt have joy and gladness" (Luke 1:14)—that is, at his birth there will be in thy mind so great a joy that it will redound upon the body, and thou wilt appear of cheerful countenance, and from the greatness of thy glorying thy whole nature will sweetly flourish again: not only because a son is born to thee, but because such and so great a son, and so pre-elected by God; and thus will be fulfilled in thee what the Wise Man says: "The father of the just rejoiceth greatly; and he that hath begotten a wise son shall have joy in him" (Prov. 23:24). And again it is written: "A wise son is the glory of the father" (Prov. 10:1). Besides, how much one ought to glory in a good son is plain from that of Ecclesiasticus: "Rejoice not in ungodly children, if they be multiplied; better is one that feareth God than a thousand ungodly sons; and it is better to die without children than to leave ungodly children" (Ecclus. 16:1, 3, 4). Ambrose also says: "Parents are admonished here to give thanks to God both for the birth and for the merits of their children: for it is no small

gift of God to give children, propagators of the race, heirs of succession. Therefore the fecundity of a parent is a divine gift."

"And many shall rejoice in his nativity," namely thy kinsfolk, friends, and neighbors. Whom many causes induced to this congratulation: First, because Zachary and Elizabeth were singularly dear to all, therefore they rejoiced with their prosperity and joy. Second, on account of the novelty and greatness of the miracle which they saw in the boy supernaturally brought forth. Third, because in the boy born they considered that the divine vision which Zachary had was fulfilled. Fourth, because they hoped that this boy would be of great usefulness and grace, so that the whole people of the Jews would profit from him and be divinely helped through him. Finally every year at his birthday all Christians specially glory that they have obtained the society of so great a Saint, and because he was not born in sin as the other Saints commonly, but was cleansed and sanctified in his mother's womb. By the Saracens too his nativity is celebrated. Hence the reason of joy is subjoined:

"For he shall be great" (Luke 1:15), with spiritual greatness, which is greatness of grace and wisdom and virtue, so that to be greater is to be more perfect; *"before the Lord,"* that is, truly, so that God will judge him such. For some are great, not indeed before God, but before their own eyes and before men, as hypocrites and the proud, to each of whom it is said: "Lay aside thy greatness without tribulation" (Job 36:19). But who can express the greatness of this most blessed John? But the angel consequently declares it; and Christ embraced many things in a single testimony: "Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist" (Matt. 11:11). Moreover, according to Ambrose, as of the body so also of the soul we number ages, not by reason of time but by quality and degree of virtue: so that that man is called perfect who lacks the error of boyhood and transcends the slipperiness of adolescence by maturity of mind; but little, who has as yet no progress in virtue. Lastly, according to the four bodily dimensions, spiritual greatness also consists proportionally in four things, namely in the height of conversation or contemplation, or of divine love; in the breadth of fraternal charity; in the depth of humiliation; in the length of perseverance to the end: according to that of the Apostle to the Ephesians, "That you may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth, and length, and height, and depth" (Eph. 3:18).

"And he shall drink no wine nor strong drink." According to Bede, the Jews understand by strong drink (*sicera*) every inebriating drink, of whatever matter it be made: by which the austerity and sparingness of John's life are signified. In the book of Judges also these drinks are read

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to have been forbidden to Samson, because he was a Nazarite of God from his mother's womb until the day of his death (Judg. 13:5, 7, 14). But John was a more sublime Nazarite of God, that is, consecrated to God the whole time of his life, and therefore all the time of his life abstained from these drinks: as in the law the Nazarites abstained from these during the time of their consecration or separation, and afterwards could drink wine, as is described in the book of Numbers (Num. 6). Now it was fitting that John be of so great abstinence, that his testimony of Christ might be rendered more credible, and that by the rigor of his life he might insinuate that Christ in His first coming would not give abundance of temporal things and delights of bodies, as the most blinded Jews presumed.

"And he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost," that is, with the grace and gifts of the Holy Spirit, *"even from his mother's womb,"* that is, in the maternal womb, or before he goes out of it: by which grace he will be purged from original sin, and his soul will be adorned with the gifts of the Holy Spirit and disposed for meritorious working, as the Lord speaks of Jeremias: "Before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee" (Jer. 1:5). And through the sanctification of both in the womb the all-round sanctification, innocence, and purity of Christ in the virginal womb is prefigured. Yet the sanctification of John was greater and more gracious than that of Jeremias, as also his nativity and person were nearer to Christ: which is also drawn from

the very manner of speaking of sacred Scripture. For of Jeremias it is not asserted that he was filled with the Holy Spirit in the womb. Besides, since the Holy Spirit is true and uncircumscribed God, it is certain that He is everywhere by essence. Nevertheless He is denied to be in sinners, because He is not in them by grace. For which reason in Proverbs it is read: “The Lord is far from the wicked” (Prov. 15:29); and likewise: “The Holy Spirit of discipline will flee from the deceitful, and will withdraw Himself from thoughts that are without understanding” (Wis. 1:5). Hence the Holy Spirit is said to be infused and given to those into whom His gifts pertaining to grace making pleasing are infused and given, whom also He inhabits as long as they remain in charity and grace; but those He is said to fill whom He perfects with singular and abundant grace. Therefore Ambrose says: “One into whom the Holy Spirit is infused is a fullness of great virtues.”

Then the efficacy of John’s doctrine is shown. *“And he shall convert many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God”* (Luke 1:16), that is, to Christ, of whom it is straightway subjoined: *“And he shall go before Him”* (Luke 1:17), that is, before Christ: whose precursor he was, by announcing His coming, and pointing Him out, and in other ways disposing the people to faith in Christ, namely by baptizing, rebuking the impious, and exhorting all who flocked to him to virtues, as will be narrated below in the text (Luke 3:3 ff.). Now by the fact that the angel names Christ the Lord God of Israel, there is confounded the heresy of Arius, denying that Christ is true God; the madness also of Manichaeus, saying that the God of the law or of the Jews is one, and of the Gospel or of Christians another; and the perfidy of Photinus, saying that Christ began from Mary and was not before. So John went before Christ, and by his baptism ran before and presignified Christ’s Baptism, by his passion Christ’s slaying, by his descent into limbo Christ’s descent to the same. *“In the spirit and power of Elias,”* that is, with such grace and fortitude granted by the Holy Spirit as that in which the grace and power of the Holy Spirit Elias did the virtuous works which are written of him in the books of Kings, and as he will go before Christ’s coming, as Malachias has (Mal. 4:5; 3:1); or, in the spirit of prophecy and grace, and the power of justice, by which Elias shone and lived. Each was both Prophet and hermit and a fervent zealot of justice. And as Elias rebuked King Achab and Jezabel his wife (3 Kings 18 ff.), so John rebuked Herod and Herodias. In the roughness also of dress and food they had a special conformity. According to Augustine, however, he does not say, “in the soul of Elias,” since souls do not transmigrate from body to body, but “in the spirit and power of Elias”: for the spirit which was in

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Elias came upon John, and likewise his power.

“That he may turn the hearts of the fathers unto the children”—that is, may make the Jews of his time lovable to and conformed with the Patriarchs and Prophets long dead, inducing them to faith and grace and the Baptism of Christ: through which those fathers will reckon these truly to be loved, and will turn their hearts by love to them. Or, by the hearts of the fathers are understood the true and spiritual understandings of the Scriptures: which understandings the aforesaid fathers obtained. Then John turned the hearts of those fathers to the children, that is, to the Jews to whom he preached personally, when he communicated or preached to these their spiritual knowledge. Again, by the fathers can be understood the progenitors or elders of the disciples and Apostles of Christ: who first raged against the Gospel, but afterwards were converted through John and the Apostles, and made concordant with their aforesaid children. Finally, this Elias is to do around the second coming of Christ, as the Lord testifies through Malachias: “Behold I will send you Elias the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers” (Mal. 4:5–6).

“And the incredulous”—that is, the faithless Jews—“*to the wisdom of the just,*” that is, true wisdom, and evangelical doctrine, and spiritual understanding of the Scriptures, that they may not understand the law carnally nor follow the letter which killeth (2 Cor. 3:6). Of which prudence it is asserted to the Romans: “The prudence of the spirit is life and peace” (Rom. 8:6). But true discretion also is the prudence of the just, by which they rationally serve God, according to that of the Apostle, “Your reasonable service” (Rom. 12:1).

What it is thus to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the incredulous to the prudence of the just, is subjoined: *"To prepare for the Lord a perfect people."* By this instruction or illumination and conversion of the Jews he disposes them to a stable and sincere observance of the evangelical law, whereby they become the perfect people of Christ. Which was chiefly fulfilled in the Jews after Christ's ascension and the sending of the Paraclete, converted by the Apostles in Jerusalem, who, as it is had in the Acts of the Apostles, served God most perfectly (Acts 2:41 ff.): to which conversion John had worked dispositively. For many of those who were fully converted by the Apostles he himself in some manner converted, and disposed to the faith of Christ, by teaching that Christ had come and by baptizing in the name of Christ to come (Luke 3:3, 18). Some also of John's disciples joined themselves to Christ, as Andrew, and became the perfect people of Christ (John 1:40). Hence below Zachary says to John: "Thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, to give knowledge of salvation to His people, unto the remission of their sins" (vv. 76, 77). Many indeed through John's preaching believed in Christ, although afterwards, around Christ's passion and in it, they were seduced by the priests, scribes, and Pharisees, and turned away from Christ: who again, the Holy Spirit being sent through the Apostles, were most fully converted.

"And Zachary said to the angel: Whereby shall I know this?" (Luke 1:18)—that is, by what sign shall I know most certainly that what you have promised is true? For it was the custom with the Jews, on hearing something wonderful, to seek a certifying sign, namely a supernatural effect by which God might testify or declare that what was said is true, as is plain in Gedeon, Ezechias, and many others (Judg. 6; 4 Kings 20:8). Now Zachary spoke these words doubting, because he regarded not God's omnipotence but the course of nature and natural order and causality, as the following words disclose: *"For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years"*; as if he said, By reason of old age we are barren. Zachary does not seem to have been uncertain of the angel's quality—whether he was a good spirit or an evil: nay, he knew that he was an angel of light, because he appeared in a sacred place and in divine worship, and announced such salutary things concerning God's honor and the common salvation; and from the manner of speaking and consoling which the angel had, he weighed this very thing.

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Since therefore he knew these things, it was culpable that, disbelieving, he sought a sign: therefore he is reproved and punished, yet most mercifully.

"And the angel answering, said to him: I am Gabriel" (Luke 1:19), of whom thou hast read in Daniel how faithful a helper I am of thy people (Dan. 10:12, 20): therefore thou shouldst not have doubted of the truth of my words; *"who stand before God,"* that is, I incessantly attend to the face of God, and wherever I go, I am never turned away from the beatific contemplation of the Divinity, nor recede: therefore I stand before God, as ready to obey, and immovably confirmed in good, and stably and inconvertibly intent upon the unchanging God: therefore I cannot lie. In this manner all holy angels are said to stand by God. Sometimes, however, "to stand by" or "to assist" is taken more strictly, as it excludes going forth or being sent to exterior offices or to wayfarers. And so the angels of the higher orders are said to assist God, those of the lower to minister, according to Daniel: "Thousands of thousands ministered to Him, and ten thousand times a hundred thousand stood before Him" (Dan. 7:10). Taking "to stand" in the first way, also in Tobias a certain angel confesses: "I am the angel Raphael, one of the seven who stand before God" (Tob. 12:15). In the Apocalypse it is had: "Grace be unto you and peace from God, and from the seven spirits which are before His throne" (Apoc. 1:4). So finally it is written in Job: "Now on a certain day when the sons of God came to stand before the Lord" (Job 1:6; 2:1): which is said there of the lower angels.

"And am sent to speak to thee, and to bring thee these good tidings"—that is, to evangelize these things to thee: which is to announce something good. Therefore, if he was sent by God, and really stood before Zachary in the temple, how was he, for the same time, standing before God? For he who stands before God seems to be in heaven: but an angel cannot be in several places at once. And the answer is that God as

immense is everywhere: whence for a created mind to assist or stand by Him, it need not be in heaven; yea, wherever it goes, comes, or exists, it remains within the uncircumscribable God, to whom every one is said to stand by who promptly obeys Him or is fixed on Him by contemplation. Now contemplation does not require a determinate place. Hence the Psalmist says: "In the morning I will stand before Thee, and will see" (Ps. 5:5).

"And behold" (Luke 1:20). By this word, "Behold," adverbially, it is demonstrated or insinuated that what is said or shown is notable. *"Thou shalt be dumb"*—so that thou shalt lack the use of speaking, and shalt not be able to speak, because thou shalt lose the faculty of speaking. And it was easy for the angel so to alter the instruments of speech that words could not be formed, as in Genesis it is read that the angel touched the sinew of Jacob's thigh, who immediately halted (Gen. 32:25). *"Until the day wherein these things shall come to pass"*—that is, until the day of the nativity, or rather of the circumcision of the boy, when his name was called John, as the angel had said. For Zachary did not recover speech before the day of John's circumcision, as is described below. So the angel, God inspiring him, gave Zachary a sign as he asked, but not such as he wished: and justly and usefully he takes a penal sign, instructive unto faith, in the withdrawal of speech, that he who by disbelieving had spoken, by being silent might learn to be believing of heavenly words. Indeed, as Chrysostom says, when God indicates something, it must be received in faith: for to dispute about such things is the mark of a contumacious soul. So this sign, inasmuch as it was penal, was given to Zachary in punishment of his incredulity, as is subjoined: *"because thou hast not believed my words, which shall be fulfilled in their time,"* that is, in the fitting time, divinely fixed, according to the Wise Man: "All things have their season, and in their times all things pass under heaven" (Eccles. 3:1). Yet it is not to be thought that Zachary thought the angel's words false; nor was he wholly incredulous, but partly disbelieving and uncertain, turning himself too much to the course of natural things and order of causes, not to the consideration of God's omnipotence and the certainty of the messenger.

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"And the people were waiting for Zachary" (Luke 1:21): because, as was said, he stayed without in the court, nor could enter the Holy Place, nor ought to depart till, the sacrifice completed, the priest who prayed for them should come out. *"And they wondered that he tarried so long in the temple."* For it was not customary to continue so long at such a sacrifice, and they did not know the cause of the delay. *"And when he came out"* (Luke 1:22) of the temple and the place of the altar of incense, *"he could not speak to them, and they understood that he had seen a vision"*—that is, had had a heavenly apparition or angelic revelation—*"in the temple."* For this they considered from the aforesaid delay, and the wonderful alteration of his countenance from the colloquy of the angel, and also from the loss of speech. For God willed that it be known to the people that an angel had appeared to him, so that afterwards, the truth being more fully known, and how the angel had foretold the birth of John, the people might begin to be disposed for the faith of the Messiah's coming, whom this Zachary also certainly preached to have come. Whence, God most supremely wise ordering and dispensing all things best (Wis. 8:1; 12:15), Zachary was permitted to fall into incredulity, and was deprived of speech, that the fame of John might be fixed more tenaciously and widely in the hearts of the Jews, and so afterwards they might the more quickly believe his testimonies of Christ. *"And he made signs to them,"* that is, by a visible sign or nod he indicated to them to be content and depart, and perhaps that something divine had befallen him; *"and remained dumb"* until the day of John's circumcision. So also anyone ought to be silent when a heavenly revelation is made to him, and not at once betray it, until God wills it to be disclosed to others.

"And it came to pass, after the days of his office were accomplished" (Luke 1:23)—that is, the week completed in which he ministered in the temple, within which he remained, as was said, around the temple—*"he departed to his own house,"* which, as it is read, was not in the city of Jerusalem but in another. Since therefore the priests of the old law, whose priesthood was cheap, carnal, and typical, in respect of the

priesthood of Christ or the evangelical law, so abstained from entering their own houses and from approaching their lawful wives, and, remaining around the temple, so gave themselves to purity and devotion in the time of their office, how damnable and wicked are the priests now of Christ, who either daily or frequently handle the sacraments of Christ, and minister and celebrate them to others, and yet are defiled with carnal vices, and are mixed with what is not their own!

"And after those days" (Luke 1:24)—namely Zachary having returned to his house—*"Elizabeth his wife conceived"*: who either by supernal revelation, or by her husband's signs, or by the report of others, knew that her husband had seen a vision, and that not from love of carnal pleasure or his own motion, but from desire of offspring and divine inspiration, he approached her in so great old age: therefore she ought not to resist. Now she conceived, according to the expositors, in the month of September, on the eighth day before the calends of October, the eleventh day of the moon, at the autumnal equinox. *"And she hid herself five months, saying: Thus hath the Lord dealt with me"* (Luke 1:25)—that is, this fecundity He hath supernaturally given me, *"in the days wherein He hath looked on me,"* that is, with His pious, omnipotent, and most causal regard He hath deigned *"to take away my reproach among men"*—that is, the confusion which was threatening me from men, because I was barren. For barrenness in the law lay under a malediction (Deut. 7:14): not that the infecund were accursed before the Lord, since neither Elias nor Jeremias, most holy men, took wives; but that malediction was a certain human reproach, because it was a shame to the married to lack the fruit of marriage. Yea Ambrose says: "It is a shame to women not to have the rewards of marriage, whose sole cause of marrying this is." Yet for the time of grace this is not so to be understood as if it were not more meritorious for the married wholly to continue for love of God and of chastity than to beget offspring, but because men reckon it dishonorable in matrimony not to procreate offspring. But before God a certain sterility is asserted to be happy, according to that of Wisdom:

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"Blessed is the barren and undefiled, who hath not known bed in sin" (Wis. 3:13).

Finally, although holy Elizabeth was greatly gladdened at the conception of so illustrious a son, and that she was supernaturally made fecund, and also because she considered that the son to be born would be of great perfection, and because she had been freed from the mark of barrenness; yet she blushed that this happened in her old age, when by common law it is not the time of union, as it is written in Ecclesiastes: "A time to embrace, and a time to be far from embraces" (Eccles. 3:5). So also Sara says in Genesis: "After I am grown old, and my lord is an old man, shall I give myself to pleasure?" (Gen. 18:12); as if she said, It is unseemly. But the divine will is bound by no law, restricted by no order, but transcends the cause of every law and order: therefore whatever He shall command is good, just, and fitting, at whatever time He commanded it to be done. So from shame or blushing Elizabeth hid herself five months, namely until the most blessed virgin Mary should conceive, and the offspring of Elizabeth, exulting in joy, should prophesy, as Origen expounds.

Furthermore, in this place Ambrose shows that certain incontinent men, who do not blush to know women who are with child and heavy, are more irrational and more base than the beasts. For there are cattle which by a certain mute work as it were speak that their concern is for generating, not a desire of coupling. For when they once feel the womb heavy, they no longer admit intercourse, nor the wantonness of a lover, but take on the care of a parent. Now men spare neither the offspring conceived nor God: those they contaminate, Him they exasperate. To restrain thy petulance, consider the hands of thy Creator forming the fetus in the womb. He works there, and thou defilest with lust the secret of that womb: either imitate the beast, or revere God. — Lastly, from this place Ambrose and Bede elicit how great a care modesty was to the Saints: because even Elizabeth blushed so much at a good and lawful thing that she hid herself five months, because the thing that had befallen her could have among the ignorant the appearance of evil. Indeed, as Ambrose says, to each office an age is prescribed, and what befits at one time does not befit at another: and there are certain times prescribed for marriage, when it is decorous to give oneself to procreating children, while the years are

vigorous and there is hope of offspring; but when mature old age has succeeded, it is a shame to bear the signs of intercourse, though lawful, and to be burdened with a load of another age, and for the womb to swell with fruit not of its time.

Luke 1C: Annunciation and Visit to Elizabeth

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Continuation of the exposition of this first chapter, from the place where it is said: "And in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent."

The annunciation and conception of the Precursor having been described, as a kind of preambles, the annunciation and conception of the Savior are now described. For God adorned the Precursor with so great an excellence of miracles in his annunciation and nativity so that his testimonies concerning Christ might stand the more credible; and these things are described for this reason too, that what is read of Christ may be believed the more certainly and firmly.

"And in the sixth month" (Luke 1:26) from the conception of John, who is said to have been conceived about the end of September. But Christ was announced, conceived, and suffered about the end of March, namely on the twenty-fifth day of it, *(p. 384)* according to Bede.

Now March is the sixth month from September, not counting the minutiae of the last part of September, namely the last eight days of it, within which John was conceived: and these are not reckoned here, because it is the custom of Scripture not to make a point of the minutiae of numbers and times.

"The angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary" (Luke 1:26–27). About to describe the highest and most worthy mystery—namely the most blessed and most benedicted Incarnation of the only-begotten Son of God—the sacred Evangelist relates all things in the most orderly and distinct way, and elucidates everything plainly, so that we who hear or read may set before the eyes of the mind those things which were done as if present, and weigh each one with the utmost attention, devotion, and distinctness: that in the recollection of so ineffable a benefit of God toward us we may be cordially kindled, may thank God from the depths, and may with pure and most joyful mind recall the manner and history of our salvation.

Therefore, in describing the Incarnation of the Son of God, he first mentions the messenger, that it was not a man or a prophet but an angel; whom he also expressly names, that he was Gabriel, of whom it has already been said. He is read in the Old Testament to have appeared to Daniel, to whom a superior angel, namely Michael, then prince of the Synagogue, spoke: "Gabriel, make this man understand the vision"—that is, Daniel (Dan. 8:16). Of this Gabriel Daniel says: "And whiles I was yet speaking in prayer, behold the man Gabriel, flying swiftly, touched me at the time of the evening sacrifice" (Dan. 9:21). The Evangelist teaches that this angel was sent immediately by God, one and three, not (as is wont to happen) by a superior angel, as the prophet Zachary testifies it happened: "Behold the angel that spoke in me went forth, and another angel went out to meet him, and said to him: Run, speak to this young man" (Zach. 2:3–4). *"Sent,"* I say, *"into a city of Galilee, named Nazareth."* By which that saying of Isaias about Christ is shown to be fulfilled: "A Nazarene shall spring from his root" (Isa. 11:1). For so the Hebrew truth contains it, and so Matthew alleges it (Matt. 2:23); for which Jerome translated, "A flower shall rise up out of his root." It was also fitting that Christ be announced in Galilee, not in Judea, to signify that Christ, having left Judea, was to migrate to the Gentiles, converting them to the faith by apostolic preaching. For Galilee means "migration."

Finally, *he was sent "to a virgin espoused to a man named Joseph."* Why Christ willed to be born of a betrothed virgin, many reasons are given; because they are read in everyone's commentaries, I pass them

over, touching only a few very briefly: namely, that the most chaste Virgin might not be defamed of fornication, and that Christ might not be said to be born of a fornicatress; likewise that the Jews might not seem justly to have despised Him as illegitimately begotten; and that the devil might have less occasion to suppose that Jesus was the Messiah, since He had sprung from the spouse of a husband, whereas the devil knew that the Messiah would be born of a virgin. Lastly, that the Virgin Mary might not be stoned as an adulteress, since she was also of priestly stock: for a girl of that stock committing fornication was stoned as an adulteress, as is clear in Leviticus (Lev. 21:9; Deut. 22:21). The virgin's name too was Mary, which is interpreted "star of the sea," because she herself, by the light proceeding from her or born of her, illumined this world. Mary also is interpreted "bitter sea." For not only in Christ's Passion, but often before, she was filled with the bitterness of maternal compassion, anguish, and fear, as is also had below: "And your own soul a sword shall pierce" (Luke 2:35). For as she was tortured most bitterly in seeing her Son crucified, so very frequently was she afflicted in considering that He was to be crucified, and in seeing His persecutions. Again, Mary is interpreted "lady": and she is indeed Queen of heaven, Lady of the world, because Genitrix of God.

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The spouse of the Virgin, most chaste Joseph, was *"of the house"*—that is, of the seed, tribe, or family—*"of David"*: of which tribe the blessed Virgin also was. For men were joined in matrimony to women of their own tribe (Num. 36), and especially women succeeding in their parents' inheritance could not marry except to men of their own tribe, lest the distribution of the lots be confounded. Now the glorious Virgin was the only child of her father; wherefore she succeeded him in the inheritance.

Furthermore, we must contemplate how Christ chose in all things what seem abject and humbler (1 Cor. 1:27). Whence He willed to be conceived not in Jerusalem, the metropolis, but in the little town of Nazareth, that the Christian religion might be recognized as established and introduced not by human power but by divine virtue. Yes, and Galilee itself was so despised by the Jews that the princes said to Nicodemus: "Search the Scriptures, and see that out of Galilee a prophet rises not" (John 7:52). This also was wonderful, that the world could be persuaded that she was a virgin who for so many years had cohabited with a husband. Finally this was of eminent condescension, that the Only-begotten of God willed to be conceived by the announcing of the same angel by whose announcing His precursor was conceived, and that He sent not some one or some of the highest order of angels to announce so great a mystery. From which St. Thomas and many others also conclude that angels of the superior orders are never sent to exterior ministry, since the announcer of this supreme matter was of the choir of the Archangels. For since the Only-begotten of the eternal Father descended into the world and assumed our nature, that in all things in word and deed He might teach humility, and by it instruct us that we must return to true salvation, He did not send the hosts of the highest order to announce His incarnation, but was content with one customary messenger.

Lastly, St. Bernard seems to hold on this passage that the holy angels were ignorant of the mystery of the Incarnation, so that the counsel of God for the salvation of the human race through the Incarnation of the Word lay open to none of the angels before this embassy of the Lord's annunciation was committed to Gabriel. And this indeed displeased even certain Catholics in Bernard's time; and Hugh of St. Victor wrote to Bernard about it, that he might open his mind more fully. To whom the holy Father replied most fully and clearly: first, that he had not uttered that word as an assertion; second, that even if he had uttered it assertively, it could nevertheless stand: because it could be understood not of the mystery itself or its substance in itself—for this had long ago been revealed to the Prophets through angels—but of the mystery of the Incarnation as to certain of its conditions and definite circumstances, namely as to place, time, mode, person: that it was of this Virgin and at this hour that the Word should be incarnate. — Therefore it is to be noted that (as St. Thomas determines) the mystery of the Incarnation, namely that the Only-begotten of God would assume human nature, was made known to all the angels from the beginning of their felicity as to the

substance of the mystery, and in general, but not as to determinate conditions, or in particular. For all the ministries of the angels are chiefly ordered to the incarnation of the Word: and "they are all ministering spirits" (Heb. 1:14). Therefore of this mystery all were commonly taught from the beginning; but afterwards, as to its circumstances, they advanced in more distinct knowledge of it; yea, as the divine and holy Dionysius writes in the seventh chapter of the *Celestial Hierarchy*, from the time of the Ascension they were more fully instructed by Christ. And thus can be saved what Augustine says in his *Literal Commentary on Genesis*: "So hidden was this mystery that it was not known even to the angels."

Moreover, according to Gregory, Gabriel is fittingly sent to Mary, who is interpreted "fortitude of God," because he announced as now to be incarnate Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:24), who overcame the aerial powers. Again, according to Bede, it was fitting that an angel be sent by God to the Virgin, to announce *(p. 386)* the Savior's coming, since in the beginning a serpent was sent by the devil to a woman to induce the ruin of mankind (Gen. 3). Besides, it became Christ, the author of all purity and integrity, and the reformer of the corrupted and broken, to be born of a virgin most entire and most pure, and to signify that His members were to be spiritually born or regenerated of the Virgin Church. Finally, according to Jerome, rightly is an angel sent to a virgin, since virginity has always been akin to the angels, and to live in the flesh beyond the flesh is not an earthly and human but a heavenly and angelic life.

"And the angel being come in to her" (Luke 1:28): doubtless into a secret place, where that most holy one was giving herself to contemplation and prayer, perhaps in her chamber or oratory; and it is probable that she was then praying most devoutly for the salvation of the whole human race and the coming of Christ. He *"said,"* with immense reverence and humble bearing saluting the most sacred Virgin, soon to be Genitrix of her God, and indeed admiring her dignity: *"Hail, full of grace,"* that is, pre-eminently replenished with habitual grace making pleasing, and its charisms and gifts, and the virtues annexed to it. She was therefore already excellently adorned with the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, wondrously decorated with the theological virtues, elegantly supported by the cardinal and moral virtues, and polished also with various gifts of grace freely given, and in all these straightway to be filled up far more. *"The Lord"*—the most blessed Trinity—*"is with you,"* so much the more singularly as more graciously. For the fuller the Virgin's grace was, the more singular and illustrious was the consistence of God in her. And the Lord, the Only-begotten of God, was soon to be with her, and in her in a most singular and eminent manner, as being about to rest bodily in the midst of her virginal bowels, her true and only Son.

"Blessed are you among women": that is, more blessed than all, because more elected, filled with greater gifts of grace, and about to be sublimated in a manner by an almost infinite dignity in the conception of the Son of God. For to be of equal parentage with the eternal Father, to have the true God as Son, to conceive, bring forth, and cherish Him from whom the Holy Spirit, true God, proceeds, to have as one's only filial fruit the Creator and Savior of all—is not that in a manner an infinite dignity? Again, to be mother and virgin, and not only this, but to be mother of so great and such a Son, and a virgin: is it not so much the more sublime as it is singular? If causality is a great perfection, how great a perfection it is to be the cause, or genitrix, of the Cause of causes! And a mother is certainly the cause of her son. Moreover, since the benediction of God is the conferring of His gifts and the multiplying of the same, Mary is so much the more blessed as she has obtained greater and more singular gifts from God. She is also so magnificently saluted by the angel not only because of what she was then, but because of what she was soon to be, and what she was in eternal predestination.

"Who having heard, was troubled at his saying" (Luke 1:29): that is, at so excellent, unexpected, and never before heard angelic salutation. This trouble was neither of imperfection nor of fault, but of admiration and virginal modesty. And it was a certain vehement change, concussion, or commotion of the affective power. For since the most sacred Virgin was least in her own eyes, and laudably bashful, she most vehemently marvelled at so great a praise of herself, and blushed and was struck dumb at being praised and preferred to

all women, all the more as she suspected or felt less of the kind about herself. For the humbler a man is, the more wonderful to himself seems his praise and exaltation, and often the more burdensome too. A holy troubling of this sort was found in a more excellent manner also in Christ, according to that of John: "Jesus, when He saw Mary, namely Magdalen, weeping, groaned in the spirit and troubled Himself" (John 11:33). And in another place He Himself testifies: "Now is my soul troubled" (John 12:27). But there is also another trouble, *(p. 387)* immoderate and vicious, contrary to quiet and peace of mind, hindering reason, which was far from Christ and the pre-elect Virgin: yea, speaking of this trouble, we ought to labor to have an untroubled mind.

— Furthermore it is to be considered that holy Mary is said to have been troubled at the angel's word, not at his sight, because (as is said) she was accustomed to behold angels. Nevertheless some probably assert that the angel on this occasion appeared to her with much brighter light, with more beautiful apparatus and bearing, as the greatness of the cause of his embassy required, and therefore she had in some manner been troubled at his appearing. *"And thought with herself what manner of salutation this should be."* She did not doubt that it was true and truly uttered by an angelic mouth. For the gracious Maiden lacked not the grace of discernment of spirits. Yet she thought what it was, what it pretended, whither it tended, why it was offered: and it was of prudence that she so thought. Nor did she answer at once, esteeming herself unworthy of so magnificent a salutation, because she considered herself according to what she was in herself and what she had from herself. After which manner the Apostle says, "I am not worthy to be called an apostle" (1 Cor. 15:9), and "Jesus Christ came into this world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief" (1 Tim. 1:15); nevertheless he says, "I am not conscious to myself of anything" (1 Cor. 4:4), and "In nothing was I inferior to them that are above measure apostles" (2 Cor. 12:11): ascribing the one to himself and his own will, the other to God and His grace. For of the same thing, according to its diverse considerations, diverse judgments are given.

"And the angel said to her: Fear not, Mary" (Luke 1:30). He names the most chaste Virgin expressly, as if compassionating her tenderness, her trouble, and her virginal modesty, and consoling her by speaking sweetly and familiarly. Although therefore Mary's fear and modesty were not culpable, yea laudable, yet she is admonished to cast them off, that better and more divine acts may succeed: namely contemplation of heavenly secrets, thanksgiving for them, and a most tranquil serenity of mind in God. And why she need not fear is added: *"for you have found grace with God,"* that is, you have been found accepted and pleasing to God, and have obtained the piety and grace which you sought from Him, yea much more.

"Behold, you shall conceive in your womb" (Luke 1:31): that is, you shall be made fruitful without the opening of the virginal seal, the virtue of the Holy Spirit working in you, *"and shall bring forth a son"*—your own Creator and the Savior of all the sons of men—*"and you shall call His name Jesus."* The reason of which appellation of Christ the angel explained to Joseph, saying: "For He shall save His people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21). For Jesus means savior, salvation, or saving. Hence of His naming the Son says of the Father through Isaias: "The Lord has called me from the womb, from the bowels of my mother He has been mindful of my name" (Isa. 49:1). Finally, of this Jesus our Lord, in thing and name, there were figures: Jesus the son of Nave, otherwise called Josue and Osee (Ecclus. 46; Num. 13:17); and likewise Jesus the son of Josedec, the high priest (Agg. 1:1). For the former led the sons of Israel into the promised land, the latter presided in spiritual things: so also Jesus now, spiritually presiding over the hearts of the elect, leads them into the land of the Church militant and triumphant.

"He shall be great" (Luke 1:32). For according to the divinity He was from eternity, is unchangeably, and shall indefectibly be great—not in bulk but in perfection, power, and dignity; and so great that the Psalmist says: "Great is the Lord, and exceedingly to be praised, and of His greatness there is no end" (Ps. 144:3). But according to the human nature He differs not from other men as to the essentials of the species; yet through the gifts of grace and the hypostatic union of His humanity with the Word, He is of so great magnitude,

dignity, and perfection that He is greater than the whole universe, or any intellectual creature or lower one. Whence because of this greatness even in the womb of His mother He was a man, according to that of Jeremias: "The Lord has created a new thing upon the earth: a woman shall compass a man" (Jer. 31:22). *"And shall be called the Son of the Most High"*—not an adoptive son like the rest, but natural, coeternal, only, coequal, according to that: "The Lord said to me: You are my Son" *(p. 388)* (Ps. 2:7); and again, "From the womb before the day star I begot you" (Ps. 109:3). Whence Solomon, teaching that both the Father and the Son are ineffable, says: "What is His name, and what is the name of His Son, if you know?" (Prov. 30:4). Nor does it stand in the way that the Son of God is now bidden to be called Jesus. For Solomon does not say those things because the Father and the Son lack every name, but because every name falls short, as far as we can comprehend it, of the superblessed and superliving and superessential dignity of the Father and the Son, by an immense defect. Nor let anyone think otherwise of the majesty of the Holy Spirit.

"And the Lord God shall give Him," according to the human nature—the Lord God, the eternal Father, or the whole adorable Trinity, whose gifts and works are undivided—*"the seat,"* that is, the royal dignity and power, *"of David His father,"* that is, which David had in type. For whatever of power and eminence was in David, far more sublimely was given to Christ as man, according as He says: "All power is given to me in heaven and on earth" (Matt. 28:18). Hence Christ was truly King of Israel, and received plenary power over the Jews in spiritual and bodily things, although as to temporal and bodily presidency He did not use it. For which reason He said to Pilate: "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36). And when they would make Him king, He fled (John 6:15). *"And He shall reign in the house of Jacob,"* that is, in the hearts of the true and elect Israelites—not only those descending bodily from the patriarch Jacob, but of all also who follow his virtues—*"forever"*: namely, in the way, through gifts of grace and through His vicars, Christ presides over the faithful, and reigns in those who obey His law; in the fatherland, however, through gifts of glory and through Himself. *"And of His kingdom there shall be no end"* (Luke 1:33). Whether the kingdom be called the faithful people—the Church, which is frequently called the kingdom of heaven—or Christ's dominion in it, or the triumphant Church, or Christ's presidency in it: it is clear that of His kingdom there shall be no end. For the state of the Church militant will last until the end of the world: which taking an end here, the elect will be translated to the fatherland, in which the end of the divine government shall not be. — These same things are known to have been foretold through Isaias: "He shall sit upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom: to establish it and strengthen it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth and forever" (Isa. 9:7). For concerning Christ's principality over the Jews, Ezechiel, Jeremias, Zacharias, and the other Prophets have spoken with one accord (Ezech. 37:24; Jer. 23:5; Zach. 9:9).

"And Mary said to the angel: How shall this be done" (Luke 1:34)—that I should conceive the Son of God—*"because I know not man?"* that is, I have resolved by no means to know, and have vowed, as far as in me lies? For already, as the doctors say, she had promised virginity, yet under a most honest condition, namely unless God should dispose otherwise of her. Some, however, affirm that before she was espoused she had the keeping of virginity in purpose and affection, but did not promise; and afterwards, being espoused to Joseph, who had a like purpose, she made the vow together with him. Now she inquires of the manner, not of the fact itself, for she did not doubt, but, solicitous for the observance of virginity, she asked the manner of the work. Yet, Ambrose testifying, Mary read that of Isaias, "Behold a virgin shall conceive" (Isa. 7:14), but did not read the manner. From which it is concluded that she was lettered, and instructed in the Law and the Prophets even by human study. For Origen also testifies that she had a knowledge of the Law.

"And the angel answering, said to her: The Holy Ghost shall come upon you" (Luke 1:35): that is, not by a natural way, not by a man's intercourse, not by angelic power, but coming upon you—that is, coming upon you, over and above what He has now conferred upon you, flowing in more abundantly—you shall conceive, because He Himself will make you fruitful, fitting, forming, and suddenly organizing a body for the Word of God from your most pure bloods: as He says through Zachary, "I will engrave the graving thereof" (Zach.

3:9). Whence to intimate that Christ would be born of a mother, no husband making her fruitful but a heavenly power acting in her, it is written in Isaias: “He shall grow up as a tender plant before Him, and as a root out of a thirsty ground” (Isa. 53:2). *(p. 389)* That Isaias speaks there literally of Christ is certain to anyone who rightly weighs that chapter. *“And the power of the Most High,”* that is, God the omnipotent Father, *“shall overshadow you,”* that is, will temper His immense power to your capacity, that you may be able to bear its influence. Therefore He will not irradiate you according to the immense fullness of His brightness, but, causing in you as it were a shadow of His resplendence, will exercise the effect of His power in you proportionately to your lowliness, doing in you immediately by Himself what in others He effects through the causality or formative virtue of a man. These words are expounded by others in many ways, but what is read sufficiently in all the commentaries I have decided to pass by. But that the Holy Spirit comes not by changing place but by influencing and operating, I think most certain.

Moreover it is made known from these things that there are many degrees of fullness of grace. For the blessed Virgin before these words was called full of grace; nevertheless in the conception of the Son of God the grace of God was most greatly increased in her, so that then the *fomes* is said to have been wholly extinguished in her, which even before had been so weakened that it never rose up into a culpable motion. Yet here the discourse is chiefly of the conferring of grace freely given, namely of the maternity of God, or maternal fecundity in the Virgin, as regards Christ. And as prophecy and apostleship, so also this maternal fecundity is a gift of grace freely given. For which reason, according to Augustine, Mary was more blessed in conceiving Christ by mind than by body, and that bodily conception without the spiritual would not have profited her.

Finally, fullness, perfection, and immensity belong to God alone absolutely and properly, to creatures however comparatively, improperly, particularly, and in a certain genus. *“And therefore the Holy One which shall be born of you,”* that is, Christ to be born of you—who according to the divinity is substantially holy, and holiness itself, and the superessential essence of immense holiness; according to the assumed nature also is of greater holiness than all the predestinate together—“*shall be called the Son of God,”* as has just been said: “He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High.” Therefore from so divine and supernatural a conception of Christ it becomes known to the faithful that He is the Son of God, for whom alone such a conception was reserved. For to the fountain of purity, and the repairer of the broken and restorer of the corrupted, a most pure conception was due, and a most clean nativity, that He might not diminish the Mother’s integrity and purity but consecrate and confirm it, so that before the birth, in the birth, and after the birth she might remain untouched, closed, and most clean.

Moreover, since in the words quoted the superblessed Trinity is distinctly expressed by the angel, it is clear that the wise Virgin, even before this angelic address, had an express faith and distinct knowledge of the most high Trinity. Otherwise she would not have understood what the angel was intimating by these words, but might have said what in the Acts some answered the Apostle who asked: “Have you received the Holy Ghost, believing?”—“We have not so much as heard whether there be a Holy Ghost” (Acts 19:2).

Consequently, to increase Mary’s credulity, gladden her soul, inflame her devotion, and so that with most ardent, most joyful, and most devout mind she might consent and conceive the Only-begotten of God, the holy angel proposes to her an example, that the wonderful conception to come may be approved by a wonderful conception already done, and that the charitable Maiden may congratulate the benefits of her kinswoman. *“And behold your cousin Elizabeth, she also has conceived a son in her old age”* (Luke 1:36)—though she had a twofold impediment, namely old age and natural sterility—*“and this is the sixth month with her that is called barren”*: for this is the month, namely March, in which I appear to you, the sixth for her since she conceived; *“that is called barren”* because she had long been so called, nor had the usage of so calling her been abolished; *“because no word shall be impossible with God”* (Luke 1:37): that is, whatever is signified by speech God can fulfill, if it involve no contradiction, and to do so is rather of power

than of weakness. *(p. 390)* Whence that God in His nature cannot sin, be weakened, eat, run, be moved, or sleep is of power, not of weakness. With this word agrees that of Jeremias: “Lord God, no word shall be hard for You” (Jer. 32:17). For since the power of God is infinite, He is certainly omnipotent, and whatever He wills He can accomplish in an instant, nor can He do so many or so great things that He cannot infinitely do more and greater.

These things heard, the pious and docile Virgin quickly gives her consent. And so incomparably commended, she knows not to be exalted, but humbled herself the more deeply, the larger God’s clemency toward her she perceived, ascribing nothing to her own powers. For as the vicious swell foolishly and emptily with their praises, so the virtuous cast themselves down the more by them. For the more good things one has received from God, the more grateful to Him he ought to be, and the more subject. *“And Mary said”* (Luke 1:38), gladdened by the benefit conferred on her kinswoman: *“Behold the handmaid of the Lord”*; therefore I offer myself prepared for all that pleases Him. Hearing also that she was elected Mother of the Lord her God, she calls herself nothing other than His handmaid. *“Be it done to me according to your word,”* that is, the Holy Spirit coming upon me, I shall conceive the Son of God as you have said. By these words she consented: which being uttered, she immediately conceived the Only-begotten of the eternal Father. Therefore in an instant the Holy Spirit formed a body from her most pure blood, and organized it perfectly as to the distinction of the members; in which same instant the soul of Christ was created, united to the flesh, and both were joined to the Word by hypostatic or personal union. So in the same instant there was the separation of the blood, its consolidation, figuration, animation, and deification. Yet the distinction of the members, perceptible to the eyes, would hardly have been seen because of the smallness of the body.

Furthermore, as soon as the Virgin assented, there were celebrated in her womb the nuptials of the hypostatic union, namely the joining of human nature with the Word: of which Gregory says that God the Father then made a marriage for the Son when He joined human nature to Him in the Virgin’s womb. Then also were celebrated the nuptials of the heavenly Bridegroom with His singular Spouse, who is the Virgin Mother, the Christ-bearing Virgin, who by conceiving the Son of God became His singular Spouse. Now the whole superblessed Trinity (whose essence being one, the works are undivided) suppositally coupled human nature to the Son. But the Son alone assumed that nature and suppositated it in Himself: so that the eternal Word Himself is the hypostasis of the assumed humanity, which subsists in the Word by the uncreated personality of the Word. And there is in Christ only one personality, and one filiation only, since He is one person: for filiation concerns the person. But two generations are posited in Him, as also two natures: for generation concerns nature.

“And the angel departed from her” (Luke 1:38). And I judge that he did not depart from her suddenly and abruptly, as he is more often read to have receded or disappeared from other Saints; but with great reverence, with the greatest congratulation, with most joyful apparatus, as if asking leave to depart from his Lady, whom as Mother of himself and of the Creator of all he had already begun to honor, he withdrew and vanished provident of her.

“And Mary rising up” (Luke 1:39) from the place of prayer, from the quiet of contemplation, from the dwelling of her abode, *“in those days,”* straightway after she had conceived the Only-begotten of God, *“went into the hill country,”* that is, through high, mountainous, and rough places, with which Judea is full, *“with haste, into a city of Juda; and she entered into the house of Zachary, and saluted Elizabeth”* (Luke 1:40). She went swiftly, giving an example to virgins and to all women not to tarry gladly in public, nor to be found without reasonable cause on common roads. And because she was already full of the Holy Spirit, and of spiritual joy, fervor of charity, and the sweetness of holy devotion, she went forward hastily, especially because she desired both to rejoice with her kinswoman and to serve her, and desired that her offspring *(p. 391)* be adorned with fuller gifts by the presence of her Son. — Now by the city of Juda some understand Jerusalem itself, through which they assert Mary passed, toward the city in which John’s parents dwelt,

which they say was almost four or five miles beyond Jerusalem. Nevertheless by the city of Juda the city of residence of John's parents can be understood. *"And she saluted Elizabeth"*: as it is had in Ecclesiasticus, "I will not be ashamed to salute a friend" (Ecclus. 22:31). And because she was most humble, perhaps she saluted her kinswoman first. The form of the salutation, however, is not recorded in writing. According to Ambrose, it is fitting that the chaster a virgin is, the humbler she be.

"And it came to pass that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the infant leaped in her womb" (Luke 1:41). Exultation is wont to arise from some prior cognitive apprehension. The doctors therefore commonly hold that by the omnipotence of God the use of reason was accelerated in John, not yet born: so that, the Holy Spirit revealing, he knew the Only-begotten of God already incarnate and then present in the Virgin's womb; and then especially was fulfilled in him what the angel announced, that "he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb" (Luke 1:15). Hence, according to Ambrose and the Gloss, as Elizabeth perceived Mary's coming, so John perceived Christ's. Some, however, said that John did not know the presence of Christ, nor did he then use reason, but was moved miraculously, and bore himself like one exulting in his mother's womb, for the declaration of the dignity of Christ and of His Genitrix. Augustine touches both ways, but determines neither assertively; yet the first is held the truer.

"And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost." Some say that Mary was filled with the Holy Spirit before conceiving, but Elizabeth after conceiving. Yet since the Evangelist has said of Elizabeth, not yet fecundated, that they were both, her husband and she, "just before God," etc. (Luke 1:6), it is certain that even before the conception of her offspring she was in a manner, yea eminently, full of the Holy Spirit, as worthy to be numbered among the perfect; but it is the custom of Scripture to say that a man is then filled with the Holy Spirit when he is suffused with notably more exuberant grace, as of the primitive Church, which on the day of Pentecost was filled with the Holy Spirit, it is written in the Acts: "When they had prayed, the place was moved wherein they were assembled; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 4:31).

So holy Elizabeth, weighing so great a miracle in the exultation of her yet unborn offspring, and also perceiving the venerable presence of Christ and of the most blessed Virgin, gloried from her whole heart in God, and was wonderfully filled with greater grace, and received the spirit of prophecy. *"And she cried out with a loud voice,"* (Luke 1:42): from the fullness of devotion and interior joy she burst forth into a sublime voice. For "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (Matt. 12:34). *"And said: Blessed are you among women,"* that is, above all women, as has been expounded. For these words have the same sense as those angelic words, "Blessed are you among women" (Luke 1:28). *"And blessed is the fruit of your womb,"* that is, Christ, already made your son: of whom the Psalmist says, "Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord" (Ps. 117:26); and, "Our earth shall yield her fruit" (Ps. 84:13). Of whom it is written in Isaias: "In that day the bud of the Lord shall be in magnificence and glory, and the fruit of the earth shall be high" (Isa. 4:2). — Now Christ is blessed according to both natures, but in different ways. For as God He is blessed by nature, or substantially, and holy, according to that of Daniel: "Blessed are You, O Lord God of our fathers" (Dan. 3:52). For God is said to be blessed in Himself because essentially holy, most worthy of all benediction and praise, and the conferrer of all benediction and grace (Ecclus. 43:33). But according to the human nature He is said to be blessed through grace, since He received the fullness of grace, "not by measure" (John 3:34): namely in such abundance that the whole capacity of a created mind was filled up in Him. *(p. 392) "And whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me"* (Luke 1:43)—namely the Mother of Christ? As if she said, I am not worthy, nor do I ascribe this to my merits. In which the humility of Elizabeth is made known, who, though she was advanced in years, and joined in marriage to so great a priest, and supernaturally made fruitful, professed herself unworthy to be visited by a young girl espoused to a carpenter. And this was true, having regard to the excellence of Mary's dignity and grace, and to what Elizabeth had been by nature; or even to her good works, according as they proceeded from free will; but insofar as they proceeded from the supernatural habits of grace making pleasing, and of the infused virtues,

and likewise from the actual motion of the Holy Spirit, she was not only worthy to be visited by the Mother of the Lord, but also beatifically to enjoy the Divinity in the fatherland, the common obstacle having been removed by Christ's Passion: according to the manner in which virtuous works are said to be meritorious of eternal life, and of condignity, according to a probable opinion, although some say the opposite.

Furthermore, it now occurs to memory that concerning the words aforesaid, "Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost," Ambrose writes: "The mother was not filled first before her son." Which is to be understood of that abundant filling touched on above. And he adds: "But when the son (namely John) was filled with the Holy Spirit, he filled his mother also." It is asked how John, not yet born, filled his mother with the Holy Spirit. And it is certain that he did not do so authoritatively, since this is proper to God; nor ministerially, as in the dispensations or administrations of the sacraments the ministers of the Church are said to fill the recipients. Some say that he did this in the manner of an instrumental meritorious cause, so that in him by grace the use of reason and of free will had been accelerated. Others however affirm that it happened in none of the aforesaid ways, but that he is said to have filled his mother because by his privilege the increase of such divine charisms was given to his mother. It may also probably be said that he filled his mother with the Holy Spirit occasionally, because she, experiencing the miraculous exultation of her son, was thereby poured out in mind toward God, and her heart, opened and dilated and made patent by charity, became capable of greater grace—as someone seeing another standing in great devotion is kindled in devotion.

"For behold, as soon as the voice of your salutation sounded in my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy" (Luke 1:44): that is, O Mary, as soon as it was made—that is, heard—the voice of your salutation, by which you saluted me so charitably and humbly, in my ears, at once the infant in my womb leaped for joy, formally or causally: so that this leaping was joy, or a bodily exultation by redundance, born of the joy of the mind. Therefore John, the friend of the Bridegroom, rejoiced in the Bridegroom's presence, according to what he himself will afterwards confess with his mouth: "The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices with joy because of the bridegroom's voice" (John 3:29). Wherefore Ambrose says: "John leaped by reason of the mystery," inasmuch as he now knew the Only-begotten of God incarnate and truly present. From which I think it evident that John also perceived by interior hearing Christ's internal allocution or illumination. The Gloss here says: "Behold of how great virtue is the salutation of the blessed Virgin, which confers joy, confers also the Holy Spirit, confers revelation of divine secrets, confers also the act of prophecy." But this is to be understood of conferring by way of meritorious cause. For Mary, by saluting her kinswoman so ardently and humbly, in a certain manner merited for her the aforesaid goods.

Moreover, as Bede also confesses, it is certain that Elizabeth knew only by the revelation of the Holy Spirit that Mary had already become the Mother of Christ, having been saluted by the angel, and believed his words, and that John's exultation was on account of Christ's bodily presence. Hence Elizabeth adds to her: *"And blessed are you that have believed"* (Luke 1:45). This agrees with what the Savior says: "Blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed" (John 20:29). Moreover Gregory on Ezechiel: *(p. 393)* "At once concerning the past and present and future, by the spirit of prophecy Elizabeth was touched, who knew that blessed Mary had believed the promises of the angel, and, naming her mother, understood that she bore the Redeemer in her womb; and when she predicted that all things would be accomplished, she looked into what also would follow in the future." Therefore the knowledge of faith is a kind of inchoation of the blessed knowledge in the fatherland; and to believe from charity is itself meritorious of consummate beatitude, standing to it as merit to reward. Finally, as open vision is the felicity of the fatherland, so the knowledge of faith is the beatitude of the way. The beatitude of the way too is imperfect, and a disposition for the perfect felicity of the fatherland.

Why she was blessed in believing is added: *"because those things shall be accomplished that were spoken to you by the Lord,"* that is, they shall obtain their complete effect or plenary completion; and what you have believed through faith, you shall see by species. Christ also whom you have conceived you shall bring forth,

and lead on to the growth of manhood. Augustine, moreover, says that the blessed Virgin was happier in spiritually conceiving the Son of God in her mind by faith, or by believing, than in bodily conceiving Him in her womb. Ambrose too: "Whatever soul has believed," namely by faith united to charity, "conceives and generates the Word of God; and if according to the flesh there is one Mother of Christ, yet according to faith Christ is the fruit of all."

Luke 1D: Magnificat

(p. 393)

Article IV. Exposition of the Gospel canticle of the Christ-bearing Virgin Mary, namely: "My soul doth magnify the Lord," etc.

To certain Saints of the Old Testament it was granted that, having received the chief benefits of God, they should compose a canticle and offer it to God. So now does holy Mary. For considering the ineffable benefits of God upon her and in her, she did not delay to render praises and thanks, especially because the Only-begotten of God deigned to be incarnate of her. Of which a type went before in Anna, who, having borne Samuel by a supernatural gift of God, sang the song contained in the first book of Kings: "My heart hath rejoiced in the Lord" (1 Kings 2:1); which in some points coincides with the song of the divine Virgin.

"And Mary said" (Luke 1:46). Here is described the canticle, hymn, praise, or thanksgiving of the glorious Virgin.

The magnificence and excellence of this canticle is first weighed from the part of the one who made it—who, the more gracious, the more illumined, and the more divine she was, the more splendidly she brought forth the canticle; secondly, from the richness and majesty of its meaning; thirdly, from the fire of devotion overflowing in it. So then: *"My soul,"* she says, *"doth magnify the Lord."* As if she said: You, O Elizabeth, praise me, extol me, magnify me; but I, knowing that of myself I have nothing, ascribe all good things to God, praise Him, abase myself, and magnify Him—that is, I confess, bear witness to, and show Him to be great, supreme, immense; I honor Him magnificently with all my strength, I desire to venerate Him with all zeal, and I reckon myself of small account. We are said, then, to sanctify, magnify, and glorify God when by words and deeds we profess, extol, and set forth His holiness, majesty, and blessedness. But the impious are said to pollute the name

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of God, to make little of it, to dishonor it, because, so far as lies in them, by words and deeds they show—or so conduct themselves as if—God were not worthy of honor and glory and all reverence, but to be little esteemed and not cared for; and they also lead others to offend God, to irreverence and injury. Hence through Ezechiel God often rebukes the children of Israel for having polluted His holy name among the nations (Ezech. 36:20).

Mary therefore did what her holy father, the prophet David, admonished: "O magnify the Lord with me" (Ps. 33:4). Now, according to Ambrose, we magnify the Lord, or the Lord is magnified, not that anything accrues to Him, but because He is magnified in us—that is, through His effects in us, or our acts performed by His help, He is shown to be great. Therefore Ambrose adds: "For Christ is the image of God, and so, if the soul does anything just and religious, it magnifies the image of God, to whose likeness it was created" (Gen. 1:27). Which seems taken from the words of Origen, who says: "Our Savior is the image of the invisible God (Col. 1:15), and our soul is the image of that image: when therefore I magnify that image by thought, speech, and action, then the image of God is made great in me, and the Lord Himself, whose image my soul is, is the more magnified in me."

Furthermore it is to be noted that in this canticle, by the name of God and Lord can be understood absolutely God Himself, one and three, or any divine Person; although some understand by God and Lord specially the person of the Son, asserting that in this canticle the most worthy Virgin commends her Son. And she does not say, "I magnify," but, *"My soul doth magnify the Lord,"* to intimate that she does it from heartfelt devotion. By which are reproved those who pray to and praise God without reverence, and do not honor Him as true God with the whole keeping of the heart: of whom the Lord says through Isaias: "This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me" (Isa. 29:13; Matt. 15:8).

"And my spirit hath rejoiced" (Luke 1:47)—that is, my rational soul—*"in God my Savior,"* from the contemplation and love of Himself in Himself, and of His benefits toward me. Now exultation, or joy, proceeds from contemplation and from the act of charity, or actual love. The more enlightened Mary was in the contemplation of divine things, and the more fervent in love of them, the more fully she rejoiced—not in herself, but in the Lord, as in cause, object, and end, as the Apostle writes: "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" (1 Cor. 1:31). Now He is called Lord by reason of governance; God, by reason of causality and creation; Savior or Saving, by reason of justification, or re-creation, and glorification: who singularly was and is God, and Lord, and Savior of Mary, on account of His chief benefits to her, and her greatest devotion, love, and worship toward Him. Though soul and spirit of a man are really the same, yet they differ in reason: for it is called soul because it informs and animates the body, and by ruling it well magnifies God; but it is called spirit on account of the subtlety of its nature, and because it contemplates heavenly things, and so it befits it to rejoice and, from exceeding gladness, as it were leap out of itself toward God. Hence the Virgin Mother of God spoke distinctly: "My soul doth magnify the Lord; and my spirit hath rejoiced in God."

Lastly, that we may magnify God with all our strength, let our memory magnify Him by continually recalling His benefits, our understanding by contemplating His truth and excellence, our will by loving and desiring His goodness, our interpretative or expressive power by praising Him with the mouth.

And because thanksgiving and the voice of praise are due to God for His benefits (Isa. 51:3), the illustrious Virgin consequently adds the reason of her canticle: *"Because He hath regarded"* (Luke 1:48)—by approval, with the eye of His immense mercy—*"the humility of His handmaid,"* that is, me, His humble handmaid, and my humility and littleness. And rightly does she specially make mention of her humility rather than of her virginity,

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charity, or the other virtues in which she preeminently shone: because it was chiefly through humility that she merited to be so exalted, and by it especially she was disposed to conceive the Only-begotten of God, inasmuch as in the mystery of the Incarnation the majesty of the incarnate One is considered—a majesty so great that it became Him to be incarnate and conceived only by a most humble and almost incomparably humble maiden. Virginity, however, was a more remote disposition, and even it would not have pleased the Lord without humility. Nevertheless, in the mystery of the Incarnation, weighing the immediate and hypostatic union of the two natures, the sacred Virgin was, through charity and its most ardent act, supremely and immediately disposed for the conception of the only-begotten Son of God. For charity is the most excellent and most divine virtue, most pleasing to God, effecting conjunction, transformation, and indissoluble binding. Although therefore the whole superblessed Trinity most mercifully regarded Mary's humility, yet chiefly the Son, in putting on human nature from her, making Himself her offspring and subjecting Himself to her. But God the Father also regarded her so far as to deign to have the same Son with her; likewise the Holy Spirit, making her fruitful with that germ which He adores, from whom He Himself truly and eternally proceeds. According to Origen, humility in the Scriptures is one of the virtues which by the philosophers is called modesty; but we can also call it, by a certain circumlocution, when someone is not puffed up but abases himself.

"For behold from henceforth"—and by reason of so great a benefit conferred on me, and by this my humility too—*"all generations shall call me blessed,"* that is, some of all, so that the distribution is for the kinds of individuals. For all who are converted from the Jews and the Gentiles profess the Virgin, so incomparable, blessed—yea most blessed; but even the Saracens, who accept the law of Mahomet, say that she was chosen above all women of all ages, as also they confess her Son Christ greater than their lawgiver Mahomet. So also Lia, from whom the Virgin Mary sprang, seeing herself so fruitful, said: "This is for my happiness: for women will call me blessed," as is read in Genesis (Gen. 30:13).

"Because He that is mighty hath done great things to me" (Luke 1:49)—that is, He has bestowed on me the most illustrious benefits, in sanctification, in the increase of graces, in the conferring of all perfection, and now most of all in the Incarnation, in which, being made the true Mother of the true God, I have in a manner obtained the prerogative of infinite dignity from Him who is mighty—yea, omnipotent, and so powerful that in His regard every creature is powerless, and cannot subsist for a moment without His upholding (for with Him to be and to be powerful are the same: His essence is His own independent, unlimited, and wholly infinite power; to whom all things are equally easy; who rules by His might forever [Ps. 65:7]; from whom is all power, as the Apostle says, "There is no power but from God" [Rom. 13:1]; whence it is written, "He is wise in heart and mighty in strength, who doth great things and unsearchable and wonderful, of which there is no number" [Job 9:4, 10])—who has deigned to deliver the world through me, and has honored me before every creature, so that I conceive and bear God, the Creator and Lord of all.

"And holy is His name." That is, He Himself, designated by the name that names Him, is in Himself essentially pure, virtuous, and holy—yea holiness first, fontal, exemplar, immense: in whom whatever of perfection, holiness, and virtue is or can be thought is contained with immense plenitude, most supersimply. Of whom the Psalmist says: "Adore ye at His holy mountain, for the Lord our God is holy" (Ps. 98:9); and again, "Let them give praise to Thy great name, for it is terrible and holy" (Ps. 98:3). Whence it is written: "God is holy and mighty, a jealous God, and will not forgive your sins" (Jos. 24:19). In Job also it is said: "Far be it from God that He should do wickedness, and from the Almighty that He should commit iniquity" (Job 34:10). Finally, so holy is our omnipotent God that in comparison with Him all

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our holiness and justice is as the rag of a menstruous woman (Isa. 64:6). "Behold even the moon doth not shine, and the stars are not pure in His sight" (Job 25:5): who "in His angels also found wickedness" (Job 4:18). For what is the divine essence itself but superessential wisdom, exemplar truth, first power, supreme equity, infinite charity, uncircumscribed light, unmixed purity? Let no one therefore boast, or think himself something, or despise another, nor compare himself with open transgressors; but, ever setting himself in the sight and presence of divine holiness, whatever of virtue he perceives in himself or could be in himself, let him hold as nothing in its view, and strive to keep himself unceasingly in the depth of humility.

Thus far holy Mary has recalled the benefits given singularly to herself; now she expresses those bestowed generally on herself and on others. *"And His mercy"* (Luke 1:50)—that is, the effect and grace of His eternal mercy—*"is from generation unto generations,"* extended and flowing from the generation that was from the beginning of the world before the flood, into later generations. "The earth is full of the mercy of the Lord" (Ps. 32:5). Or, from the generation of the Jews into the generations of the Gentiles. For salvation communicated to the Gentiles flowed from the Jews and began from them, as Christ testifies: "Salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:22). For Christ chose to be incarnate of them, and through the doctrine of the Apostles (being of the nation of the Jews) the world was converted. *"To them that fear Him,"* with filial and chaste fear. For to such alone does the grace of God finally profit, and they alone are partakers of the fruit and merit of the Lord's Passion, which, though it extends to all by its sufficiency, yet not by its efficiency, but only to the elect. Hence the Psalmist says: "But the mercy of the Lord is from eternity and unto eternity upon them that fear Him" (Ps. 102:17). In Ecclesiasticus also it is had: "He that is without fear cannot be justified"

(Ecclus. 1:28). Nevertheless no one is so reprobate as to stand wholly devoid of divine clemency; but mercy leading to true salvation is bestowed only on those who fear God with filial and reverential fear, which is flight from the evil of fault.

"He hath showed might" (Luke 1:51)—that is, He has worked mightily and wrought powerful effects—"*in His arm,"* that is, by His sublime virtue, according to that in Exodus: "He brought forth the children of Israel with an high arm" (Exod. 6:6; Acts 13:17). Or, "*in His arm,"* that is, through His incarnate Only-begotten; and then it refers to the Father, of whose Son Isaias speaks: "To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" (Isa. 53:1), whom the Apostle names the power of God (1 Cor. 1:24). Now through the Son the Father created all things, through Him redeemed the world, prostrated the devil, broke hell, opened heaven, and also wrought infinite miracles through Him. Whence the Son also protests: "I do nothing of myself; but the Father who abideth in me, He doth the works" (John 8:28; 14:10). None the less Christ as God worked by His own power, which in the three supremely holy Persons is one in itself and undivided in work. Finally, the most magnificent work of God appeared in the Incarnation, or in the incarnate Word, when two natures infinitely distant came together into one person, when Christ came forth from the closed womb of the Virgin, when He instituted the Sacrament of the altar. Great power God surely exercised in making so humble a young girl His Mother, and Lady of the angels, and more excellent than every pure creature, as subsisting in created being.

"For all the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth" (Ps. 24:10), or equity: having commended God by reason of His clemency, the most wise Virgin now commends Him from the effects of His justice. *"He hath scattered the proud"*—that is, He has permitted them to be scattered through various errors and vices, and through diverse punishments has destroyed and condemned effectively the elated, whose spirit swells unjustly, who neglect to be subject to God and obey, nor care to humble themselves under His almighty hand (1 Pet. 5:6)—"*in the conceit of their heart,"* that is, in the intention and pleasure of their heart, that is, of their understanding, by which it discerns, judges, and disposes all things. Hence in Ecclesiasticus it is written: "God hath dried up the roots of the proud nations" (Ecclus. 10:18). Who also threatens through Sophonias: "I will visit upon every one that entereth arrogantly" (Soph. 1:9); and in Isaias, "The loftiness of men shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be humbled"

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(Isa. 2:11). The proud demons also Christ, coming into the world, scattered, conquered, and cast out of the hearts of men. And the proud Jews also we see by Him dispersed into every region.

"He hath put down the mighty from their seat" (Luke 1:52). This is not said of any whatever who are mighty, since in the book of Job it is said, "God casteth not away the mighty, whereas He Himself is mighty" (Job 36:5); but of the mighty who use their power viciously, of whom it is written in Ecclesiasticus: "God hath overturned the thrones of proud princes, and hath made the meek to sit in their stead" (Ecclus. 10:17). But since we see such mighty ones reign even to old age, how does God put them down from the seat of dignity and presidency? And the answer is that at least in death; and frequently on account of their sins they are slain, smitten, or taken away before the time of their natural period: "For all power is a short life" (Ecclus. 10:11); as also "the king today is, and tomorrow he shall die." Of whom Isaias speaks: "And surely their stock shall neither be planted nor sown, nor rooted in the earth; suddenly He hath blown upon them, and they are withered" (Isa. 40:24). Hence it is written: "I have seen the wicked perish by the blast of the Lord" (Job 4:8, 9); and again in the same book, "The wicked were taken away before their time" (Job 22:16). Moreover God removed from the seat of doctrine the mighty masters of the Jews. He also gave judicial power to the poor, to be exercised on the day of judgment: "You shall sit," He says, "upon twelve seats" (Matt. 19:28).

"And hath exalted the humble"—now through the gifts of grace making pleasing and of grace freely given, because He has often raised such to prelacy; but in the future through gifts of glory and sublimation even to the empyrean heaven. For which reason the Scripture says: "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the

humble" (James 4:6); and again, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," that is, the humble, "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Luke 6:20)—than which nothing is higher. Most of all Christ exalted His Apostles, truly most humble: whom He appointed princes over all the earth (Ps. 44:17); of whom it is written: "For the strong gods of the earth are exceedingly exalted" (Ps. 46:10). The other children of the primitive Church too, His disciples, He exalted not moderately, not only in the future but also in the present, giving them power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy (Luke 10:19).

"He hath filled the hungry" (Luke 1:53)—that is, those who avidly desire spiritual goods—*"with good things,"* that is, with the gifts of grace, interior riches, refreshments of the mind. God also feeds and fills the poor who are bodily hungry, as it is written: "The eyes of all hope in Thee, O Lord, and Thou givest them meat in due season" (Ps. 144:15); and likewise: "All expect of Thee that Thou give them food in season; what Thou givest to them they shall gather up" (Ps. 103:27–28). Of the hungry in the first way the Savior says: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall have their fill" (Matt. 5:6); and in the Apocalypse, "I will give to him that thirsteth, of the fountain of the water of life freely" (Apoc. 21:6). *"And the rich"*—that is, the inordinate lovers of bodily riches, preferring earthly things to heavenly—*"He hath sent empty away,"* that is, void of spiritual goods and clinging to their own vanities. Of whom Christ says: "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:24). James also in his Canonical Epistle: "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl in your miseries, which shall come upon you" (James 5:1). Of whom it is had below: "Woe to you that are rich, for you have your consolation" (Luke 6:24). For riches furnish fuel to almost all vices—to pride, gluttony, lust, idleness the mother of crimes. Wherefore the blessed Apostle writes: "They that will become rich fall into temptation and into the snare of the devil, and into many unprofitable and hurtful desires, which drown men into destruction and perdition" (1 Tim. 6:9). Therefore the Scripture says: "There is not a more wicked thing than to love money; for such a one setteth even his own soul to sale" (Ecclus. 10:10). Yet there are some rich who are virtuous, using their wealth well and liberally, distributing it mercifully, not living delicately, nor inordinately attached to earthly things, as the Psalmist exhorts: "If riches abound, set not your heart upon them" (Ps. 61:11).

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But how few such there are is clear from what is written in Ecclesiasticus: "Blessed is the rich man that is found without blemish, and that hath not gone after gold, nor put his trust in the treasures of money: who is he, and we will praise him? For he hath done wonderful things in his life" (Ecclus. 31:8–9). Let no one therefore commit himself to the danger, but rest in the Apostle: "Having food and wherewith to be covered, with these let us be content" (1 Tim. 6:8). Hence in Proverbs Solomon prays: "Give me neither beggary nor riches, O Lord; give me only the necessaries of life" (Prov. 30:8).

Some by the hungry filled with good things understand the converted Gentiles, to whom, hearing the word of God with great desire, God bestowed the greatest charisms of graces; and by the rich left empty they understand the masters of the Jews, abounding in the Scriptures, who were dismissed in their blindness.

Consequently the blessed Virgin touches on the benefits shown to the Jews. *"He hath received Israel His servant"* (Luke 1:54)—that is, the Israelite people He has now graciously and mercifully joined and united to Himself, by assuming human nature from it: whereby He purposed, as far as in Him lay, to save that whole people. Therefore the Apostle writes to the Hebrews: "For nowhere doth He take hold of the angels, but of the seed of Abraham He taketh hold" (Heb. 2:16). *"Being mindful of His mercy"*—that is, showing Himself mindful of the mercy and grace which He promised to this people, namely that of it He would take the form of a servant (Phil. 2:7). In the unchangeable God, however, neither remembering nor forgetting has place properly; but He conducts Himself after the manner of one remembering when He does not delay to show mercy, after the manner of one forgetting when He delays. *"As He spoke to our fathers"* (Luke 1:55), *"to Abraham and to his seed for ever."* For first to Abraham, then to Isaac, afterwards to Jacob himself, that

divine promise is read in Genesis to have been made: “In thy seed shall all the nations be blessed” (Gen. 22:18; 28:14; 26:4). Next it was said to David: “Of the fruit of thy womb I will set upon thy throne” (Ps. 131:11). Generally also the holy Patriarchs and prophets spoke of the coming of Christ, as Peter affirms in the Acts: “All the prophets, from Samuel and afterwards, have foretold these days” (Acts 3:24). Now that clause, “for ever,” can refer to the word “He hath received,” also to “being mindful,” and also to the whole phrase “to his seed”: for that gracious receiving of the elect, and God’s remembrance of them and of the seed of Abraham, abides forever in the predestinate, and has an effect that will never perish.

Behold this most sweet canticle—how full of sentiment under brevity of words! Which the Church, by the counsel of the Holy Spirit, has appointed to be sung at Vespers, that at that hour, while it grows toward evening and the day is now far spent (Luke 24:29), our mind may begin to gather itself from exterior things to interior, to lift itself to God, to ponder His goodness and benefits, to give Him thanks with all affection, to praise Him with joy, and to honor Him in all things by word and deed as far as we can. Therefore, to the honor of the most high God and in reverence of so great a Virgin, let us sing this canticle not without mental attention and actual fervor of holy devotion; yea, and let us then remember with how great devotion and alacrity the most blessed Virgin sang this song, and what ineffable grace God bestowed upon her; and so let us congratulate the same Virgin in the Lord.

Lastly, each of us can sing this canticle in his own person, saying from the inmost marrow: “My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God,” etc., according to the exposition given above. For so to praise God is an altogether angelic and illustrious act. *“Because He hath regarded the humility of His handmaid,”* that is, of my soul, which in its own eyes is vile and small; or, of His handmaid, that is, of the creature, which I am: for a creature is the minister of its Creator. *“For behold from henceforth,”* as I piously trust, *“all generations”* of the elect *“shall call me blessed.”* For nothing, as Jerome says, is happier than the Christian, to whom the kingdoms of heaven are promised. In the fatherland also each of the elect will be called blessed by the others. But Christians too can truly say to one another that word of Baruch, “Blessed are we, O Israel, because the things that are pleasing to God are made known to us” (Bar. 4:4); and finally: “Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people whom He hath chosen for His inheritance” (Ps. 32:12). *“Because He hath done great things to me.”* In saying this, let each one think of the benefits of God toward himself, general and special: the goods of nature, the gifts of grace, the promises of glory—how much the Son of God did, assumed, and endured for him; how often He spared him in his sins; that He brought him to this grace of penance. The rest do not require special exposition, but can be uttered by anyone according to the interpretation set down above.

Luke 1E: Birth of John and Benedictus

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Article V. Explanation of the remaining part of this first chapter: the birth of the Precursor is described and the canticle of Zachary is explained.

“Now Elizabeth’s full time of being delivered was come” (Luke 1:57)—that is, the ninth month came to Elizabeth herself—*“and she brought forth a son. And her neighbors and kinsfolk heard that the Lord had showed His great mercy towards her”* (Luke 1:58)—that is, had dealt very clemently with her, exercising the effects of His mercy upon her so graciously that, notwithstanding natural barrenness and old age, she had conceived and borne offspring and was freed from the reproach of barrenness—*“and they congratulated her”*, out of the love with which they loved her and her husband: for Zachary and Elizabeth lived blameless among others. Hence by their peaceable, kindly, and just manner of life—tempered fittingly by justice and piety—they showed themselves lovable to all; on which account others rejoiced at their prosperity.

"And it came to pass on the eighth day" from the infant's birth *"they came to circumcise the child"* (Luke 1:59). Mary remained with her (Elizabeth) about three months, and returned to her own house in Nazareth. The doctors commonly say that Mary did not depart until John was born. Hence in the *Scholastic History* it is reported that she lifted the infant from the ground, as is written in the *Book of the Just*—that is, of the Nazarenes, as some explain. Yet some, such as Theophilus and the Greek, affirm that Mary went away when Elizabeth's delivery was imminent, because other women had already gathered round Elizabeth, and because virgins are not wont to be present at the delivery of women. The Evangelist also writes first that Mary withdrew, and only afterwards of Elizabeth's delivery.

For on that day, by the precept of the law, circumcision was wont to be performed, according to Genesis: "An infant of eight days old shall be circumcised among you" (Gen. 17:12). *"And they called him by his father's name, Zachary."* For to firstborn sons, and especially only-begotten ones, the father's name is frequently given. And in these there was no hope that Zachary and Elizabeth would have more offspring. Now, as in the New Testament the name is given in Baptism, so then in circumcision. But since John was sanctified in the womb and cleansed from original sin, why was he circumcised, since circumcision was a remedy against original sin? Some answer that he was circumcised not for need of the remedy but for observance of the precept; likewise lest others be scandalized, and to avoid singularity, and because perhaps by that so painful circumcision he was disposed to greater grace.

"And his mother answering, said: Not so, but he shall be called John" (Luke 1:60) *(p. 400)* That he was so to be called—nay, had already been called by the angel and commanded to be so called—holy Elizabeth knew by the spirit of prophecy, since this had been intimated to no man but her husband in the temple, who from that time remained mute; unless perhaps someone supposes that Zachary made it known to his wife in writing, as in what follows he is said to have indicated it to the others. For perhaps what had been revealed and brought to him in the temple he thus told his wife. *"And they said to her: There is none of thy kindred"* (Luke 1:61)—that is, among thy blood relations—"*that is called by this name*": therefore we wonder that you wish him so called.

"And they made signs" (Luke 1:62)—that is, by signs or sensible nods, by way of question, they signified—"*to his father, how*"—that is, by what name—"*he would have him called."* Because it is now said that they made signs to his father, the doctors infer that Zachary on account of his aforesaid unbelief was made not only mute but deaf: for had he heard, they would have asked his will not by a nod but by word. *"And demanding a writing table"* (Luke 1:63)—demanding it by a certain nod, not by word—that is, the pen of a writer, or a tablet which can be held in the fist—"*he wrote, saying*", with word written, not spoken: *"John is his name."* As if he said: Not I, nor the mother, give the infant a name, but I disclose what was given by God through the angel. *"And they all wondered,"* seeing in the course of the affair miracles joined to miracles, and so many unusual things done, and also that Zachary and his wife thus agreed, who from John's conception had not been able to confer with each other.

"And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue" (Luke 1:64): that is, as soon as he had made known his faith in writing, the former use of speech was restored to the mouth and tongue of Zachary; and there is no doubt that meanwhile his mouth had been open for taking food, but not for speaking. As he was deprived of speech by the demerit of his unbelief, so by the merit of his faithful confession speech was restored to him. Therefore Ambrose says: "The tongue which unbelief had bound, faith loosed." *"And he spoke, blessing God"*—with a blessing of praise and thanksgiving, who had paternally chastised him for his excess and clemently healed him, according to Tobias: "I bless Thee, O Lord God of Israel, because Thou hast chastised me, and Thou hast healed me" (Tob. 11:17). But he blessed God for other causes also, as soon shines out in his canticle.

"And fear came upon all their neighbors" (Luke 1:65): that is, the neighbors of Zachary and Elizabeth, having seen so many marvels, from consideration of the divine power conceived fear, admiration, and

astonishment. For they weighed the cause, namely God's omnipotence, in its supernatural effects, and regarded it as truly present and punishing vices. So also in the Gospel it is written that the crowds, having seen Christ's miracles, feared (Matt. 9:8). Finally, a man conscious of his own frailty and fault, considering the power of the Most High, not undeservedly trembles. Wherefore in Jeremias it is written: "There is none like to Thee, O Lord; Thou art great, and great is Thy name in might: who shall not fear Thee, O King of nations?" (Jer. 10:6–7). *"And all these things were noised abroad over all the hill country of Judea"*: that is, the report of these marvels—of the punishment and healing of Zachary, of John's wonderful conception, birth, and naming—was made known to the Jews in all the mountainous places of their region, who wondered. For great and rare things are wont to be divulged everywhere, because they are gladly heard: indeed novelties please, and unusual things induce admiration. Now man is by nature an admiring animal, and desirous of variety, especially since all men naturally desire to know.

"And all they that had heard them laid them up in their heart" (Luke 1:66), that is, they tenaciously impressed these things on their minds and diligently committed them to memory, saying, either each within himself, or one to another, or indeed in both ways: *"What an one, think ye, shall this child be?"* as if they said: He will be a very notable one and will grow into an eminent man. For such marvels are not wont to happen except

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around very elect persons. Therefore it is added: *"For the hand of the Lord was with him"*: that is, the power, grace, help, and supernatural operation of God Himself was with John in his sanctification, his leaping in his mother's womb, and the other things mentioned; from which they argued, probably, that as time went on the hand of God would be with him.

"And Zachary his father was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying" (Luke 1:67). On which Ambrose writes: "See how good God is, and ready to forgive sins. He not only restores what was taken away, but also grants what was not hoped for: he who was long mute prophesies." Finally, even before this hour Zachary had been filled with the Holy Spirit; but now he is said to be filled because in the gifts of grace making pleasing and of grace freely given he had now advanced eminently, and had newly received the prophetic grace. And rightly is it said he was filled with the Holy Spirit before he prophesied, since to prophesy is a work of God, according to Peter: "For prophecy came not by the will of man at any time; but the holy men of God spoke, inspired by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. 1:21).

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel" (Luke 1:68). In this canticle Zachary gives thanks to God for His various benefits, chiefly for the incarnation and passion of the Word, and for the salvation of the human race, chiefly of the Israelite. Although in this canticle by the Lord God of Israel can be understood God absolutely, or the whole superblessed Trinity, or any divine Person, yet the whole is more appropriately expounded of the Son.

"Blessed" therefore He is, and eternally blessed may He be, and by all unceasingly blessed—the Lord of all, by reason of possession, governance, and presidency over all things. Of whom in Genesis Abraham says: "I lift up my hand to the Lord God the most high, the possessor of heaven and earth" (Gen. 14:22). Of whom it is also written in the book of Job: "Whom hath He appointed over the earth? or whom hath He set over the world which He made?" (Job 34:13). Moreover the name and notion of Lord belongs fully, supremely, purely, and properly to omnipotent God alone: since He alone has universal, primordial, independent dominion subject to none; but the dominions of all subsequent angels and men are particular, secondary, needy, and mixed with servitude, because subject to God. Hence in Isaias, Jeremias also and Amos, the Scripture says: "The Lord of hosts is His name" (Isa. 47:4; Jer. 10:16; Amos 4:13); and in the Psalm: "The Lord is His name" (Ps. 67:5). Who again says through Isaias: "I am the Lord, this is my name; my glory I will not give to another" (Isa. 42:8). *"God of Israel"*: who was generally God of all by right of creation; but

was then specially called God of Israel—that is, of the Israelite people born of Jacob (who by another name was called Israel; Gen. 35:10)—because He gave that people chief and special benefits, as it is written: "Who declareth His word to Jacob, His justices and His judgments to Israel" (Ps. 147:19); and because He was specially worshipped by that people, the rest having fallen into idolatry. Whence in Deuteronomy Moses says to this people: "The Lord thy God hath chosen thee, to be His peculiar people of all peoples that are upon the earth, because the Lord hath loved you" (Deut. 7:6–8).

"Because He hath visited"—that is, has approached by the incarnation and, like a most pious and most skilled physician, has set about to work—*"and wrought the redemption of His people"*: that is, the liberation of the Israelite people from invisible enemies, from eternal damnation, from the guilt of original sin, yea from all sin, so far as it lies in Him: as He speaks through Osee: "I will deliver them out of the hand of death, I will redeem them from death" (Osee 13:14). Of whom it is also said through Isaias: "The Lord is our king; He will come and save us" (Isa. 33:22). Who also, in Zacharias, exhorts: "Sing praise and rejoice, O daughter of Sion: for behold I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee" (Zach. 2:10). Indeed Christ's incarnation is our deification, as Pope Leo asserts. And so His incarnation was the beginning of our redemption and salvation, which were completed by Christ's passion. For He decreed not to save us by His incarnation alone, but ordained to consummate our salvation by His passion. Whence what Zachary

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said, *"He hath wrought,"* can, in the prophetic manner, be taken in the future tense—that is, "He will work"—since by His passion He was to make this redemption fully, as being about to blot out our crimes and reconcile us to God, according to Isaias: "But He was wounded for our iniquities, He was bruised for our sins" (Isa. 53:5); and again, "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6). For Christ by His passion and obedience satisfied for all; but if we are to attain the fruit of His passion, it is necessary that His merit be applied and communicated to us through the sacraments, or in some other way. Hence Christ testifies of Himself: "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

Finally, by "His people," or the people of God, can be understood not only the people of the Jews but the whole race of the elect: who are the people of God by eternal predestination, and spiritually Israel, that is, seeing God, or contemplating Him by faith. Of which people the Apostle says: "Peace upon the Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16). Yet by "His people" in this place is more literally understood the people of the Jews, for whose redemption Christ came first, directly, and principally, as He affirms: "I was not sent but to the sheep that are lost of the house of Israel" (Matt. 15:24). When these despised the word of God, the transmigration of the Apostles to instruct the Gentiles was just, for whose salvation Christ came as it were secondarily. Wherefore Paul and Barnabas said to the Jews: "To you it behoved us first to speak the word of God; but because you reject it, behold we turn to the Gentiles" (Acts 13:46).

"And hath raised up" (Luke 1:69)—that is, has aroused, lifted up, and declared—*"a horn of salvation,"* that is, the announcement of true and heavenly blessedness, *"to us,"* that is, for our salvation, that by believing in Him we may be saved, *"in the house of David His servant,"* that is, in the tribe or family of the prophet David, of whose seed Christ was born, according to the Apostle to the Romans: "Who was made to him of the seed of David according to the flesh" (Rom. 1:3).

But how did the God of Israel, namely Christ, raise up this horn of salvation? The answer: in that He already revealed by an angelic mouth to Zachary that He was straightway to be incarnate, to come and save the human race (v. 17): whose incarnation Zachary knew had been accomplished in a Virgin of the Davidic stock. By a horn, therefore, the public announcement of a great matter is signified, because by horns great things are wont to be made known: and now not only by an angel but also by Mary God prophesied of this matter (v. 54). Hence Theophilus says: "God seemed to sleep, looking upon many sins and caring not for them; but in the last times, incarnate, He was roused, and crushed the demons that hate us." — Moreover, by

a horn power or height is expressed, because horns in an animal are eminent and solid parts: and the sense will be that God has announced to us the strength and summit of salvation—that is, inviolable and heavenly felicity—in the house of David, that is, in Christ sprung from David's lineage, through whom and in whom this beatitude is given, because it is granted only to him who believes in Christ, as the prince of the Apostles taught in the Acts: "Neither is there any other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

Lastly, by a horn a king, royal power, or a kingdom is designated, especially in the Apocalypse and Daniel. Whence in the Apocalypse it is read: "I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns" (Apoc. 13:1); and in Daniel: "The fourth beast had ten horns; and behold another little horn sprung out of the midst of them, and three of the first horns were plucked up at its presence" (Dan. 7:7–8). So here by a horn can be understood Christ the King of kings, or His kingdom. For this horn He raised up—that is, by the incarnation made appear—and declared first in the house of David, that is, in the Davidic lineage, of which Christ was born, who first was seen on earth and conversed among some of those sprung from this His genealogy (Bar. 3:38). So then God the Father, or the Trinity, or Christ as God, raised up

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a horn of salvation, that is, Christ the king of our salvation: raised Him up, I say, for us, as He is man. For Christ according to the divinity raised up Himself according to the humanity. Some refer this raising up to Christ's resurrection or ascension, because then Christ raised up or publicly showed the horn of salvation—that is, the power and glory of blessedness—by rising to immortal life, by bringing the fathers out of limbo, and by ascending to the heavenly kingdoms. So Zachary speaks of the future in the manner of the past, as is the custom of the Prophets. God therefore did this faithfully, not unexpectedly; but as He foretold, He truly fulfilled.

Hence it is added: *"As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, who are from the beginning"* (Luke 1:70)—that is, as He foretold through the holy Prophets who have been from the beginning of the world, who by words, signs, figures, or deeds spoke of Christ and foretold His mysteries: because in no age of the world was prophecy of Christ wanting, as Augustine declares. For Adam too spoke of Christ in words and things; likewise the other Patriarchs and seers. Wherefore in the Acts Peter testifies: "But those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all the Prophets, that His Christ should suffer, He hath so fulfilled" (Acts 3:18). And elsewhere he says: "To Him all the prophets give testimony" (Acts 10:43). So great a mystery it behoved to be foretold long before and in many ways, that its dignity may be recognized, and the deed shown the more credible and more firmly believed. Whence in this our faith is most certainly confirmed, that all we believe and hold concerning Christ we prove to have been so prophesied. Yea, the very doctors of the Hebrews confess that all the Prophets spoke only of the days of the Messiah, that is, for the time of Christ: because whatever they spoke they finally referred to Christ, and uttered chiefly of Him. Whence it is now said singularly, "by the mouth of the holy ones," because all spoke with one accord in one spirit.

"Salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us" (Luke 1:71). By these words he explains what he meant by saying, "He hath raised up a horn of salvation to us." So that the sense is: He raised up, etc., as He spoke—that is, as He promised through the Prophets to raise up or procure for us salvation from our enemies, especially the invisible—that is, liberation from demons, yea also from the flesh and the world, and every impediment of true beatitude. Whence in the epistle of John it is written: "For this purpose the Son of God appeared, that He might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8). Now as to what he says, "from the hand of all that hate us," some expound it of the Gentiles, whom Christ converted: and thus there was peace between them and the converted Jews, between whom before there was enmity (Eph. 2:14). It can also be taken of all perverse men, from whom the elect are delivered: not that they are not troubled or slain by them in this life, but because through disordered fear they are not subjected to them, nor led into vices, and through the temporal persecution which they suffer from them they are brought to eternal glory, and so are

eternally delivered from all their molestation, as Augustine declares more fully on that verse of the Psalm, “Deliver my soul from the fear of the enemy” (Ps. 63:2). This is what was promised in Micheas to the primitive Church: “Thy hand shall be exalted above thy adversaries, and all thy enemies shall be cut off” (Mich. 5:9). And in the same place it is foretold of Christ: “And this man shall be our peace, when he shall come, and when he shall tread in our houses” (Mich. 5:5).

“To perform mercy to our fathers” (Luke 1:72)—that is, to this end, that He might bestow consummated mercy—namely full felicity—on the Patriarchs and the just long since dead, leading them out of limbo and placing them in the heavenly palace, as in Zacharias it is said to Christ: “Thou also, by the blood of Thy testament, hast sent forth Thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water” (Zach. 9:11). Or, “to perform mercy to our fathers,” that is, to this end, that He may mercifully fulfill what He foretold He would grant them. These words too are spoken because not

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on account of our justice but by His immense piety Christ bestowed these things on us and assumed our nature, as the Apostle writes to Titus: “The goodness and kindness of God our Savior appeared: not by the works of justice which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us” (Tit. 3:4–5). *“And to remember His holy testament”*—that is, to this end, that by the exhibition of the work He may show Himself mindful of His holy testament, that is, of His most firm pact or covenant, which He made and entered upon with the Patriarchs and seers of the Old Testament, to whom Christ promised that He would be incarnate and come into the world, according to Isaias: “Therefore shall my people know my name in that day, for I myself that spoke, behold I am here” (Isa. 52:6). Of which testament He shows Himself mindful by assuming human nature of the Virgin.

So then He was mindful of His testament, which is, *“the oath”* (Luke 1:73), because it was confirmed by an oath, *“which He swore”*, swearing by Himself, *“to Abraham our father”*: as it is had in Genesis: “By my own self I have sworn, saith the Lord: because thou hast done this thing, and hast not spared thy only begotten son for my sake, I will multiply thee, and I will bless thee; and in thy seed shall all nations be blessed” (Gen. 22:16–18). Where by the seed of Abraham Christ is understood, according to the Apostle (Gal. 3:8, 16). And so by those words God the Father promised that His Only-begotten would be incarnate of the seed of Abraham; or the only Son of God the Father Himself by those words promised that He would be so incarnate. Now the Father, by giving us His Son through the mystery of the Incarnation, also presented Himself to us by a fuller grace.

Hence it is added: *“that He would grant to us.”* For the Son gave Himself to us by showing Himself our brother, savior, and advocate (Matt. 28:10; Luke 24:11; 1 John 2:1); yea in other ways also He communicated Himself to us: for by being born and conversing in the world He made Himself a companion of men (Bar. 3:38); at the Supper He gave Himself to us as food (John 6:56; Matt. 26:26); by dying, as a ransoming price; and finally in the fatherland He gives Himself as objective and beatifying reward. Which St. Thomas touched compendiously in the hymn on the Sacrament, saying:

Se nascens dedit socium, Convescens, in edulium, Se moriens, in pretium, Se regnans dat in praemium.

(“Being born, He gave Himself as companion; at table, as food; dying, as price; reigning, He gives Himself as reward.”)

Hence also to Abraham in Genesis He says: “I am thy protector, and thy reward exceeding great” (Gen. 15:1). Finally, God is said to give Himself to those into whom He pours His charity and grace: for they have and possess God as the object of their love and occupation. In which full liberality, the highest condescension, and God’s purest love for us are shown, since by giving us His gifts He likewise presents Himself—namely to have, to possess, to behold, to love, to enjoy, to preserve, to help, to defend, to dwell

with forever. For that is the most liberal love by which one presents himself to another. Therefore the Psalmist says: “The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup” (Ps. 15:5). And in the book of Lamentations it is read: “The Lord is my portion, said my soul; therefore will I wait for Him” (Lam. 3:24). Now the discourse literally is of the giving by which the Only-begotten was given to us, in that He assumed our nature to accomplish our salvation. Whence in Isaias it is had: “A child is born to us, and a son is given to us” (Isa. 9:6).

Then the reason of this is subjoined. *“That being delivered from the hand of our enemies,”* (Luke 1:74)—visible or invisible—by Christ’s coming and passion, *“without fear”*—disordered, carnal, worldly, servile—*“we may serve Him,”* namely the true God, with the service of latria, of which it is had in Deuteronomy: “Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve” (Deut. 6:13). Latria is the virtue that renders worship and ceremony to God. *“In holiness”* (Luke 1:75), that is, in mental purity, every earthly and carnal affection being excluded, as in perfect conversion of the heart to God, all the affections of the soul being reformed, ordered, and brought back to God. For so the supremely holy God of immense purity is to be served.

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Therefore in Leviticus He speaks: “Defile not your souls: for I am the Lord your God; be holy, because I am holy” (Lev. 11:43–44). In Deuteronomy also it is said: “Thou shalt be perfect and without stain before the Lord thy God” (Deut. 18:13).

Now as to what he says, “without fear,” it can be referred to what follows, “being delivered,” and to the word “we may serve.” In the first way the sense is that Christ delivered us without our own danger and fear, whereas many are rescued from the hands of enemies not without great fright and danger of their own. Christ also delivered us without disordered fear of His own. Although, the passion at hand, He was shaken by natural fear (Mark 14:33), yet this happened voluntarily and by power, or by prior judgment of reason, and when He willed He cast off that fear and went intrepid to meet His enemies (Mark 14:42). — But if it be referred to this word, “we may serve,” the sense is that Christ therefore promised that He would give Himself to us, that being delivered by Him from enemies we might serve Him without disordered fear, in holiness: not that we have no adversaries, since all who will live godly in Christ suffer persecution (2 Tim. 3:12); but that we do not fear them inordinately, nor are compelled by sinning to be subjected, nor fall into the hands of demons as before, nor are assigned to the torments of hell, yea are rescued from every obstacle to glory by the merit of the Lord’s passion, provided we ourselves put no obstacle. This is the spiritual security, interior peace, and true liberty of the Church militant, as to those who are Christians in faith and work: which abounded most in the primitive Church, as the Acts of the Apostles teach (Acts 2, 4, 5). Whence the Lord foretold through Isaias: “And my people shall sit in the beauty of peace, and in the tabernacles of confidence, and in wealthy rest” (Isa. 32:18). And in Sophonias it is read: “Give praise, O daughter of Sion; shout with joy, O Israel: the Lord hath turned away thy enemies; thou shalt fear evil no more” (Soph. 3:14–15). Moreover, when the Lord had said through Jeremias, “I will raise up to David a just branch” (Jer. 23:5)—that is, Christ the son of David, as all expound—He soon adds, “In those days shall Juda be saved, and Israel shall dwell confidently” (Jer. 23:6): namely because, converted to Christ, they did not fear those who kill the body (Matt. 10:28), as being ready to die for faith and truth and God, since they were filled with the charity and grace of Christ, through which they had the best and most invincible confidence.

Finally, Christ came therefore, that redeemed by His passion we may serve Him according to the tenor of the evangelical law. Now this is the law of perfection. For which reason He says in Matthew: “Be you therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect” (Matt. 5:48). To which it is required that a man not only bear himself reverently and purely toward the Lord, but also justly toward his neighbor, giving to each what is his, and edifying his neighbors in all things, according to the Apostle: “Let us follow after the things that are of peace, and keep the things that are of edification one towards another” (Rom. 14:19). And again: “Put not a

stumbling block or scandal in your brother's way; destroy not him for whom Christ died" (Rom. 14:13, 15). Therefore it is added, *"and justice,"* that is, by acts of justice both distributive and commutative. Yea, by justice can be understood any virtue, according as every virtue, or general virtue, is called justice. For every virtue is a kind of justice, because by it some debt is paid, or God is served as is just: as by charity we love God as we are bound, by mercy we help our neighbor as we are obliged. But we must serve God not only in justice, which is a special virtue, but in every virtue, especially in faith, hope, and charity, by which God is directly worshipped as their immediate and proper object.

"Before Him"—that is, with right intention and with interior attention: that we place ourselves in the presence of God and consider Him as king and judge beholding all things; and so wish to please Him alone as final end,

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seek His honor and glory in all things, doing all things in fear and reverence, with simple heart, not like hypocrites doing good before men for their own profit or praise (Matt. 6:1–6): that we may deserve to say truly that word of the Psalmist, "I have kept Thy commandments and Thy testimonies, because all my ways are in Thy sight" (Ps. 118:168), and that of Elias, "The Lord liveth, in whose sight I stand this day" (3 Kings 17:1).

So then, "Let us serve Him," not one day, or seldom, or for a short time, but unceasingly and perseveringly, as is added: *"all our days."* "For he that shall persevere to the end, he shall be saved" (Matt. 10:22). Therefore the Apostle warns: "And in doing good let us not fail; for in due time we shall reap, not failing" (Gal. 6:9). Nothing, finally, is so foolish as to spend time not only unfruitfully but even viciously. Let us therefore continually serve God the Most High, and ever strive to serve more perfectly and more lovingly, thinking of what is written: "Cursed be he that doth the work of God deceitfully" (Jer. 48:10).

Lastly, it is asked how the human race was delivered through Christ, since so few are saved and so many perish. It must be answered that Christ by His passion satisfied for the sins of the whole world or people, so far as in Him lay: so that His merit was so great as to be sufficient for the deletion of all sins; but it helps only those to whom it is applied or communicated by faith, charity, or the sacraments. By His most holy conversation and passion He merited for all of us copious grace; yet He is said to have satisfied specially for original sin, since on account of its guilt the whole human race was deferred from glory. Finally the conversation and passion of Christ, arising from so most perfect charity and obedience, were so acceptable to God the Father, or the superblessed Trinity, that for the liberation and justification of the whole world they were so fit, meritorious, and most worthy, especially on account of the hypostatic or personal union of Christ's humanity with the Word, from which they obtained in a manner an infinite fitness and efficacy of meriting and satisfying.

"And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest" (Luke 1:76). According to Origen, Zachary full of the Holy Spirit announces generally two prophecies: the first concerning Christ, which extends thus far; the other concerning John, which begins here, where he foretells that the grace of prophecy would be given to John, so that he would be and would be called the Prophet of Christ, who, according to the Apostle to the Romans, is "over all things, God blessed for ever" (Rom. 9:5). Yet in John it is read that this same John, being asked, "Art thou a prophet?" answered, "No" (John 1:21). To which a twofold answer is made: First, according to the Gloss there, that the Jews who questioned understood by the Prophet Eliseus; which John perceiving, he rightly answered to their intention. Second, that he denies being a prophet merely, because he was more than a prophet (Matt. 11:9), not only by announcing future things but also by pointing out Christ present.

It is asked again why Zachary addressed an infant of eight days, in whom the use of reason did not yet exist. To which Ambrose answers that Zachary knew that infant supernaturally understood his words, as in his

mother's womb he understood the incarnation and bodily presence of the Son of God. For Ambrose says: "John could hear his father's voice when born, who heard Mary's salutation before he was born. Zachary knew that the ears of the Prophet are other ears, which are opened by the Spirit of God, not by the age of the body. John had the sense of understanding, who had the feeling of exulting." Others (like Bede) say that he foretold these things not on account of John's attention but for the instruction of those who were present: for we also address inanimate and brute things, inviting them to the proclamation of God, not that they may understand, but that we ourselves and the hearers may thus be provoked to the praise of God.

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Furthermore John is found called by many names. For he is called the friend of the Bridegroom (John 3:29), the precursor of Christ, the Baptist, an angel (Mal. 3:1), a burning and shining lamp (John 5:35), a prophet and more than a prophet, and Elias (Matt. 11:9, 14), on account of the various gifts of grace conferred on him.

"For thou shalt go before the face of the Lord"—that is, before the bodily and manifest presence of Christ, who is King of kings and Lord of lords (Apoc. 19:16). For John was born before Christ; moreover he began to preach and baptize before Him, and went before Him also into limbo: therefore he is called precursor. Some understand by the face of the Lord Christ the Son of the Father, so that He is called the likeness and face of the Father, because through Him the Father is known (John 14:9). For by face knowledge is designated: and knowledge in divine things is appropriated to the Son, like wisdom and truth, because it proceeds from the Father by way of intellectual emanation.

"To prepare His ways"—that is, to dispose men for faith in Christ, charity, and reception of Him: which John did by preaching, pointing out, and baptizing. Moreover, the ways of Christ—that is, the ways or means by which Christ came to the hearts of men—were the preaching and baptism of John, which he prepared—that is, wisely presented, as one prepares a table. Or, these ways are the Baptism and preaching of Christ, for which two John disposed men by his teaching and baptism. Again, these ways are virtuous works, or the keeping of the precepts, to which John led men, by uprooting vices and dispositively or instrumentally introducing virtues. Wherefore through Malachias the Lord speaks of John: "Behold I send my angel, and he shall prepare the way before my face" (Mal. 3:1; Matt. 11:10). Again, these ways are the mercy by which God comes to us, and the penance by which we go to Him. For the first John prepared by making known the grace and Baptism of Christ; for the second, by exhorting to penance and living rigorously. — Besides, according to Chrysostom, as kings have some who go before them at a distance, and also companions in arms who go before at close quarters; so Christ had other Prophets foretelling and preceding Him long before, but John going before Him nearby and present, then pointing Him out.

Then, according to Theophilus, Zachary explains how John prepared the way of the Lord, namely by teaching. *"To give knowledge of salvation to His people"* (Luke 1:77), that is, to present or preach to the people of the Jews the knowledge by which true felicity is reached, or the knowledge of Christ, who is our salvation. This is the saving knowledge (Acts 4:12), moral doctrine, declaration of the coming and mysteries of Christ, and of the sacraments of the Church. Therefore he does not say, "To give salvation," but, "knowledge of salvation," because John did not give salvation but preached it. Wherefore in John it is had: "He was not the light, but was to give testimony of the light" (John 1:8). This knowledge John began to give, which Christ and the Apostles afterwards conferred more fully: of which the Apostle says to the Philippians, "I count all things to be but loss for the excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord" (Phil. 3:8). This knowledge he gave *"unto the remission of their sins,"* namely of His people, that is, of the believing. Now this knowledge availed dispositively and incitatively to wash away sins, because through it the people were led to penance and explicit faith in Christ. But God alone remits sins effectively, according to that: "Who can forgive sins but God only?" (Mark 2:7). The passion of Christ does this meritoriously, as in the Apocalypse it is had: "Christ hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood" (Apoc. 1:5). Formed faith does

it formally, as it is said in the Acts: “Purifying their hearts by faith” (Acts 15:9). The works of penance do it satisfactorily.

“Through the bowels of the mercy” (Luke 1:78)—that is, the intimate, secret, tender, or loving mercy—*“of our God,”* namely the Only-begotten incarnate for us, *“in which”* bowels of mercy *“He hath visited us,”* that is, through

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the incarnation descended to us and joined our nature to Himself, and like a pious physician now approached us the sick. So the bowels in God are spiritually and metaphorically called His charity and mercy, by which He was led to succor us, as the Apostle says of Christ: “Who loved me, and delivered Himself for me” (Gal. 2:20). And again of the Father: “For His exceeding charity wherewith He loved us” (Eph. 2:4), “the Father sent His Son” (1 John 4:9). Therefore, because not on account of our merits but for His piety and charity God has bestowed these benefits on us, he rightly says: “Through the bowels of the mercy of our God, in which He hath visited us.” Whence in the epistle of John it is read: “In this is charity: not as though we had loved God, but because He hath first loved us” (1 John 4:10). These bowels of God once lay as it were hid, according to Isaias: “The multitude of Thy bowels and of Thy mercies have held back themselves” (Isa. 63:15).

So, *“the Orient from on high hath visited us”*—that is, descending from highest heaven to earth, coming from the bosom of the Father, yea from the heart of the Father into the Virgin’s womb, from the height of His dwelling, in which He inhabits light inaccessible (1 Tim. 6:16), bending to pilgrims and exiles, as it is written: “His going out is from the end of heaven” (Ps. 18:7). Christ also is called Orient (Zach. 3:8; 6:12): who is the brightness of eternal light and the splendor of paternal glory (Heb. 1:3), eternally rising and emanating from the most resplendent heart of God the Father, then through the assumed humanity becoming known and shining forth to men. Who in Ecclesiasticus testifies: “I dwelt in the highest places” (Ecclus. 24:7), and again, “I made in the heavens that there should rise light that never faileth” (Ecclus. 24:6). Of whom according to the form of a servant God the Father says through Zacharias: “Behold I will bring my servant the Orient” (Zach. 3:8). Of whom by the same Zacharias: “Behold a man, the Orient is his name” (Zach. 6:12).

But as from the eastern part of heaven, which is called the orient, the light of the sun rises on earth-born men, so from Christ the light of grace has flowed to us, and the Sun of wisdom, God one and three, has illumined us through His humanity. Hence it is added: *“To enlighten them”* (Luke 1:79)—that is, to illuminate those who *“sit in darkness,”* of ignorance and error or infidelity, *“and in the shadow of death,”* that is, in impious life: which is called the shadow of death because it separates the mind from God, as natural or bodily death severs the soul from the body, according to Isaias: “Your iniquities have divided between you and your God” (Isa. 59:2). Or the shadow of death is the present world, which, since it is a valley of tears, a pilgrimage and exile, is called the shadow and likeness of death in respect of the fatherland; yea even the present life is called the shadow of death, as Gregory says: “Temporal life compared with eternal life should rather be called death than life.” Some by the shadow of death understand forgetfulness, because as death takes away from existence in nature, so forgetfulness from existence in memory. Moreover some by those sitting in darkness take the fathers detained in limbo, who were in darkness, that is, lacking the light of glory, and in a dark place: for whose illumination Christ after death on the cross immediately descended and straightway there illumined them with the light of glory, so that then they began to see God by species, according to the doctors. For then satisfaction had been made for the guilt of original sin, and the price of redemption paid, for which guilt alone those saints were deferred from glory. By those sitting in the shadow of death they understand wayfarers and sinners. — Properly also by those sitting in darkness are understood the idolatrous Gentiles, for whose illumination Christ descended, as He says in John: “Other sheep I have that are not of this fold; them also I must bring” (John 10:16). Of this many things are read in Isaias, as: “The people that

walked in darkness have seen a great light; to them that dwelt in the region of the shadow of death, light is risen" (Isa. 9:2). Again through the prophet Isaias the Father speaks to Christ: "I have given Thee to be the light of the Gentiles, that Thou mayest open the eyes of the blind, and bring forth the prisoner out of prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house" (Isa. 42:6–7). But also through Isaias Christ testifies of the Father: "I am glorified in the eyes of the Lord, and He said: It is a small thing that Thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to convert the dregs of Israel; behold I have given Thee to be the light of the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be my salvation even to the farthest part of the earth" (Isa. 49:5–6).

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Hence also John says of Him: "That was the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world" (John 1:9).

"To direct our feet"—that is, our affections: of which we sing, "He hath set my feet upon a rock" (Ps. 39:3), and in the Canticles the Spouse says, "I have washed my feet" (Cant. 5:3)—*"into the way of peace,"* that is, to a just and virtuous conversation, which is the road to peace of heart in the present and to the peace of eternity in the future. To bestow this twofold peace Christ chiefly came and suffered. Wherefore He testified to the Apostles: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you" (John 14:27). Hence the Apostle says of Christ: "And coming, He preached peace to you that were afar off, and peace to them that were nigh" (Eph. 2:17)—that is, to Gentiles and Jews: which words are taken from Isaias (Isa. 57:19).

Finally, since this peace is spiritual and true, and a fruit of the Spirit according to the Apostle to the Galatians (Gal. 5:22), being the rest, tranquillity, or quieting of the mind in God, or untroubled joy in Him, it is certain that through virtuous conversation a man attains peace, by calming and uprooting the tumults and unrest of vices and passions. Chiefly, however, peace proceeds from charity, as it were efficiently. For charity begets union and concord, and designates rest and joy in the beloved when it is joined to him. Hence the Psalmist says: "Much peace have they that love Thy law" (Ps. 118:165). From justice, however, it is said to proceed as a prohibiting thing from a removing one, because justice takes away and destroys the impediments of peace, according to Isaias: "And the work of justice shall be peace" (Isa. 32:17). Again, peace is set down as the effect of prudence, as of the virtue directing to peace through true discretion, by which one conducts oneself in order: whence he is not disturbed. Therefore the Apostle says to the Romans: "The prudence of the spirit is life and peace" (Rom. 8:6). Let us therefore love this peace, seek it and preserve it, since the Savior says: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God" (Matt. 5:9).

Lastly, let us most devoutly sing this sentient and sweet canticle, with grateful and affectionate mind inwardly recalling the ineffable benefits of God, especially the incarnation of the eternal Word, and rendering Him innumerable thanks from the depths of the heart.

"And the child" (Luke 1:80)—namely John—*"grew, and was strengthened in spirit"*: he grew in mind and body, but much more in mind, advancing ineffably in every charism of graces from the time when he began continuously to use reason; and *"was strengthened in spirit,"* that is, by the Holy Spirit, or by His gifts and grace; or, "in spirit," that is, in his own soul or rational spirit, as the Apostle says: "It is best that the heart be established with grace" (Heb. 13:9). *"And was in the deserts,"* that is, in places of wilderness and solitude, that there he might give himself more freely and frequently to God by contemplation and fervent love, might the more avoid the daily sins which often occur from human cohabitation, might attend only to heavenly things, lead a more rigorous and exemplary life, and thereby become the more fit as witness of Christ and exhorter to penance. Hence Bede asserts: "As one about to be a preacher of penance, that he may the more freely turn his hearers away from the allurements of the world, he spends his earliest life in the deserts." And Origen: "He was in the deserts, where the air is purer, the heaven more open, and God more familiar: that since the time of baptism and preaching had not yet come, he might give himself to prayers, and converse with angels, call upon the Lord, and hear Him saying, Behold I am here." Finally in the Hymn it is sung:

"The caves of the desert in thy tender years, fleeing the crowds of citizens, thou didst seek," etc.

"Until the day of his manifestation to Israel"—that is, until at God's bidding he came and showed himself to the Israelite people, preaching and baptizing about the Jordan. At what time that manifestation was made is told below, in the third chapter: "In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar" (Luke 3:1). So John began to do and to teach, as did Christ (Acts 1:1), as His true precursor, herald, servant, friend, and disciple.

Luke 2A: Nativity, Shepherds, Circumcision

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Article VI. Exposition of the second chapter: "And it came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus."

The nativity and circumcision of the Precursor having been described, the nativity and circumcision of Christ are now described. *"And it came to pass in those days"* (Luke 2:1)—that is, at the time when John was growing and being strengthened, or thereabouts—"*that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus*": that is, the emperor Octavian commanded. This Octavian was the successor of Julius, the first emperor, who seized the empire, gaining it by battles when he had put Pompey to flight. Julius was called Caesar either because, his mother being dead, he was extracted by the cutting of the maternal womb, according to Isidore, or because he was born at Caesarea, or because he was a victorious cutter-down (*caesor*) of enemies. Now the daughter of Julius was the wife of Octavian, who kept this name Caesar from his predecessor, and was moreover surnamed Augustus, because he greatly increased the republic and the Roman empire and all its resources at Rome. *"That the whole world should be enrolled"*—that is, that the names of the regions, and cities, villages, hamlets, and all their inhabitants should be put into writing, and carried to Rome, and reported to him. For this emperor wished to know the greatness of his power from the quantity of his subjects, namely over how many provinces, cities, hamlets, and villages, yea and how many men he ruled; that he might also know the greatness and value of the tribute which was paid to him in each province of his dominion, and how he might better keep the provinces in peace, providing for each with governors, judges, or rulers.

Meanwhile, according to Ambrose and the Gloss, Octavian did not rule the whole world, nay not even the Goths or Armenians, according to Ambrose; nor does it seem possible that he could extend his power or come to all the provinces of the world: therefore that the whole world is said to have been enrolled at his command is a hyperbolic expression, by which something is said by excess, to intimate the greatness of the matter, as in John the Pharisees say of Christ and of the people on the following day of Palms: "Behold, the whole world is gone after Him" (John 12:19). To intimate therefore that Augustus ruled most widely, he is said to have lorded it over the whole world and to have ordered it to be enrolled. For in truth he ruled most widely, and no region was able to resist him, but he was most victorious and most fortunate. For which reason it was afterwards cried out in the senate, namely in the time of the emperor Trajan: "None happier than Octavian, none better than Trajan."

Finally, Octavian is read to have reigned fifty-seven years and a half, and in the forty-second year of his reign to have made this edict: so that under his rule there was unheard-of peace in the world, all being subject to one man, to prefigure that Christ, coming then, would give true peace of heart and of eternity to all who believe in Him, and would place them in the fatherland of eternal felicity. Whence there was then literally fulfilled what in Christ's first coming was foretold to be fulfilled through Isaias and Micheas: "They shall turn their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into sickles; nation shall not lift up sword against nation" (Isa. 2:4; Mich. 4:3).

"This enrolling was first made by Cyrinus, the governor of Syria" (Luke 2:2). Before this general enrolling of the world there had been particular enrollings of certain regions, *(p. 411)* as in the book of Kings it is read

that David commanded Joab to number the people of his kingdom and put them in writing (2 Kings 24); but this one which Octavian commanded was the first, speaking of a general enrolling of the world. So this enrolling was first, namely universal, which no like one had preceded, and was made by the governor of Syria. Or: this enrolling commanded by Augustus was made first—that is, was first put into execution, or began to be made—by the governor of Syria named Cyrinus. This Cyrinus Augustus set over Syria and Judea, according to the Greek expositor; but Cyrinus began in Syria to carry out the emperor's edict, because Syria, as is said, is the navel or middle of the habitable earth, in the midst of which they say Judea lay.

"And all went" (Luke 2:3)—namely the principal persons of every house, or also the others who were able to go—*"to be enrolled"*—that is, to profess by word and deed that they were subject to the Roman empire—*"every one into his own city,"* that is, into the town in which they were born, or to which they more belonged. *"And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth"* (Luke 2:4), in which Christ was conceived; and there the most blessed Virgin then dwelt with Joseph her minister, spouse, and husband. Joseph is also said to have "gone up" because that city was lower than the place to which he went. Of which it is subjoined: *"into Judea, to the city of David"*—that is, into a town belonging to the tribe of Juda: so that Judea is taken adjectively, as in John, where it is said, "into the land of Judea" (John 3:22)—*"to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem,"* that is, from which he had sprung. For there his father dwelt, and he himself with him, as is had in the books of Kings (1 Kings 16, 17). Sion also is called the city of David, because there he set up his special dwelling, namely his palace, and because Jerusalem was the metropolis of David's kingdom. Now Sion is sometimes taken for Jerusalem, sometimes for that part of Jerusalem where the palace and the temple were. *"Because he was of the house and family of David,"* as is plain in Matthew and below in the third chapter (Matt. 1:16; Luke 3:23–32). Or by "house" is understood the race or kindred in general; by "family," a part of the kindred. For many families went forth from the same father when he had many sons. On which the Greek says: "By this that the Evangelist shows Joseph to have been of the kindred of David, he was content to announce that the Virgin also was of the same kindred, since the divine law prescribed that conjugal unions be contracted from the same stock" (Num. 36:6). *"To be enrolled with Mary his espoused wife,"* espoused to him before she conceived Christ. For the angel Gabriel was sent to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, as has been said (Luke 1:26–27). *"Who was with child,"* that is, already near to delivery. For she was truly his wife, though he never knew her. Whence in Matthew the angel says to him, before Christ's birth from the Virgin: "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife" (Matt. 1:20). For there was true matrimony between them, though it was not consummated by carnal union.

Now that profession was made by word and deed, because they said they were subject to the emperor, and in sign of truth they placed a denarius stamped with the emperor's image upon their own head, which they straightway handed to the emperor's minister, who at once wrote down the names of those who professed. And it is doubtful among some whether the man alone made the profession. If it be said so, then what the Evangelist says, "with Mary," is referred to the word "went up," not to the word "was enrolled."

"And it came to pass, that when they were there" (Luke 2:6)—namely in Bethlehem—*"her days were accomplished that she should be delivered,"* the blessed Virgin, nine months having now passed: who by the revelation of the Holy Spirit knew that she would give birth in Bethlehem, that that of Micheas might be fulfilled, in which the Lord says: "And thou, Bethlehem Ephrata, out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be the ruler in Israel; and He shall be magnified in the midst of the whole earth" (Mich. 5:2, 4). Of whom it is said in the Psalm: "And He shall rule from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth" (Ps. 71:8). And Daniel says: "All peoples, tribes, and tongues shall serve Him" (Dan. 7:14). *"And she brought forth her firstborn son"* (Luke 2:7),

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namely Jesus Christ, who is called firstborn by exclusion of a prior, not by respect to a following or later one: so that he is called firstborn before whom no other was born, even if none be born after him. For so

“firstborn” is taken in the law, when every firstborn is commanded to be offered to the Lord (Exod. 13). For it is certain that many were then only-begotten among the people of the Jews who were nevertheless offered to God on account of that precept.

Finally, since Christ deigned to be born of a Virgin, that through spiritual regeneration He might acquire many brethren, hence, in this way, He is more aptly called firstborn than only-begotten. Hence Bede affirms: “He is only-begotten in the substance of the deity, firstborn in the substance of the humanity; firstborn in grace, only-begotten in nature.” For He received most excellent grace according to the assumed humanity, so that “of His fullness we have all received,” as John has (John 1:16). Again Christ is called firstborn because worthier than all. Whence in the Apocalypse He is called “the firstborn of the dead” (Apoc. 1:5); and to the Colossians the Apostle writes of Him: “Who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead” (Col. 1:18). Again He is called “the firstborn of every creature” (Col. 1:15), because according to His divine nature He was born before all ages, from eternity. According to the humanity also He is preferred to everything created, not only through the hypostatic union of His humanity with the Word, but also through the most excellent fullness of grace and glory which He received from the first instant of the incarnation.

So, *“She brought forth her son,”* the only-begotten of God the Father: whom, as she conceived Him without carnal delight, with great spiritual joy, being in high contemplation, so without bodily pain, with interior sweetness, being in sublime contemplation, she brought forth as it were in the twinkling of an eye, and having brought Him forth, at once she most humbly, strongly, and joyfully adored Him as true and most high God; *“and wrapped Him up in swaddling clothes,”* with her own hands, neither using nor needing the help of midwives, as Jerome says: “No midwife was there, no officiousness of women intervened; she herself wrapped the infant in swaddling clothes; she herself was mother and midwife.” Therefore, if anywhere the opposite is found, let it be rejected as a lie. It is commonly asserted that she wrapped Him in “swaddling clothes,” that is, in poor and old little cloths. Yet in the *Revelations* of the most blessed Bridget the Virgin Mary is introduced as saying to Bridget that she knew she was to give birth in Bethlehem, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, and therefore she provided for herself of the cleanest and most becoming little linen cloths, in which she soon reverently wrapped her Son. Indeed, as it is read there, credibly enough, the most sacred Virgin, about to give birth, bent her knees most devoutly, and, her mind raised to God, as in a moment brought forth the Boy, and saw Him lying before her on the ground, and a little after trembling with cold: with whom she, most tenderly sorrowing, taking Him up and embracing Him, kissed Him, pressing Him to her breast and warming Him; then she wrapped Him in the whitest little cloths, doing what is subjoined:

“And laid Him in a manger”—placed beside her: which either Joseph the carpenter made there at that time (on account of the ox and ass which he is said to have brought with him, carrying the Virgin upon the ass, and wishing to sell the ox for necessities on the journey, although some think that those animals, or at least the ox, were brought from elsewhere); or the manger had long been constructed there in the place of which it is subjoined: *“because there was no room for them in the inn,”* that is, the holy Virgin found no other more suitable place there in which to put the Child.

Now an inn (*diversorium*), according to Isidore, is so called because various persons come together there; and, as Bede asserts, it was a house or space between two streets, having a wall on both sides, and a gate on each end, and also covered over against the intemperateness of the air: where on feast days the citizens had come together to confer and be solaced,

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where also those entering the city were wont to lodge their animals for a time: and so from “turning aside” (*divertendo*) it is called *diversorium*, because there men turned aside. Others say that it was a hospice, to which those coming from outside turned aside to be lodged, especially the poor. Whence, because Bethlehem was then full of people, and the richer had occupied the better lodgings, Joseph, as modest, simple, and poor,

turned aside with the Virgin to the aforesaid place. Which certainly was not done by chance, but by God's pre-ordaining and disposing, for manifold reasons, namely: to commend poverty and humility and to teach contempt of the world, because the Son of God Himself came to instruct in these by word and deed; likewise to fulfill the Scripture, since through Habacuc it was foretold of Christ, according to the translation of the Septuagint interpreters: "In the midst of two animals Thou shalt be known" (Hab. 3:2).

So the Lord of hosts, the King of glory (Ps. 23:10), the God of immense majesty, about to assume and redeem human nature, chose in all things what according to the world are more abject and heavier to the body (1 Cor. 1:27). For He chose a poor mother; in a strange, narrow, and vile place He was born and laid; in winter time and at midnight He willed to be born, that He might condemn the pride of the world, reprobate its wantonness, but adorn penury in Himself, and console the poor: that by His example we may crucify our flesh with its vices and concupiscences (Gal. 5:24), and manfully undertake hard and arduous things. Woe therefore to the vainest lovers of the world, who most foolishly glory in their nobility and opulence and boast themselves: who at last, too late and fruitlessly, will say that of the Wise Man: "What hath pride profited us? or what advantage hath the boasting of riches brought us? All those things are passed away like a shadow" (Wis. 5:8, 9). Where now are they who delight in softness of beds, who there satisfy the desires of the flesh? To whom it is said through the prophet Amos: "Woe to you that sleep upon beds of ivory, and are wanton on your couches" (Amos 6:4). Behold, He who sits upon the Cherubim, and rests on the heavenly Thrones (Ps. 98:1), is contained for our sake in the narrowness of a hard manger. — Finally, since man is compared to a beast of burden, either by piously and obediently bearing the yoke of the divine law (according to that of the Psalm, "I am become as a beast before Thee, and I am always with Thee," which is said there in the person of the just [Ps. 72:22–23]); or by living irrationally or bestially, as it is written, "Man when he was in honor did not understand; he is compared to senseless beasts" (Ps. 48:13, 21): hence Christ, that He might become the refreshment of these beasts, was made hay, in the manner in which it is written in Isaias, "All flesh is grass" (Isa. 40:6), and willed to be set before them first in the manger.

Lastly, as some say, the aforesaid inn was within the city of Bethlehem, at the end, near one of the gates, under a hollow rock, having no roof above it except the rock hanging from the mountain.

"And there were in the same country shepherds" (Luke 2:8)—namely in Judea. Here the Evangelist shows how the nativity of Christ began to be revealed to men. *"Watching, and keeping the night watches"*—that is, they carefully kept the customary night vigils—*"over their flock,"* that is, about the cattle which they fed in the field, even in the night time, as is wont to be done in those places. It is also said that they were then near a certain tower between Bethlehem and Jerusalem, where Jacob returning from Mesopotamia dwelt with his flocks, where Rachel died and was buried, as is plain in Genesis (Gen. 35:21): which was called the Tower of the Flock. Of which that of Micheas is expounded: "And thou, cloudy tower of the flock of the daughter of Sion, unto thee shall come the first power, the kingdom of Jerusalem" (Mich. 4:8)—that is, Christ, the first, supreme, omnipotent power: whom there the angel announced to the shepherds, who are said to have been three; and there afterwards a church was built, where their sepulchres are shown (as is reported). To which place also Christ is not unreasonably believed afterwards to have come.

"And behold an angel of the Lord stood by them" (Luke 2:9): for he assumed the figure of a human body and appeared to them visibly; *"and the brightness of God shone round about them,"* that is, a certain light divinely sent

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so brightened the air near the shepherds that they were covered on every side with that light, as soon afterwards they were inwardly flooded with spiritual light, to know the truth about Christ: as in the Acts it is had of Paul, "Suddenly a light from heaven shined round about him" (Acts 9:3). Finally, the angel perhaps was of such splendor in the body which he assumed that such light was diffused from him; or, besides the

brightness diffused by him, a light also was scattered from above by God's acting: by which copious diffusion of light it was figured that Christ, born in this world, would be the sun of wisdom and of justice. Whence in the Old Testament angels are not read to have appeared with so great brightness. *"And they feared with a great fear,"* on account of so great and unaccustomed a vision, and lest perhaps it were an illusion, or not knowing what the vision portended. Of the causes of such fear it was said more fully in the exposition of the first chapter (Luke 1:12). Whence also in the book of Judges, Manue, having seen an angel, said to his wife: "We shall surely die, because we have seen the Lord" (Judg. 13:22).

"And the angel said to them" (Luke 2:10)—who is wont by his vision to console and strengthen those terrified, as was said—*"Fear not,"* that is, with immoderate and dejecting fear, which hinders the use of reason, and is a disordered passion which by reason and confidence or fortitude is to be curbed and moderated. Why they ought not to fear but to rejoice he added: *"For behold, I bring you good tidings"*—that is, I announce a good thing to you—*"of great joy,"* that is, the cause and matter of spiritual and chief good joy, or that there is much to rejoice in, *"which shall be to all the people"*: that is, this joy will be as much to the Jews as to the Gentiles, namely to all the faithful and elect: so that the distribution is adapted for the genera of individuals, because some of every kind or nation of men rejoiced therein. In which sense Christ speaks in John: "I will draw all things to myself" (John 12:32).

"For this day is born to you" (Luke 2:11)—that is, for your true salvation—*"this day,"* that is, this natural day, namely in this night (which is a part of the natural day, which is said to have twenty-four hours: and so a week is said to be a space of seven days)—*"a Savior,"* namely the only-begotten Son of God: who according to His divine nature is Savior by authority and principal efficiency, as creator and giver of salvation and grace, by first and omnipotent power. Who in Isaias testifies: "A just God and a Savior, there is none besides me" (Isa. 45:21); and through Osee He says: "I am the Lord thy God, and thou shalt know no God but me, and there is no savior besides me" (Osee 13:4). Now according to the assumed humanity He is Savior by instrumental efficiency, and as the meritorious cause of grace and salvation. And so in the Acts the Apostle says of Christ: "He hath purchased the Church with His own blood" (Acts 20:28). Of whom it is foretold in Isaias: "Behold your God will come and will save you" (Isa. 35:4). For by His passion He washed away our sins, and merited grace and salvation for us: which also He did by the merits of His most holy conversation.

"Who is Christ." "Christ" in Greek is in Latin "anointed." Now Christ is anointed not with bodily oil or human unction, as in the law kings and pontiffs were anointed in figure of Him, since He Himself is the supreme king and pontiff, the end and consummator of the law, according to the Apostle (1 Tim. 6:15; Heb. 7; Rom. 10:4); but He is anointed, according to the humanity, with divine and spiritual unction, that is, with the fullness of grace and every charism of graces, virtue, gift, and holiness, yea and the light of glory and beatific fruition from the first instant of the incarnation, according to that of the Psalm: "God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows" (Ps. 44:8). Which unction was made by the whole superblessed Trinity, whose action outward is undivided. Hence through Isaias Christ speaks according to the assumed nature: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me" (Isa. 61:1). Finally, "Christ," as we commonly use this name in the New Testament, signifies or stands for the uncreated Person subsisting in a twofold nature, namely divine and human,

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that is, the incarnate Only-begotten of God. *"The Lord."* Christ is called Lord according to both natures, but in different ways: because as God He is Lord by independent authority and first power and wholly perfect universal presidency; but according to the human nature He is Lord also of all creatures by power and grace given in time, created, instrumental, and finite or limited, according to what He says in Matthew: "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18). Of whom in the Acts Peter says: "This is the Lord of all" (Acts 10:36). *"In the city of David,"* namely Bethlehem.

Behold how, according to the Apostle, God chose the weak and contemptible or abject and foolish things of the world, that He may confound the great, the strong, and the wise in their own eyes (1 Cor. 1:27–28). For not to the pontiffs and priests of the temple lying on soft beds, not to the Scribes swollen with knowledge of the law, not to the Pharisees presuming on their holiness, not to the nobles and proud rich, but to shepherds—idiots, needy, humble—an angel, then an angelic army, appears. To them the angel announces Christ: which the angelic army confirms by jubilation. By which also it was figured that not to the idle but to the studious and true keepers of the Lord's flock, or worthy and virtuous pastors, especially those who at night-times give themselves to the divine praises, are supernal illuminations, angelic visitations, and heavenly consolations granted. For by the fact that those shepherds thus kept watch over their flocks it is insinuated that the pastors of Christ's sheep, namely of Christians, ought to attend to those committed to them with continual solicitude and watchfulness, and feed them by prayer, doctrine, example, that they may be able to say that of Isaias: "I am upon the watch-tower of the Lord, standing continually by day; and I am upon my ward, standing whole nights" (Isa. 21:8). For pastors ought so to attend to others that they neglect not to guard themselves from every sin. Therefore in the Acts the Apostle says to them: "Take heed to yourselves and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops" (Acts 20:28).

Furthermore it is to be contemplated that, as in Christ is the highest nature, namely divinity, and the lowest in the order of intellectual creatures, that is, humanity, so in all that is read of Christ there is a most beautiful and fitting mixture of the sublime and the lowly, of heavenly and earthly, of divine and human, of the highest and the lowest. For that He is conceived of a maiden, born in a stable, wrapped in swaddling clothes, laid in a manger, circumcised, and driven into Egypt, and suffers the rest that are written in the Gospel: do not all these things belong to littleness and lowness? But that He is announced by an angel, begotten of a virgin, commended by an angelic army, and works supernaturally the rest that are written in the Gospel, is of divine excellence. Besides, some so read, "is born for us," not "for you," that the angel may confess that Christ was born not only for the salvation of men but also for the repair of the angelic ruin.

"And this shall be a sign unto you" (Luke 2:12). According to the Apostle, the Jews seek signs (1 Cor. 1:22): therefore to the shepherds, as to Jews, the angel gives a sign, not indeed on account of their incredulity, but rather for their and all men's most salutary instruction. For it is subjoined: *"You shall find the infant wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger."* As if he said: Although Christ is born king of all and prince most high, yet, which is most admirable, He chose to be born and to live in the greatest poverty and humility, not in opulence and temporal kingdom, as the Jews looked for: as they still await the Messiah king in His first coming to reign temporally, and to subject the whole world most powerfully to Himself and to the people of the Jews, according to exterior and earthly dominion; whereas the holy Prophets described the first coming of Christ as to be in poverty and humility, to be judged

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and to suffer, and to save men by His passion (Jer. 12:5). By this sign therefore the angel taught that Christ came that by word and deed He might teach contempt of all earthly things, and wholly transfer the hearts of the faithful to the love of divine things. By this sign also the angel most vehemently consoled the shepherds themselves, and all the poor. Therefore, according to Bernard: "The swaddling clothes of Christ are set for a sign, but for a sign which is daily contradicted by many." For those who glory in costliness, superfluity, or multitude and cultivation and softness of garments contradict this sign. So these things are written for our instruction, that, knowing the poverty and humility of Christ, we may follow Him in poverty and humility, at least so that, if riches abound, we set not our heart upon them (Ps. 61:11).

"And suddenly" (Luke 2:13)—that is, the aforesaid angel yet speaking with the shepherds, according to Origen; or abruptly after this—"*there was*"—that is, was shown, and appeared in the air, with the angel teaching the shepherds (whom some think to have been Gabriel, and more principal than the others who then appeared, therefore announcing so great a mystery)—"*with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army,*" that

is, a copious host of angelic spirits: who stand as soldiers of the supreme King, since they fight victoriously against His adversaries, namely the aerial powers, and conquer and restrain them, and are borne with utmost readiness to follow every command of the eternal majesty. Moreover, they humbly served Christ the Leader, who came to overcome the aerial powers. So, for the certification of the truth, and to insinuate the dignity of the Boy born, so many—nay, according to Origen, so innumerable—angels appeared. *"Praising God"* with most ardent, most devout, and most joyful mind, and *"saying,"* with consonant voice and sweetest melody through the mouths of the assumed bodies:

"Glory" (Luke 2:14)—that is, supreme excellence, or knowledge with clear praise, or beatitude and gladness, but properly glory, that is, the clarification of the divine majesty in the hearts of intellectual creatures with due praise—*"be to God in the highest,"* that is, to God who is in the heavens (Ps. 112:4; Heb. 1:3). Especially in the empyrean heaven He is asserted to be and dwell, inasmuch as there He works more evidently and magnificently, and is more clearly beheld, though in Himself He is wholly most simple, uncircumscribed, immense, having no relation to place. Or: "Glory," that is, the aforesaid clarification of divine dignity, be "in the highest," that is, in the minds of the Blessed, to God, that they in all things may render honor and glory to God. Whence, according to this, that word is a word of congratulation rather than of exhortation, like that: "Praise ye the Lord, all His angels" (Ps. 148:2); according to that of the Apostle, "To God only be honor and glory" (1 Tim. 1:17).

In this therefore let us conform ourselves to the holy angels and to God, that we ascribe glory to God alone, and likewise desire it to be rendered by all. For He Himself says through Isaias: "My glory I will not give to another" (Isa. 48:11). And so with the Psalmist we shall worthily sing: "Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to Thy name give glory" (Ps. 113:1). But can we not also, and ought we not, to desire glory, especially since all things are finally to be done for eternal felicity or glory? And the answer is that we ought to desire glory in God, according to God, and for God: in God, as in object, giver, and cause; according to God, that is, according to His will, not according to our own cupidity—namely in order, as befits a created mind; for God, that is, finally to His praise and honor, to whom and to whose honor we ought to refer ourselves and whatever is in us or ours. Therefore the Apostle says: "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" (1 Cor. 1:31); and the Psalmist: "In the Lord shall my soul be praised" (Ps. 33:3). But vain, vicious, and frivolous men wish to be praised in themselves and for themselves, and to obtain glory, committing theft against the Lord, because what is His they usurp for themselves.

"And on earth peace"—true and spiritual: which is tranquillity of mind in the honest good, especially in God the fountain of all honest or virtuous good, of which in the exposition of the first chapter more fully was said (Luke 1:79)—

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"to men of good will": speaking of will not merely optative, which is imperfect velleity, of which Solomon speaks, "The sluggard willeth and willeth not" (Prov. 13:4); but of imperative and efficacious will, which, when opportunity is at hand or demands, proceeds into work. Those who have such a good will are good, and in the state of salvation or in charity and grace, since such will or volition is reputed by God for the work. Will is here taken for the interior act of the will, which is volition, not for the power only, or for the power formed by such an act. Finally, a man is said to be good or bad chiefly from the will, because the first root of meriting and demeriting consists in the will, according as liberty first, directly, and properly belongs to the will. Now sin is so voluntary that if it were not voluntary it would not be sin, according to Augustine. And likewise is to be said of the act of virtue. Hence good and evil are said to be in the will, true and false in the intellect. Hence fittingly peace is announced to men of good will. Moreover this peace does not belong to the wicked, according to that in Isaias: "There is no peace to the wicked, saith the Lord" (Isa. 48:22). — Peace can also here be taken for the reconciliation of the human race made with God through Christ, which the angels then said was at hand. Whence the Apostle says to the Romans: "We were reconciled to God by the

death of His Son" (Rom. 5:10).

It is plain from these words that what the Prophets announced of the future peace at Christ's coming is to be understood of spiritual peace, which is the peace of good will. For by goodness of will a man is said to be simply good, rather than by the goodness of the other powers of the soul. For it belongs to the will to move the other powers to their acts: and so its goodness and badness redound upon them, as the virtue or influence of a moving cause upon those things that are moved by it. Now the temporal peace which was in the world at Christ's coming was a figure of this principally intended spiritual peace, of which the Apostle says to the Colossians: "Let the peace of Christ rejoice in your hearts" (Col. 3:15). Of which also through Micheas it was foretold: "Peace shall be in our land, when He shall come, and when He shall tread in our houses" (Mich. 5:5); and in the Psalm, "In His days shall justice spring up, and abundance of peace" (Ps. 71:7). This is the interior peace of the just, truly Christian, which cannot be taken from them by exterior disquietudes or tribulations, as Solomon says in Proverbs: "The just, bold as a lion, shall be without dread" (Prov. 28:1); and again, "Whatever shall befall the just man, it shall not make him sad" (Prov. 12:21). Hence of the primitive Church God foretold through Isaias: "My people shall sit in the beauty of peace, and in the tabernacles of confidence, and in wealthy rest" (Isa. 32:18). This is the true and holy security by which the perfect, ready to suffer all adversities for God, do not fear them that kill the body (Matt. 10:28). For which reason through Jeremias it is written: "In those days Juda shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell confidently" (Jer. 23:6). Whence in the Acts of the Apostles Paul and certain others are read to have acted confidently (Acts 9:27; 4:13). And again: "The disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 13:52). So, if we desire to please God, let us have true peace and concord with all, as far as possible (Rom. 12:18), and especially keep the mind quiet in God, fixed, and untroubled: which can be done if we are truly meek, patient, and humble, and, all earthly things despised, fervently love God.

Lastly it is asked by whom the remainder of this angelic canticle was composed. To which Albert and some others say that it was by Pope Symmachus; others more credibly assert that it was by the holy bishop Hilary. It is read in the acts of the Roman Pontiffs that Pope Telesphorus ordained that it should be lawful only for bishops to begin this canticle. Afterwards, however, Pope Symmachus ordained that the other priests also might begin it on feast days, because of the priest

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it is written in Malachias: "He is the angel of the Lord of hosts" (Mal. 2:7).

"And it came to pass, after the angels departed from them into heaven" (Luke 2:15)—that is, when they had withdrawn themselves from the sight of the shepherds and returned to heaven, to which they are wont to return, the ministry for which they were sent being consummated, as Raphael says to Tobias: "It is time that I return to Him that sent me" (Tob. 12:20)—*"the shepherds said one to another."* For though at first they had been terrified and filled with stupor, yet from the angelic consolation and the sweetest perception of so joyful a thing they were comforted, and made glad and alert, and said: *"Let us go over to Bethlehem"*—which, as is said, was distant a mile from the place where the shepherds saw these things—*"and let us see"* bodily what now we believe with the eyes of faith, *"this word that is come to pass,"* that is, the thing signified by the words said to us, namely the Boy born, who is Christ the Lord, king Messias. For "word" in the Scriptures is taken sometimes for the mental word, sometimes for the vocal or written word, sometimes for the thing signified, as in the books of Kings Ezechias says: "There was not a word in my house that I did not show them" (Isa. 39:2, 4). *"Which the Lord hath done,"* that is, hath spoken to us through angels; or, what thing He hath done: which Lord, the Father or the whole Trinity, made Christ according to the assumed humanity, according to which Christ is called a creature, though simply speaking He ought not to be called a creature, but true God and Creator of all. For the Apostle says: "Who was made to Him of the seed of David according to the flesh" (Rom. 1:3). Yet this particle, "which the Lord hath done," is not had in the Greek and ancient and corrected codices, nor is it of the text. *"Which the Lord hath showed to us"*—that is, which Boy He hath

manifested to us through the angel to have been born. — It can also be expounded of the uncreated Word, so that the sense is: Let us see this Word, that is, the Only-begotten of God, of whom it is said, "In the beginning was the Word" (John 1:1); *"that is come to pass,"* that is, incarnate, according to that, "The Word was made flesh" (John 1:14); *"which the Lord hath done"*: because this Word was made man by God the Trinity, though absolutely speaking He was not made, but begotten and eternal. Whence this exposition seems improper, nor is it certain that from the angelic words set forth the rude and simple shepherds understood that Christ would be called and was the Word of God. *"Which the Lord hath showed to us,"* that is, hath already made known to us that He is born.

"And they came with haste" (Luke 2:16): because they were fervent in love of God and of the Boy born; and they fervently desired to behold so great a novelty, namely Christ born, whose majesty they weighed from the appearing and testimony and congratulation of the angelic host. They rejoiced also at the salvation of the whole world now imminent, and the fulfillment of the Scriptures. But they were also anxious to return quickly to their flocks, which they had left without a keeper: therefore they hastened. So let us also seek Christ with haste, that is, diligently and fervently: whom no one worthily seeks with torpor and sloth. For to hasten and run to God is to love ardently, and from spiritual love to do good things alacriter; and the more fervently we love, the sooner we hasten and run.

"And they found Mary"—whom the divine Ignatius in his epistles to her so often calls the Christ-bearer (*Christifera*)—*"and Joseph,"* the spouse of the Virgin, her guardian, minister, and most true witness of her most entire virginity, *"and the infant,"* that is, the little one: who, though after the manner of other little ones he was called "infant," as it were "not speaking," or unable to speak, yet from the first hour of His nativity was able to speak most eloquently and most wisely, not only in Hebrew but in the tongue of all nations: for He also received the gifts of grace freely given, as prophecy, kinds of tongues, knowledge, and interpretation of speeches (1 Cor. 12:8–10), from the first instant of the incarnation; *"lying in the manger"*: in which, according to Gorran, was spiritually fulfilled that admirable thing written in Job: "Will the rhinoceros be willing to serve thee, or will he stay at thy crib?" (Job 39:9). For the rhinoceros

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is a most strong animal, which bears one horn in the forehead, for which it is called unicorn, and is taken in the lap of a virgin, in which it reclines its head when it is hunted: and it designates Christ, who is said to have been taken in the lap of the virginal womb and brought into our service.

"And seeing, they understood of the word that had been spoken to them concerning this child" (Luke 2:17)—that is, they considered that the discourse uttered to them by the angel concerning this infant was true; or, "they understood of the uncreated Word," which had been said to them concerning this child, that is, what the angel preached to them, that this Boy is [the Word]. For the Word made flesh was an infant of one day, and the angel said that that Boy was Christ the Lord, the only-begotten Son of God: and so, beholding Christ's body with bodily eyes, with interior eyes they knew His divinity by faith. For, as Ambrose asserts, while the flesh was seen, the Word was seen, namely Christ, who in one person is God and man.

"And all that heard wondered" (Luke 2:18). Some expound this thus: All who had heard from the angel these mysteries of Christ, namely how He was born, wondered that Christ the Lord of all was born in so vile a stable and laid in a manger, and yet by an angelic army so solemnly proclaimed. From which it would follow that the aforesaid angels appeared not to the shepherds alone, nor was that angelic praise heard by the shepherds only. Yet, so far as is weighed from the text, the shepherds alone seem to have seen and heard those angels: so that the sense is that all who heard from the shepherds wondered. Whence by way of exposition it is subjoined: *"and at those things that were told them by the shepherds"*—that is, of those things which the shepherds told them concerning this Boy, namely that the angel had said such things of Him, and how the angelic host sang a hymn to the Lord. At these, I say, they wondered rightly, because it

was supernatural that in one person such great majesty and such great humility, such great dominion and such great poverty should have met, that the King of heaven should be born on earth, that the Desired of all nations should have come (Agg. 2:8), whom the Patriarchs and Prophets so ineffably longed for. Moreover they wondered at the so constant, certain, and fervent testimony of the shepherds, who knew not how to feign unheard-of things, but with simple eloquence proclaimed what was true.

"But Mary" (Luke 2:19)—whose sweetness, according to Bernard, is so great that she never enters the gates of pious memory without sprinkling of the sweetness innate in her—"*kept all these words,"* which have now been written of Christ, that is, committed them most diligently to memory, *"pondering them in her heart,"* that is, intellectually revolving them, and richly repeating and comparing them with one another. So the most quiet and purest Virgin delightfully considered how the angel had announced Christ to her, how she conceived and brought Him forth, how angels appeared to the shepherds, and what the shepherds protested they had seen and heard, not only to the glorious Virgin and St. Joseph but also to many others to whom they could opportunely speak. All these things the holy Virgin wisely and most diligently considered, and compared with the prophecies of the Prophets concerning Christ: and so she vehemently advanced in faith; nay, according to Ambrose, she gathered faith from the shepherds, that is, increase of faith, not that she was ever doubting in faith, but because she advanced daily in all virtues. Hence the disciples of Christ after Christ's ascension are said to have been instructed by her in some things. Especially this renowned evangelist Luke is asserted to have been taught by her, chiefly in those things which he alone relates of Christ's infancy: not that he was not instructed in them by the Holy Spirit, nay the Holy Spirit so instructed him through the most worthy Mary, and informed, certified, and infallibly directed him by supernatural irradiation about all things. For the same truth is learned from different persons and in many ways, because it can be learned more clearly and distinctly from one than from another, as to itself and its circumstances.

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Besides, according to Ambrose, let us learn in all things the chastity of the holy Virgin, who, no less modest in speech than in body, conferred the arguments of faith in her heart. For, keeping the rights of virginal modesty, according to Bede, she divulged to no one then the secrets of Christ which she knew, but conferred what she had read was to be done with what she already knew had been done. Yet I think that to some intimates who piously asked she opened some things secretly, as reason demanded and charity. So let us too, by the example of the most blessed Virgin, keep in memory all the divine and salutary things which we hear, see, know, or read, and shrewdly confer them, and according to them regulate our conversation in all things, that with the Psalmist we may deserve to say: "Thy words have I hidden in my heart, that I may not sin against Thee" (Ps. 118:11). For Christ also testifies: "Blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it" (Luke 11:28).

"And the shepherds returned to their flocks" (Luke 2:20)—which are said to have been sheep, though perhaps there were also some other cattle: as also the sons of Jacob kept cattle of diverse kinds, and yet in Genesis they name themselves shepherds of sheep (Gen. 47:3)—"*glorifying,"* that is, confessing gloriously or magnificently honoring, *"and praising God"* for His benefits, of which it is subjoined: *"for all the things they had heard,"* from the angel and the angelic host, of the nativity of Christ, etc., *"and seen,"* with their own eyes in Bethlehem, *"as it was told unto them."* This can be referred to what he says, "glorifying and praising God": so that the sense is that they glorified and praised God as it was said to them, that is, as the holy angels did in their hearing, saying: "Glory to God in the highest." It can also be referred to what he says, "which they had heard": and the sense will be that they glorified God in all things which they had heard and seen as it was told to them: that is, in the way they saw it as it had been foretold to them by the angel, and therefore they praised God because they found it so.

Lastly, what the shepherds did bodily, let us do spiritually. Let us exhort one another, saying: "Let us go over to Bethlehem," that is, by devout and affectionate consideration let us unite our heart to the place in which

Christ was born, and mentally behold how great poverty and humility the King of glory assumed for us, and let us be grateful for His benefits in word and deed, imitating Him truly, and praising Him with the angelic spirits ardently and reverently.

Thereupon the Evangelist describes the circumcision of Christ. *"And after eight days were accomplished"* (Luke 2:21)—that is, fulfilled, counting or including both the day of the nativity and the day of the circumcision itself—*"that the child should be circumcised,"* the little infant Jesus, of whom Isaias says: "A child is born to us" (Isa. 9:6). The word "that" (*ut*) is here held concomitantly, though it could be held also in some manner causally, since so great is the dignity of the Savior that times are ordered to Him and to His deeds: which can be said specially of the times in which He lived in this world. *"His name was called Jesus,"* which is interpreted Savior, to insinuate that He would be the true Savior of the world, rescuing all believing in Him generally and completely and finally from the death of sin and the destruction of hell, and leading them to heavenly felicity. Whence in Matthew, when the angel had said to Joseph, "Thou shalt call His name Jesus," he added the cause of the naming, saying: "For He shall save His people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21). Of whom Isaias writes: "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all: by His bruises we are healed" (Isa. 53:6, 5). And in the Acts Peter says: "There is no other name under heaven given to men whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Whence that some in the Old Testament were called by this name, as Josue, who by another name was called Jesus, and Jesus the son of Josedec (Ecclus. 46:1; 49:14; Jos. 11:23), was for another reason, and in figure of Jesus Christ. For Josue saved

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the sons of Israel from the Chanaanites, and Jesus the son of Josedec, pontiff of the Jews, was one of those leading them back from Babylon (1 Esd. 2): which were particular and imperfect liberations, figuring the perfect liberation accomplished by Jesus Christ. Therefore this name, Jesus, was new and proper to Christ, as imposed to designate complete liberation. To which many allege that of Isaias: "Thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord hath named" (Isa. 62:2). Yet this is said literally of the Church or Synagogue converted to Christ, not of Christ, though it can be applied to Him. *"Which was called,"* that is, expressed and foretold, or commanded to be called, *"by the angel"*: for in Matthew the angel is read to have said to Joseph, "Thou shalt call His name Jesus" (Matt. 1:21); and he said the same to the holy Virgin; *"before He was conceived in the womb,"* that is, in the virginal womb of Mary of the Holy Spirit. For the angel said to her: "Fear not, Mary, behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus" (Luke 1:30, 31). And rightly it is said, "which was called by the angel," not "imposed," because it had been imposed before by God, who pre-ordained that Christ should be so called, and through the angel and Mary and Joseph so called Him, as Christ testifies through Isaias: "The Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother He hath been mindful of my name" (Isa. 49:1).

Besides, as some say, Jesus is called Savior: First, from the power of saving: and so this name belongs to Him from eternity, namely according to His divinity, by which from eternity He had the power of saving. Second, from the habit of saving: and so it was imposed on Him by the angel, and belongs to Him from the first instant of His conception, in which according to His humanity He received so perfect grace, by which afterwards He did and bore those things by which He actually saved the world. Third, from the act of saving: and so this name was called in the circumcision, and belongs to Christ by reason of His passion; and in the circumcision He first shed His blood for us. Moreover it is to be looked at that to save belongs to Christ according to both His natures: because according to the divinity it belongs to Him authoritatively and principally, according to the humanity instrumentally, as was said more fully above: therefore He can be called Jesus according to both natures. For of God one and three it is written in Habacuc: "But I will rejoice in the Lord, and I will joy in God my Jesus" (Hab. 3:18). But now the name is treated as it belongs to Christ according to the human nature.

Finally, according to Epiphanius, Christ willed to be circumcised for many causes: First, to show that He was truly incarnate, not phantastically or apparently, as Manichaeus feigned. Second, to show that His body was not consubstantial with the divinity, as Apollinaris most rudely said; likewise to declare that He did not bring it down from heaven, as Valentinus asserted. Again, and third, that the Jews might not have occasion against Christ by saying that He had transgressed the law by not receiving circumcision. Fourth, that He might fulfill and approve the law, and give an example of humility and obedience: for which reason afterwards He confessed: "I am not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill" (Matt. 5:17). It was divinely commanded in Genesis: "An infant of eight days old shall be circumcised among you" (Gen. 17:12). Fifth, that by the virtue and merit of His circumcision He might relieve His faithful from the hardship of that precept, and sweetly commute circumcision itself into Baptism. Sixth, to avoid the scandal of the Jews. Seventh, for the commendation of community and uniformity, that we too may avoid singularity, and not disdain to be punished for our sins, seeing that Christ, who did not need the remedy of fault, with ineffable humanity received circumcision, which was the remedy against original sin. Whence the Apostle says to the Hebrews: "Wherefore it behoved Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren" (Heb. 2:17). Lastly, by receiving circumcision He took from the devil the occasion of suspecting that He was the Christ.

So let us too most diligently consider all that Christ assumed, did, and bore for our

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salvation, and strive to be grateful to Him, and be spiritually circumcised, endeavoring to avoid all disorder and superfluity within and without—namely in garments, words, works, leisure, omissions, and likewise in thoughts, affections, intentions—nor abominating the austere exercises of penance, but manfully embracing them, since Christ too in so infantile an age underwent so bitter pain for us. For, as Rabbi Moses testifies, in circumcision there was most grievous pain, so much that many infants died of it. Hence, according to the same, the Lord willed boys to be circumcised on the eighth day, when as yet they have but little imagination, that thereby they might be less afflicted. Since therefore the boy Jesus was of best and most tender complexion and most perfect imagination from the beginning of the incarnation, as also of fullest intellectual knowledge, we can easily perceive how very grave a pain He felt in the circumcision, how intimately and painfully His most affectionate and most pious Mother compassionated Him. Whence we also ought to compassionate both.

But concerning that, "His name was called Jesus," Origen says: "The name Jesus, glorious and most worthy of all worship, the name which is above every name (Phil. 2:9), it did not become to be first called by men, nor to be brought into the world by them, but by a more excellent nature." Of the sweetness of which name also Bernard says: "This name Jesus is honey in the mouth, melody in the ear, jubilation in the heart."

Luke 2B: Purification, Simeon, Anna, Boy Jesus in the Temple

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Article VII. Continuation of the exposition of this second chapter, from the place where it is said: "And after the days of her purification were accomplished, according to the law of Moses."

The circumcision of Christ having been described, the Evangelist goes on to the purification of His virginal Mother, omitting the description of the appearing of Christ by which He became known to the Magi, which he knew had been sufficiently described by the evangelist Matthew (Matt. 2:1–12). *"And after the days of her purification were accomplished"* (Luke 2:22)—namely Mary's—"*according to the law of Moses,"* that is, when forty days from the birth of Christ were fulfilled: on the last of which the infant was, according to the law of Moses, to be presented in the temple, or offered to the Lord; within which days also the mother, according to the Mosaic law, abstained from entering the temple, and on the fortieth day, entering the temple, was purified. For the law in Leviticus commanded that a woman who, having received seed, bore a male

child, should be unclean seven days—unclean, that is, as to the company of men and as to entering the temple; and that on the eighth day the infant should be circumcised, and she herself then be made clean as to the company of men; moreover, after those seven days the woman was to remain yet thirty-three days in the blood of her purification, abstaining from entering the temple, though not from the company of men; and so on the fortieth day she was to offer or present the boy in the temple, offering at the same time gifts according to the law for herself and for him (Lev. 12). Now if she had borne a girl, the days were doubled, both as to entering the temple and as to the company of men.

But since the most blessed Virgin did not conceive from seed received, but by the power of the Holy Spirit, it is certain that she was not bound by that law, nor needed purification—she who neither conceived in sin nor ever sinned, nor underwent the lot common to other mothers, *(p. 423)* but brought forth, in mind and body most immaculate and most pure. These days are therefore called days of Mary's purification not according to real existence but according to men's estimation, just as Joseph is called the father of Christ (Luke 3:23) because he was so thought; and because, according to Jerome, it is the custom of Scripture to report deeds as they were thought to be done at the time they were done. Moreover, the days are called days of Mary's purification "according to the law of Moses" in this way, although in truth that law did not fall upon Mary. Or the days of her purification are said to be fulfilled according to the law of Moses not as to Mary's obligation to purification but as to the determination and fulfillment of the time. Now the most worthy Mary willed to be subject to the law and as it were to be purified in the temple, to give an example of obedience and humility, to avoid the scandal of the Jews, to conform herself to other women in things lawful and honorable, and because she saw her Son subject to the law of circumcision. For perfect obedience does more than it is bound to, as Bernard says: "Perfect obedience knows no law, is not confined by limits; nor, content with the narrowness of profession, is it borne along by a larger will according to the breadth of charity."

"They carried Him," namely Jesus—Mary and Joseph did. For then the Christ-bearing Virgin went out of the stable in which she bore Christ and carried Him to the temple (and perhaps she herself with Joseph often carried the Boy there) *"to Jerusalem, to present Him"*—that is, to offer, present, or consecrate Him—*"to the Lord,"* that is, to God the Father, or to the triune and simple God, and so also to Himself, inasmuch as He is God; for to be offered belongs to Him according to the humanity; *"as it is written in the law of the Lord"* (Luke 2:23), namely in Numbers and Exodus (Num. 8:17; Exod. 13:2, 12–15): *"Every male opening the womb"*—that is, first opening it by being born, every firstborn both among men and among cattle—*"shall be called holy to the Lord,"* that is, shall be consecrated to God, so that he shall be offered to Him and made over as belonging specially to Him. Hence the Lord says often through Moses: "Since I struck every firstborn in Egypt, both of men and of beasts, I have sanctified to myself all that first openeth the womb in Israel, both of men and of beasts" (Num. 3:13; 8:17). That sanctification, then, was a certain deputation of those things to God, whose magnificence was represented in them, inasmuch as they commemorated the slaying of the firstborn of Egypt.

Now the firstborn were consecrated to the Lord in different ways. For if they were of the tribe of Levi and had no blemish, they ministered to God continually in the temple when they reached adult age, although after the offering they were sent back to their parents' house. But if they were of any of the other eleven tribes of Israel, they belonged to God by the offering, but were redeemed with five shekels (Num. 18:15, 16). If they were firstborn of cattle, and clean animals, they were offered to the Lord and not redeemed, but belonged to the priests, that is, for their use. But if they were unclean, they were redeemed, or exchanged for something else—as the firstborn of an ass for the firstborn of a sheep—or were killed, as the firstborn of a dog (Exod. 13:13). Since therefore Christ was of the tribe of Juda, it is certain that He was redeemed with five shekels.

"And to offer" (Luke 2:24)—that is, they carried Jesus to the temple also for this, to offer for Him and His mother a sacrifice *"according to that which is written in the law of the Lord,"* in Leviticus (Lev. 12:6, 8): *"a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons."* One turtledove was offered to God for a holocaust, the other for

sin, and this went to the use of the priest praying for the woman who was thus purified. This also was the offering of the poor, for the rich offered a lamb; from which the poverty of Mary and Joseph is plain. Yet Mary received a good inheritance from her parents, and there is no doubt that the three Magi on the day of the Epiphany offered precious gifts to Christ; but the most perfect Virgin, her Son's Spirit inspiring her, gave away to the needy, *(p. 424)* by herself or rather by the hands of Joseph, everything that was superfluous to the barest necessity, that is, to the sparest food and covering. Nor do I think that she kept anything notable for her pilgrimage with Jesus and Joseph into Egypt, or had any great care for the morrow; for her hope in God was most perfect, and she knew that she had with her as her son Christ, the wisdom and omnipotent providence of God (1 Cor. 1:24).

On this Cyril exclaims: "O the depth of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" (Rom. 11:33). He offers sacrifices who is honored with the Father in every sacrifice; truth keeps the figures of the law; He who as God is the founder of the law keeps the law as man.

He adds: "We must see what these things signify. Among birds the turtledove is the most talkative, while the dove is a meek animal; and so by both Christ is expressed, who was of perfect meekness, and by His words converted the world. Whence, to prefigure His passion, the dove and the turtledove were offered and killed." — Again, by the dove is designated simplicity, or (as was said) meekness; by the turtledove, chastity. For if a turtledove has once lost its mate, it seeks no other. Therefore, according to Athanasius, God commanded two to be offered, because man consists of body and soul, and God demands of us a double chastity and meekness, namely of soul and of body; otherwise a man will be a hypocrite, wearing a covering over hidden malice. Further, not without mystery the Evangelist expresses turtledoves and pigeons differently, saying, "a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons," not "a pair of pigeons." For the turtledove is a chaste animal at every age of its life, but the dove at full age is very lustful; it was therefore fitting that it be offered at the age at which it is not apt for lust, namely in youth. Hence it says "young pigeons," to intimate that wantonness displeases God. Lastly, Luke does not determine what Mary and Joseph offered—whether a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons—because it comes to the same whichever of these they are said to have offered. For by both their poverty is designated, and the thing figured by both is pleasing to God.

Next is described how Christ, in the aforesaid presentation, had testimony from most credible witnesses. *"And behold"* (Luke 2:25). By this demonstrative, "behold," it is insinuated that what is subjoined is great, notable, and worthy of attention. *"There was a man."* For here "man" is not said from that which commonly prevails in men, which is sensuality (in which manner the Apostle says, writing to the Corinthians: "Whereas there is among you envying and contention, are you not men?" [1 Cor. 3:3]), but as man is said from what is most excellent in man and prevails in the wise, which is reason and piety, according to what the Apostle says: "If according to man I fought with beasts at Ephesus" (1 Cor. 15:32). The sense of which saying is: If—for "since"—according to man, that is, rationally, I fought, that is, disputed, with beasts, that is, against bestial and faithless men, at Ephesus, that is, in the city called Ephesus. Whence we call "human" what is rational and pious. Hence some, as it were describing man, affirm: "Man is an animal meek by nature, erect in stature, and distinguished by reason." *"In Jerusalem,"* which is called the holy city because the temple was there, and divine worship flourished, and the study of the law and the Prophets; especially because Christ there in the temple was offered, preached, worked miracles, suffered, and shed His blood, and then sent the Holy Spirit. There finally the primitive Church lived most holily. *"Named Simeon"*: and among the priests he was famous and advanced in years.

"And this man was just," with that justice which is a cardinal and special virtue, by which to each is given what is his, and likewise with that justice which is a general virtue and virtually every virtue, because he was adorned with every virtue. And he was above all charitable and just, because he desired not his own private advantage but the common good and the general *(p. 425)* salvation of all. *"And devout"* [*timoratus*, "God-fearing"], with a chaste, holy, and filial fear, which fears the offense of God, and abhors dishonoring

the most clement God as a father. Of this it is written in Ecclesiasticus: “There is nothing better than the fear of God”; and, “The fear of God hath set itself above all things” (Ecclus. 23:37; 25:14). Of this the Psalmist says: “Fear the Lord, all ye His saints, for there is no want to them that fear Him” (Ps. 33:10). Although therefore this Simeon abounded in all virtues, yet he shone more brilliantly in justice and fear, just as each of the Saints is said to have shone more in some one virtue. For which reason it is sung of each: “There was not found the like to him, who kept the law of the Most High” (Ecclus. 44:20). Whence Paul too: “Every one hath his proper gift from God” (1 Cor. 7:7). Therefore he is specially commended for these two virtues. So he was just toward his neighbor, and God-fearing toward God. Finally, fear draws a man back from sin, as it is written, “By the fear of the Lord every one declineth from evil” (Prov. 15:27); therefore by fear he fulfilled what is said, “Decline from evil.” But justice pursues the good; by it he fulfilled what is added, “and do good” (Ps. 36:27).

“Waiting for the consolation of Israel”—that is, most certainly and affectionately hoping and looking for the coming of Christ, and the liberation and spiritual consolation which the Jews would obtain from Christ’s coming, namely redemption from sins, from the devil, from hell, and the attainment of eternal salvation. Some carnal Jews, however, thought that Christ would come to snatch them out of all subjection by which they were subject to foreign nations and princes, and to subject all the kingdoms of the world to them—as if human felicity consisted in this, or Christ had been promised to accomplish such a liberation, and not rather to deliver the human race from the guilt of original sin and from all the ferocity of the devil. This Simeon, therefore, did not wait for such a consolation, as Gregory of Nyssa also testifies. *“And the Holy Ghost was in him,”* not only by essence, presence, and power, as He is in every creature, nor only by charity and any grace whatever, as He is in everyone who is in the state of salvation, or in charity, which is the life of the soul, but by eminent grace and ardent charity, as He is in heroic or perfect men. He had also the grace of prophecy, as will be said presently.

“And he had received an answer from the Holy Ghost” (Luke 2:26)—“*that he should not see death”*—that is, should not suffer or experience it, for “seeing” is taken for any sense—“*before he had seen the Christ of the Lord”* with bodily and mental eyes: Christ the Lord, who is Lord of all (Acts 10:36), preferred even according to the human nature to every creature; or, “the Christ of the Lord,” that is, the one anointed according to His humanity by the Lord God the Father, or by the whole most blessed Trinity. For *Messias* in Hebrew, *Christus* in Greek, and “anointed” in Latin signify the same. Simeon, therefore, like the other Patriarchs, Prophets, and Saints of the Old Testament, burned with the greatest desire for the coming of Christ, or His advent. Wherefore Christ says to the Apostles: “Blessed are the eyes that see the things that you see; for I say to you that many kings and prophets have desired to see the things that you see, and have not seen them” (Luke 10:23, 24). Therefore they frequently and ardently prayed for the coming of Christ, especially this Simeon, who from the Scriptures of the Old Testament recognized that Christ’s coming was at hand. Whence, as the reward of his devotion, a heavenly revelation was made to him by the Holy Spirit: either immediately by the Holy Spirit, through interior illumination, or through the mediation of an angel, as prophetic revelations were commonly made by the ministry of angels, as St. Dionysius teaches. Finally, though the works of the holy Trinity are undivided, yet revelations of this kind are appropriated to the Holy Spirit, since goodness, charity, and liberality, from which gifts directly proceed, are appropriated to Him.

“And he came by the Spirit” (Luke 2:27)—that is, by the instinct of the Holy Spirit, by whose revelation he understood *(p. 426)* that the hour was at hand for the fulfillment of the promise made to him concerning the sight of Christ—“*into the temple.” “And when His parents brought in the child Jesus,”* namely Mary and Joseph, of whom one then carried Jesus—and I think it was the Mother. Why Joseph is called the parent or father of Christ has been explained. *“That they might do for Him according to the custom of the law,”* by offering, as was said, a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons, and by redeeming the boy with five shekels, as was said. *“He”* (Luke 2:28)—Simeon himself, most affectionately, devoutly, reverently, and

joyfully—*"took Him into his arms,"* that is, between his arms, although he thought himself unworthy of the touch of the Holy of Holies; but vehement love overcame reason and impelled him to union and embrace; *"and blessed God,"* that is, praised Him, gave thanks, and sang the following canticle for the fulfillment of the divine promise and the other benefits of God, and also because he had now received more than was promised him. For it was promised him that he should see Christ; and now he not only saw Him but clasped Him in his arms, carried Him, handled Him, and I think also kissed the sweetest Infant.

"And he said: Now" (Luke 2:29)—after Thou hast fulfilled Thy promise, by showing me Christ as Thou didst promise—*"dost Thou dismiss,"* that is, straightway wilt dismiss, or, I beseech Thee that Thou dismiss me, *"Thy servant,"* not with the servitude of servile fear, which dreads punishment more than the offense or fault against God (of which the Savior says in John: "The servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the son abideth for ever" [John 8:35]; and elsewhere, "I will not now call you servants, but friends" [John 15:15]), but a servant with the servitude of filial fear, to which servant the Savior says: "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Matt. 25:21, 23); *"O Lord,"* God the Father, or the Trinity, God, *"according to Thy word, in peace"*—that is, to be snatched from the unrest, tribulation, and vices of this world, to be quiet, or to cease in the sleep of death, and to rest in the limbo of the fathers and the bosom of Abraham in sweet hope, since I am certain that I shall soon be led out of there by Christ and transferred to glory. So then, "Thou dost dismiss me in peace, according to Thy word," that is, according to what Thou didst say to me, that I should not experience death unless I first saw Christ (v. 26): whereby Thou didst insinuate that, Christ seen, I should soon fall asleep in the Lord.

"Because my eyes" (Luke 2:30), the exterior and the interior, *"have seen Thy salvation,"* that is, Christ the Savior, who is called "Thy salvation" because through Him Thou hast decreed to save the world, and hast established the salvation of all in Him. Of Him it is said in the Psalm: "The Lord hath made known His salvation" (Ps. 97:2). Whence in Genesis also the patriarch Jacob testifies: "I will look for Thy salvation, O Lord" (Gen. 49:18). To this Salvation the Father speaks through Isaias: "I have given Thee to be the light of the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be my salvation even to the farthest part of the earth" (Isa. 49:6). This Salvation Simeon saw bodily and intellectually. For Christ is God and man in one person; therefore, while the man was seen with the bodily eye, God also was seen with the same eye, though not according to His divinity; nay, according to Ambrose, when the flesh is seen, the Word also is seen. Hence what is had in John, "No man hath seen God at any time" (John 1:18; 1 John 4:12), is said of God according to the essence of the divinity. Moreover, with the interior eye Simeon saw the Savior, because by faith he knew His divinity, and also considered His humanity intellectually, and weighed that it was assumed by the Word. Hence it is written of Christ in Baruch: "Afterwards He was seen upon earth, and conversed with men" (Bar. 3:38); and likewise in Isaias: "They shall praise together, for they shall see eye to eye" (Isa. 52:8).

"Which Thou hast prepared" (Luke 2:31)—that is, which by the incarnation Thou hast made apt to be seen and recognized, or hast disposed and decreed to manifest—*"before the face of all peoples,"* that is, in the sight of all men, or clearly to all men, not only to Jews but also to Gentiles: yet in such a way that the distribution is an accommodated one, namely for the kinds of individuals, not for the individuals of the kinds, according to what is read in Daniel: "All peoples, tribes, and tongues shall serve Him" (Dan. 7:14). God the Father, therefore, made His Only-begotten, who in the divinity *(p. 427)* dwells in light incomprehensible and inaccessible (1 Tim. 6:16), manifest, visible, and dwelling among men, in that He joined Him to human nature in unity of person. This was thus foretold by Isaias: "The Lord hath prepared His holy arm in the sight of all the Gentiles" (Isa. 52:10). For the arm of the Lord is the only Son of God the Father, through whom the Father made all things; as the finger of God is the Holy Spirit, through whom He reveals all things. Of this arm the Psalmist says: "His right hand hath saved for Him, and His holy arm" (Ps. 97:1). The Father, therefore, prepared this Salvation before the face of all peoples, to whom Christ was preached through the Apostles, according to that of the Psalm: "Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth" (Ps. 18:5); and

again, “All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God” (Ps. 97:3). This is also had in Isaias: “All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God” (Isa. 52:10).

Though Christ is thus prepared meanwhile before the face of all peoples, yet it is otherwise as to the Jews, and otherwise as to the Gentiles. For this reason it is subjoined: *“A light to the revelation of the Gentiles”* (Luke 2:32)—that is, Thou hast prepared the Salvation, or Christ, so that He is specially the light of the Gentiles, or for the illumination of those who, deprived of the knowledge and worship of the true God, worshipped idols and demons. But Christ through His disciples led them back to the knowledge, love, and worship of the true God; nay, rather, He did this by His interior illumination, without which the exterior preaching of the Apostles would have profited nothing; and the Trinity, God, by the merit of Christ’s conversation and passion, gave the Gentiles so great a grace. Therefore Christ was prepared and given as a light for the revelation or illumination of the Gentiles, who sat in the darkness of unbelief, error, and all vices. Whence in Isaias the Lord declares: “Behold I have given Him for a witness to the people, for a leader and a master to the Gentiles” (Isa. 55:4). — Moreover, Thou hast prepared this Salvation *“the glory of Thy people Israel,”* that is, to the end that He be the glory of the Israelite people, which was specially the people of God, as was more fully said on that verse, “He hath visited and wrought the redemption of His people” (Luke 1:68). For this is the chief prerogative, exaltation, honor, and glory for that people—as to those of it who believed—that the Only-begotten of God chose to be incarnate from it, came to it personally, and descended first and specially for its sake, as the Lord says: “I was not sent but to the sheep that are lost of the house of Israel” (Matt. 15:24). Moreover He was for the glory of His people Israel because through Him the saints of the Old Testament, held in limbo, obtained the glory of the beatific vision. — Finally, Christ was both light and glory to Jews and Gentiles alike. For all the elect are illumined through Him; and it is a glory to all that the Son of God assumed human nature. Nevertheless, by appropriation He is called the light of the Gentiles and the glory of the Jews. For this reason John says: “Salvation is of the Jews” (John 4:22).

Here, however, it can be asked how Simeon, entering the temple, recognized the Boy Jesus, whom he had not seen before. To which the answer is easy: by the same Spirit revealing, by whom he knew that He was to come. And perhaps some sensible sign was divinely foretold him by which to recognize the Boy, as God foretold to John the Baptist, “Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining, he it is,” etc. (John 1:33). For perhaps he saw some divine splendor in the face of the Boy who was to be adored. Of Him it was sometime true to say: “This is the infant of one day and the eternal God.”

Lastly, each of us can say this canticle in his own person, speaking to God the Father or to the Trinity: *“Now,”* that is, in the time of this grace, *“Thou dost dismiss Thy servant, O Lord, according to Thy word, in peace”*: that is, in the tranquillity of heart which Thou hast given me, Thou wilt graciously permit and make me, as I hope and pray, to rest now, that I be not troubled or fall, but “in peace in the selfsame I will sleep and I will rest” (Ps. 4:9), and in every adversity, temptation, and unrest my mind may remain quiet and fixed in Thee; *“according to Thy word,”* that is, as Thou hast promised to those who hope fully in Thee, to whom Thou dost abundantly promise Thy defense in the Scriptures, according to that in the Psalm: “Because he hoped in me I will deliver him; I will protect him because he hath known my name,” etc. (Ps. 90:14). *“Because my eyes”*—the interior ones, through faith, through the gift of wisdom, through the doctrine of the Scriptures, through the sacramental species and Thy various supernatural effects—*“have seen Thy salvation,”* because in these ways we now know Christ. The remaining words of this canticle do not call for another interpretation. *(p. 428)*

Most fittingly, finally, this canticle was appointed to be said at Compline, because then with chief interior peace we ought to give ourselves to God, and go to bed, and fall asleep, and as it were bury Christ in our breast, every temptation, aversion, and fault being wholly excluded. Then, therefore, let us most devoutly utter this compendious and sweetest canticle, and most intently recall how the most blessed Simeon clasped Christ in his arms, and the other things that were said and happened, and what Simeon did bodily let us

accomplish spiritually. So let us too lay hold of the Boy Jesus with the arms of faith and charity, kiss Him, press Him to our breast, nay place Him in the most secret place of the breast, saying with the Spouse, according to that: “A bundle of myrrh is my beloved to me; he shall abide between my breasts” (Cant. 1:12). But he who desires and ought to do this must cordially wish, seek, and pray for the common good of the Church, and be led by the Holy Spirit, and, carnal consolation being despised, await only the spiritual. For he cannot sincerely delight in God to whom the delights of the flesh or the world are pleasing, or who glories in vain thoughts. — Moreover this canticle is most aptly said after celebration or communion, and at the hour of death now near, as becomes clear to one who considers its sense.

Besides, some in the first verse of this canticle understand by “Lord” Christ, so that Simeon named God and Lord the Boy Jesus whom he embraced between his arms. And then by “the salvation of the Lord” is understood the mystery of the Incarnation, or the assumed humanity, through which, as through an instrument and medium, the eternal Word worked the salvation of the world, the illumination of the Gentiles, and the glorification of the Jews. Or this salvation would be the salvation or redemption then to be wrought by Christ, which Simeon foresaw by prophetic spirit.

Lastly, of this presentation of Christ in the temple it was foretold in the Psalm: “We have received Thy mercy, O God, in the midst of Thy temple” (Ps. 47:10). But also in Malachias, when the Lord had spoken of Christ’s precursor, “Behold I send my angel,” He straightway added of Christ: “And presently the Lord, whom you seek, and the angel of the testament, whom you desire, shall come to His temple” (Mal. 3:1). — This also is to be known, that there is a twofold blessing, namely of consecration or donation, and of praise. By the blessing of consecration or donation the greater blesses the lesser, and God the creature, according to that of the Apostle to the Hebrews: “Without all contradiction, that which is less is blessed by the better” (Heb. 7:7). Whence the blessing by which God blesses the creature is the conferring of His gifts and the multiplication of the same. But by the blessing of praise the lesser blesses the greater, though often also the contrary; and so Simeon blessed God, and in the Psalm we sing, “I will bless the Lord at all times” (Ps. 33:2).

“And His father” (Luke 2:33)—namely Joseph, who is called the father of Christ because he was foster-father, and because, to preserve the good name of the Virgin Mother, he was permitted to be reputed the father of Christ. On this Origen says: “He who inquires more deeply into something can say that the order of generation is deduced from David to Joseph, lest Joseph himself seem to be named in vain, since he was not the father of the Savior; yet, that the order of generation might have a place, he was called the father of the Lord.” Again, since Joseph was truly the husband of Mary, of whom Christ was truly the son, Christ is more properly called the son of Joseph than if He were adopted *(p. 429)* from elsewhere, or from another wife. *“And His mother,”* the Mother of Him who with the Father and the Holy Spirit is one God, eternal, omnipotent, and immense; the Mother of Him who is the Creator of all, whom all the orders of the angelic spirits unceasingly adore. *“Were wondering”*—not with the wonder of doubt but of reverence and congratulation—*“at those things which were spoken concerning Him,”* that is, at the great and magnificent praises uttered of the Boy Jesus by the parents of the Precursor, by the angel and the angelic host, by the shepherds also, and by Simeon. So they wondered that of Him who came in so great poverty and humility such most lofty things were said: that He was the salvation of God the Father, and Lord of all (Acts 10:36), the light of the Gentiles, the glory of the Jews, the Savior of the world, the Only-begotten of God, and true God. They wondered also not a little that they were chosen for so great a mystery, and that the treasure of the world was committed to them.

“And Simeon blessed them” (Luke 2:34)—namely the parents of Jesus Christ. For it was the custom of the priests of the law to bless the parents offering an infant in the temple with the due victims; and that blessing seems to have been an imprecation of good, by which the priest asked or called down good things for them from God. The form of that blessing, however, we do not have expressed, as is said; but perhaps it was that, or like that, which is had in Numbers: “The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: Thus shall you bless the

children of Israel: The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord show His face to thee and have mercy on thee; the Lord turn His countenance to thee and give thee peace" (Num. 6:22–26). Yet I think that Simeon blessed Mary and Joseph with an altogether special blessing, namely a blessing of praise, calling them blessed and benedicted. For their dignity, election, and grace even he himself marvelled at most vehemently. Nevertheless he blessed them because he was greater in priestly office, though not in holiness and merit, at least as to Mary. Now the one greater in office bestows a blessing. Truly blessed was that Joseph who was admitted to so great a secret; who was chosen, and merited, to be the spouse and guardian of the Virgin Mother and Genetrix of God; who was pre-ordained to nourish, handle, and carry the Son of God the Father, God incarnate, and to have Him dwelling with him, yes, obeying and ministering to him—for, as is had below, "He was subject to them" (v. 51), doubtless to Mary and Joseph.

"And he said to Mary His mother." He speaks to her, by prophetic spirit, of future things rather than to Joseph, because he knew that she was the true Genetrix of Christ, but Joseph only foster-father and minister. *"Behold this child"*—this Boy whom I clasp in my arms, given through the assumed humanity, set and established by God—*"is set for the fall,"* that is, the perdition, *"and for the resurrection,"* that is, the salvation, *"of many in Israel,"* that is, of very many Israelites. For Christ through His incarnation, preaching, life, and passion was a cause of salvation to many Jews; of these He says in John, "I know whom I have chosen" (John 13:18). To many also, and to more of the Jews, He was through these same things an occasion of blindness, and transgression, and damnation; to them He says in John, "You are not of my sheep" (John 10:26). Hence again He says: "For judgment I am come into this world: that they who see not may see, and they who see may become blind" (John 9:39). Where by "they who see" are understood those who were wise and great in their own eyes, and prudent after the manner of the world (Isa. 5:21); such especially were the priests and Scribes, of whom it is plain that for the greatest part they were darkened and damned. But by "they who see not" are understood the unlearned, the humble, and the simple, many of whom Christ illumined, as were the Apostles and the other disciples, into whom He poured the Holy Spirit. Hence also in Matthew He says with joy: "I confess to thee, O Father, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones" (Matt. 11:25).

Speaking generally, however, Christ came for the fall of all the reprobate or unbelieving, and the resurrection of the *(p. 430)* elect faithful. Yet He did not come, or was not set, uniformly for the fall and the resurrection; for He was set for the fall of the reprobate occasionally and indirectly, but for the resurrection of the elect causally and directly. For He was set for the fall in the way in which God is said to harden a man. Here, then, the discourse is of the fall of sin, which is the very fault, and of eternal damnation, which is the effect of fault and unbelief, according to the Savior: "He that believeth not is already judged, because he believeth not in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:18). Here also the discourse is of spiritual resurrection, by which a man through Baptism and penance and the grace of God rises from sin. Whence the Apostle says: "Rise thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead" (Eph. 5:14). Likewise the Psalmist: "Therefore the wicked shall not rise again in judgment" (Ps. 1:5); which is rightly expounded of resurrection from sin in the judgment of discernment, although it can also be taken of the future bodily resurrection of happy change, which will be the effect of the Lord's passion, or the merit of Christ, as the Apostle says: "For by a man came death, and by a man the resurrection of the dead" (1 Cor. 15:21). So Christ is set for the fall of those of whom Paul testifies: "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews indeed a stumbling block, and unto the Gentiles foolishness" (1 Cor. 1:23). And for the resurrection of those of whom Paul adds: "But unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, we preach Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. 1:24).

"And for a sign which shall be contradicted." A sign is taken in three ways: first, for an indication signifying something, as a hoop designates wine for sale; second, for a miracle, as Christ says in John: "Unless you see signs and wonders, you believe not" (John 4:48); third, for the standard by which in war the soldiers of one side are distinguished from the soldiers of the other, as in the Psalm: "They have set up their ensigns for

signs, and they knew not" (Ps. 73:4, 5). So, according to the first acceptation of "sign," the sense is: Christ is set for a sign, that is, to intimate or propose the doctrine of evangelical truth, which will be contradicted by many, either by word, or by deed, or by both. For disobedient Christians contradict by deed. According to the second acceptation the sense is: He is set for a sign, that is, a miracle, because even Christ Himself, man born of a Virgin—what is more wonderful? Everything that Scripture relates of Christ is a sign, that is, a miracle, which will be contradicted by all the faithless: as that the Mother is a virgin, that in unity of person He is God and man, that He truly rose again. So Origen expounds. According to the third acceptation, by "sign" is understood the cross of Christ or the faith of the cross, by which sign the servants of Christ are distinguished from the servants of the devil, when this sign is honored by the former and imprinted on the forehead, and despised by the latter. — Lastly, it can be expounded of the sign of pacification, so that the sense is: He is set for a sign of covenant and reconciliation or peace between God and men, because He was made the mediator of God and men (1 Tim. 2:5), and was figured by the bow of which the Lord speaks in Genesis: "I will set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of a covenant between me and the earth" (Gen. 9:13). But Christ is the sign of the covenant mentioned not only signifyingly but also causally, as the Apostle says: "He is our peace, who hath made both one" (Eph. 2:14); and again, "Making peace through the blood of His cross, both as to the things that are on earth and the things that are in heaven" (Col. 1:20).

"And thy own soul a sword shall pierce" (Luke 2:35), O Mary—that is, the most bitter sorrow of compassion, with which thy soul shall be filled when thou shalt see thy Son put to death and suffering persecutions. Indeed the blessed Virgin, frequently before Christ's passion, foreseeing in thought how much He would suffer, was afflicted most bitterly; and this sorrow began in her in Christ's infancy. Many things on this matter are credibly written in the revelations of St. Bridget. This is the spiritual sword of which it is said in the Psalm: "Their tongue a sharp sword"; and, "A sword is in their lips" (Ps. 56:5; 58:8). There, however, "sword" is taken for the cause of sorrow. So the sword passed through the soul of the glorious Virgin *(p. 431)* as it is sung of Joseph in the Psalm: "The iron pierced his soul" (Ps. 104:18), that is, hard affliction. — Ambrose understands by the sword the word or wisdom. Whence Paul also to the Ephesians: "Take unto you," he says, "the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:17). So the sense is: "Thy own soul a sword shall pierce," that is, the word or wisdom of the mystery of the cross shall illuminate thy intellect intimately, so that thou shalt not be ignorant of it, but foreknowledge of thy Son's passion shall penetrate thy inmost being. This interpretation also the most illustrious man St. Paulinus the bishop touches, in a sermon or epistle to Blessed Augustine. And Ambrose and Paulinus allege for this that saying of the Apostle to the Hebrews: "The word of God is living and effectual and more piercing than any two-edged sword, reaching unto the division of the soul and the spirit" (Heb. 4:12). Yet this is literally brought in of the uncreated word, the eternal Word, the Only-begotten of the Father, as is plain to one who looks at the text.

"That out of many hearts thoughts may be revealed." This word is intricate, and can be referred to the particle immediately preceding, or to what Simeon had said, "Behold this child is set for the fall," etc. From the fact, therefore, that Christ came for the salvation of some and, occasionally, for the greater damnation of others, as was said, and likewise from His passion and the compassion of His Mother, it came to pass that the thoughts of many men which before lay hid were revealed—that is, through certain effects were betrayed and made manifest to others. For from what was said it was shown who sought God with good thoughts, who believed in Christ, who sincerely longed for His coming, who also, seeking temporal things and supposing such things promised at Christ's coming, scorned to believe in Him so poor, so humble, and so abject. Finally, at the time of the passion the Jews made manifest the thoughts they had of Christ, as for the greatest part, denying Him, they spoke the words which are written in the Gospel, but some stayed standing by Him, and so laid open their thoughts of Christ. According to this sense, the word "that" is taken concomitantly, not causally; because Christ did not come and suffer in the aforesaid manner in order that such a manifestation of thoughts might be made, but that followed by way of event.

Or thus: “That … may be revealed,” that is, may be opened in confession or humble self-accusation, *“out of many hearts,”* the wicked thoughts of sinners, which before confession lay hid; but by the merit of Christ’s passion the grace of confessing salutarily was given and is given to men. And so that word “that” can in some way be held causally; for Christ suffered that He might merit this grace for men. So Origen expounds, saying: “There were evil thoughts in men, which were therefore revealed, that He who died for us might kill them.” Lastly, the faithful, heartily attending to Christ’s passion and Mary’s compassion, soon reprove themselves for their vain thoughts, and bring them forth in the ways touched on.

Next the testimony given to Christ by a holy woman is recited. *“And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser”* (Luke 2:36). She is described so determinately for the certification of the truth, and that she may be distinguished from others called by a similar name. Now Aser was one of the twelve Patriarchs, sons of Jacob (Gen. 30:13). *“She was far advanced in years,”* that is, she had lived long, and advanced more in virtues than in years, daily increasing her merits; *“and had lived with her husband seven years from her virginity,”* that is, from the time when he took her, still a virgin, as wife. *“And she was a widow”* (Luke 2:37) and remained so *“until fourscore and four years.”* Whence on account of her old age she was the more honorable and the more worthy of credit. For it is written in Leviticus: “Rise up before the hoary head, and honor the person of the aged man” (Lev. 19:32). Job also says: “In the ancient is wisdom, and in length of days prudence” (Job 12:12).

“Who departed not from the temple”: not that she remained there without interruption *(p. 432)* and did there all that is necessary for the body, since it is straightway subjoined, “And she, coming in at that very hour.” She is therefore said not to have departed from the temple because at every opportune hour, nay frequently before the others, she was there; as of a very devout man who remains long in church we say that he is always in church. So also Christ testifies: “We ought always to pray” (Luke 18:1). *“Serving God with fastings and prayers,”* to whom alone the service of latria is to be rendered, *“night and day,”* that is, at fitting, yes, long and frequent times of day and night. Now “obsecration” is properly set down as a species of prayer by which we invoke God by the commemoration of something sacred, as when we say: “By Thy passion deliver us, O Christ”; or, “By Thy goodness help me.” Fasting disposes to prayer, furnishing a sober and watchful mind, driving off the vices of the flesh, drowsiness, talkativeness, and sloth, all of which are born of gluttony. To illumination also, and to the increase of every grace, fasting contributes. How great is the virtue of prayer and fasting is clear from the fact that of the worst kind of demons Christ asserts: “This kind can go out by nothing, but by prayer and fasting” (Mark 9:28).

Moreover, this widow was full of every virtue; but she is specially commended for these two acts of virtue because in them she grew more and shone, as it was had of Simeon why he is specially called God-fearing and just (v. 25). Whence through long fasts and frequent and fervent prayers she ascended to the grace of prophecy. For by both the mind is elevated to God: by fasting, dispositively and mediately; by prayer, directly, formally, and immediately. By these two also sins are chiefly taken away; and so the soul is purified and sanctified, and like a polished, clear, and transparent mirror becomes capable of copious wisdom and prophetic illumination, as the friend and counsellor of the Creator, to whom God reveals the uncertain and hidden things of His wisdom (Ps. 50:8), according to that of Wisdom: “Wisdom conveyeth herself into holy souls, she maketh the friends of God and prophets” (Wis. 7:27).

If therefore we also desire to be cleansed from vices, to curb concupiscences, to grow in grace and virtues, to prevail over demons, to be illumined from above and sanctified, let us persevere unceasingly and fervently in fastings and prayers, let us not depart from the temple of God, so far as reason permits, or at least not go away in mind. Obsecration is more fervent, more potent, and more impetratory of the spirit of prayer; therefore obsecration is to be insisted on, as in that of the Psalmist: “According to Thy mercy remember Thou me, for Thy goodness’ sake, O Lord” (Ps. 24:7).

"Now she, at the same hour" (Luke 2:38)—the hour of the day of Mary's purification at which Simeon held the little Boy Jesus in his arms—*"coming in,"* that is, entering the temple at the prompting of the Holy Spirit (for by the Holy Spirit's revelation she knew who He was, and what was being done in the temple), *"confessed to the Lord,"* that is, praised Christ whom she saw present, and gave Him thanks that according to the oracles of the Prophets He had now come down for the redemption of the world. Now confession is twofold, namely of praise and of fault. By the first we confess the goodness of God and His benefits; of this Christ speaks: "I confess to thee, O Father" (Matt. 11:25). By the second we confess our own evils. Finally, the words of Anna are not set down in order, perhaps because as to sense they sufficiently coincided with the words of Simeon and Zachary described above. For that most happy Anna also was of so great an age that with Simeon she not undeservedly wished to be dissolved, Christ now seen, and to await His coming with the holy fathers in limbo. *"And spoke of Him,"* namely of Christ and His coming, benefits, and mysteries. Whence it is plain that a little before, by "the Lord" is understood literally Christ. *"To all that looked for the redemption of Jerusalem."* By Jerusalem, the metropolis of Judea, the whole region or Israelite people is designated. To all, therefore, who devoutly desired and awaited the liberation of the people of Israel from the yoke of sin and the power of the devil, *(p. 433)* this Anna testified that Christ had now come and would now deliver the people of Israel and the whole world; and this is to be understood of all to whom she could speak opportunely or fittingly.

"And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord" (Luke 2:39)—that is, after Mary and Joseph had accomplished all that belonged by the precepts of the law to the rite of purification, namely offering the Son in the temple and redeeming Him with five shekels, and also immolating the legal victims, though to none of these (as was said) were they bound—*"they returned into Galilee,"* namely to their city Nazareth, which is called their city because they had dwelt there before they came to Bethlehem. Christ also was conceived in Nazareth.

Besides, according to Origen, Bede, and many others, Luke here passes over certain things which he knew had been described by the evangelist Matthew, namely how Jesus after this was carried into Egypt that He might not be killed by Herod, and after Herod's death was brought back, and then began to dwell at Nazareth (Matt. 2:13–23). According to these, then, before Mary and Joseph came with Jesus to Nazareth, they set out into Egypt. And some say that they returned from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, and from Bethlehem went on into Egypt. Others say, with probability, that from Jerusalem they did not return to Bethlehem, because for no cause did they come from Nazareth to Bethlehem except for the enrolment, as was plain; therefore, that business being dispatched, returning from Jerusalem they went back not to Bethlehem but to Nazareth, in which, as in the city of their country and dwelling, they more willingly stayed; and afterwards, from that city, the angel announcing it, they fled into Egypt. Others, as if taking a middle way, affirm that from Jerusalem they began to return to Nazareth, and on the way the angel spoke to Joseph that he should flee with the mother and the Boy into Egypt. But whichever of these is said, it is true that the Evangelists severally omit some things here and there which they knew already written by others, or which they saw by the Spirit's revelation were to be described; yet in such a way that, the series of their narration or description being continued, they seem to have passed over almost nothing; and a diligent reader, by weighing the description of the other Evangelist, will find at what place the omitted things were passed over.

"And the child" (Luke 2:40), as man, *"grew"* in age and quantity of body—He who as God is eternal and immense; *"and waxed strong"* with bodily strength, according to the measure of growth, although at every moment He could assume and have as great bodily strength as He had commanded or willed as God, or even as man a comprehensor, according to the superior portion of His soul, as enjoying the Deity. For so great was the beatitude of Christ's soul that it would have overflowed into His body, giving it the four dowries of the glorified body, had not God by dispensation deferred this, as Augustine asserts in the epistle to Dioscorus. Moreover, Christ as man *"waxed strong in spirit,"* that is, in His soul, by the Holy Spirit, not through

increase or progress of grace or virtues or gifts, but as to manifestation, by which according to the growth of age He showed more and more His perfection, or showed it to others by effect. Again, He was strengthened by the Holy Spirit—nay, by the whole Trinity—in the soul, inasmuch as His soul was unceasingly preserved by God in the strength of grace and virtues which it received from Him in the instant of its first creation. Of this matter, however, more fully will be said at the end of this article. *"Full of wisdom,"* because according to the divinity He was substantially the uncreated Wisdom itself. But according to the humanity He was filled with manifold created wisdom, as will be said after a little; and that created wisdom was perfect in Him from the beginning of the incarnation: for which reason the Apostle says that in Him "are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:3). *"And the grace of God was in Him."* For so great was the fullness of grace in Him according to the human nature as a created mind can contain, so that the whole *(p. 434)* capacity of His soul was filled with the grace of God from the beginning of His creation. Of the manifold grace which is posited in Christ, it will be plain presently.

"And His parents went every year to Jerusalem, at the solemn day of the pasch" (Luke 2:41). If Mary and Joseph stayed seven years in Egypt with the Boy Jesus (Matt. 2:15), how did they set out every year of Jesus' boyhood for Jerusalem about the pasch? Besides, in Matthew it is had that Joseph, at the angel's command returning from Egypt into the land of Israel, hearing that Archelaus the son of Herod reigned in Judea, whose metropolis was Jerusalem, feared to go thither, and therefore returned into Galilee and dwelt in Nazareth (Matt. 2:19–23). How then did he go every year to Jerusalem, if from fear of Archelaus he did not dare to approach it? Moreover the law commanded that three times in every year every male of the Jews should appear before the Lord in the place chosen for this, that is, in the chief place of divine worship, which was Jerusalem, especially after the temple was built there (Exod. 23:14–17; Deut. 16:16). By what reason, therefore, did they go up to Jerusalem only once? It seems they ought to have gone up three times.

And the answer to the first is that Luke speaks of the time in which Mary and Joseph stayed in Galilee or Nazareth. To the second, Augustine in the book *On the Harmony of the Evangelists* answers in two ways: first, that though Joseph feared to stay in Judea while Archelaus reigned, lest he be conspicuous among the crowd, yet among a people in whom he could easily lie hidden he could go up secretly, lest he be irreligious; second, that Luke speaks for the time when Archelaus was not feared, or was dead. To the third it is answered that the law in Exodus commanded that every male of the Jews appear before the Lord on three solemnities, namely of Pasch, Pentecost, and Tabernacles; but for those who dwelt far from the aforesaid place there was a dispensation as to two solemnities, namely Pentecost and Tabernacles. Now Mary and Joseph dwelt far from Jerusalem; therefore they came only for the principal solemnity, obeying the law and giving an example of obedience. For women, however, it was not commanded so to come; but if they accompanied their husbands, it was from devotion or custom.

Lastly, what he says, "They went to Jerusalem at the solemn day of the pasch," is not to be understood as meaning that they went on that so celebrated day, but that they so set out on the journey that they might be in Jerusalem on that day—nay, on the eve of the Pasch, when the lamb or phase was immolated, they took care to be there, that they might eat of the paschal lamb.

Next the Evangelist recounts how the Boy Jesus first began to declare or manifest His wisdom. *"And when He was twelve years old"* (Luke 2:42), as man (who according to the divinity remains the same eternally and unchangeably), *"they going up to Jerusalem"*—namely Mary and Joseph. For so Solomon called what is commonly named Jerusalem; and because its site was higher than Galilee, they are said to have gone up—*"according to the custom of the feast day,"* that is, as was usual about the paschal festivity. For a good and laudable custom has the force of law, and so is not to be omitted without a suitable cause.

"And having fulfilled the days" (Luke 2:43)—that is, the days belonging to that solemnity being completed or passed, which lasted seven days, according to that of Deuteronomy, "Seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread" (Deut. 16:3). Yet some say that it lasted eight days, because the Gloss also testifies: "It was prolonged

eight days." Which is true when, along with the aforesaid seven entire days of which Scripture speaks, one counts the day immediately preceding them, on the evening of which the phase was immolated, the fourteenth moon, as was commanded in Exodus (Exod. 12:18). *"When they returned,"* that is, began to return from Jerusalem to Galilee, *"the child Jesus remained in Jerusalem,"* not without manifold cause and most reasonable motives, namely: that *(p. 435)* He might then begin to show His wisdom to the glory of the Father; that He might give to boys, yes, and to all, an example of persisting in the temple and in the worship and work of God; that He might declare from boyhood His zeal for divine things and for the Father's honor; that by love of spiritual progress in wisdom, knowledge, and virtues He might show that carnal parents are to be left behind. *"And His parents knew it not"*—that He remained there; because, as Bede confesses, men and women coming to the aforesaid solemnities and returning home walked apart, but infants and boys could go with either parent; therefore Mary thought the Boy was with Joseph, and vice versa. For men and women went apart that, by continence, they might attend the solemnities more devoutly. Yet Origen touches on something more subtle, I know not however whether truer. He imagined that He supernaturally and imperceptibly slipped out of the hands of His parents, just as in the Gospel according to John He is often read to have slipped out of the hands of the Jews who wished to stone Him (John 8:59; 10:39); how this was done will be said below.

"And thinking that He was in the company" (Luke 2:44)—that is, among those who walked together, so that Mary thought He was in the company of the men, and Joseph that He was in the company of the women—*"they came a day's journey,"* that is, they made a journey of one day leaving Jerusalem, *"and sought Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance."* For at the end of the first day both Mary and Joseph perceived that Jesus was with neither of them or had not returned, and were not a little anxious; therefore on the next day they most diligently sought Him in either company, especially among kinsfolk and neighbors, or acquaintances and familiars. *"And not finding Him"* (Luke 2:45) among them—to insinuate that carnal love and nearness and human society very much hinder from divine leisure and the finding of Christ—*"they returned into Jerusalem on the third day, seeking Him"* in it, wherever they thought there was hope He might be found. For the more they loved, the more watchfully and abundantly they sought the Beloved; because, as Gregory says, the force of love multiplies the intention and zeal of inquiry.

"And it came to pass that after three days" (Luke 2:46)—namely on the fourth day—*"they found Him in the temple,"* not in the theatre, forum, or place of games, as boys are wont to be found: to intimate that those wishing to seek and find the Son of God ought to enter the temple, oratory, church, or place apt for the worship and contemplation of God, not places of spectacles or tumults. Nay, as he who willingly is in church for the sake of divine things is believed to be an adopted son of God, as willingly remaining in the house of the heavenly Father, so he who willingly is in taverns and places of vanities is reputed a son of the devil. *"Sitting in the midst of the doctors"*: to designate that boys, yes, and the rest, ought to apply themselves to the doctors, by whom they may be formed in virtues and sciences, according to that of Ecclesiasticus: "If thou see a man of understanding, go to him early in the morning" (Ecclus. 6:36); and again, "Stand in the multitude of ancients that are wise, and join thyself from thy heart to their wisdom" (Ecclus. 6:35). *"Hearing them and asking them questions."* He heard their doctrine, not that He might learn something or profit, but that according to what was uttered by them He might ask fittingly, not extraneously; and because, conversing among men, He had to bear Himself in a human and becoming manner; likewise to give an example to the simple, especially boys and minors, however skilled, that they take care to hear masters and elders rather than presume to teach, and not boast themselves with vain ostentation, especially since it is written: "Let every man be swift to hear, but slow to speak" (James 1:19); and again, "Be ye not many masters, my brethren, knowing that you receive the greater judgment" (James 3:1).

So, after He had heard them, Christ proposed questions that He might instruct them and bring them to the praise of God. Finally, here is the right order of discipline: first to hear diligently, then to inquire pertinently

about what has been heard, according to that of *(p. 436)* Ecclesiasticus: “Hear in silence, and at the same time seek, and for thy reverence good grace shall come to thee” (Ecclus. 32:9, 12). Against which some, without awaiting a reply, try to object, or, the objection not heard in full, begin to answer, not attending to that of Proverbs: “He that answereth before he heareth sheweth himself to be a fool, and worthy of confusion” (Prov. 18:13). Therefore in Ecclesiasticus it is written: “Before thou hear, answer not a word” (Ecclus. 11:8). What Christ’s questions and answers were the Evangelist does not express. I judge, however, that He inquired about some things concerning His mysteries and His coming, that He might give them occasion of recognizing the truth.

“And all that heard Him” (Luke 2:47) *“were astonished”*—that is, vehemently wondered—that in a boy of so little age there was such wisdom, eloquence, maturity, and constancy; especially, however, at the eminence of His wisdom. For it is subjoined: *“at His wisdom”* [*super prudentia ejus*, “at His prudence”]—and here “prudence” is taken for wisdom, or knowledge of the Scriptures—*“and His answers,”* through which His interior prudence was disclosed. From which it is gathered that as Christ proposed questions to them, so vice versa; but they could not answer Him so promptly and wisely as He them. For from the same fountain of wisdom proceed both to question aptly and to answer fittingly. *“And seeing Him they wondered”* (Luke 2:48)—that is, all who were present at this disputation, and bodily beheld that Boy, how pleasantly, modestly, and reverently He bore Himself, and intellectually saw how wise He was, were filled with wonder that that Boy so incomparably surpassed doctors advanced in age, study, and human instruction: the like of which they never saw and perhaps never heard, since it is against or above the course and order of things. — Besides, it is asked why Christ in the twelfth year of His age began thus to declare His wisdom. To which the Greek answers that in the twelfth year among men the reason of discretion is wont to be perfected; whence He did not do this before, lest it be thought phantastic or diabolical. It can also be said, as Ambrose touches, because the number twelve of the Apostles was to be chosen for the preaching of the Gospel.

But the most affectionate and most pious Mother, seeing her only and dearest Son, rejoiced so much the more as she had been the more saddened at losing Him; yet she presumed not to speak to Him so long as she saw Him occupied with the doctors. But the Boy, seeing His Mother present, that act being completed, came to her. She, at once, her maternal bowels shaken and weeping for joy, confidently, humbly, sweetly, and affectionately, as a mother, said to Him: *“Son, why hast Thou done so to us?”* This word is to be expounded not as a rebuke but as a pious and loving complaint, or eager inquiry. For the most blessed Virgin knew that her Son was God and man, and could not sin, nor do anything without reasonable cause. She therefore asks: O Son, what—that is, why—hast Thou done so to us, remaining in Jerusalem without our knowing it, and thereby bringing so great sorrow upon us, whom Thou knewest would be so afflicted by Thy absence? O most happy and incomparable Mary, who so truly and confidently calls the Only-begotten of the eternal Father her son!

“Behold Thy father and I”—putative father—*“sorrowing, have sought Thee”* with great sorrow. The cause of which sorrow the Gloss assigns: they feared lest what Herod attempted to do to the Boy in His infancy, others—namely Archelaus and the rest—might inflict upon the Boy now of more advanced age (Matt. 2:13, 16). But did not the wise Virgin know that the Boy came to be crucified in manhood for the salvation of the world? And the answer is: certainly; nevertheless she could fear lest some adversity befall the Boy who came to suffer, although she knew that this could not befall Him against His will. Finally, Origen writes subtly on this: “Why,” he says, “did they seek the Boy with sorrow? Was it lest perhaps He had perished or gone astray? *(p. 437)* Far from it. For it could never be that they feared Him lost whom they knew to be the Lord, and whom Mary perceived she had conceived of the Holy Spirit. But as thou, when thou readest the Scriptures, seekest the sense in them with sorrow and a kind of torment, not that thou thinkest the Scriptures to have erred, but because thou knowest not the truth they contain, and seekest to find it; so they sought

Jesus, lest perhaps leaving them He had gone away to other things, and, what I rather think, lest perhaps He had returned to the heavens, when it pleased Him to descend again."

So let us too, when by sinning we have lost Jesus, at once grieve from the heart, and seek Him with solicitude and sorrow, nor pass by dissolutely and negligently, like those who seek and yet do not find Him. Whence in Deuteronomy it is had: "When thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find Him; yet so if thou seek Him with all thy heart, and all the affliction of thy soul" (Deut. 4:29). For we ought to grieve so much the more over the commission of sin and the loss of Christ than over the loss of temporal and bodily things, as the evil of fault is worse than the evil of penalty, and as eternal salvation, or the immutable good, is of greater goodness and dignity than all transitory things. Nevertheless many, with blind and wretched mind, grieve more at the taking away of transitory things than at the loss of grace and salvation.

"And He said to them: How is it that you sought me?" (Luke 2:49)—as if He said: There was no need that I be so sought with such sadness. By which words He does not rebuke them as culpable, because they did not act ill in seeking; but charitably and piously insinuates that He should rather have been sought otherwise, and that they could have done better and more wisely than they did in thus seeking among kinsfolk and acquaintance; just as the will of Christ by which He said, "Father, not what I will" (Mark 14:36), was good, and yet that by which He said, "but what Thou," was better. Hence it is subjoined: *"Did you not know"*—as if He said, You could certainly have perceived—*"that I must be about my Father's business?"* that is, in the worship and temple of the eternal Father, I who came that according to the form of a servant which I received (Phil. 2:7) I may unceasingly honor my heavenly Father? Whence in John Christ says of the Father: "I do always the things that please Him" (John 8:29). As if He said: First, I was not to be sought by you among kinsfolk but in the temple, other things being equal; or you could have noticed that I stayed only in divine things. Yet for the time they were not bound to consider this, but ought gradually to advance. And Christ by these words questions them, not to reprehend them as sinning, but to instruct them in some things they did not know, as is the way of those who speak from special charity.

"And they understood not the word that He spoke unto them" (Luke 2:50). It is not to be thought that they, especially Mary, were ignorant that by "Father" He meant God the eternal Father; but they did not fully understand what Christ intended by these words, that is, in what way He asserted that He must be about the things of His Father—namely as to place and time, and other circumstances, and as to determinate acts; because this word could be understood in many ways. And Mary did not ignore that her Son was unceasingly intent on God the Father and divine acts, but when, how, and how often He must be in the temple, she did not so distinctly foresee.

"And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth" (Luke 2:51), from which He went up with them to Jerusalem. Of this going up of His to the legal festivity He foretold, through Zacharias, speaking of Himself: "I will go also myself." For a little before in the same place it is had: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts: Until peoples come, and dwell in many cities, and the inhabitants go one to another, saying, Let us go and entreat the face of the Lord" (Zach. 8:20, 21). To which is soon subjoined: "I will go also myself"—namely the Lord of hosts who speaks these things. For Zacharias does not say this of himself, which I showed more clearly in my commentary on Zacharias. *"And was subject to them"*: *(p. 438)* since as in Himself He was most humble as man, so He humbled Himself perfectly even in exterior things, subjecting Himself not only to His Mother but to His foster-father and minister, according to the assumed nature (Phil. 2:8); and the law which He gave about honoring parents (Matt. 15:4) He fulfilled, not from necessity but from condescension and piety. For He was not bound by the common law, nor subject from the necessity of precept, but above the law, not only according to the divinity but also according to the humanity, as assumed by the eternal Word and preferred to all creation.

Finally, according to the different degrees of higher power, the degree of obedience is to be determined. Therefore the power presiding in spiritual things is to be obeyed in those things; the one presiding in the

government of the commonwealth is to be obeyed in such things; likewise the one presiding in the government of house and family is to be obeyed in such things by the household. Now Christ was simply superior to His parents; yet He obeyed them and served them most humbly and most promptly, giving to all of us, especially the younger, an example of obedience and humility, and that we obey not only carnal but also spiritual fathers and elders, as the Apostle says: "Children, obey your parents in all things" (Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20). Now children owe their parents honor of reverence, as in rising up; honor of obedience, in omitting or doing, provided it be not an impediment to salvation; likewise honor of necessary help, according to place and time. By this humility of Christ our pride is most vehemently confounded, our rebellion condemned, when we do not comply with our superiors; since the Lord of all, who even according to the assumed nature united to the Word is worthier and dearer to God than the whole universe, obeyed not only a poor Mother but a carpenter.

"And His mother kept all these words," namely the words and deeds of her Son, *"in her heart,"* as the best and most docile disciple of eternal wisdom, most capacious and most eager for wisdom; and whatever her Son thereafter did or said she weighed with the greatest veneration, and thence advanced eminently, attending to Him not as a boy or a man only but as God. Whence neither she nor Joseph were wont to enjoin anything on Him without due reverence.

"And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age" (Luke 2:52), because the time that accrued to Him He spent most fruitfully; *"and grace with God and men,"* that is, truly before God and men, honoring God in all things with a pure conscience, and edifying His neighbors, manifesting to them little by little His wisdom, perfection, and grace as He advanced in age, that thereby they might be provoked to the honor and glory of God. Finally, as to God, a good conscience suffices; but on account of men a good reputation and an exemplary life are required, which he who neglects, according to Augustine, is cruel. For which reason it is read in Ecclesiastes: "A good name is better than precious ointments" (Eccles. 7:2); and elsewhere, "Take care of a good name" (Ecclus. 41:15). The Apostle also: "Providing good things, not only before God, but also before men" (Rom. 12:17; 2 Cor. 8:21); and elsewhere, "That you walk honestly towards them that are without" (1 Thess. 4:11).

Lastly, it is now to be looked at more diligently how Christ advanced in wisdom and grace. To understand which it is needful to observe that, since Christ is God and man in unity of person, there was in Him a twofold wisdom, namely the uncreated, which is the eternal Word Himself and the divine essence, and the created. And that created wisdom of Christ was manifold. One is called that of the Blessed, by which from the beginning of the creation of His soul He Himself, according to the soul as enjoying God, knew all things in the Word, or in the divine essence, as the Blessed do in the fatherland—nay, far more excellently than they. Moreover there was in the soul of Christ from the beginning of its creation an inborn or infused wisdom, by which it knows things through their proper species, concreated with it and connatural and proportioned to His soul. For no natural perfection was lacking to the soul *(p. 439)* of Christ. Whence, as, according to Augustine, the eternal Word or God from the beginning imparted to angelic minds the intelligible species of things, by which they know things by evening knowledge, besides the morning knowledge by which things are known in the Word, so the Word imparted to the soul of Christ united to Him natural intelligible species.

Besides these wisdoms or sciences, some theologians posit in the soul of Christ acquired or experimental science, which St. Thomas at first denied to be in the soul of Christ; but afterwards in the third part he retracts this, and asserts that such science is to be posited in Christ: because, as he says, nothing of those things which God planted in human nature was lacking to Christ, and so Christ had an agent intellect and its operation. Now the operation of the agent intellect is to abstract intelligible species from phantasms and to place them in the possible intellect, as is said in the third book *On the Soul*. So in the possible intellect of the soul of Christ there were intelligible species impressed on it by the agent intellect; which is to say that acquired science, which some call experimental, exists in Christ, which is had in a human manner and by

natural light. Of this the Apostle says to the Hebrews, speaking of Christ: “He learned obedience by the things which He suffered” (Heb. 5:8). And “to learn” is there taken for “to experience.” For Christ did not learn acquired science from others, but obtained it by His own discovery. These things are set forth according to Thomas in the third part.

From which it is shown that Christ advanced in none of the aforenamed wisdoms or sciences, as to the habit of it, except in acquired science. The soul of Christ also was unceasingly equally perfect in the act of the wisdom of the Blessed and of the infused wisdom; whence He advanced in none of them except as to manifestation; but in the act and habit of acquired wisdom He advanced, according to those who posit it in Him.

Moreover there was in the soul of Christ from the beginning of the incarnation habitual grace so great and so perfect that through it, and from the fullness of it, spiritual sense and the vivifying motion of the virtues can flow to all the faithful who are called His members (John 1:16; 1 Cor. 12; Eph. 4:15), as the head pours natural motion and sense into the members. Hence habitual grace and the grace of the head are posited, in reality, as one and the same in Christ; in which also, in reality, He never advanced, but only according to manifestation; nay, that grace was and is so great in Christ that a created mind is not capable of greater grace. There is also posited in Christ the grace of union, which according to some is the uncreated being itself of the Word, communicated to the humanity of Christ. Some, however, affirm that the grace of union in Christ is something created; but they take the grace of union otherwise. Whence the diversity between them consists in words. So, since the hypostatic union with the eternal Word, which is above every created gift, was communicated to the humanity of Christ from the beginning of its creation, from then also was given to Him the fullness of grace and of the gifts of wisdom and virtues, and also of the beatitudes and fruits, which do not include imperfection in their notion.

Luke 3: John the Baptist, Baptism of Christ, Genealogy

(p. 440)

Article VIII. Exposition of the third chapter: “Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar.”

Just as the Evangelist, about to describe the annunciation, conception, nativity, circumcision, naming, and boyhood of Christ, put first the annunciation, conception, and the rest said of the Precursor, so now, about to write of the preaching, Baptism, and deeds of Christ, he puts first the preaching, baptism, and deeds of the Precursor, because these are preliminary and subordinate to the teachings and deeds of Christ.

“Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar” (Luke 3:1)—who succeeded the emperor Octavian immediately in the empire, and had Octavian’s daughter as wife. Octavian reigned fifty-seven years, and in the forty-second year of his empire Christ and His precursor were born; so for fifteen years they lived in this world under Octavian, and the fifteenth year of the empire of Tiberius was the thirtieth year of the age of Christ and of the Precursor, in which year were done the things which are described a little later. *“Pontius Pilate being procurator”*—that is, governing in the manner of a procurator—*“of Judea.”* Some say that Pontius was his proper name, and Pilate his surname. Others, more probably, assert that his proper name was Pilate, and that he was called Pontius from the island of Pontia, where he had been stationed; he, according to Bede, was sent by this emperor in the twelfth year of the reign of Tiberius to govern Judea. “Judea” also is taken here not for the whole kingdom of the Jews but for that part of Judea which was Archelaus’s, as will be said presently. *“And Herod being tetrarch of Galilee”*—Herod Antipas, who beheaded John (Mark 6:27), and was the son of that Herod who slew the infants (Matt. 2:16). Now a tetrarchy is called the fourth part of a kingdom, from *tetra*, which is four, and *archos*, which is prince; whence a tetrarch is called prince of a fourth part of a kingdom. *“And Philip his brother tetrarch of Iturea and the country of Trachonitis”*: which two

provinces were reckoned the fourth part of the whole kingdom of Judea, which was the kingdom of Herod the Ascalonite, father of these brothers. This, finally, is that Philip whose wife, namely Herodias, his brother Herod Antipas took from him, and for this John rebuked him (Mark 6:17, 18). *"And Lysanias tetrarch of Abilina,"* that is, of the province so called. Lysanias, according to Bede, was a son of Herod the Ascalonite. Josephus, however, affirms that he was his grandson, being the son of a certain Ptolemy of Alexandria, by a sister of the aforesaid Herod; and this is the more truly believed. Bede perhaps took the name "son" broadly, as grandsons of someone are called his sons.

It is to be noted besides that Herod the Ascalonite had six sons, three of whom he himself killed while still alive; and on his death the three remaining sons, namely Archelaus, Herod Antipas, and Philip, contended for the possession of their father's kingdom. At length the emperor Octavian, by the counsel of the senate, divided the kingdom of the dead Herod the Ascalonite into four parts, giving two to Archelaus, namely Judea and Idumea, the third to Herod Antipas, namely Galilee, and the fourth to Philip, namely Iturea and the region of Trachonitis. Archelaus in the tenth year of his rule was accused of tyranny before the emperor, deposed from his principality, and banished; and from then on one part of his principality, namely Judea, began to be administered by procurators and officials of the Romans, of whom the fifth is read to have been Pilate.

"Under the high priests Annas and Caiphas" (Luke 3:2) *(p. 441)*—not that these two were pontiffs at the same time; but Annas was pontiff in the year when the Precursor began to preach, and Caiphas in the year when the Lord suffered. In the intermediate time between these two pontiffs there were three others succeeding one another, namely Ismael, Eleazar, and Simon. Josephus indeed relates that the priesthood under the Roman empire was irreverently venal, so that the precepts of the law about the succession of pontiffs having ceased through violence and ambition, the honor of the pontificate was bestowed on no one by merit of life or lineage. Whence Valerius Gratus, Annas having been removed from the pontificate, designated as pontiff Ismael, son of Raphabus; and he, after a short time cast out, he replaced with Eleazar, son of the pontiff Ananias, whom after a year he removed, and gave the episcopate to Simon, son of Caiphas; who, being pontiff no more than a year, received as successor Joseph, who was also called Caiphas. The Evangelist therefore makes mention of these two, the others omitted, because they bear more on the passion and persecution of Christ. They are also said frequently to have succeeded one another in the pontificate, and to have been joined by affinity. *"The word of the Lord came to John, the son of Zachary, in the desert."*

Behold how solemnly the Evangelist describes the time at which the divine revelation was made to the Precursor about preaching and baptizing. And why this? Surely on account of the reverence and magnificence of Him whose announcer he was, namely Christ. Finally, according to Origen, in the books of the Prophets, where the time of the revelations made to them is noted, only the kingdom of the Jews is described, because the discourses of the Prophets were made to the Jews alone. But in the description of the evangelical revelation and preaching, which was to be announced to the whole world, the empire of the Roman ruler, who seemed to rule the whole globe, is described. Because, however, the Gospel was also to be preached to the Jews, their tetrarchies are described too; nay, since Christ, whom John was to preach, is King and Priest or Pontiff, the time of John's preaching is rightly described by kingdom and pontiffs.

So, *"the word of the Lord came to John,"* that is, a divine command was made to John, whether by interior inspiration alone, angelic or divine, or by exterior angelic apparition and address, or by an imaginary vision. For the Evangelist does not determine how this word of the Lord was made to John, nor does he express whether it was in waking or in sleep. Nor is there doubt that before this time divine illuminations, inspirations, and addresses were frequently made to the most blessed Precursor; but now for the first time the command was given him to go out from the secrecy of the desert and come into public, to preach and baptize. *"And he came into all the country about the Jordan"* (Luke 3:3), that is, to the places of Judea around the waters of the Jordan. For since the grace of baptizing was coming, he had to approach places near water.

"Preaching the baptism of penance for the remission of sins." This is explained in two ways: first, of the Baptism of Christ; second, of the baptism of John. In the first way this is the sense: "Preaching," that is, announcing as soon to come and to be given, and exhorting men to receive, the Baptism of Christ, which Christ gave through the Apostles and His other disciples. For He did not baptize personally, but His disciples did at His bidding, as is plain in John (John 4:2). It is also called the Baptism of Christ because He instituted it and it has its efficacy from His merit, and has obtained grace, as the other sacraments of the evangelical law have. John therefore foretold to his hearers that the Baptism of Christ was at hand, as is had below in this chapter (v. 16), and in Matthew and Mark (Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8). It is called, moreover, the baptism of penance, because it is neither given to adults nor profits them unless they repent. Wherefore Peter says in the Acts to the Jews: "Do penance, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins" (Acts 2:38). Nor does Ambrose's saying stand in the way, *(p. 442)* "The grace of baptism requires neither groaning nor lamentation"; for he is speaking either of infants, or of exterior penance, which is called the punishing of evil or satisfaction for sin, not of interior penance, which is displeasure at, or detestation of, fault. Moreover he preached this Baptism for the remission of sins, teaching that the Baptism of Christ would blot out sins and confer grace. — Second, it is explained of the baptism of John, that is, of the baptism which he gave; which he preached because he admonished the people to receive it. This baptism is called a baptism of penance because those whom he baptized he exhorted to penance; and those who received that baptism confessed their sins, and so showed that they repented. Again, he baptized to this end, that those receiving his baptism might, through that washing in water, be provoked to heartfelt contrition and humiliation, and so be disposed to receive devoutly the Baptism of Christ and its grace. So also John's baptism was for the remission of sins, not causally or directly but dispositively or preparatorily, because in the manner touched on John's baptism fitted and prepared men for the Baptism of Christ, as will be said below. — In the first way Gregory expounds, saying: "He preached the baptism that would loose sins, because he could not give it; that as the incarnate Word of the Father he preceded by the word of preaching, so he might precede the baptism of penance, by which sins are loosed, with his own baptism, by which sins cannot be loosed."

Next the preaching and teaching of John are confirmed by prophetic testimony, that they may be proved more credible. *"As it is written in the book of the sayings of Isaias the prophet"* (Luke 3:4), that is, as Isaias foretold of John. The most blessed Isaias so luminously and fully announced beforehand the mysteries of Christ and the Church, and prophesied so openly also of Christ's precursor, that he is to be called not only a Prophet but an Evangelist: whose book Luke rightly calls the book of sayings, on account of its eloquence and the majesty of its sentences, and also because of the size of that book, which in number of chapters exceeds the other Prophets. What was written there is subjoined (Isa. 40:3–5):

"The voice of one crying in the desert." By "voice" can be understood the discourse of John, or John himself. In the first way, therefore, the sense is: The voice of one crying—that is, the doctrine, preaching, or discourse of John preaching in the wilderness—is this which is subjoined: *"Prepare ye the way of the Lord,"* that is, for Christ, the Lord of all, dispose, make, prepare, afford the means of coming to you by the infusion of faith and grace; that is, cast away the obstacles to grace, the hindrances to the virtues, namely the crookednesses of vices, or all sins; prepare yourselves for faith and grace, do penance, which is easy for you; *"make straight His paths,"* that is, fulfil purely and irreprehensibly the divine precepts and counsels, by the observance of which one goes to God. These are the ways of the Lord on our part, that is, the ways by which we fit ourselves for the coming of God, namely for receiving His gracious indwelling, or His virtues and grace: to withdraw from sin and to do good. Of these two ways it is said in the Psalm, "Decline from evil, and do good" (Ps. 36:27). On the other hand, the ways of the Lord on His part, by which He comes to us, are mercy and justice, of which we sing, "All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth" (Ps. 24:10); likewise His charity and liberality, which are reduced to mercy. Now "paths" properly denotes more secret and shorter roads; "ways," more open and more common roads. Accordingly, by "way" can be understood the precepts,

and by “paths” the counsels, which lead more directly to God. Of these it is written in Proverbs: “His ways,” namely God’s, “are beautiful ways, and all His paths are peaceable” (Prov. 3:17); and in the Psalm, “Show me Thy ways, O Lord, and teach me Thy paths” (Ps. 24:4). Moreover, as a bodily way is prepared when a bodily means is made or perfected by which one may proceed from one place to another, so this spiritual way of God is prepared when by contrition *(p. 443)* one withdraws from evil and persists in virtuous action: for thus God comes to us, pouring in the gifts of grace or perfecting those poured in.

Second, by “voice” is understood the Precursor himself; as in John, when the Jews asked, “Who art thou?” he answered, “I am the voice of one crying in the desert” (John 1:19–23). He is called “voice” by similitude, by reason of his office: because as the voice is by the order of nature prior to the word, so John went before Christ. Again, as the voice makes known the thing signified, so John pointed out Christ. Again, as the voice sounds and passes away and leaves the word in the heart of the hearers, so John by preaching sounded, and by martyrdom descended to the fathers, but left Christ on earth and in the hearts of believers. Lastly, as word and voice are simultaneous in time, and yet the voice in the aforesaid manner is prior to the word, so Christ and John lived in the world together, and yet John preceded Christ by a short time in nativity, preaching, baptizing, and passion. Nevertheless, as the mental word is prior to the voice in him who speaks, so Christ, as He is the Word of the eternal Father, was and is prior to John. John is also called the voice of one crying, that is, of Christ, or of the Holy Spirit speaking through him. For God spoke through him, as Paul also says: “Do you seek a proof of Christ that speaketh in me?” (2 Cor. 13:3).

“Every valley shall be filled”—that is, every humble heart shall be copiously enriched with the gifts of grace: for humility prepares the mind for every virtue and grace, as pride does for every sin. And as drops fall from the summits of mountains to the lowness of the valleys—nay, the deeper the valleys are, the more abundant the water gathered in them—so the charisms of the Holy Spirit, leaving the proud, descend into the hearts of the humble and rest in them, and are gathered the more abundantly the more deeply they are laid under God. *“And every mountain,”* that is, the proud one who is eminent over others, *“and hill,”* that is, the proud lesser or inferior one, *“shall be brought low,”* that is, shall be spurned, depressed, and damned by God. This is what Christ says: “Every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted” (Luke 14:11). Hence Peter: “Be humbled under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in the time of visitation” (1 Pet. 5:6). In Job also it is read: “He that shall be humbled shall be in glory” (Job 22:29); and in Proverbs: “God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble” (Prov. 3:34; James 4:6). *“And the crooked shall become straight”*—that is, vicious hearts shall be converted and made straight, that is, just, and be directed according to the rectitude of equity; *“and the rough ways plain”*—that is, the fierce, rebellious, and perverse in manners shall be obedient and simple, so that the word of God shall enter them readily, and the hardened shall be softened by grace. These things began to be done through the preaching of John, because he converted many; then they were completed through the evangelizing of Christ and His disciples. — Moreover, by the valleys can be understood the hearts of carnal men, depressed by earthly affection, which at the first coming of the Savior were filled by the love of divine things; and by mountains and hills, the hearts of the vain, lifted up by worldly vanity, which were humbled by an enlightened recognition of their own defectiveness.

Certain darkened Jews, however, expound the authority of Isaias here adduced about the filling of the valleys, etc., far too corporally and crudely, affirming that at the coming of the Messiah the earth will be wholly levelled, so that the Jews dispersed through the world may gather to Judea more speedily, without difficulty of journey: which I refuted more fully on Isaias. Rabbi Moses also rejects this. Certain Catholics, however, expound it so literally of the levelling of the earth by the depression of mountains and the raising or filling of valleys, referring this Scripture to the second coming of Christ, about which the earth is said to be levelled.

"And all flesh shall see" (Luke 3:6)—that is, every man—*"the salvation of God,"* that is, Christ, through whom, as man, God the Father, or the Trinity, saved the human race, *(p. 444)* as the Apostle says: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself" (2 Cor. 5:19). Finally, every man, that is, some of every kind of men, beheld Christ bodily as He lived in this world, since many Gentiles also so looked on Him, especially on Palm Sunday, when the Pharisees said: "Behold, the whole world is gone after Him" (John 12:19). So the distribution here is for the kinds of individuals, not for the individuals of the kinds; as in Joel the Lord says: "I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh" (Joel 2:28), and Isaias says: "The carcasses of the transgressors shall be a satiety of sight to all flesh" (Isa. 66:24). From these places it also becomes clear that in the Scriptures a part is frequently put for the whole, and flesh for man. Spiritually, by faith and the gift of wisdom, far more in the whole world have seen and contemplated the Savior, as Isaias prophesied of the converted Gentiles: "They to whom it was not told of Him shall see; and they that heard not shall behold" (Isa. 52:15). Of which vision the Apostle writes to the Hebrews: "We see Jesus, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor" (Heb. 2:9).

Some, however, refer this word to the second coming of Christ, in which all flesh, that is, the elect and the reprobate, shall see Christ on the throne of majesty and the seat of judgment, according to that of the Apocalypse: "Behold He cometh with the clouds, and every eye shall see Him" (Apoc. 1:7). So Bede expounds, following Gregory, taking the distribution of what is said, "all flesh," for the individuals of the kinds. But the last clause of the authority here alleged by the Evangelist, namely, "And all flesh shall see the salvation of God," is not had in Isaias together with the preceding words as they are written in Isaias, according to Jerome's translation, as to the form of the words; yet as to sense it is sufficiently included there where it is said, "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed" (Isa. 40:5): the sense of which is, the Son of God shall be shown. For the son is called the glory of the father, as it is written: "A wise son is the glory of his father" (Prov. 10:1).

"He said, therefore, to the multitudes that went forth to be baptized by him" (Luke 3:7). Of these it is read in Matthew: "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the country about the Jordan" (Matt. 3:5). *"Ye brood of vipers,"* that is, sons of serpents, namely of venomous men, full of craftiness and crimes; of whom, or of such, the Lord says to Ezechiel: "They are unbelievers and subverters with thee, and thou dwellest with scorpions" (Ezech. 2:6). Men are indeed expressed by the names of beasts because they follow their property; therefore the astute and crafty, the stinging and the harmful, are rightly named serpents or vipers. *"Who hath shewed you to flee from the wrath to come?"*—that is, from the strict judgment of God and eternal damnation?—as if he said: You have lived so impiously and sinned so securely, as though you could escape the divine vengeance.

It is also to be noted that in that crowd there were some good and penitent, especially among the common people, who came with right intention to be baptized; and also some perverse and feigning, who came not from devotion but from malice. As to the first, therefore, these words can be a commendation of penitents: whom he calls a brood of vipers not because they follow the malice of their fathers, but it is uttered to the praise of the sons that though they are sons of the wicked, they nevertheless bear themselves well. To these also it is said: "Who hath shewed you to flee from the wrath to come?" that is, who taught you to repent, and to amend your life, and to come to baptism, by which eternal damnation is avoided? as if he said: Not from yourselves nor from your fathers, but from the piety and grace of God you have received this. So Ambrose expounds. But as to the wicked, these words are a rebuke of the impenitent in the sense touched on; and these were the Pharisees and some Sadducees. Whence it is read in Matthew: "John, seeing many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, said to them: Ye brood of vipers, who hath shewed you to flee from the wrath to come?" (Matt. 3:7).

Finally, according to Origen: the viper, as is reported, *(p. 445)* kills the male in coupling, and the offspring of the viper in coming forth kills the mother, her womb being torn, in a kind of vengeance upon the begetter

who was slain. The viper's brood is therefore parricidal; and such were the Jews who killed their spiritual fathers and doctors.

Next, to those rebuked and set in the danger of damnation he proposes a compendious counsel. *"Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of penance"* (Luke 3:8)—that is, perform penitential acts, interior and exterior, according to the exigency or measure of the multitude and magnitude of your faults: namely inwardly sorrowing from the heart over your sins, fully confessing with the mouth, and performing works of satisfaction; so much the more and the more perfectly, the more and the greater the sins. For contrition, according to Jerome, ought to equal sin, so that according to the measure of the gravity and number of sin, and the magnitude of the unlawful delight or complacency, may be the measure of interior sorrow or displeasure at sin, and also of penitential works and spontaneous affliction, if opportunity or ability be present. Penance, therefore, ought to be fruitful, so that it may come from charity; for otherwise it merits nothing. Wherefore Antiochus the king repented in vain, and obtained no pardon, because he prayed and repented from servile fear alone, as is had in the book of Machabees (2 Mach. 9). Of Esau also the Apostle says to the Hebrews that he found no place for repentance, although with tears he had sought it (Heb. 12:17). Moreover it must be laborious, as to works of satisfaction—toilsome and afflictive; and worthy, that it be commensurate to the quantity and quality of the fault.

But since sin, in that it is done against God of immense majesty and holiness, is in some sense of infinite enormity, how can anyone repent or satisfy for sin worthily? And the answer is that he cannot by his own power, nor insofar as his acts proceed from free will; but by the help of Christ, insofar as His merit is communicated to His members through charity and the sacrament of Penance, and so in virtue of the merit of Christ penitential acts are offered to the Lord; and also insofar as such acts proceed from infused charity and from the actual motion of the Holy Spirit concurring in every meritorious act, which Holy Spirit is mover of immense dignity. And so the virtuous action of penance, on the part of this co-operating principle, has a proportioned efficacy and an equation of goodness against the depravity of sin. Again it can be said that contrition and satisfaction ought to equal the offense or fault by an equality of proportion, namely with respect to man's ability, not by an equality of equivalence. Wherefore it is commonly said that the whole world could not satisfy condignly for one mortal sin, on account of the infinite dignity of Him who is offended by sin. But God requires nothing beyond man's power; and when man does the diligence due, God reckons it as done in some sense condignly: so infinite is His piety and condescension.

"And begin not to say, We have Abraham for our father"—that is, do not vainly trust in the nobility of carnal descent, nor foolishly be proud, nor boast, as if this sufficed for salvation, because you are born of the seed of a holy man and great Patriarch. St. John knew that those carnal Jews swelled with pride of carnal descent, namely that they descended from the seed of the Patriarchs and Prophets; whereas by this their sins were the more aggravated, since the more holy the fathers from whom they descended, the more gravely they sinned, neither imitating their virtues nor giving thanks to God. Hence carnal nobility confers nothing unless it be supported by like pursuits, as Cyril says; therefore it is vain to be exalted over good predecessors and to fall away from their virtues. Finally, according to the Scriptures, imitators of the faith and justice of the Patriarchs and Prophets are called their sons rather than those who are merely carnal sons; nay, such are held *(p. 446)* unworthy to be called sons of those Saints, as the Apostle says: "Neither are all they that are the seed of Abraham, children" (Rom. 9:7). Whence Christ speaks to the carnal Jews in John: "If you be the children of Abraham, do the works of Abraham" (John 8:39). And because they did not fulfil this, He added: "You are of your father the devil" (John 8:44).

And why they ought not to glory vainly in this, he subjoins: *"For I tell you that God is able of these stones to raise up,"* that is, to procreate or bring into being, *"children to Abraham."* Which can be understood and verified in three ways. First, by understanding by "stones" the very rocks pointed out to the eye by John, who, as is commonly reported, showed those twelve stones which Joshua caused to be carried from the dried

bed of the Jordan, when God dried up the channel of the Jordan and the children of Israel passed through it, as is narrated in Joshua (Josh. 4:8); and by understanding by "children" just men, who, attaining the faith and perfection of Abraham, would be his spiritual sons. For God omnipotent, who made all things from nothing, can most easily change the natures of things and convert them into one another (Esther 13:9). — Second, by understanding by "stones" the Gentiles, vehemently despised by the Jews, who like stones were spiritually hard, unpolished or uncircumcised, and sterile, and by worshipping dumb and stony idols had been made like them, according to that of the Psalmist: "Let them that make them become like to them: and all such as trust in them" (Ps. 113:8). — Third, by understanding by "stones" the aforesaid rocks or others, and by "children of Abraham" his carnal sons. But it may seem strange how this could be done or can be, especially since Abraham died at that time, and carnal sons are propagated from carnal seed. Nevertheless God, whose power is altogether infinite (Dan. 4:32), can do this in several ways. First, because He can convert one existing thing into another subsisting thing by transubstantiation, as He does daily on the altar; and so He could and can convert stones into Jews then or now existing. Moreover He could raise Abraham from the dead, and convert stones into his seed: and this in several ways; but I pass this by, because it seems to belong to curiosity rather than devotion.

As to the second sense, God fulfilled John's words when, through the preaching of the Apostles, He converted countless Gentiles throughout the whole world, as Isaias in his book, wondering and rejoicing, says to Him: "Behold thou shalt call a nation which thou knewest not, and the nations that knew not thee shall run to thee" (Isa. 55:5). Through Zacharias also, when the Only-begotten of God had said of His incarnation, "Sing praise and rejoice, O daughter of Sion: for behold I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee," He added: "And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and they shall be my people" (Zach. 2:10, 11). Of whom the Apostle to the Galatians says: "They that are of faith, are the children of Abraham" (Gal. 3:7). But of the carnal and unbelieving Jews it is said in the Apocalypse: "They say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan" (Apoc. 2:9).

Next he adduces another reason why they ought not to boast of nobility of race. "*For now the axe is laid to the root of the trees*" (Luke 3:9). Some understand by the axe death, or the sentence of death, which cuts a man off from the present life; by the root they understand Adam, from whom the whole human race, or Abraham, from whom the people of the Jews, has sprung as from a root; and by the tree, the human race, or the Israelite people. Now when John said this, Adam as well as Abraham had been taken from this life by death. By this it was plain that their posterity too were likewise to be taken away and soon to die, according to that: "Our days upon earth are as a shadow, and there is no stay" (1 Par. 29:15). — Others understand by the axe the rigor of divine equity; by the tree, the person or life of any man; by the root, the foundation or firmness of man: so that the sense is that the rigor or vengeance of divine justice is laid, or hangs over, the sinner, to destroy and damn him utterly, unless he repent, as it is read in Ecclesiasticus: "Unless we do penance, we shall fall into the hands of the Lord, and not into the hands of men" (Ecclus. 2:22). *(p. 447)* And in Deuteronomy the Lord God says: "He is the strong and faithful God, who repayeth them that hate Him forthwith, so as to destroy them, and without further delay, rendering to them presently what they deserve" (Deut. 7:9, 10).

Again, by the root can be understood the nativity of man; by the axe, the passage of the present life beginning from nativity; by the tree, man. The axe is therefore laid to the root of the tree because from the beginning of nativity man tends continually to the setting of death. For night, like one woodcutter, cuts off one half of life, and day another, and at last man must fall like a tree. And indeed, as Solomon says: "If the tree fall to the south or to the north, in what place soever it shall fall, there shall it be" (Eccles. 11:3)—that is, when man, dying, fails and passes to the kingdom of heaven, which is meant by the south, where the heat of the sun is stronger, or to hell, which is designated by the name of the north, because there the cold is more intense, in one or other of these places he will remain eternally. Hence Bernard says: "If you wish to know where the

tree will fall, climb among the branches, and wherever the weightier abundance of branches is, there, doubt not, it will fall." The branches of the tree are the desires of man: if the carnal desires preponderate in him, he will fall to the lower regions; if the spiritual, he will fly to heaven.

Lastly, according to Origen and Cyril, the holy Precursor by the aforesaid words prophesied to the people of the Jews the near-impending destruction, captivity, dispersion, and damnation, on account of their infidelity and hardness.

From these threatening words John infers: *"Every tree therefore,"* that is, every man a wayfarer using reason, *"that doth not yield good fruit,"* that is, a virtuous and meritorious act, if there be ability, *"shall be cut down,"* that is, shall be torn from the company of the elect, and at the hour of death shall be taken away, *"and cast into the fire"* of eternal damnation; as the Psalmist says of the reprobate: "Thou wilt cast them down into fire; in miseries they shall not stand" (Ps. 139:11, Vulgate). Christ also speaks in John: "If any one abide not in me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither, and they shall gather him up, and cast him into the fire, and he burneth" (John 15:6). From these words it is shown that the mere omission of good is mortal sin, and will condemn a man, namely when by it an affirmative precept is neglected.

Furthermore, there are some trees that produce no fruit at all, by which the idle and slothful are signified, to whom the apostle Jude says in his Canonical Epistle: "These are spots in their banquets, feasting together without fear, trees of autumn, unfruitful, twice dead, plucked up by the roots" (Jude 12). To them applies that of Osee: "Their root is dried up, they shall yield no fruit" (Osee 9:16); and again, "My God will cast them away, because they hearkened not to Him" (Osee 9:17). Other trees bear fruit, but useless fruit: by which hypocrites are designated, of whom Christ says, "They have received their reward" (Matt. 6:2). Whence it is read in Job: "The praise of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment" (Job 20:5). Other trees bear evil fruit: by which heretics are noted, to whom applies that of the Apostle: "Evil men and seducers shall grow worse and worse: erring, and driving into error" (2 Tim. 3:13). Others bring forth good fruit: by which the virtuous are signified. On this Chrysostom says: *(p. 448)* "It is elegantly said, 'that doth not yield fruit,' and 'good' is added. For God created man a dutiful animal, and constant attention to exercises is natural to him, but idleness unnatural. For inertia harms all the members of the body also, but none so much as the soul; for since it is naturally in continual motion, it does not suffer itself to be idle."

How fruitful the Precursor's preaching was is straightway subjoined: *"And the multitudes asked him, saying: What then shall we do?"* (Luke 3:10)—that is, since thou hast rebuked us so rigorously, and so great a danger hangs over us, what counsel givest thou for escaping the evils thou threatenest? This crowd, that is, the common people, seeing the unyielding equity, the most rigorous and most holy life of John, and that in all things he intended nothing but their salvation, believed his words, and was vehemently pricked and terrified by them, and therefore asked counsel: as also in the Acts the Jews, pricked by Peter's words, said to the Apostles: "What shall we do, men and brethren?" (Acts 2:37). But the Pharisees and Scribes by no means did so, nor asked from the heart for counsel of salvation. Whence it is plain that the learned, and those who glory in their knowledge, are corrected with more difficulty than the unlearned and simple; nay, those smatterers and those wise in their own eyes (Isa. 5:21) frequently deride the unlearned who are converted, as in John the doctors of the Jews said: "Hath any one of the rulers believed in Him"—namely in Jesus Christ—"or of the Pharisees? But this multitude that knoweth not the law are accursed" (John 7:48, 49).

"And he answering, said to them: He that hath two coats" (Luke 3:11)—that is, any superfluous garment—*"let him give to him that hath none,"* that is, to the needy; *"and he that hath meat,"* that is, anything suited for nourishment, whether grain, or bread, or the like, *"let him do in like manner,"* that is, what is not necessary for himself and his family let him bestow on the poor. In the precept there is not only charity but also an order of loving, that a man love God above all things (Deut. 6:5; Matt. 22:37, 39), then himself, then his neighbors, according as they are more or less closely united to him, or there is greater reason for loving them. Therefore a man ought first to supply what is necessary for himself, then to share

what is left over with those in need, as he would reasonably wish done to himself if he were in like want (Luke 11:41). For fraternal charity requires this.

Finally, these words of John are to be attended to with great care, nay, to be feared and observed. For if what is superfluous to necessity in clothing, food and drink, and the like, is to be mercifully imparted to the poor, what will they answer in the divine judgment who abound in so many precious or curious garments, not necessary; who prepare for themselves daily so many kinds of dishes, who heap up for themselves so much money, but give to the poor very little, and nothing but dry bread? If it is so impious and damnable to act thus from one's own patrimony or one's own possession, who can express how sacrilegious and ruinous it is to have, from the patrimony of the Crucified, from the goods of the Church, which are the alms of the poor, precious, curious, superfluous garments, to feast delicately and splendidly, and to give the poor little or nothing? especially since, as blessed Bernard testifies in his epistle to a certain canon, "Whatever is held of such goods beyond simple food and clothing is theft, sacrilege, and rapine." And St. Jerome says of all generally: "Whatever is necessary for human use is to be accounted as one tunic; the whole remainder is superfluous and is to be given to the poor. For he who is proved to retain superfluities is convicted of seizing what belongs to others." Ambrose and Basil also assert that the clothing, money, shoes, and food that are superfluous to thee and yet are not given to the poor are possessed unjustly, as if taken away by theft or violence, and belong not to the possessor but to the needy.

Furthermore, the end of bodily goods is spiritual good, especially true happiness, or at least progress in the service of God *(p. 449)* and in the virtues of the soul, as the divine law prescribes. Now the goodness of the means to an end is judged from the end itself: as medicine is useful insofar as it contributes to health, which if it hinder, it would be judged bad, superfluous, and useless. Bodily goods, then, such as clothing, food, and the rest, are to be reckoned lawful, good, and useful only insofar as they are profitable for spiritual progress, for the service of God, for eternal life; and from these spiritual goods an abundance of bodily goods surely hinders, most of all if one uses them more than is expedient for the soul's serving God and keeping His commandments. Therefore what is superfluous to necessity is to be given to the needy, as the Apostle says: "Having food, and wherewith to be covered, with these we are content" (1 Tim. 6:8). In Proverbs also Solomon says: "Give me only the necessaries of life" (Prov. 30:8). Hence Gregory says: "Since a tunic is more necessary than a cloak, it belongs to a fruit worthy of penance that we ought to share with our neighbors not only every exterior thing but even what is very necessary to us, that is, useful—namely the tunic with which we are clothed, and the food with which we are sustained. For because it is written in the law, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself' (Lev. 19:18; Gal. 5:14), he is convicted of loving his neighbor less who does not share with him in his necessity even those things that are necessary to himself." Basil agrees with these words: "From these we are taught that of everything that flows in beyond the necessity of our own living we are bound to bestow on him who has not, for the sake of God, who has bestowed all that we possess." Whence Tobias says: "According to thy ability be merciful. If thou have much, give abundantly; if thou have little, yet gladly bestow even a little" (Tob. 4:8, 9).

"And the publicans also came to be baptized by John" (Luke 3:12). Publicans, according to Bede, are the exactors or farmers of taxes or of public revenues; likewise those who pursue the gains of this world through business. They were called publicans because they involved themselves in matters pertaining to the public affairs; and many of them amended themselves at John's preaching. For which reason in Matthew Christ spoke to the chief priests and the Pharisees: "The publicans and the harlots shall go into the kingdom of God before you, for they believed him"—that is, John (Matt. 21:31, 32). *"And said to him: Master, what shall we do?"* They did not say, "What shall we know?" but, "What shall we do?" because it is not the hearers but the doers of the law who are just with God (Rom. 2:13), and knowledge without the life of the virtues harms more than it profits. Many do the contrary, especially clerics. For they ask: How shall we understand this or that? how shall we argue?

"But he said to them: Do nothing more than that which is appointed you" (Luke 3:13)—that is, exact no more than is fixed for you by law, or by the lords whose tributes you levy. He says this because such men are wont to exact more than is commanded them, that what they levy beyond may remain with them secretly. Finally, none of us ought to transgress the law laid down for him, or the bounds of his power or office, lest he be guilty of presumption and wrongly bold; but let him observe what is incumbent on him, and not invade what is another's, according to that of Proverbs: "Pass not beyond the ancient bounds which thy fathers have set" (Prov. 22:28). In Deuteronomy also it is written: "Thou shalt not take nor remove thy neighbour's landmarks, which they of old have set in thy possession" (Deut. 19:14). Against which in the book of Job it is asserted of the violent: "Some have removed the landmarks" (Job 24:2).

"And the soldiers also asked him" (Luke 3:14), who served in the army under Roman rule and defended the commonwealth and country, *"saying: And what shall we do?"* According to Origen there were three orders of those who questioned John: one of the crowds; the second of the publicans; the third of the soldiers. And John gave each order a proportioned answer. *"And he said to them: Do violence to no man,"* by oppressing, afflicting bodily, or unjustly terrifying; *"neither calumniate any man,"* that is, do not fraudulently injure, dragging the innocent into a lawsuit or falsely accusing anyone; *"and be content with your pay,"* that is, with the wage or recompense fixed for you by the emperor or his deputies for the service of the army in which you labor for the defense of the commonwealth, *(p. 450)* and extort nothing beyond from anyone. Furthermore, according to Augustine against Faustus the Manichee, John knew that those who were soldiers were not murderers but ministers of the law, not avengers of their own injuries but defenders of the public safety; otherwise he would have answered them: Throw away the soldiery, desert that army, strike no one, wound no one, lay no one low.

Besides, the discretion of the most wise Precursor is to be weighed, how he speaks to each who comes to him according to his capacity and disposition. For the publicans and soldiers, who are wont to be entangled in greater vices than the common people, he first restrains from evils, and proposes easy precepts to them, teaching them first to withdraw from those sins to which they are known to be more prone, that thus he might gradually lead them also to do good and to share their goods mercifully with others. Hence Chrysostom says: "John wished to lead the publicans and soldiers to greater perfection; but since they were not yet fit for it, he proposes lesser things, lest, if he put forward greater, they should not attend to them, and be deprived of these also." Let us follow this discretion, and according to the oracle of Isaias "not break the bruised reed, nor extinguish the smoking flax" (Isa. 42:3); and so we shall fulfil that of the Apostle: "We that are stronger ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Rom. 15:1). This is what is read elsewhere: "Recover thy neighbour" (Ecclus. 29:27).

"And as the people were of opinion" (Luke 3:15), and all were thinking in their hearts of John—all who came to John's baptism, nay many others—*"whether perhaps he were the Christ."* They were induced to this opinion by considering the wonders which had happened around his conception and nativity (Luke 1): that he arose from aged parents and a barren mother, an angel foretelling; and that he lived so strictly and so holily; also on account of the excellence of his preaching and the novelty of his baptism, and because he descended from a noble stock, namely the priestly, which was commonly intermingled with the royal tribe; also because there was then among the Jews a public rumor of Christ's coming already accomplished, on account of the words of Simeon and Anna and the Magi, and on account of Herod's tyranny against the infants (Luke 2; Matt. 2): the memory of all which was now being renewed. Indeed many were still living who had heard or seen those things. These things so moved the Jews that even the more principal men of Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to John to ask him, "Who art thou?" as is had in John (John 1:19).

"John answered, saying to all" (Luke 3:16). For he knew the secrets of their hearts by the revelation of the Holy Spirit; or that men were thinking such things of him he learned from the questioning of the aforesaid envoys, or perceived and weighed it from elsewhere. *"I indeed baptize you with water,"* that is, I dip your

bodies in a material element, but your minds I do not directly cleanse, nor adorn with the gifts of grace; *"but there shall come One mightier than I after me,"* that is, Christ, after me by birth from the Virgin Mother, has entered this world; and it is in proximity that after this my manifestation He Himself shall be manifested to you all, through my testimony and demonstration and through His own preaching and miracles: who according to His divinity is infinitely mightier than I, as omnipotent God, whose power is immense; and according to His assumed humanity too, "all power in heaven and in earth" was given to Him (Matt. 28:18), and greater was and is His power, dignity, and perfection than that of all creatures taken together, because "God doth not give the Spirit by measure" to Him (John 3:34), and because His humanity is united to the Word by personal or hypostatic union, so that in the same being in which the Word of the Father eternally subsists, it too subsists from the beginning of the incarnation.

"The latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to loose." Literally St. John spoke according to the common manner of speaking, in which someone wishing to humble himself to the utmost before another, asserts that he is unworthy to carry or unloose his shoes. Hence the glorious and humble Baptist, not able fully to utter how much inferior to Christ he felt himself, brought forth these words. In which his most profound humility is plain: for though he was reputed by all to be such and so great a man, *(p. 451)* he was not ashamed to depress, humble, and lessen himself so publicly before all. Whence it is clear that by the reputation, reverence, and praises of men he was in no way swayed. But he declares himself unworthy to loose the latchet of Christ's shoes by considering himself according to natural things only, and as to what he had from himself; and also by speaking of absolute worthiness, by which someone is said to be simply worthy of something. Insofar, however, as he was full of so many charisms of the Holy Spirit, and was moved in all things by the same, he was worthy to merit even eternal life, especially speaking of worthiness of proportion, according to the measure of human possibility. In this manner a devout priest is worthy to consecrate and take the body and blood of Christ; otherwise he should not communicate, since the Apostle says: "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself" (1 Cor. 11:29).

Again, John's words are not to be understood as if Christ used shoes, since He even forbade them to the disciples whom He sent to preach (Luke 10:4). But He began to do and to teach (Acts 1:1); therefore, as was said, John's word is to be taken after the manner of a general proverb. For in such speech the literal sense is not always that which is immediately signified by the words, but sometimes that which is insinuated by similitude, or signified by the things expressed in the words, as when in Jeremias and Ezechiel it is asserted: "He that shall eat the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge" (Jer. 31:30; Ezech. 18:2). — Lastly, these words are mystically expounded by Gregory and Bede: understanding by Christ's shoes His humanity, with which the person of the Word is clothed; by the foot, the divinity; and by the latchet, the hypostatic union of the humanity with the Word. And thus John insinuates that he is unfit and unworthy to expound fully this union, which exceeds the capacity of the angelic mind.

"He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." In John it is had that Jesus did not baptize, but His disciples (John 4:2). The sense, therefore, is: Christ Himself will baptize you through His disciples, so that He will be the principal baptizer. Again, Christ baptized, that is, washed the soul within from fault, *"with the Holy Ghost,"* that is, by the power and grace of the Holy Spirit, namely by infusing the grace of the Holy Spirit, by which fault is taken away and the soul adorned; nay, so the whole Trinity, or Christ as God, baptizes. But the disciples of Christ also, and the priests of the Church to the present day, baptize in the Holy Spirit, namely by the power and grace of the Spirit, as instrumental baptizers and cleansers of the baptized, instrumentally cooperating in the infusion of the Holy Spirit, the blotting out of fault, and the justification of the soul. Baptism, however, is not given in the Holy Spirit as though it were sufficient in the form of Baptism to express the Holy Spirit; rather it is given thus: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

But since the Savior says in John, “Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:5), why does the Precursor say, “He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire,” and not rather, “with the Holy Ghost and water,” since to be born again, as it is taken there, is nothing other than to be baptized? And the answer is that the Precursor does not express water because he intends to assign the difference between his baptism, which was done in water, and the Baptism of Christ, and the excellence of the Baptism of Christ; therefore he does not name the element in which his was done. Hence he does not take fire for ordinary material fire; rather, according to Jerome, by fire he understands the Holy Spirit, who ignites or inflames the mind with charity; and so the conjunction “and” is taken expositively. Chrysostom *(p. 452)* and Bede understand by fire the fervor or bitterness of temptation and tribulation, by which the elect are purged in this life, as the Apostle says: “Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:21). Some understand by fire the fervor of charity, to which the Baptism of Christ is ordered. For charity covereth a multitude of sins (1 Pet. 4:8), and, as the best of fires, consumes the rust of vices. There are those who understand by fire a sensible and visible sign in which the Holy Spirit was frequently given to the baptized in the primitive Church, as to the Apostles in tongues of fire, as more is read of this in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2:3, 4; 8:15; 19:5, 6). Lastly, some understand by fire the pain of purgatory, in which after this life are purged those who depart with guilt, as the Apostle writes to the Corinthians: “The fire shall try every man’s work, of what sort it is” (1 Cor. 3:13); and again, speaking of the one purged: “He himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire” (1 Cor. 3:15).

“Whose fan is in His hand” (Luke 3:17). By the fan, which is the instrument by which grain is cleansed by casting out the chaff, is signified Christ’s just judgment, or the power and sentence of judging; which is in His hand, that is, in the act or execution of His justice, or in His power and promptness, as in John Christ says: “The Father hath given all judgment to the Son” (John 5:22). And this judgment belongs to Christ as God, by first and principal authority; but according to the form of a servant which He assumed (Phil. 2:7), it belongs to Him as instrumental executor and constituted judge, as Peter testifies in the Acts of the Apostles: “It is He who was appointed by God to be judge of the living and of the dead” (Acts 10:42).

“And He will thoroughly cleanse”—that is, perfectly purge—*“His floor,”* that is, the Church militant, in which elect and reprobate are now mingled together, as in a floor wheat and chaff are laid together. Whence Isaias also says to the Synagogue: “O my threshing, and the son of my floor, what I have heard of the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, I have declared unto you” (Isa. 21:10). This thorough cleansing Christ will make fully on the last day, when the good and the evil shall be separated by place and reward (Matt. 13:49); when also the elect who shall then have anything to be purged are said to be purged in the fire of the conflagration—at least those who shall then be found alive, and shall die in that fire and be raised with the others. Daily, finally, God purges this floor in three ways: first, when by ecclesiastical censure some are cast out of the Church by priestly chastisement; second, when the wicked are taken away from this life; third, when the elect in the present life are cleansed from their sins by adversities and in other ways.

“And gather the wheat,” that is, the elect and virtuous, and their solid fruits, *“into His barn,”* that is, the heavenly receptacle of the Blessed. *“But the chaff,”* that is, the reprobate, empty in mind, unstable, and movable by every impulse of passions or concupiscences and vices, *“He will burn,”* that is, kindle and punish—not consume—*“with unquenchable fire,”* infernal and eternal: of which at the end He will say to the wicked, “Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire” (Matt. 25:41). Of this it is written in Isaias: “Their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched” (Isa. 66:24); and in Judith: “The almighty Lord will take revenge on them, in the day of judgment He will visit them: for He will give fire and worms into their flesh, that they may burn and may feel for ever” (Judith 16:20, 21). In Job also it is asserted of the transgressor: “He shall pay for all that he hath done, and yet shall not be consumed: according to the multitude of his devices, so shall he also suffer” (Job 20:18). O how senseless, blind, and crude of mind are the most unhappy lovers of this world, to whom these things have no savor, nor strike terror; therefore carnal and perishable

things delight them, and with joy they run down to hell. Finally, as Albert testifies on the Apocalypse, the damned shall not be so much afflicted in body by the fire of hell as in mind, by apprehending that they shall remain eternally in their pains. But since the punishments of the wicked are so various that the Psalmist says, "He shall rain snares upon sinners; fire and brimstone and storms of winds shall be the portion of their cup" (Ps. 10:7), *(p. 453)* why does John make mention of fire alone? And the answer is that it is because the punishment of fire is the heavier among bodily afflictions; but also under the name of fire any great punishment is wont to be understood. Besides, O wretched sons of the most deceitful world, utterly blinded by your own vices, why do you glory and boast of the nobility of the flesh, of abundance of temporal things, of worldly power, of your wicked deeds? why do you despise the poor and the devout? when the most sacred Baptist of Christ compares you to chaff, and them to wheat: nay, the prophet Jeremias also, reckoning you most unworthy to be counted with them, says: "What hath the chaff to do with the wheat?" (Jer. 23:28).

"And many other things also exhorting, he preached to the people" (Luke 3:18)—that is, besides what has been said, blessed John set before the people very many other teachings and exhortations; one of which is that which in Matthew he is reported to have said: "Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3:2). Thus, as it is written of Christ that He did many other things which are not written (John 21:25), so it is here read of His precursor that he preached many salutary words to the people which have not been committed to writing.

"But Herod the tetrarch" (Luke 3:19)—that is, Herod Antipas, son of King Herod under whom Christ was born (why this Antipas is called tetrarch and not king has been said above, v. 1)—

Article IX. Continuation of the exposition of this chapter, from the place where it is said: "Now it came to pass, when all the people were baptized" (Luke 3:21).

—"*being reproved by him*"—that is, by John the Baptist—"*for Herodias his brother's wife,*" that is, for this, that he had taken to wife the wife of Philip his brother, Herodias by name, daughter of Aretas king of the Arabs, while his brother was living and she had a daughter by him; and so Herod committed adultery and incest, because according to the law it was not lawful to take a brother's wife unless he had died without offspring (Lev. 18:16; Deut. 25:5); *"and for all the evils which Herod had done"*: for there is no doubt that he who did not fear to commit and continue so enormous a deed had committed many other grave crimes as well. For one mortal sin by its own weight draws to another, and the more enormous it is, the more it leads on to graver ones. It makes a man to be the more deserted by God, and a man deprived of His help falls into the depth of vices and becomes insensible in mind to the things of God and of true salvation, so that he does not perceive his own dangers. *"He added this also above all"* (Luke 3:20)—that is, over all his other sins, to which he added this one, as though the others had not sufficed; or, "He added this also above all," that is, this sin graver than the rest—"*that he shut up John in prison.*" Why and how he did this, and how he beheaded John, Matthew and Mark fully describe (Matt. 14:3–12; Mark 6:17–29). Luke, knowing that this was sufficiently described, rightly passes it over and hastens to unfold the deeds and teachings of Christ.

"Now it came to pass, when all the people were baptized" (Luke 3:21). A little before, the Evangelist showed how Christ was made known to men by the testimony of John; now he describes how He was made manifest by the testimony of God the Father and by the descent of the Holy Spirit. *"When all the people were baptized"* by John, that is, some of every kind of Jews, especially of the male sex (for persons of the female sex are not read to have been baptized by him), *"and Jesus being baptized"* by John—how this was done Matthew and Mark relate more fully, as is plain there and to be looked up there (Matt. 3:13–15; Mark 1:9)—"*and praying.*" That Jesus, having received baptism, straightway prayed, the other Evangelists do not write.

Christ prayed, then, not from any want of His own, because according to the humanity He was already confirmed in good, and as to the superior part of the soul was enjoying God beatifically; but for our

instruction, and for our succor, nay, for our salvation; although Christ is sometimes said to have prayed for the glorification of His body and for accidental reward. Having received baptism, then, the Savior prayed: first, to intimate that our prayers are not acceptable to God and meritorious unless we are free from mortal sins and adorned with charity and grace. For charity is the life of the soul, without which neither the soul nor its action is spiritually alive and pleasing to God. Therefore the Apostle says: "If I have not charity, I am nothing" (1 Cor. 13:2). Hence one must first be washed from the filth of vices. Whence when the Lord through Isaias had said, "When you multiply prayer, I will not hear," He added, "Wash yourselves, be clean" (Isa. 1:15, 16). Second, to intimate that grace obtained in Baptism and the other sacraments needs to be guarded by continual prayers, lest it be taken away through fault. Third, to intimate that in the reception of the sacraments, and straightway after it, the mind is to be raised to God in prayer or thanksgiving. Christ prayed, therefore, that by the merit of His baptism we might be spiritually cleansed.

Now Christ, living in the world, was in a certain way both comprehensor and wayfarer according to His humanity: comprehensor, indeed, as to the superior and intellectual powers of His soul, by comparison with their uncreated object, namely eternal truth and the highest goodness; wayfarer, however, as to the inferior powers of the soul, and also as to the superior powers by comparison with the essence of the soul in which they were rooted, and likewise by comparison with a created object. For so Christ was passible, even as to the superior powers in some way, namely by reason of their subject. To Christ as man, therefore, insofar as He was comprehensor, it belonged to pray for others; but as wayfarer He prayed also for Himself.

Why Christ willed to be baptized, and what was the form of John's baptism, and whether those baptized with John's baptism were to be rebaptized, and also of the eight kinds of baptism according to Damascene, and the five kinds of baptism according to Gregory Nazianzen—these I pass over in this place, because I have spoken of them on Matthew (Matt. 3). — Besides, a question can be asked here, which I did not touch there: whether John baptized Christ under the same form of words as he did others. I have found nothing written about this; and I think that as the reason for the baptizing of Christ was altogether different from that of others, so in baptizing Christ John did not use the common form of baptism, which was, according to the doctors: "I baptize thee in the name of Him that is to come." Whence Paul testifies in the Acts: "John baptized the people with the baptism of penance, saying: That they should believe in Him who was to come after him, that is to say, in Jesus" (Acts 19:4). Hence the reception of John's baptism is said to have been a profession of believing in Christ. Whence it is plain that such a form was not fitting to Christ, at least univocally. Moreover, under what form of words he baptized Christ, or whether he baptized without a form of words, I think uncertain.

"Heaven was opened": not by a real opening, rending, or division of the heavenly bodies, which are affirmed incorruptible; but by a certain appearance, because so great a splendor appeared and descended from above upon Christ that heaven seemed opened or unlocked, as also at the time of great lightning it appears. Again, since God is said to dwell and be in the heavens (Ps. 10:5), heaven is said to be opened when God descends through a subject creature and appears to men, working in a new manner around them, *(p. 455)* as is straightway subjoined to have happened in the baptism of Christ.

"And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape, as a dove, upon Him" (Luke 3:22). The Holy Spirit, true, immutable, and uncircumscribable God, according to Himself, or in His own nature, is never moved, nor does He descend; but He is said to have descended because the dove representing Him descended, and to have remained upon Christ because it sat upon His head: as on the day of Pentecost He sat upon the Apostles in tongues of fire (Acts 2:3), that is, in that the tongues of fire representing Him and figuring His grace descended upon the Apostles. Why, then, did the Holy Spirit descend in the form of a dove? The answer is that the properties of the dove suit in the highest degree both the Holy Spirit appearing and Christ upon whom He appeared. For Cyprian says in the book *On the Unity of the Church*: "The dove is a simple and joyous animal, not bitter with gall, not savage with bites, not violent with the tearing of claws. Doves are

wont to love human dwellings, to know the fellowship of one house; when they breed their young they sit together, in flying also they cling to one another, they pass their life in common converse, and with the kiss of the beak they show the concord of peace." By the dove, therefore, are designated good simplicity, spiritual joy, sweetness, innocence, concord, love, and union: all of which befit the Holy Spirit; and some of them are appropriated to Him, namely sweetness, love, peace, and joy.

Finally, the Holy Spirit descended upon Christ baptized not that He then began to be in Him, or that grace was then increased; but to manifest the excellence, dignity, and glory of Christ, and that John might make them known to the people, testifying what he had seen. Which he is also narrated to have done in John, where it is read: "John gave testimony, saying: I saw the Spirit coming down as a dove from heaven, and He remained upon Him" (John 1:32); and likewise, "And I saw, and I gave testimony that this is the Son of God" (John 1:34). Second, that John the Baptist might be more fully instructed about Christ and the efficacy of His Baptism. For he had to advance gradually in the knowledge of divine things. Wherefore he says in John: "And I knew Him not; but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me: He upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining upon Him, He it is that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost" (John 1:33). Third, because it was then especially fitting that the innocence, purity, and simplicity of Christ be declared, when He conformed Himself the more outwardly, in things lawful, to sinners. Since, therefore, at the time of His baptism He came among sinners to John, laid aside His garments, stood naked before the hands of a servant, and received baptism from him—in all which He conformed Himself to sinners, though not as to one of them—it was then especially fitting that His innocence, holiness, and sincerity be shown, which was accomplished by the descent of the dove and John's preaching, lest Christ be thought a sinner like the rest. And because He then so humbled Himself (Phil. 2:7, 8), it was fitting that He be then so most gloriously exalted, as at the time of the passion, when He emptied Himself to the utmost, He was glorified by the greatest miracles then wrought (Matt. 27:45, 51–53). Fourth, to insinuate that through the baptism of Christ there was given to the waters a power of purging sin, and that by the Baptism of Christ the Holy Spirit is infused into the baptized, and the heavenly kingdom is opened. For Christ by His baptism prefigured our baptism according to the manner instituted by Himself.

"And a voice came from heaven: Thou art my beloved Son"—this voice is said to have come from heaven because it was uttered in the air by heavenly power. It was formed by an angel in the person of God the Father, as in John Christ said: "Father, glorify Thy Son"; where it is straightway subjoined: "A voice therefore came from heaven, saying: I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." Which when the crowd heard, they said it thundered; others said: "An angel spoke to Him" (John 12:28, 29). And, according to the expositors, those others spoke the truth, because the angel said this in the person of the Father. Hence in the baptism of Christ the Father is said to have appeared in the voice, not because He was seen in it, but because He was heard. And He appeared fittingly in the voice, to make known that by speaking He begot His only-begotten Son, who is the eternal Word, eternally and intellectually uttered by the mouth of the Father. *(p. 456)*

So He said: *"Thou art my beloved Son"*—a Son consubstantial, coeternal, and coequal, not less, nor a mere creature, as the wicked Arius lied. Finally, the Father loves Christ according to the divinity no less than Himself; nay, with a supremely ardent, supremely sweet, and wholly infinite love He loves Him, since He is of infinite goodness and beauty, and because all that He has He communicates to the Son. The Son also loves the Father infinitely; but the Father and the Son likewise love the Holy Spirit no less, and He loves the Father and the Son infinitely. The Father also, or the whole Trinity, loves Christ according to the assumed nature, as united to the Word, more than all things created taken together, because He bestowed on Him a greater good, namely hypostatic union with the Word, and grace in a certain way without measure (John 3:34).

"In Thee I am well pleased." As the Father loves the Son according to the divinity only as He loves Himself, so He has as great a complacency in Him as in Himself: indeed, the mutual complacency of the most blessed

Trinity is altogether immense, since no dissimilarity, no contrariety, no defectibility or imperfection exists in them, but each is of infinite goodness, wisdom, beauty, and holiness, and every notion of perfect mutual love and complacency is found in them, namely the clearest intuition, full communion, supreme likeness, boundless goodness, and simply infinite perfection, and of will not mere conformity but eternal unity. Lastly, in Christ according to His human nature, God the Father, or the Trinity, has a special complacency—nay, greater than in all created things together—as in a most obedient Son in whom no fault ever existed, but who from the beginning of the creation of His soul clung most perfectly and most affectionately to God, and was adorned most beautifully with every charism of graces. Moreover, the Father was well pleased in Christ according to His humanity, namely because it pleased the Father to prevent His soul with so great piety and grace, and through Christ the man, or His humanity, to save the whole human race. For which reason the Apostle says: "Because in Him it hath well pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell, and through Him to reconcile all things" (Col. 1:19, 20). With these words agrees what the Father says of Christ through Isaias: "Behold my servant, I will uphold Him: my elect, my soul delighteth in Him: I have given my spirit upon Him" (Isa. 42:1).

Lastly, Augustine in the book *On the Harmony of the Evangelists* discusses: that which Matthew says was spoken by the Father, "This is my beloved Son" (Matt. 3:17), and Luke, "Thou art my beloved Son," serves to explain the same meaning. For the heavenly voice said one of these; but Matthew wished to show that those words which were spoken serve to this end, that it might rather be declared to those who were listening that He was the Son of God. For what He knew was not being declared to Christ; but those who were present heard it, for whose sake also the voice itself was made. So, according to blessed Augustine, others besides John heard that voice; and perhaps, according to Augustine, it must be said in like manner that they also saw the dove. — Now I, before I read these words, wrote thus on this matter on Matthew: "It is asked whether John alone saw the dove descend upon Christ or sitting there, and whether he alone heard the voice of the Father, presupposing that Christ saw the dove and heard the aforesaid voice." To which I answered in the same place: "Of this I have read nothing; but it appears so: otherwise John would not have needed to testify to the people how he saw the Holy Spirit descending upon Christ." This I said there as an opinion, which I still think can be said probably, although I do not intend to contradict St. Augustine. Nor does it follow that that voice was formed *(p. 457)* in order that those present might hear it, since it was not made that anything might be declared to Christ. For it was made for John's sake, as was said, and that he might make known to the people what he saw and heard.

Next the age at which Christ received baptism is set down. *"And Jesus Himself was beginning about the age of thirty years"* (Luke 3:23), that is, He was beginning to be, as it were, of thirty years. For He had already completed His twenty-ninth year and begun the thirtieth, having of it thirteen days, according to the expositors commonly; who also assert that He was baptized on that day on which He was also shown to the three Magi, namely the thirteenth day from His nativity. Hence the Evangelist says, "about the age of thirty years," because He had but little of the thirtieth year; or "about" says the truth here, because He truly began the thirtieth year. And those who so expound assert that Christ preached three years and a half, though in the reckoning of the half-year they take a part for the whole. Augustine and Chrysostom, however, expound otherwise, in this way: "Jesus Himself was beginning about thirty years," as if namely the thirty-first of His age. For they say that Christ was then fully thirty years old and had of the thirty-first year thirteen days; and that He preached two years and a half. The first exposition, however, is more consonant with the text and more commonly held.

It is asked why Christ delayed so long to be made manifest, to be baptized, to preach, and to work miracles. The answer is that it is because that age is called perfect and mature, in which the senses and intellect are vigorous in man, and bodily strength; therefore it befits teachers and preachers, nor is it needful to delay longer, lest the time suitable for bearing fruit for others be less usefully spent. Whence Ezechiel began to

prophesy and speak to the people in the thirtieth year of his age (Ezech. 1:1); in which year also David began to reign (2 Kings 5:4), and Joseph was made prince of Egypt (Gen. 41:46). Nor does it stand in the way that Jeremias and Daniel began to prophesy at a younger age (Jer. 1; Dan. 13): for the grace of God is not restricted by common law, nor is miraculous operation to be drawn into common imitation. That also which rarely happens is not the law of the Church, according to Gregory Nazianzen, because one swallow does not make a spring. Christ taught what it becomes the community to follow. Wherefore He also delayed these things so long, that He might instruct us by His example to avoid all vanity, pomp, precipitancy, and boasting, lest we go forth into public before the due or fitting time, or presume to teach others.

Jesus was of so many years, then, at the time of His baptism, *"being (as it was supposed) the son of Joseph"*—that is, that, or when, He was still esteemed the natural son of Joseph, whom they thought to have known Mary and to have begotten Jesus of her. But from this time, by the testimony made from above, and by the preaching of John, and then by the words and works of Jesus, it began to be plain and proved to very many that Jesus is the Christ promised in the law, and consequently born of a virgin, as Isaias foretold: "Behold a virgin shall conceive" (Isa. 7:14). *"Who was of Heli,"* that is, Joseph, who was the son of Heli. But the contrary seems to be the case, because in Matthew he is said to be the son of Jacob (Matt. 1:16). To which the answer is that he was truly the son of Jacob, according to carnal propagation, but the son of Heli according to the institution of the law. For Heli, having taken a wife, died without offspring; therefore his brother Jacob, according to the precept of the law, took his wife as his own, to raise up seed or offspring to his dead brother, and begat of her Joseph, who according to the law was called the son of Heli; for the law commanded that when a married brother had died without children, his brother or kinsman should take his wife, and ascribe the son born of her to the dead man, that his name might not be blotted out of Israel (Deut. 25:5, 6). Of this and many other things which might be adduced in this place and in various places of this volume I make no mention, because I have written more on them on Matthew (on Matt. 1).

"Who was of Neri" (Luke 3:27), that is, who Salathiel was the son of Neri. *(p. 458)* On which it is asked how this can be true, since in Matthew Salathiel is said to be the son of Jechonias (Matt. 1:12). It must be said that Jechonias was the natural father of this Salathiel; Neri, however, was his legal father, or by active adoption. — *"Who was of Nathan, who was of David"* (Luke 3:31), that is, Nathan was the son of David. How this is to be understood, and of which Nathan this is said, I have pursued diffusely and diligently on Matthew. — Moreover, from Salathiel back to David there were kings, whom Luke does not set down but Matthew does; Luke, however, recalls private persons. For Matthew is occupied principally with the kingdom or royal dignity of Christ, but Luke with His priesthood. Furthermore, from David to Abraham, Luke ascending and Matthew descending from Abraham to David, give the same persons and under the same names; whence I reckon enough has been said on this part of the text on Matthew.

"Who was of Sarug" (Luke 3:35)—the son of Ragau. This Ragau in Jerome's translation is called Reu, as is plain in Genesis (Gen. 11:18). — *"Who was of Sale, who was of Cainan, who was of Arphaxad"* (Luke 3:35, 36), that is, Cainan was the son of this Arphaxad. Against this seems to be what is read in Genesis, that Arphaxad begat Sale himself; nor is Cainan expressed there or interposed (Gen. 11:12). The same is had in the book of Paralipomenon (1 Par. 1:18). Why, then, does Luke put Cainan between Arphaxad and Sale? To which some answer that Arphaxad, still living, adopted his grandson Sale, and so he is called his son: and thus Cainan was the natural father of the aforesaid Sale. Others think that Sale was the adoptive son of Cainan and the natural son of Arphaxad. In this, therefore, all agree, that one of these two was the natural father of this Sale, the other his legal or actively adoptive father. The Seventy interpreters, however, place this Cainan between Arphaxad and Sale: whose translation Luke follows, because in his times the whole Church used it.

"Who was of Sem, who was of Noe"—Sem, whom the Hebrews think to have been Melchisedech, and that he lived to the times of Isaac. For in Genesis it is written that Sem lived six hundred years (Gen. 11:10, 11).

On which account, as they say, Melchisedech is said to have been without father and without mother (Heb. 7:3), not because he had none but on account of his very great age, and because Scripture does not describe his parents under the name of Melchisedech. *"Who was of Noe, who was of Lamech."* This is the Lamech descending from the stock of Seth, as is plain in Genesis (Gen. 5:25). There was also another Lamech, of the race of Cain, who also killed Cain himself, and began bigamy, as is related in Genesis (Gen. 4:18, 19, 23). *"Who was of Mathusale"* (Luke 3:37): *"Lamech was the son of Mathusale."* This Mathusale was the oldest of all, since he lived nine hundred and sixty-nine years (Gen. 5:27), and died before the flood, in the same year in which it inundated, according to Jerome.

"Who was of Henoch": of whom Jude writes in his Canonical Epistle, "Now of these Henoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied" (Jude 14). Whence it is plain that he was seventh after Adam by descent from Seth. Wherefore it can be asked: if Henoch was seventh from Adam, Noe seems to have been tenth, since between Henoch and Noe there were Mathusale and Lamech. But the apostle Peter in his Canonical Epistle says that Noe was the eighth: for thus it is read: "God spared not … but preserved Noe, the eighth person, a preacher of justice" (2 Pet. 2:5). And the answer is that Henoch is said to be seventh from Adam by including both extremes, counting both Adam himself and Henoch; but Noe eighth by excluding both extremes. This is that Henoch of whom it is written in Ecclesiasticus: "Henoch pleased God, and was translated into paradise, that he may give repentance to the nations"; and likewise, "Neither was there any man born upon earth like Henoch"; and in Genesis, "Henoch walked with God, and was seen no more: because God took him" (Ecclus. 44:16; 49:16; Gen. 5:24). He is, finally, the one who is to come with Elias and to preach against the deceits of Antichrist, as John foretells in the Apocalypse (Apoc. 11:3 ff.). The praises of this blessed Henoch are contained more fully in the book of Wisdom and in the Epistle to the Hebrews (Wis. 4:10; Heb. 11:5). *(p. 459)*

"Who was of Cainan" (Luke 3:38)—Cainan was the son of Enos. This is another from the Cainan spoken of above. *"Who was of Enos, who was of Seth."* This Enos was a man of great devotion. Whence in Genesis it is had: "This man began to call upon the name of the Lord" (Gen. 4:26); which is not to be understood as if his father Seth and Adam did not call upon God, but because Enos worshipped God with special devotion. *"Who was of Adam"*: Seth was the son of Adam. Whence on the birth of Seth Eve said: "God hath given me another seed for Abel, whom Cain slew," as is plain in Genesis (Gen. 4:25). *"Who was of God"*—that is, Adam was the son of God, not so as he himself was father of Seth, who was not the natural son of God, since this is proper to the Only-begotten of God; but he was son of God by reason of creation, and because as to the body he was formed by the hands of God from the slime of the earth (Gen. 2:7), but as to the soul he was made to the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:27). Whence he too is called son by imitative likeness, because the intellectual and rational creature, the more like to the Creator it is, the more the name and notion of son befits it as regards God. Again, he was son of God by the grace of adoption, as one predestinated. For although he transgressed, it is not doubted that he repented and thenceforward lived virtuously. Whence in Josue he is called the greatest. For Scripture says there: "Adam the greatest lay there" (Josh. 14:15), that is, was buried in the cave, namely the double one, in which Abraham also, Isaac, and Jacob were buried.

On what has been said, it is asked why Luke describes the generation of Christ ascending from the later ones, but Matthew descending from the earlier. And the answer is that Luke treats of the generation of Christ in a manner spiritual, and as by it we are led back to God. For which reason he begins straightway after the baptism of Christ, because in Baptism we are spiritually regenerated and led back to God. Such a leading back or regeneration is made ascending by grace. But Matthew treats of the generation and genealogy of Christ as by the assumption of flesh He descends to us; which was done by the descent of carnal propagation. Hence also Luke sets down more persons between Joseph and Abraham than Matthew, because he introduces threefold fathers, namely natural and legal and adoptive. For adoptive filiation is reckoned spiritual. Matthew, however, commemorates only carnal or natural fathers. Moreover Luke does not stop at Abraham

as Matthew does, but ascends to Adam: because through Christ all who have been saved from the beginning of the world have been led back to God, since it was needful that they in some way have faith in Christ, namely explicit or implicit.

From these things, finally, is rendered the reason why Luke in the generation which he weaves inserts no woman, whereas Matthew mingles in some, namely Thamar, Ruth, and Bethsabee (Matt. 1:3, 5, 6). Matthew determines the carnal descent of Christ to us: in which women concur. Luke, however, treats of this generation as by it we ascend to God: which ascent women hinder rather than help. Hence again Matthew, in describing the generation of Christ, uses throughout the word "begot," but Luke the word "was of": because Matthew sets down fathers and sons only according to true and real generation, excepting Jesus and Joseph as compared with each other. Luke, however, sets down not only fathers by carnal generation but also legal and adoptive fathers. Finally, because, as the Apostle testifies, "that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; afterwards that which is spiritual" (1 Cor. 15:46), Matthew, who describes the descent of Christ to us by carnal descent, fittingly began his Gospel from the generation of Christ. Luke, however, who shows forth the spiritual ascent, began to write the genealogy of Christ after the description of His baptism, wishing to show how through Christ we are made sons of God; which is done through Baptism.

Luke 4: Temptation, Nazareth, Capharnaum

(p. 460)

Article X. Elucidation of the fourth chapter: "And Jesus, full of the Holy Ghost, returned from the Jordan."

The Evangelist now goes on to the works of Christ, and first to how He declared His majesty by overcoming the devil. *"And Jesus, being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from the Jordan"* (Luke 4:1). There are many degrees of the fullness of the Holy Spirit, or of His grace. For John the Baptist is said to have been filled with the Holy Spirit in his mother's womb (Luke 1:15); and of the Apostles it is read, "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:4); and afterwards of Stephen it is written, "But he, being full of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 7:55). There is, then, one fullness of the Holy Spirit, or of grace, which is called a fullness of proportion or comparison, according to which someone is said to be full of grace or of the Holy Spirit as to what pertains to his own measure or age, or by comparison with others. Another is called a fullness of sufficiency, by which some say the Apostles and Stephen and the like were filled with the Holy Spirit. But since such men were heroic and perfect, even as to works of supererogation, by a special observance of the counsels, their fullness seems to be called a fullness of abundance. Another is the fullness of prerogative, which was in the blessed Virgin, to whom it was said: "Hail, full of grace" (Luke 1:28). These fullnesses receive increase while this life lasts, because the glorious Virgin also advanced daily in charity and grace and the other virtues. A fourth is posited, the fullness of superabundance, by which Christ as man was full of the Holy Spirit, and of all His grace, gift, and virtue. Finally, He was so full of the Holy Spirit and His gifts that the whole capacity of His soul was filled, so that in the habit of grace and virtues He never advanced, as was declared more clearly in article seven (p. 438 f.). This fullness is proper to Christ the man, to whom the Spirit was given not by measure, namely as He was given to others, as it is told in John (John 3:34).

It is asked whether Christ according to the divinity, or as the eternal Word, was full of the Holy Spirit. And the answer is that according to Damascene and the other theologians each divine and uncreated Person is in the others by circumincession, so that the Father is wholly in the Son and conversely, likewise the Holy Spirit is wholly in the Father and the Son, and the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit. For each divine Person is uncircumscribable and immense. In this sense, then, Jesus, as God, could be said to be full of the Holy Spirit, so that the Holy Spirit is wholly and entirely in Him. In rational creatures, however, the Holy Spirit is said to be by His gifts. Hence as He is said to be given to those into whom the gifts of His grace are poured, so they are said to be full of the Holy Spirit who are filled with His grace and virtue infused.

So Jesus, baptized by John, departed, returning from the Jordan in which He had now been baptized, *"and was led by the Spirit,"* that is, was brought or moved by the Holy Spirit, *"into the desert,"* that is, into solitude, which is the most apt place for those exercises for the sake of which Christ entered the desert. "Led" is taken here in the sense in which the Apostle says to the Romans: "For whosoever are led by the Spirit of God," that is, moved, ruled, or directed, "they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:14). Besides, Christ's humanity was the instrument or organ of the Holy Spirit—nay, of the whole most blessed Trinity, *(p. 461)* undivided in operation, working through it—though it is especially said to have been the instrument of the Word, by whom it was assumed. Hence as our body is the immediate, animate, conjoined, and proper instrument of our soul, so Christ's humanity was the animate, united, immediate, and proper instrument of the Word. Therefore Christ as man was in all things led or moved by the eternal Word, or by Himself according as He is God.

So *"He was led by the Spirit into the desert"* (Luke 4:2)—which lay between Jericho and Jerusalem—*"for the space of forty days,"* that is, so many days He remained there, the Spirit leading. Luke, however, speaks of the natural day, which includes the night, for it is a space of twenty-four hours. Matthew, speaking of the artificial day, says that Christ was, or fasted, in the desert forty days and as many nights (Matt. 4:2). Of which day also the Savior says: "Are there not twelve hours of the day?" (John 11:9).

Here many things are to be considered. First, why Christ, who could not sin, nor be hindered from good by the crowd, nor helped by solitude, entered the wilderness? The answer is that Christ willed not only to fulfil all perfection (Matt. 3:15), but also to show and teach the various species, degrees, and modes of perfection or of perfect conversation. Hence in boyhood He dwelt with His Mother and her minister and was subject to them (Luke 2:51), to demonstrate by example and efficaciously approve the life under the obedience of a spiritual father or mother. Then He entered solitude, to give an example of the eremitical and anchoritic life, and to commend the solitary life by deed. Second, to instruct us that for doing penance and attaining the summit of contemplation a solitary place helps chiefly, especially the desert, in which there are no objects of sensual delights, as was said more fully above (Luke 1:80), where it was shown why John the Baptist fled to the desert. A third cause the evangelist Matthew touches, saying: "Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert, to be tempted by the devil" (Matt. 4:1). But could He not be tempted outside the desert too? Why then does Matthew say this, unless to intimate that Jesus for certain causes willed to be tempted by the demon singularly, that is, most sharply and most strongly, and as it were to engage him hand to hand?

Fourth, He entered the desert straightway after baptism and the testimony of John—nay, after so sublime a testimony of God the Father and the Holy Spirit concerning Him—to give a pattern of shunning human praise and all vain glory, that we too, when praised or honored, may seek to be hidden and desire to be unknown. Fifth, after baptism He immediately entered the wilderness, wishing to teach that we ought then most especially to attend to the guarding of the heart and to be free for spiritual progress, when we have obtained some special purification and grace from God, lest we be rendered ungrateful to God, and offend the more gravely the greater the mercy we had a little before obtained, weighing that of the Apostle: "It is impossible for those who were once illuminated, have tasted also the heavenly gift, and are fallen away, to be renewed again to penance" (Heb. 6:4–6), in which authority, according to one exposition, "impossible" is taken for "difficult." John also in the Apocalypse: "Hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Apoc. 3:11). Sixth, that in solitude He might afflict His body by abstinence for our sins, and exercise Himself in other acts of satisfaction. I think indeed that there He copiously wept over the sins of the world, and unceasingly poured out prayers for our salvation.

Besides, the desert is a most apt place for doing penance, praying, and contemplating, and this in a certain order: for by abstinence man is led to the grace of devout prayer; by prayer, to the grace of sincere contemplation; and by these three he is rendered most apt for instructing, preaching to, and governing others, so that he may thus communicate and set before others, by fiery and fitting words, the grace, wisdom, and fervor which he has received from above in secret. Whence Christ, soon to preach to others, *(p. 462)* to

instruct us by example, was first free for solitude, fasting, prayer, and contemplation, instructing the rulers, preachers, and prelates of others to exercise themselves first in the aforesaid things, and so by holy conversation to merit from God the grace of preaching efficaciously and ruling fruitfully, that the words they utter may flow not from a dry heart, but from interior taste, from the ardor of charity, from spiritual experience, according to that of the Psalm: “They shall publish the memory of the abundance of Thy sweetness” (Ps. 144:7).

“And was tempted by the devil.” According to Origen, He was tempted during the whole time of those forty days; and what the temptations were we do not know, which perhaps were passed over because they were greater than could be committed to writing. This word of Origen, however, must be piously received, especially since the most blessed evangelists Matthew and Luke commemorate the three temptations which Christ suffered there. Basil also seems to think that He was tempted when the forty days of fasting were completed. For he says: “Christ remained untempted through the forty days: for the devil knew that He fasted and was not hungry, and therefore did not dare to approach.” And this I reckon more consonant with the evangelical truth, because in Matthew it is had: “And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterwards He was hungry; and the tempter coming said to Him” (Matt. 4:2, 3). Whence it appears that, the fast being ended, and His hunger seen, the tempter assailed Him. Hence some expositors affirm that Christ’s hunger was the devil’s occasion for tempting.

Finally, as for our salvation the Only-begotten of God deigned to be incarnate, circumcised, baptized, and crucified, so also to be tempted: first, that He might merit for us the virtue and grace of triumphing in every temptation. For in all that He did and bore, He merited for us. Second, that He might encourage and stir us to bear all temptations. For members and servants ought willingly and proportionately to be conformed to their lord and head. Third, that no one of the faithful, set in temptations however grave, may be cast down by faintheartedness or suspect himself forsaken by God, when the Only-begotten of God was gravely tempted. Fourth, to show us the form of resisting and conquering. Hence in every temptation He opposed Scripture to the devil. Fifth, that He might weaken the tempter’s power, and rescue us from every temptation. Moreover in this especially He showed His incomprehensible condescension and humility, that He deigned to be so tempted by the demon as to be led or taken by the devil from place to place. Let us therefore in every temptation call on Christ with confidence, that by the virtue and merit of His temptation He may strengthen us and make us overcome; for the Apostle also says to the Hebrews: “Wherefore it behoved Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest before God. For in that wherein He Himself hath suffered and been tempted, He is able to succour them also that are tempted” (Heb. 2:17, 18). Let us therefore follow the condescension and humility of Christ, all indignation of pride being cast away.

“And He ate nothing in those days,” that is, within these forty days He took no bodily food. He did not fast, then, as we do, who are refreshed once daily. That He wished first to abstain when about to contend with the devil makes plain that for those who wish to overthrow the temptations of demons it is needful to withdraw the flesh from the pleasures of taste and touch, as the Apostle says: “I chastise my body, and bring it into subjection” (1 Cor. 9:27); and again, “They that are Christ’s have crucified their flesh with the vices and concupiscences” (Gal. 5:24).

“And when they were ended, He was hungry,” that is, after the end of the forty days Christ straightway suffered hunger: and perhaps a great one, for our progress and advantage. For what He suffered for us He suffered in abundance, from the greatness of His charity toward us, and for the manifold fruit flowing from it to us. Hence Christ says in the Psalm: “My knees are weakened through fasting, and my flesh is changed for oil” (Ps. 108:24), *(p. 463)* that is, for want of oil; and again, “I humbled my soul with fasting” (Ps. 34:13).

Finally, Moses and Elias fasted as long as Christ, eating nothing and drinking nothing (Exod. 34:28; 3 Kings 19:8); yet they are not read to have hungered, though they are believed to have hungered afterwards. But

Christ did not will to fast longer than His aforesaid ministers, lest the devil should form a greater estimate of His divinity; and also for a mystical reason, because the number forty befits penance: for it consists of ten taken four times, and so designates the chastisement of man, composed of four elements, with the observance of the Decalogue according to the doctrine of the four Gospels; and again, because by fasting so many days we offer to God the tithes of the days of the year (according to Gregory), to whom we are commanded to offer the tithes of other things also; moreover, to teach that singularity and ostentation are to be avoided.

He hungered, however, not from infirmity or necessity of nature, but by divine dispensation and His own will. For although, speaking commonly, it is wonderful and supernatural for a man to subsist so long without any food or drink, nevertheless in Christ it was more wonderful that afterwards He hungered than that meanwhile He ate nothing. To understand which one must know that after the future resurrection the bodies of the Blessed will be most perfectly subject to the glorified souls at their command, so that, from the overflow of the beatitude of the souls into the bodies, those bodies will be adorned with four dowries, namely clarity, agility, subtlety, and impassibility. Since, therefore, the soul of Christ from the beginning of its creation enjoyed God pre-eminently above all intellectual creatures, and was blessed as to the essential reward, it is certain that from the overflow of His beatitude into the body it could have been preserved, and would have been preserved, from all passion and bodily discomfort, had not, God so ordaining, that overflow been deferred and suspended until its time, namely until the resurrection. He did not need food, therefore, except by that will with which He suspended the overflow. Again, He took hunger to show true humanity in Himself; likewise, that through the penalty of His hunger He might merit for us great grace and satiety of the soul. For every affliction of His was meritorious for us. Again, that He might present to the devil an occasion for tempting Him, as a most strong boxer provokes his adversary to the encounter. Hence the Gloss asserts: “The hunger of Christ is a pious fraud, lest the devil should beware of tempting Him.” That hunger was a fraud, then, not as though it were not true hunger, but because it concealed the divinity and deceived the demon.

But from this, that the devil set about tempting Christ after baptism and the fast, it becomes known that he strives especially to hinder and overcome a man when he sees him beginning to make progress and inflamed with some more fervent desire of doing good. Therefore it is taught in Ecclesiasticus: “Son, when thou comest to the service of God, stand in justice and in fear, and prepare thy soul for temptation” (Ecclus. 2:1). By the fact, moreover, that Christ is not read to have been tempted except when He entered the desert, it is designated that he chiefly strives to cast down those who study perfection and endeavor to be free for God, all frequenting of men left behind. Hence, according to the doctors, the solitary life, namely that which is wholly solitary, and outside a monastery or congregation or society, is perilous, most of all for the imperfect. Lastly, by the fact that the demon assailed Christ when the wonderful and long fast was completed, it is shown that he labors to tempt the virtuous and religious with spiritual vices even then, when he has seen carnal vices overcome by them. Let us never, therefore, be secure and improvident, but always fearful and circumspect, as it is written in Ecclesiasticus: “Unless thou hold thyself diligently in the fear of the Lord, thy house shall quickly be overthrown” (Ecclus. 27:4).

Next the course of the temptation is described. *“And the devil said to Him”* (Luke 4:3). This devil is said by many to have been that first apostate angel, who is called Lucifer. *“If thou be the Son of God.” (p. 464)* The devil knew that in the Scriptures virtuous men as well as holy angels are called sons of God. When therefore he says to Christ, “If thou be the Son of God,” he means the only-begotten Son of the eternal Father—whether, namely, Christ is that unique and natural Son of God, of whose incarnation, coming, and passion the devil knew the Prophets had spoken. Nor did he doubt of the holiness of Jesus, but of His true divinity. *“Command this stone,”* that is, by thy own authority, commanding, act, that this stone lying here, *“be made bread,”* that is, be converted into bread.

First the devil tempted Christ with the vice of gluttony, by the changing of a stone into bread, because he had seen that Christ was hungry, and so [text unclear] more inclined to desire for bread [text unclear]. Finally, in none of the three temptations did he tempt Christ with anything manifestly dishonorable or vicious, because he knew His holiness, and therefore did not trust that by anything of that sort he could at once lead Him on. The demon is also very astute. For he did not say, "Ask God to turn this stone into bread," or "Beg of me that I do this"; but said, "Command"—that is, by an imperative or imperial word do this. For the tempter knew that thus to change the natures of things is proper to God, of whom the Psalmist says, "He spoke and they were made" (Ps. 32:9; 148:5); to whom in the book of Wisdom it is said, "For to be able to do it is at thy command, when thou wilt" (Wis. 12:18). So the tempter thought: If He can thus convert the stone into bread, I shall know that He is the Only-begotten of God and true God; but if He cannot, it will be plain to me that He is a mere man. — Moreover, in Matthew it is read that he said to Christ: "Say that these stones be made bread" (Matt. 4:3). Either, then, Luke puts the singular for the plural, or Matthew the plural for the singular: both of which are often done in Scripture.

Furthermore, according to Ambrose, from the fact that the devil, spying and tempting, says to Christ, "If thou be the Son of God," it is certain that he knew the Son of God was to come, but did not suppose this to be Jesus, on account of the infirmity of body which he perceived in Him. Chrysostom, however, affirms that the devil heard the angels singing glory to God at Christ's nativity (Luke 2:13), and the angel announcing to the shepherds, "For this day is born to you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11); and likewise that he saw the three Magi adoring the Child, and Simeon and Anna and John the Baptist bearing testimonies to Jesus Christ; and from the prophecy of Daniel on the number of the weeks (Dan. 9:24–27) he knew the time of Christ's coming to be fulfilled; and from the oracles of the other Prophets he knew that Christ is God; from all which he vehemently thought that Jesus was the Christ, the Only-begotten of God. But on the other hand, seeing Him baptized among the common people and sinners, and worn out with hunger, he doubted and wavered how such a one could be God; therefore, probing the truth, he said, "If thou be the Son of God." Hence others say that the devil could not believe lowly things in God.

But concerning these words no small doubts occur. For since the devil is of so great subtlety and knowledge, he knows most certainly that holy angels never lie, nay cannot lie. If then he heard the aforesaid testimonies of the angels about Christ's birth accomplished, and saw that the Magi adored that Child whom an angel asserted to be Christ, he in no way doubted that Jesus was the Christ. Again, as from the sayings of the Prophets he knew that the Son of God would be incarnate, so also from the same he knew that He would suffer for the salvation of the world, nay be killed by a most ignominious death. For this was most openly foretold in Isaias, and in the psalm that begins, "O God, my God, look upon me: why hast thou forsaken me?" (Isa. 53; Ps. 21). It appears, therefore, that he would not have judged that Jesus was not the Christ because He bore abject things; especially since he knew that Christ would converse among men and live in great poverty, as was said in Zacharias and Baruch (Zach. 9:9; Bar. 3:38); nay, at the time of Christ's passion, seeing His ineffable patience, he suggested to Pilate's wife to persuade Pilate: "Have nothing to do with that just man" (Matt. 27:19). *(p. 465)*

For these reasons and many like them which I could adduce, I do not see what could more aptly be answered to solve this difficulty than what Augustine asserts in the ninth book *On the City of God*, chapter 21: "To the demons," he says, "Jesus Christ made Himself known only as far as He willed; and He willed as far as was fitting, that is, as was expedient, namely as far as it was needful for the proud to know. He made Himself known to them, too, not by that which is eternal life and unchangeable light, but by certain temporal effects or works of His power, and most hidden signs of His presence, which can be conspicuous to the angelic minds even of malignant spirits rather than to human infirmity." Finally, when Christ judged that these should be somewhat suppressed, and lay hidden somewhat more deeply, then the prince of demons doubted about Him, and tempted Him, probing whether He were Christ, so far as He Himself permitted Himself to be

tempted, that the man whom He bore He might temper into an example for our imitation.

From these words of blessed Augustine it is plain that the demon had as much knowledge of Christ as Christ permitted. Whence I also think that the devil, from the things already adduced and from other various words, deeds, and signs of Christ, would have known certainly and firmly that Jesus is the Christ, had Christ permitted it, most of all when Christ afterwards openly taught that He was the Only-begotten of God and true God, and confirmed this by miracles possible to God alone. Such things would not have escaped the devil, had Christ permitted. Nevertheless Christ is said to have done some things lest the devil should know that He was already born; and yet some of them were not such but that, had Christ permitted, the devil, notwithstanding them, would have known that Christ was already born, and that Jesus is the Christ. For it is commonly said that He willed His Mother, though a virgin, to be betrothed to a man, lest the Mother's virginity be open to the devil, and so he should recognize the Virgin's Son as Christ; and yet, that betrothal notwithstanding, the devil by his natural industry would have well explored, and known, whether the Mother of Jesus were a virgin, as the doctors evidently show. Whence the fact that this lay hid from the demon was because he was divinely prohibited, nor permitted to explore. So to the point I say that the aforesaid testimonies of angels and holy men concerning Christ became known to the devil just so far as God willed and permitted: by whose moderation it came about that the devil often so wavered from the consideration of diverse things around Christ and His acts. — These things I have inserted at some length, because they will often have a place below, when it is inquired how the demons and the Jews knew that Jesus was the Christ.

Lastly, this too is to be noted, that Augustine contends Christ was tempted by the prince of demons. Hence it is commonly said that He was tempted by Lucifer, and that he, conquered by Christ, was thrust down into hell, and will not come out except at the coming of Antichrist, of whom he will be the possessor in all things and the director.

"And Jesus answered him" (Luke 4:4): *"It is written in Deuteronomy: Not in bread alone doth man live"* (Deut. 8:3)—that is, man does not need, subsist, and is not sustained by bodily food alone, *"but in every word of God,"* that is, by the divine words or utterances of Sacred Scripture, or by the interior inspirations of God, or secret addresses. As, then, man as to the body and the conservation of natural life needs bodily nourishment, so as to the soul and the obtaining or conservation of the life of grace he needs the word of God, which is rightly asserted to be the food of the soul. For spiritually the word of God does in the soul what bread or other material food does bodily in the flesh. Material food restores what is lost, strengthens nature, brings it to due quantity, preserves in life: so the divine words lead the mind to penance, by which lost time and omitted goods are recovered; they strengthen the interior powers of the soul, according to that of the Machabees: *(p. 466)* "Judas armed every one of them, not with shield and spear, but with very good speeches and exhortations" (2 Mach. 15:11). Moreover the word of God brings to the due measure or quantity of spiritual progress, now by exhorting, now by threatening, now by coaxing, now by commanding, now by counselling, as the Apostle says: "All Scripture, inspired of God, is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice: that the man of God may be perfect, furnished to every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16, 17). Finally, it preserves the soul in the life of grace and the acts of virtues. And briefly, the word of God roots out the death of sin, namely errors, passions, and vices, and every evil, and disposes to every virtue, confers and leads to it, consoles, illuminates, directs, as the Psalmist says: "Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my paths" (Ps. 118:105); and again, "I have delighted in the way of Thy testimonies, as in all riches" (Ps. 118:14). Hence in the book of Wisdom it is read: "It is not the growth of fruits that nourishes men, but Thy word preserves them that believe in Thee" (Wis. 16:26).

The devil, conquered in the first temptation, assails another, tempting Christ with ambition and avarice, knowing that many who flee the vices of taste and touch, or of gluttony and lust, are overcome and perish by ambition and avarice. *"And the devil led Him into a high mountain"* (Luke 4:5). Matthew asserts that he "took Him up" (Matt. 4:8). Hence some think that flying through the air he carried Him; which does not

seem so, especially because it is commonly said, and is probable, that the devil approached Christ in the first temptation in human form—nay, in the appearance of a religious man or hermit—that by simulated sanctity he might the sooner deceive Him; and he seems to have kept this appearance in the second temptation, in which he still tempted Christ under the appearance of good: and I say this of the second temptation according to the order in which Matthew recites these three temptations. For Matthew puts as third the one which Luke commemorates in second place: in which the devil showed himself to be malignant, as his words declare.

"And showed Him all the kingdoms of the world," that is, certain kingdoms out of all the kingdoms of the world; or, he showed Him all the kingdoms, not to the bodily eye but to the intellectual, setting before Him the species and dispositions of the kingdoms, or recalling their desirable things. Further, according to Theophilus, he showed Him all the kingdoms in a phantasy: and perhaps by phantasy Theophilus means an imaginary vision. Chrysostom, however, imagines that he showed Him the nearer kingdoms to the sight as far as possible, and the rest by some indication, as if someone standing with another should stretch out his finger toward different quarters of the world, saying: "Behold there is France, there Italy." The letter seems to agree more with this manner: for he led Christ into a high mountain that the place might suit the temptation. The other showings he could have made in a valley as on a mountain. These things, then, he showed Christ *"in a moment of time,"* that is, very quickly or in a very short time, not in an instant, at least as to all the things that surrounded that showing. He showed so many objects at once, moreover, that they might the more strongly move and allure His appetite.

"And he said to Him: To thee will I give all this power" (Luke 4:6)—that is, the power of all those kingdoms; I will subject to Thee their strongholds and peoples, and will make Thee monarch of the world, or appoint Thee king of all these, *"and the glory of them"*—their glory, delights, fame, and honor, so that all will revere Thee and Thou wilt delight in Thy possession, all things subject to Thee; *"for to me they are delivered."* The devil lies in this, although in some way the word can be verified, especially since Christ in John calls the devil the prince of this world (John 14:30), and the Apostle writes of the same: "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of unbelievers" (2 Cor. 4:4). If therefore by "kingdoms" are understood the inhabitants of the kingdoms, especially the wicked, they have been delivered to the devil, that is, by the just judgment of God they have been permitted to be subjected to the devil, and tempted, conquered, possessed, or held captive by him, according to that of the Apostle: "That they may recover themselves from the snares of the devil, by whom they are held captive at his will" (2 Tim. 2:26). *(p. 467)* Hence he is also called the king of the impious, as it is had in Job: "He is king over all the children of pride" (Job 41:25). Nay, these are more truly said to deliver themselves to the devil, in that they spontaneously consent to him. But if by "kingdoms" are understood the regions, cities, wealth, and like possessions of those dwelling on the earth, such things, like the men themselves, have generally been delivered to the devil, not to the right of ruling and possessing but for the use of tempting, as holy Job also was delivered to the demon, the Lord saying to Satan, "Behold, he is in thy hand" (Job 2:6). *"And to whom I will, I give them."* This again he uttered mendaciously; nor is it wonderful, since the Savior says of him: "He stood not in the truth, because truth is not in him; when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar, and the father thereof" (John 8:44). Nevertheless by divine permission the devil frequently co-operates with men in obtaining earthly things and the dominions of the world. For which reason Ambrose says: "Ambition lies subject to the devilish power."

"If thou therefore wilt adore before me" (Luke 4:7), that is, if thou wilt suppliantly adore me myself in my presence, *"all shall be thine,"* all the kingdoms of the world shall be thine. Behold how great and how inveterate and hardened is the pomp of the devil. Of old he was driven from heaven on account of his pride, because he said, "I will be like the Most High" (Isa. 14:14); and now again he wishes to be likened to Him, requiring to be given the worship which befits and is due to the Most High alone; nay, he seeks this from Him who is truly the Most High.

And although the devil did not know with certainty that He to whom he said these things was the Most High, yet he suspected this very thing, at least in the first temptation, and so put himself in danger of demanding adoration from the Most High and of preferring himself to Him: so great is the impudence of the devil, and his greed for divine honors, born of his intolerable pride. His impiety and blindness many proud and ambitious men follow, as the Wise Man asserts: "They imitate him that are of his side" (Wis. 2:25).

"And Jesus answering said to him" (Luke 4:8): *"It is written in Deuteronomy: The Lord thy God shalt thou adore"* (Deut. 6:13)—to whom, as to the Most High Prince and greatest benefactor, able to save by His own power, supreme and singular honor is due, namely the worship of latria, interior and exterior. Since thou, therefore, devil, art a creature and not God, why dost thou require to be adored? Sometimes, however, adoration is taken for the honor or reverence of dulia, and so is shown to creatures. Hence in the Scriptures some are frequently read to have adored men or angels, as Josue the angel, and Nathan the prophet King David (Josh. 5:15; 3 Kings 1:23). *"And Him only shalt thou serve."* If this be taken of the service of latria, as the expositors commonly take it, it is plain that God alone is to be served with the service of latria. Latria, moreover, is the virtue which renders to God worship and ceremony; dulia the virtue which renders to created persons the due or fitting honor. But if the aforesaid word be understood of any service whatever, the sense is that God alone is to be served for His own sake and as the final end: so that whatever service is shown to creatures, all of it is referred to God's honor, and done on account of His ordinance and will, as when we minister to a man, we serve not so much the man as God in the man. Hence Samuel says: "Prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve Him only" (1 Kings 7:3).

Next, according to the order of this narration, the third temptation is set down, which was of pride, boasting, or vain glory. *"And he brought Him into Jerusalem"* (Luke 4:9). For since he wished to tempt Christ with arrogance and vanity, he brought Him to the city, the metropolis or chief of all Judea, where there was greater occasion, or stronger incitement, to desire human praise. *"And he set Him upon a pinnacle of the temple,"* that is, upon a certain level walk which was above the temple or its gate, on which the priests sat when they preached to the people. For there he was wont to lead the masters of the Jews into manifold vanity. Now as to the manner *(p. 468)* in which he brought Christ—whether he flew with Him through the air, or led Him hand in hand, or bore Him in his arms or on his shoulders—I wrote on Matthew. Origen, however, says here: "Christ plainly followed, as an athlete going to the contest of his own accord, and as it were saying: 'Lead me where thou wilt, thou shalt find me stronger in all things.'"

"And he said to Him: If thou be the Son of God," namely in the sense explained, *"cast thyself down from hence,"* that is, hurl thyself down from this high place in the sight of the bystanders, that seeing thee fall without injury, or fly without a fall, they may wonder and praise thee, and thou mayest be held great by all hereafter, thou who hast hitherto lain hidden in a manner. *"For it is written"* (Luke 4:10) that *"He hath given His angels charge over thee"* (Ps. 90:11)—that is, God the Father has committed and commanded to the holy angels—that they bestow on thee what is subjoined: *"that they keep thee"*—that is, preserve thee from every injury or harm. What was against the devil he craftily kept silent. For the Psalmist says thus: "That they may keep thee in all thy ways." The devil, therefore, suggesting a vain precipice, was dumb about "ways," lest his fraudulence be exposed. *"And in their hands shall they bear thee up"* (Luke 4:11)—that is, shall uphold and defend thee by their powers and acts, or bear thee bodily if it be opportune—*"lest perhaps thou dash thy foot against a stone,"* that is, lest any hindrance or harm meet thee or stand against thee. This Scripture the devil alleges with apparent but impertinent force and to a false understanding: first, because that psalm, and this alleged Scripture, does not speak literally of Christ, but of His members, the elect faithful, according to Jerome. Christ did not need the guard or help of angels, especially since He was also a comprehensor according to the superior powers of the soul, and higher and more powerful than all angels, not only as God but also according to the human nature, on account of its suppositual union with the Word. Moreover, this Scripture is not to be understood as though the elect in this life are preserved or rescued by angelic guard

from the evils of penalty, adversities, and torments, though sometimes this happens: “Many are the afflictions of the just” (Ps. 33:20); but they are guarded by angels from the evils of fault above all, and also from some bodily harms.

On this place Origen speaks: “Whence, devil, dost thou know that these things are written? Hast thou read the Prophets, or the divine oracles? Thou hast read, indeed, not that thou mightest be made better by reading them, but that from the bare letter thou mightest slay those who are friends of the letter. Thou knowest that if thou wilt speak to them out of other volumes, thou wilt not deceive. But see how the devil is a shape-shifter even in the very testimonies. For he wishes to diminish the glory of the Savior, as though He needed the help of angels, about to dash His foot unless He were lifted by their hands. For this testimony is written not of Christ but of the Saints generally: for he does not need the help of angels who is greater than the angels. Nay, rather learn, devil, that unless Jesus helped the angels, they would dash their foot. Why dost thou keep silent on what follows, ‘Upon the asp and the basilisk thou shalt walk’ (Ps. 90:13)? Is it not because thou art the basilisk, thou the dragon, thou the lion?” So Origen.

“And Jesus answering said to him” (Luke 4:12): *“It is said,”* God speaking by Moses in Deuteronomy: *“Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God”* (Deut. 6:16). Christ uttered this not by calling Himself the devil’s God, although He was his Creator, God, and Lord, nor by directly rebuking the devil for having dared to tempt Christ his Creator: for He did not wish to insinuate to the devil that He was God. But this is the sense: Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God—that is, O man, whoever thou art, do not presume to tempt God.

Now to tempt God is, without necessity, to take experiment of His wisdom, providence, or power, as by omitting what one has or can have from elsewhere. Man also tempts God in many ways: first, by inquiring, or taking experiment *(p. 469)* of His wisdom, whether He knows all things; or of His providence, whether He governs human things or is present to those who serve Him, as in Exodus it is written of the children of Israel: “They tempted the Lord, saying: Is the Lord amongst us or not?” (Exod. 17:7); or of God’s omnipotence, according to that of the Psalmist: “They tempted God in their hearts. … And they spoke against God: they said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?” (Ps. 77:18, 19). Moreover this is done by unduly experiencing the will of God, as those who wish to try whether God will deliver them within a determined time, so that afterwards they await His help only if He has succored them in the meantime, according to that of Judith: “Who are you that tempt the Lord? … You have set a time for the Lord’s mercy, and in your own judgment have appointed him a day” (Judith 8:11, 13). Again it is done by unduly experiencing what a man can do with God: and this the devil persuaded to Christ. These things are therefore to be avoided so long as one has something else to do, and by which to provide for himself or to know the truth. But if he has not, or cannot obtain it from elsewhere, then let him turn to God with confidence, as it is written: “As we know not what to do, we can only turn our eyes to thee” (2 Par. 20:12). Since, then, from the pinnacle of the temple to the ground there was a descent by steps, to cast oneself down from the pinnacle would have pertained to tempting God.

“And all the temptation being ended” (Luke 4:13) that has been told: for the other temptations too are reduced to these. And in these three temptations is the matter of all offences, according to Ambrose, and the origin of all vices, according to the Gloss, according to that of John: “All that is in the world is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life” (1 John 2:16). *“The devil departed from Him,”* as one conquered and frustrated of his desired end, because he remained uncertain about the divinity of Christ, and whether He were the Messias promised in the law. *“He departed”* however *“for a time”*: for afterwards he tempted Him again, when he led the Jews on to persecute Him; and most of all at the time of the passion he assailed Him through his vessels, namely through wicked men; nay, even then he dared to approach Christ, as He protests in John: “The prince of this world cometh, and in me he hath not anything” (John 14:30). Finally the ancient enemy often leaves even us untempted for a time, that meanwhile we may be loosened by vain security, torpor, or idleness, and grow lukewarm, and so, returning

unexpectedly and suddenly, may more easily overthrow us. Let us therefore be unceasingly guarded and circumspect; and, delivered from every temptation, let us await another straightway; and let us always stand ready against the battle-line of vices and armed with the virtues, as Augustine exhorts: “Persevere unto the end, because temptation perseveres unto the end.” Moreover some say that a demon once conquered by a man never tempts the same man again, or at least never again tempts him with the same sin. Against whom seems to stand what the Evangelist says here, namely that the devil departed from Christ “for a time”: whereby he intimates that afterwards he tempted Him again, either himself or through his ministers.

Lastly, of this threefold temptation of Christ and the order of the same many things could be said here, which, because I have written them on Matthew, I now pass over. *(p. 470)*

Article XI. Continuation of the exposition of this chapter, from the place where it is said: “And Jesus returned in the power of the spirit into Galilee” (Luke 4:14).

Christ’s action is held to be our instruction. What manner of man the teacher and preacher of the heavenly word ought to be is therefore shown by this course of the life of Christ. For He did not begin to preach until about the thirtieth year of His age, and after baptism, and after the eremitical conversation, and abstinence, and the overcoming of the demon: to intimate that the preacher and teacher ought to be of mature age, and cleansed from vices. For to the sinner God said: “Why dost thou declare my justices?” (Ps. 49:16). He will also be exercised in virtues, that he may first do what he teaches others, as it is said of Christ in the Acts: “Jesus began to do and to teach” (Acts 1:1). He ought also to have conquered the temptations of the devil and the wantonness of the flesh, as the Apostle says: “I chastise my body, and bring it into subjection: lest perhaps, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway” (1 Cor. 9:27). Whence of Christ it is now said:

“And Jesus returned” (Luke 4:14), that is, after His temptations and fasts in the desert He went back to men, to teach them what He Himself had done, *“in the power of the spirit,”* that is, in the great power of the Holy Spirit, by which He began to work miracles; and also “in the power of the spirit,” that is, full of every virtue and gift of the Holy Spirit. And although He was full of this power and these virtues in His soul from the beginning of the incarnation, yet now it is written that He returned “in the power of the spirit,” because after His return from the desert He began to manifest most abundantly His holiness and might. “Power of the Spirit,” then, is the name given to the spiritual power of working signs, which is given by the Holy Spirit. Whence in the books of Kings it is read that the spirit of Elias rested upon Eliseus (4 Kings 2:15).

Now of Christ, as He is God, and of the Holy Spirit there is one power, one omnipotence, and as to this Christ worked miracles by uncreated and proper power: which power is common to the whole most blessed Trinity, to which it belongs to work miracles authoritatively, imperially, and principally, according to that: “Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone doth wonderful things” (Ps. 71:18). Besides this uncreated power there was in Christ, according to the assumed nature, a power over every creature: of which He says elsewhere, “All power is given to me in heaven and in earth” (Matt. 28:18); which was a created power, and given by the Holy Spirit, nay by the whole most glorious Trinity: of which the Evangelist now seems chiefly to speak. Besides, Augustine in the book *On the City of God* raises the question whether the Saints worked miracles by some power existing in them, divinely granted to them, so that they effectively co-operated in the miraculous effects (*City of God* 22.8). And so it could be inquired of Christ whether besides the uncreated divine power there was in Him a created power productive of miracles: and it can be said that for working miracles it suffices to posit in Him the aforesaid twofold virtue or power. But concerning the power of Christ’s soul—whether it had omnipotence, and what power it had in respect of the changing of creatures, and as to His own body, and likewise as to the execution of His own will—St. Thomas speaks in the third part, question 13, and it will perhaps be touched below.

"And He returned into Galilee," from which He had come, and from which He had gone to John's baptism, *"and the fame of Him went out through the whole country"* of Galilee, on account of His wisdom, eloquence, holiness, and *(p. 471)* miracles, which He then began to work. I judge also that the testimony of the Precursor, so illustrious and credible, made Him not a little famous, which many of the Galileans had heard. Whence, since after that testimony Christ straightway entered the desert, when they saw Him returning they remembered the words of John. *"And He taught in their synagogues"* (Luke 4:15). For the "synagogue" was called either the very assembly of the Jews, or the house in which they came together to pray or to hear the reading of the law and the Prophets. There, then, He preached as a master of great authority, and because there was greater hearing there. *"And was magnified"*—that is, was reputed to be of great wisdom and power—*"by all."*

"And He came to Nazareth, where He was brought up" (Luke 4:16). For there He was conceived, and in boyhood dwelt until the time when He went to John's baptism, as was said above. *"And He went into the synagogue, according to His custom, on the sabbath day"*: since on that solemn day the Jews more assembled to hear the word of God and to entreat the face of the Lord, as Christians now do on the Lord's day. For on feast days there is a cessation from exterior occupation so that men may attend more quietly and devoutly to divine exercises, and amend and correct what on weekdays they have sinned by omission or commission, and recover lost time. It was Christ's custom, therefore, to enter the synagogue then, because then He found more hearers, and because He wished to approve the good customs of others and conform Himself to them, especially since a laudable custom obtains the force of law, according to Augustine.

"And He rose up to read," that is, by rising He disposed Himself to read, and showed that He wished to read: that from the Scripture itself He might take, as it were, the theme of His sermon; likewise to insinuate that the preacher and teacher ought to found his discourse on sacred Scripture; and again, that by the testimony of the Scriptures He might prove that He was to be heard, and establish that He is the Christ; lastly, that He might fulfil and approve one of the minor Orders, namely the Order and office of lector: as He also fulfilled the office of exorcist by casting out demons; of acolyte or taper-bearer, by protesting, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12); and of doorkeeper, by casting the buyers and sellers out of the temple (John 2:15). And so it is plain that Christ by four of His acts approved the offices of the four lower Orders; therefore no one, however great in life or knowledge, ought to disdain receiving these Orders or performing their offices, since "the servant is not greater than his lord" (John 13:16). *"And the book of Isaias the prophet was delivered unto Him"* by the ministers of the synagogue, whose office it was to read: and perhaps they wondered that He wished to read, knowing that He had not learned letters. *"And as He unfolded the book, He found the place where it was written."* Christ, not only by divine and uncreated knowledge, but also by the knowledge of His soul infused in Him from the beginning of its creation, most distinctly knew all created things, however small and great: therefore it is certain that He knew how many leaves, how many lines, how many words were contained in the book, and where each passage stood. Whence at the first stroke He found the passage He wished, not by chance, surely, but deliberately.

"The Spirit of the Lord" (Isa. 61:1)—that is, the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of the Father, nay of the Father and the Son as of one principle and one fount and spirator of the Holy Spirit; of whom it is written, "The Spirit of the Lord hath replenished the whole world" (Wis. 1:7), and of whom the Apostle says, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor. 3:17)—*"is upon me,"* that is, has come down from above upon me, and is dwelling in me according as I am man. For the soul of Christ was full of the Holy Spirit from the beginning of the incarnation: whence the Holy Spirit by the indwelling of His gifts is said to have rested upon Christ the man, according to that of Isaias: "And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him: the spirit of wisdom and of understanding" (Isa. 11:2). Moreover He was and rested upon Christ as mover, leader, and instructor, or inclinator of Christ in all things according to the assumed nature, *(p. 472)* which was the most chosen and most obedient instrument or organ of the Holy Spirit, nay of the whole Trinity, following the

divine instinct in all things, as He testifies in John: “For I do always the things that please Him” (John 8:29).

“Wherefore He hath anointed me”—that is, because it pleased the Holy Spirit so to come and rest upon me, therefore He has spiritually watered, steeped, and filled me, the man, with the fullness of grace and virtues, as it is written, “God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness” (Ps. 44:8), and in the Acts, “God anointed Him with the Holy Ghost and with power” (Acts 10:38). And thus what he says, “Wherefore,” states the cause *a priori*. It can also note the cause *a posteriori*, so that the sense is: “Wherefore He hath anointed me,” that is, from this, that the Spirit of the Lord so was and is upon me, it is plain and proved and follows that He hath anointed me, as a cause is shown by its effect. Finally, Christ was full not only of the gifts of grace that makes pleasing, but also of gratuitous graces: whence He is also said to have been anointed as king, as priest or pontiff, and as Prophet. And all this was done at the beginning of the incarnation. If it be read as done afterwards, it must be understood as to manifestation: nay, as on the day of Parasceve He offered Himself as priest, an oblation and victim to God for an odor of sweetness (Eph. 5:2) in effect, so affectually He began to do this from the beginning of the creation of His soul, and from then began to be mediator and reconciler, intercessor and pontiff between God and men. Moreover He was anointed as the temple or tabernacle of the Divinity, because, as the Apostle says, “in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead corporeally” (Col. 2:9). Christ also says in John to the Jews: “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” But He spoke of the temple of His body, as the Evangelist expounds (John 2:19, 21). In figure of this anointing the anointing of the tabernacle is written in Leviticus (Lev. 8:10); of the pontifical anointing, it is had in the same book (Lev. 8:12); of the others, in the books of Kings (1 Kings 10:1; 16:13; 3 Kings 19:16).

“To preach the gospel to the poor He hath sent me” (Luke 4:18), that is, to preach the heavenly kingdom to the humble: which He did, saying, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 5:3). According to Origen, by the poor are understood the Gentiles or nations, possessing nothing spiritually at all, neither God, nor law, nor Prophets, nor justice, nor the other virtues. To these Christ preached the Gospel through the Apostles, to some also, though few, through Himself, as the Evangelists testify. Whence Paul too, speaking of Christ: “And coming, He preached peace to you that were afar off, and to them that were nigh” (Eph. 2:17). It is to be noted besides that Luke alleges this place according to the translation of the Seventy interpreters. Jerome, however, translated partly otherwise, and for the word adduced said thus: “To announce to the meek He hath sent me.”

“To heal the contrite of heart.” By the contrite of heart Cyril understands the weak, having a fragile mind, and unable to resist the assaults of the passions. Basil, however, by the contrite of heart understands those who by sinning have been oppressed by Satan and spiritually destroyed. To these the Savior came to bring a saving remedy, by which sins may be cured and happiness obtained, according to what He says: “The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). For He instituted the sacrament of Baptism as the first plank after shipwreck, and the sacrament of Penance as the second plank after shipwreck. Again, the contrite of heart can be understood as the truly penitent, according to that, “A contrite and humbled heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise” (Ps. 50:19): whom Christ came to heal by grace. For although, insofar as they are contrite, they are already healed of the very wound of sin or fault, nevertheless they need to be cured of the effect and remnants of sin, which are proneness to evil and weakness toward relapse: which is done chiefly by the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, which descend from the head Christ into His members. Indeed as God He gives them efficiently, creatively, and authoritatively, but as man mediator He gives them as an instrumental cause superabundantly meritorious. *(p. 473)*

“To preach deliverance to the captives” (Luke 4:18), that is, to those entangled in the bonds of vices, *“remission,”* that is, indulgence, provided they truly repent. This Christ did by saying: “Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matt. 4:17). Of this captivity Solomon says in Proverbs: “His own iniquities catch the wicked, and he is held with the cords of his own sins” (Prov. 5:22). For sin exercises the worst

tyranny, leading to evils and confounding those who acquiesce. There is also a good captivity, of which the Apostle says: “Bringing into captivity every understanding unto the obedience of Christ” (2 Cor. 10:5). Theophilus understands by the captives those detained in limbo: who at Christ’s rising were led out by the price of His blood, having obtained release from the guilt of original sin, as in Zacharias it is said to Christ: “Thou also, by the blood of Thy testament, hast sent forth Thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water” (Zach. 9:11). *“And sight to the blind”* he preached also: that is, the spiritual illumination of the interior sight for the Gentiles, or for any who have been blinded by error, ignorance, or vices. Whence Christ protests in the Gospel: “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me walketh not in darkness” (John 8:12). To whom the Father spoke through Isaias: “I have given Thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles: that Thou mightest open the eyes of the blind, and bring forth the prisoner out of prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house” (Isa. 42:6, 7).

“To set at liberty them that are bruised”—that is, wearied by adversities, or pressed by the burdens of the legal observances—*“to deliver them into remission,”* that is, to spiritual consolation and relief. For Christ has lightened us from the observance of the ceremonial precepts of the law by the grace of the evangelical law, according to that: “Why tempt you God to put a yoke upon the necks of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? But by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we believe to be saved” (Acts 15:10, 11). Hence in Matthew the Savior says: “Come to me, all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you” (Matt. 11:28).

“To preach the acceptable year of the Lord” (Luke 4:19), that is, the time of grace, or of the evangelical law, in which God bore Himself most benignly to the human race. Of this the Apostle says: “Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. 6:2); and Isaias: “In an acceptable time have I heard thee” (Isa. 49:8). How Christ did this is shown in Mark, in which it is read: “Now after that John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying: The time is accomplished, and the kingdom of God is at hand” (Mark 1:14, 15). Of this most gracious time the Apostle writes: “But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent His Son” (Gal. 4:4); and in the Acts Peter: “All the prophets from Samuel and afterwards have told of these days” (Acts 3:24). Some understand by the acceptable year the year in which Christ preached, chiefly in Judea, or the year of the Lord’s passion, in which God was appeased toward the human race. A time is called acceptable on account of the gracious and pious works which are done in it, as days are also called evil on account of the evils done in them.

“And the day of reward”—that is, of the last judgment, in which each is believed to receive what he has merited, as in the Apocalypse the Judge asserted: “Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to render to every man according to his works” (Apoc. 22:12). This day Christ frequently announced, as in John: “The hour cometh wherein all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God” (John 5:28). Some by the day of reward understand the day of eternal felicity of the elect in the fatherland. The aforesaid exposition, however, is reckoned more literal, because Jerome translated, “the day of vengeance”: which could nevertheless be taken of the time of the devastation of the Jews (on account of the sins committed against Christ), of which through Isaias Christ declares: “The day of vengeance is in my heart, the year of my redemption is come” (Isa. 63:4; cf. 61:2). For the same was the time of the most clement calling of the Gentiles, and of the most just forsaking and devastation of the Jews.

It is to be noted besides that sin brings very many evils on men: for it wounds the soul, enslaves it, blinds it, separates it from God, and deprives it of grace and glory. Therefore Christ declares that He came against the aforesaid evils. *(p. 474)* Whence John says: “For this purpose the Son of God appeared, that he might destroy the works of the devil” (1 John 3:8).

“And when He had folded the book” (Luke 4:20). From which it is plain that He handled the book of sacred Scripture reverently, and left us an example of so acting. On this Lyra says: “The Jews show this reverence to the books of the Old Testament, that they would in no way sit near them, sitting as high as those are placed:

whence it is clear that those Christians are very much to be reprehended who treat not only the books of the Old Testament but also of the New, and the sacred Gospels, so irreverently, and more irreverently than the books of condemned pagans; some theologians also allege the sayings of such with greater weight and more certain citation in the schools than the sayings of Christ and the Apostles." *"He restored it to the minister"*—perhaps to the one from whom He had received the book—*"and sat down,"* as master and doctor, to expound what He read. *"And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him"*: because He was delightful to behold, "beautiful in form above the sons of men" (Ps. 44:3), in whose face a certain splendor of interior perfection and grace shone: and by the sweetness of His eloquence also He drew their hearts. They wondered too at a new thing, and how He knew how to read who had not learned it from man. Such new, great, wonderful and unexpected things men look at diligently and with one accord. On this Origen speaks: "Now also, if we wish, our eyes can be fixed on the Savior: for when thou hast directed the principal part of thy heart to the truth of wisdom and to the contemplation of the Only-begotten of God, thy eyes behold Jesus."

"And He began to say to them" (Luke 4:21): *"This day is fulfilled this scripture in your ears"*—that is, by the fact that you have heard me, Christ, evangelizing you, and enlightening your hearts, and announcing the grace of divine benignity, there has been fulfilled in some way what was foretold in the aforesaid prophecy. By this word Christ taught that the sayings and promises of the Prophets at the coming of Christ are to be understood spiritually: namely of spiritual liberation from the power of the devil and the yoke of sin, not of bodily liberation from exterior and temporal captivity, in which the Jews are now held, from which they await to be led out at Christ's coming and to rule over all nations. For they have their understanding blinded by the thickest darkness of errors.

"And all gave testimony to Him" (Luke 4:22): that is, many of all who were present there testified that what Jesus had uttered was true, namely that the scripture of Isaias adduced was fulfilled in Him, and that He was the Christ promised in the law and the Prophets, although in that knowledge they were not yet confirmed; and they gave Him testimony, that is, bore good testimony of Him, that He was truly wise, gracious, virtuous, and great, and that John the Baptist had affirmed magnificent things of Him, and that Jesus Himself had now begun to work wonders. *"And they wondered at the words of grace"*—that is, the gracious, eloquent, most efficacious, and most wise discourses—*"that proceeded from His mouth"* in order and eloquence, as the Psalmist foretold: "Grace is poured abroad in thy lips" (Ps. 44:3). Whence in John His adversaries, compelled by the truth itself, were forced to say: "Never did man speak like this man" (John 7:46). Finally, "a good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things" (Matt. 12:35): therefore the fuller of grace the soul of Christ was, the more gracious were the words He brought forth. And so the words of Christ were words of grace: originally, because they flowed from grace; materially, because they treated of grace; formally, because they were gracious or adorned with the grace of eloquence; finally, because they tended to grace; and causally, because they conferred grace on the hearers by edifying them. To imitate which Paul exhorts us: "Let no evil speech proceed from your mouth: but that which is good, to the edification of faith, that it may administer grace to the hearers" (Eph. 4:29).

"And they said: Is not this the son of Joseph?" They spoke this scornfully, as if to say: Since He is the son of a simple and poor carpenter, it is not likely that so great excellence truly belongs to Him, or that He is the Christ, or works wonders. Whence in Matthew and Mark they are written to have said: "Is not this the carpenter's son?" (Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3). *(p. 475)* And this is a wonderful blindness and perversity, to despise someone on account of his parents' poverty, as though the grace of God were conferred on the rich rather than the poor, and not rather the contrary.

It is asked: since it was said just before, "All gave testimony to Him," how is it straightway subjoined of the same, "Is not this the son of Joseph?" For they who gave testimony to Him revered Him; these however spurned Him. To this two answers are made: first, that Scripture speaks of the same, namely the inhabitants

of Nazareth, and that they first honored Him on account of the aforesaid causes; but after a little, from other considerations, namely from attention to the poverty of His mother and putative father, they were moved to contempt and envy of Him. Others say that Scripture here speaks of different persons as though of the same, according to one of the seven rules of Tichonius for understanding the Scriptures: as also in the Psalm: "When he slew them, then they sought him, and returned, etc." (Ps. 77:34); for those who were slain did not return at dawn. Zacharias also: "You shall flee as you fled from the face of the earthquake in the days of Ozias king of Juda" (Zach. 14:5). It is certain that those who lived in the time of the prophet Zacharias, one of the twelve Prophets, did not live in the time of King Ozias, who died so many years before the Babylonian captivity. They say, therefore, that these words were uttered by Scribes and Pharisees touched with envy.

"And He said to them" (Luke 4:23), from charity wishing to amend their error: *"Doubtless you will say to me this similitude,"* that is, you will cast at me a vulgar proverb, or a metaphorical and parabolic saying, namely this: *"Physician, heal thyself"*—that is, you will oppose to me an objection taken from the similitude of a bodily physician, saying to me: O physician, who curest strangers, namely the sick of the city of Capharnaum, cure thyself, that is, thy fellow-citizens specially belonging to thee, dwelling in Nazareth. As if they said: Since thou dost not so act, it is concluded that thou bearest thyself either foolishly or disorderly, or that thy miracles are not true miracles.

Next Christ, explaining the parable introduced, states their tacit objection: for He knew what they were thinking. *"Whatever"*—that is, many and great miracles—*"we have heard done in Capharnaum, do also here in thy own country,"* that is, in Nazareth, situate in the country where thou wast conceived and brought up, do so great and such. But since Luke has recounted no miracles of Christ done in Capharnaum up to this place, why does he say that the Nazarenes uttered or conceived these words? And the answer is that Luke relates this by anticipation. Wherefore Augustine asserts: "Since Luke already commemorates that great things were done by Christ, which he knows he has not yet narrated, what is more evident than that he knowingly anticipated what was to be narrated?" So what is written here from that place inclusive, "And He came to Nazareth" (v. 16), up to what is read below in this chapter, "And He went down to Capharnaum" (v. 31), is an interposition which is called a parenthesis (from *para*, which is "beside," and *thesis*, "position," as it were a position beside the principal), and is not continued immediately with what precedes and follows according to the order of the event. Whence what is here said by Christ and the Nazarenes is interposed: it was not said immediately after the preceding, namely after Christ's reading in Isaias, but long after, when He had come from Capharnaum into Nazareth. Therefore Chrysostom says: "After much time and the showing of signs, He went to the Nazarenes." Some also affirm that Christ frequently came from Capharnaum into Nazareth.

Then the Savior answers the instance touched on. For He says: *"Amen,"* that is, truly, *"I say to you, that no prophet is accepted in his own country"* (Luke 4:24). — Against this it could be objected that King Ezechias and his people held the prophet Isaias in great honor, as is plain in the books of Kings; he obeyed him, *(p. 476)* according to that of Ecclesiasticus: "Ezechias walked strongly in the way of David his father, which Isaias the prophet commanded him, who was great" (4 Kings 19; 20; Ecclus. 48:25, 26). And did not David venerate the holy prophets Nathan and Gad, and the other seers of his kingdom and time (2 Kings 12; 24)? Yes, and King Josaphat, devout, said to his people: "Believe in his prophets, and all things shall succeed well" (2 Par. 20:20). Lastly, it was said a little before that all in Nazareth gave testimony to Christ. Below also it is had how all the people rejoiced for all the things that were gloriously done by Him (Luke 13:17).

And the answer is that Christ, master of truth and piety, lover also of community, and shunner of inordinate singularity, willingly conformed Himself in word and deed to the community in lawful and honorable things. Whence He adduces this proverb in that manner and sense in which Solomon in the book of Proverbs affirms many things, not because universally, everywhere and always, as to individuals, it is so, but because frequently it so happens. Christ, therefore, uttered these words because commonly holy Prophets are either

despised among their countrymen or less accepted. For citizens commonly envy citizens. Men also, as is frequent, take it ill when their peers are preferred to themselves, and are prone to consider him who excels according to what he was while he seemed like to them. Again, they do not apprehend the excellence of strangers as so diminishing or confounding to themselves as the excellence of those within; nay, they think it shameful that a familiar colleague, a fellow-citizen, outshines them so much. And this is true of men not yet purged, in whom pride, envy, and the other passions reign. But he who, his passions reformed, burns with the charity of God and neighbor, rejoices in the progress and spiritual eminence of his own; but since such are few, this rarely happens. For which reason many in a foreign land are more easily promoted and more honored and esteemed than in their own, as is plain of Joseph, Daniel, and Mardochaeus (Gen. 41:38; Dan. 2:48; Esther 10:3). To Ezechiel also the Lord says: "If thou wert sent to a people of strange speech, they would hear thee; but the house of Israel will not hearken to thee" (Ezech. 3:5–7). Hence Cyril says: "A certain common passion happens as if to all. For even the best things are in a manner always despised, when they do not rarely befall someone but are at hand at will, or frequently. For the familiar, because he is always present, is deprived by acquaintances of the reverence due." Yet what Ambrose says is to be weighed diligently: "In vain thou awaitest the help of heavenly mercy, if thou enviest the fruits of another's virtue. For the Lord is a scorner of the envious, and from those who persecute divine benefits in others He turns away the miracles of His power."

By the adduced word, therefore, Christ justly excuses Himself why He did not work such signs in Nazareth: namely that this happened not from His aversion from His fellow-citizens, but on account of their incredulity and malice, because they held Christ of little account and did not believe Him. Whence in Matthew and Mark it is had that He did not work many miracles there, because of their unbelief (Matt. 13:58; Mark 6:5, 6). And this Christ thereafter shows by two examples, namely how fellow-countrymen are deprived of the benefits of God on account of their malice, which nevertheless are communicated to strangers.

"In truth I say to you, there were many widows in Israel" (Luke 4:25)—that is, in the kingdom and Israelite people—"*in the days of Elias,"* that is, in the time when Elias lived and wrought among that people. Time is said to be God's, as of the Lord and creator and moderator of all times, as Boethius says: "Who bidding, and abiding steadfast, givest all things to be moved." But the day or time is said to be men's, as of those who are subject to time and are measured by time in duration and operation. Especially, however, a certain time is said to be that of him who in it was of more illustrious *(p. 477)* power, operation, or perfection. Hence the times of prelates and princes are described; nay, according to their succession the succession of times is determined. *"When heaven was shut up"*—that is, forbidden or suspended from its accustomed effect or influence, heaven both the aerial and the starry, or the orb of the planets—"*three years and six months."* For then at the prayers of Elias, within three years and six months rain did not descend from the aerial heaven upon the land of Israel, nor on certain neighboring places; the starry heaven also did not bestow influence in the accustomed way for the generation of rains, nor did the sun raise vapors in his customary course, God omnipotent commanding. "*When there was a great famine throughout all the earth."* From the lack of rain barrenness of the land arose, and hunger followed. Whence in the books of Kings it is read: "Elias said to Achab: As the Lord liveth, the God of Israel, in whose sight I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to the words of my mouth" (3 Kings 17:1). How great that famine was is described in the books of Kings (3 Kings 17:7; 18:2, 5). *"And to none of them was Elias sent"* by God (Luke 4:26): which was on account of their unworthiness and fault, or because they were less worthy than the widow of whom it is subjoined: *"but to Sarepta of Sidon."* Sarepta was a small city between Tyre and Sidon. Sidon was the city from which that region was called Sidonia. *"To a widow woman,"* who was a poor little woman, having one only son, whom Elias raised from the dead (3 Kings 17:9 ff.): and the Hebrews assert that he was the prophet Jonas. The exception, moreover, which is designated in this place by "but," is not to be referred to the widows of Israel, as though this Sidonian widow were of the number of Israelite widows, but to what is said, "was sent": so that the sense is that he was sent to none but to the widow of Sarepta, according to that: "The

word of the Lord came to Elias: Arise, and go to Sarepta of the Sidonians, and dwell there: for I have commanded a widow woman there to feed thee" (3 Kings 17:8, 9). Finally, according to Chrysostom, God by a pious dispensation made Elias go so long a journey to Sarepta that, seeing the plague of the world, he might ask rains of the Lord. James also makes mention of this deed near the end of his Canonical Epistle, saying: "The continual prayer of a just man availeth much. Elias was a man passible like unto us; and with prayer he prayed that it might not rain upon the earth, and it rained not for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain" (James 5:16–18). Hence Chrysostom writes of Elias: "He was indeed an earthly angel and a heavenly man, who had neither roof, nor table, nor cloak; yet he bore the key of the heavens in his tongue."

Next He sets down the second example. *"And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet"* (Luke 4:27)—that is, in the time of Eliseus, nay in the time when, as a spiritual father, he was the chief director of the Israelite people. Wherefore the king of Israel said to him dying: "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the driver thereof" (4 Kings 13:14). That in the time of Eliseus there were four leprous men, who even in the night entered the camp of the Syrians, is read in the books of Kings (4 Kings 7:3 ff.). *"And none of them was cleansed, but Naaman the Syrian"*: not that Naaman was one of the lepers of Israel, but because he alone among lepers was healed by Eliseus, as it is written in the books of Kings (4 Kings 5:1 ff.). And Naaman was prince of the army of the king of Syria, a great man and honored with his lord, rich and strong: whose goodness is clear from this, that it is joined to the words adduced: "For by him the Lord gave deliverance to Syria" (4 Kings 5:1). Besides, when he had heard from a little maid that there was a Prophet in Israel, he at once believed that by the prayers of the Prophet he could be cured by the God of Israel; nay, he hoped he would be cured. Whence when Eliseus did not go out to him, he was indignant, saying: "I thought he would have come out to me, and standing, would have invoked the name of the Lord his God, and touched with his hand the place of the leprosy" (4 Kings 5:11). And so he seems then to have had knowledge of the one true and supreme God; and he came devoutly to Eliseus, according to the Gloss. But when cured he was very grateful to God and Eliseus, promising that henceforth he would sacrifice to the God of Israel alone.

Gorran here asks why Christ takes His example from Elias and Eliseus rather than from others. *(p. 478)* To which he answers that it is because these alone among the Prophets shone with miracles. To which answer it could be objected: first, of Moses, of whose excellence in the grace of prophecy and miracles it is written in Deuteronomy: "And there arose no more a prophet in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face, in all the signs and wonders which He sent by him" (Deut. 34:10, 11). Again, in the books of Kings it is read how, at the prayer of the prophet Samuel, God did a great thing, giving voices, that is, thunders, and rains in the time of the wheat harvest: which, as is there intimated, was a very great miracle (1 Kings 12:17, 18). Moreover, in the books of Kings it is had how, at the prayer of the Prophet sent divinely, God healed the withered hand of the wicked king Jeroboam (3 Kings 13:6). Likewise in the books of Kings it is described how, Isaias invoking the Lord, the sun most miraculously went back (4 Kings 20:11); and Ezechias himself was healed of a deadly sickness by Isaias (4 Kings 20:5–7): whence in Ecclesiasticus it is asserted of Isaias that he added life to the king (Ecclus. 48:26). Ezechiel also, though not in canonical Scripture, yet in the *Scholastic History* is read to have done illustrious miracles in Chaldea; as Jeremias also is read to have wrought wonders in Egypt. I have said these things not as if intending to detract from Nicholas of Gorran, who was a great expositor of the Scriptures and very learned in them, but because I wonder at the aforesaid solution, and that that solution may be read with caution. I therefore think the reason for the question is another, namely that Christ made mention of Elias and Eliseus because their aforementioned deeds more suited His purpose, and because they were exceedingly excellent, nay in the aforesaid deeds had a figure of Christ. The widow, moreover, and Naaman bore the type of the Church gathered from the Gentiles, which Christ through the Holy Spirit and the Apostles, the Jews being left on account of their perversity, deigned to visit (Acts 13:46).

"And all in the synagogue were filled with anger" (Luke 4:28) by vice, which is an inordinate appetite for vengeance on account of being slighted, *"hearing these things"* — the aforementioned sayings of Christ: because, as it appeared to them, Christ excessively vilified them, preferring to them the Gentiles, whom the Jews despised as dogs, and because He charged them with ingratitude and other sins. Gregory, however, says they were roused because Christ had asserted, "This day is fulfilled this scripture," etc., as though He were presumptuously comparing Himself to the Prophets. In these sacrilegious Jews, whose madness and ingratitude many follow, that of Proverbs was fulfilled: "The wicked loveth not one that reproveth him" (Prov. 15:12); and that of Amos: "They have hated him that rebuketh in the gate, and have abhorred him that speaketh perfectly" (Amos 5:10). Whence in Ecclesiasticus it is written: "The congregation of sinners is like tow heaped together, and the end of them is a flame of fire" (Ecclus. 21:10). Hence Terence also says: "Compliance begets friends, truth hatred." *"And they rose up"* (Luke 4:29), anger driving them on bestially, *"and thrust Him out,"* that is, irreverently expelled Him, as one guilty of death, *"of the city"* of Nazareth, which was His; *"and they led Him to the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong,"* and by casting Him down kill Him: imitating their father the devil, who said to Christ, "Cast Thyself down" (v. 9); nay, in this worse than he, because what he suggested, these attempted to do.

"But He, passing through the midst of them, went His way" (Luke 4:30), that is, escaped from the hands of the impious and got away, not fleeing by flying or running, but on foot through the midst of them He passed powerfully and wondrously. This He could do both by uncreated power, and by created virtue, or the power conferred on the humanity. For by both He could suddenly change their minds and make them stupefied or dumb, as also at the time of the passion He laid the wicked prostrate by saying, "I am He" (John 18:6); when also He said to the Father, "Thou hast given Him," that is, to me, Thy Son, "power over all flesh" (John 17:2). In the temple too He restrained the wills of so many thousands when He cast the buyers and sellers out (John 2:15), which, according to Origen, was a greater miracle than the raising of the dead, or the feeding of five thousand with five loaves. Moreover, by divine and uncreated power *(p. 479)* He could make Himself invisible to them. This He could also do by the created power given to Him, because according to the superior portion of His soul He was a comprehensor: therefore whenever He willed, He often assumed the dowries of the glorified body even before the passion, according to Hugh, and His body, perfectly obedient and subject to His soul, was so far so that, according to Damascene, all natural things were voluntary in Christ, as Thomas also testifies in the third part. Therefore the body of Christ altered the sight of those present, as pleased His soul, by whose power and command such alteration could be suspended. Hence some assert that Christ made Himself invisible to them, as is brought in in John: "But Jesus hid Himself, and went out of the temple" (John 8:59); and likewise, "They sought to take Him, and He escaped out of their hands" (John 10:39).

Bede relates here that when the Lord Christ, having slipped from their hands, was descending from the summit of the rock through the midst of them and wished to hide beneath the rock, suddenly at the touch of Christ's garment that stone fled from beneath, or gave way, and, melted like wax, made a certain hollow, that is, a concavity, in which the Lord's body was received: in which place all the outlines and folds of the garment and the footprints are still seen in the rock, as those who have seen it testify. John of Mandeville in his *Itinerary* also writes of this, adding that Christ then was greatly afraid. This, however, I do not think to be believed, nay not to be held at all, unless it be said that He voluntarily assumed that fear, as at the time of the passion. Otherwise, why should He have trembled who so perfectly foreknew all future things, and was of so great power, who was not led by them against His will, but of His own accord permitted Himself to be led? If He had willed, He would have made them all immovable in whatever space of that road.

He did not will to be cast down, however, because the time divinely fixed for His passion was not yet fulfilled; and because He chose another kind of death, namely crucifixion; that it might be fulfilled which is written: "They have dug my hands and feet" (Ps. 21:17); and again, "They gave me gall for my food" (Ps.

68:22). Also because He had not yet fulfilled the works for which He was sent by the Father, namely the preaching of the evangelical law, the institution of the sacraments, the miraculous effects: of all which, now near the passion, He said in John: "Father, I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do… and now I come to Thee" (John 17:4, 13).

"And He went down to Capharnaum" (Luke 4:31), because, leaving His faithless and ungrateful fellow-citizens, He came to the city of Capharnaum. Nevertheless, as is plain from what has been said, this, "And He went down to Capharnaum," to the end of the chapter, is not continued with the letter immediately preceding, but with what is written above: "Jesus returned in the power of the Holy Ghost into Galilee" (v. 14). He came therefore to Capharnaum, a city of Galilee, *"and there He taught them,"* the inhabitants and those present there, *"on the sabbath days,"* that is, on the days of the sabbath, when, as was said, the Jews flocked in greater numbers to the places of divine service.

"And they were astonished at His doctrine" (Luke 4:32), that is, they wondered at the excellence of the teachings and preaching of Christ. One cause of which is subjoined: *"for His word was with power,"* that is, His words were most efficacious and powerful: first, because they were confirmed by miracles, and shown to be divine and true. Second, because effects at once accompanied them. For as soon as He commanded some prodigies to be done, they were done perfectly. Third, because the words of Christ had a most singular and strongest force of moving the hearts of the hearers, namely by pricking, inflaming, penetrating, and terrifying them. For He uttered fiery words, full of sentences; most eloquent and most sweet in speech, and nevertheless terrible when He willed. Whence He could say that of Jeremias: "Are not my words as a fire, saith the Lord, and as a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" (Jer. 23:29). Nor is it wonderful that in the humanity He was of so powerful speech, who according to the divinity is the omnipotent word of God the Father, the eternal Word, of whom the Apostle says to *(p. 480)* the Hebrews: "The word of God is living, and more piercing than any two-edged sword" (Heb. 4:12). Fourth, because He had authority to add to the words of the law, perfecting it and interpreting it spiritually, nay, imposing an end upon it as to the ceremonial precepts, since He was the giver and lord of the law. Fifth, because what He taught He fulfilled in deed. Hence Bede says: "The word of the preacher is with power when he does the things which he teaches: for he who by deed destroys what he preaches in words is despised."

"And in the synagogue there was a man who had an unclean devil" (Luke 4:33), that is, possessed by a demon: who is called unclean because in himself he is wholly unclean or vicious, in all that he does sinning, since he refers all things to a perverse end. He is also called unclean from the effect, because by tempting he leads man into the impurity of vices: in which manner he is also named dumb and deaf (Mark 9:24; Luke 11:14), because he makes the possessed man dumb and deaf. *"And he cried out with a loud voice, saying"* (Luke 4:34). Some say that in the canonical Scriptures a loud voice is nowhere read except in good; the opposite of which is proved from this place. *"Let us alone,"* that is, cease to afflict us demons. For the devil grieved at the presence of Christ, whom he saw to be most contrary to himself; likewise at His saving doctrine, which was the medicine of souls, and so was especially saddened at the conversion of men. He feared also to be expelled from man, and shut off from the harassing and deceiving of men, and relegated to places of punishment. Therefore he said: *"What have we to do with Thee, Jesus of Nazareth?"* that is, since there is no friendship, society, or confederation between Thee and us, why hast Thou come to us? especially since love is wont to be the reason of union: for the Apostle also says, "What concord hath Christ with Belial?" (2 Cor. 6:15). But Christ approached the devil, not as friend to friend, but as judge to criminal, as champion to adversary, as liberator to robber. Which the devil, perceiving, added: *"Art Thou come to destroy us?"* So great is the devil's envy and impiety that he reckons himself destroyed if he is expelled from men and restrained from harming them. So, "Thou art come to destroy us," that is, to conquer, despoil, weaken? To this indeed Christ came, to take away the vessels of the devil, to restrain his tyranny, to suppress him, to subdue him, and at last to thrust him into hell (Mark 3:27). *"I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of*

God," that is, the Holy of Holies, belonging most specially to God, as the Christ promised in the law: of whom it is had in Daniel, "The Holy of Holies shall be anointed" (Dan. 9:24); and in the Psalm, "Thou wilt not give Thy Holy One to see corruption" (Ps. 15:10).

On this it is asked whether the demons knew Jesus to be the Messias. And the answer is plain from what has been said.

Lyra, however, writes on these words on Mark that the demons knew Jesus to be the Messias promised in the law; and he intends to assert that they knew this with certainty, namely from the prophecies foretold of Christ, which determine the place and time and manner of the coming of Christ Himself. But, as he affirms, they did not know that He was the Son of God by nature equal to God the Father, although the devil tempted Him to this end; because if they had known Him to be God, they would never have led the Jews on to crucify Him.

Against this it could be objected that these seem to involve a contradiction. For if the devil knew that Jesus was the Messias from the oracles of the Prophets, it follows that he equally knew Him to be the Only-begotten of God and true God. For this is plain from the Scriptures of the Prophets, and is concluded and had, that the Christ promised in the law should be the Only-begotten of God, having true divinity with the Father, Isaias saying: "For a child is born to us, and a son is given to us… and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, God the Mighty, the Father of the world to come, the Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6). And Jeremias: "And this is the name that they shall call him: The Lord our just one" (Jer. 23:6): in place of which in the Hebrew is had the name of the Lord, the Tetragrammaton, which belongs to none but the true and supreme God, as the masters of the Hebrews too concordantly *(p. 481)* profess. Micheas also testifies: "His going forth is from the beginning, from the days of eternity" (Mich. 5:2). And Daniel says: "His power is an everlasting power, that shall not be taken away" (Dan. 7:14). Likewise the Psalmist: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" (Ps. 44:7); and again, "And the king shall greatly desire thy beauty; for he is the Lord thy God, and him they shall adore" (Ps. 44:12); and again, "Let his name be blessed for evermore; his name continueth before the sun" (Ps. 71:17). That all these things are said literally of the Christ promised in the law, no one can doubt who has diligently examined the places of the Scriptures where they are had, weighing what precedes and follows there. The devil, therefore, knew most certainly that these things were foretold of the king Messias: wherefore, if from the Scriptures he knew Jesus to be the Messias, he knew with equal certainty that He was the Son of God by nature.

Moreover, the devil would no less have omitted to lead the Jews on to the killing of Christ if he had known with certainty that He was the Messias or Christ, than if he had known Him to be the natural Son of God. For the reason why he would not have led the Jews on to this was lest the human race be redeemed, which he knew was to be saved by the killing of the Messias. Nay, if he had known with certainty that Jesus was the natural Son of God, he would have hated Him more than if he had thought Him a mere man. For the better anyone is, the more he hates him: whence he hates no one so much as God. So, if he had known for certain that Jesus was the natural Son of God, he would not have omitted to lead the Jews to His crucifixion from any love or reverence for Him; nor on account of the enormity of the sin, since the more iniquitous a thing is, the more it pleases him; nor from fear of his own punishment, since so great is his envy against the Saints that he does not omit to tempt and persecute them in order to avoid the increase of his own calamity: as also in the time of Antichrist he will not omit to lead Antichrist and his satellites to destroy the worship, law, and faith of Christ, so far as he can; nor is there doubt that he would lead Antichrist to the killing itself of Christ, if it were possible for Christ in His own person to be killed by Antichrist, notwithstanding that he now certainly knows that Jesus is God and man. Finally, the demons and all the damned so envy the glory of the most blessed God that they would wish Him not to be, and if they could, they would kill the Divinity itself, being like parricides and matricides. It is clear, therefore, that there is no reason why the devil would not have led the Jews to the killing of Christ, had he known for certain that Jesus is the Christ, except that the

human race be not saved, to whose salvation the demons ineffably envy.

Lastly, the Gloss in this place thinks that the demons had not certain but conjectural knowledge of Christ, namely that He was the Christ: for what is said, "I know," it expounds, "I vehemently suppose." So Christ is the Holy One of God, because as God He is equal and of the same holiness with the Father, and essentially, eternally, and infinitely holy and holiness itself. According to the humanity, however, He is the Holy One of God as sanctified by God from the beginning of the incarnation: sanctified, I say, not as though cleansed from some stain, but filled with every virtue, gift, and grace of the Holy Spirit, and holier than all and each, even all taken together. Whence in John He says of Himself: "Whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world" (John 10:36).

"And Jesus rebuked him, saying: Hold thy peace, and go out of him" (Luke 4:35). Although what the devil said belongs to the praise of Christ, nevertheless Christ imposed silence on him, because He who is true and truth (John 14:6) did not wish to receive the testimony of him who is a liar from the beginning (John 8:44), and lest the devil should mix falsehood with truth, and also that by Christ's example we may be taught to despise the sayings of demons. Cyril, however, says that the demons thought by such praise to make Jesus a lover of vain glory, so that He would cease from opposing them, repaying favor with favor. And when the demon had cast that possessed man *(p. 482)* "*into the midst,*" that is, to the ground before those present, "*he went out of him, and hurt him not.*" For although before his going out he afflicted that man, according to that of Mark, "And the unclean spirit tearing him" (Mark 1:26), yet when the demon had gone out, that former affliction by divine power ceased, and the man was strengthened.

"And there came fear upon all" (Luke 4:36), that is, great wonder upon all who saw this. They wondered rather at the manner of acting than at the deed in itself, since their own exorcists too could and were wont to cast out demons. Further, it is natural to man to fear when great and unaccustomed things are seen, although not all men fear equally on that account. The good and wise conceive a reverential fear at the marvels of God; others often fear otherwise. For from the greatness of the effect the majesty of the cause is weighed, and so reverential or penal fear is born; but a wicked conscience is quickly terrified, and dreads lest what it has deserved befall it, especially when it perceives the presence of divine power. Whence it is also had in the Acts of the Apostles: "And fear came upon every soul" (Acts 2:43), namely from the miracles of the Apostles. But Christ wrought miracles imperially: which these men chiefly marvelled at, as is added.

"And they spoke among themselves, saying: What word is this" — that is, what does it portend? — "*for with authority and power He commandeth the unclean spirits, and they go out!"* Or "word" can here be taken for the thing signified by the word, as it is frequently taken in the Scriptures. So they say: "What word is this?" that is, how wonderful is this work! "*With authority,*" that is, with an authoritative and imperious speech, "*and power,*" that is, by efficacious might, upon which, whenever He wills, the effect at once attends. "Authority" too can be referred to the uncreated power of Christ, and "power" to His created power, although they did not understand it so. For the divinity of Jesus was not yet known to them. Again, "power" can be taken for the holiness and merit of the soul of Christ, through which in a certain way He wrought miracles, especially since other Saints also are written to have wrought miracles by the merit of their holiness. "*He commandeth the unclean spirits,*" that is, the stained demons who stain others, "*and they go out*" from the possessed when He commands them: notwithstanding that it is written of the demon in Job, "There is no power upon earth that can be compared with him" (Job 41:24); for this is said of the natural power of earthly beings or the inhabitants of the earth. But Christ did these things by divine, heavenly, and supernatural power: for even the created power of Christ is so great that by it He can command the highest angels, and does command spirits, as His soul also illuminates them, far more loftily indeed than any higher angel illuminates a lower.

Finally, by this demoniac can be understood any great sinner, subject to the will of the demons and to the servitude of sin: whom Christ, entering the synagogue, that is, the hearts of those who are joined in God by

charity, frees from the demon, when He bestows on him the grace of repenting, and then commands the demon to depart, the Holy Spirit entering such a soul. The demon, however, casts the man *"into the midst,"* that is, brings him back to the mean in which virtue consists, not effectively but occasionally, insofar as by his departure an occasion is made for the man of returning to the mean of virtue, to which, while he possessed or inhabited him, the man could not return: as God also is said to harden man, insofar as by the withdrawal of His grace He permits man to be hardened, who without the gracious presence of God cannot be softened to penance.

Besides, it is asked, since Christ cured only one possessed man, why they spoke in the plural, "He commandeth the unclean spirits." To which it can be said that they put the plural for the singular, as is often done in the Scriptures, and even in common speech: especially because Christ healed this one so magnificently that those who saw it thought He could by the same power cure others also.

"And the fame of Him went forth" (Luke 4:37), that is, of Christ or of His miracle, nay equally of both, *"into every place of the country,"* of Galilee, according to that of Mark: "And the fame of Him was spread abroad forthwith into all the country of Galilee" (Mark 1:28).

(p. 483) Consequently another miracle of Christ is recounted. *"And Jesus rising up out of the synagogue"* (Luke 4:38) of the city of Capharnaum, in which He had sat teaching, for to sit belongs to masters and judges, "*entered into Simon's house,"* that is, of Peter the apostle: who was first called Simon, but afterwards was named Peter by Christ, as will be said below. In Mark, however, is added, "and Andrew" (Mark 1:29): whence in that house Peter and his brother Andrew at one time dwelt together. *"And Simon's wife's mother,"* that is, the mother of Simon's spouse, *"was taken with a great fever"*: so that she had long laboured under this sickness; and as Christ entered she was actually afflicted by it. Wherefore Mark says, "She lay in a fever" (Mark 1:30). She had most acute fevers, especially because she was old and the natural heat in her had failed: whence in the aged a fever is wont to bring death.

"And they besought Him for her," that is, the disciples of Christ and those present in the house entreated Christ to heal that old woman: to whom, as most merciful, He at once consented, as is added. *"And standing over her"* (Luke 4:39). For He came to the place where she lay, and so was higher in position; and perhaps He inclined His face toward the sick woman as she lay, doing what follows, *"He commanded the fever."* For He had authority, power, and dominion over every created entity. So, "He commanded the fever," that is, bade it cease, *"and it left her,"* that is, the fever at once departed from that old woman. *"And immediately rising, she ministered to them,"* that is, to Christ and His table-companions, as one grateful for the benefit of health so miraculously conferred on her, and exceedingly glad; and gladdening those too whom she served by so pleasant a sight.

In these things many wonders are to be contemplated, because the manner of acting was more glorious than the work in itself, since one could also be cured of a fever naturally; but to cure so imperially and suddenly one labouring under severe fevers, so that with the fever ceasing, full health and bodily strength at once returned together, was altogether divine and miraculous: especially because those in a fever, when the fever ceases, are very weak in body, and as health begins feel the evils of the former sickness, and recover their strength only little by little. It is established, moreover, that the greater a power is, the more swiftly it works. Now the power of Christ as God is infinite, and even His created power exceeds the power of all creatures: therefore He could work miracles in an instant and most swiftly; and if He did some more slowly, this was not from any defect of power, but for the sake of a mystery. Finally, according to the Gloss, Christ at times when asked, at times unasked, worked miracles, to insinuate that sometimes He forgives the sins of those who pray, sometimes graciously pardons those who do not recall them, namely when they are so disposed that if they were reminded of their forgotten vices they would put them away and beg pardon. For then He forgives them, or at least reveals them, that the man may remember, repent, and entreat. — Moreover, the condescension and humility of Christ are to be weighed: who chose to stay with Peter, a poor man, that we

may learn, as Cyril says, to associate with the poor, and not despise the lowly and needy.

Spiritually, by the old woman in a fever is designated any soul grown old in vices and passions, which are the gravest fevers of souls: to whom when Christ comes through the help of His mercy, or the infusion of grace, she is at once cured, and serves Christ and His servants, as the Apostle says: "By charity of spirit serve one another" (Gal. 5:13). If, however, the disciples, seeing the bodily sickness of the old woman, had compassion, and besought Christ for her cure, how much more, when we see the soul of someone overcome by vices and passions, wounded and squalid, ought we at once charitably and humbly to sorrow with him, and from the heart beseech Christ for his cure and reformation? But many are indiscreet, *(p. 484)* more prone to indignation and vengeance than to compassion and aid: though the Apostle says, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so you shall fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2); nay, as Christ testifies, "with what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again" (Matt. 7:2; Luke 6:38).

But because the miracles of Christ were innumerable, as His power also was incomparable, therefore after the particular narration of two signs, many are related in general. *"And when the sun was down"* (Luke 4:40), *"all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them to Him."* All, then, in Capharnaum brought to Christ their kinsmen, household, friends, or dear ones, wasted with various infirmities, many of whom could not go by themselves, having learned of the two aforesaid miracles. So also Christians, especially prelates and fathers, ought to bring their sick, that is, those languishing in vices, to Christ, leading them to penance. *"But He, laying His hands on every one of them, healed them."* He could indeed have healed them by command alone, without touch; but He laid hands on each, to show His condescension, charity, and compassion toward the weak and needy, and also to demonstrate that His body was the instrument and organ of divine power, through which God decreed to reform the human race in body and soul. As Christ healed them by laying on of hands, so too He spiritually heals all who come to Him by true contrition, or at least do what is in them, strengthening them with grace and virtues: and upon them He lays His hand, that is, the help of His mercy, according to what is written of the elect in the Psalm: "When he shall fall, he shall not be bruised, for the Lord putteth his hand under him" (Ps. 36:24).

It is asked why the aforesaid brought their sick to Christ at evening and not by day. To which Origen replies that they were ashamed, or feared the Pharisees, or thought it not lawful to heal on the sabbath, or because by day they were intent on other things.

"And devils went out from many, crying out" (Luke 4:41). From this it appears that many of the number of those sick were possessed, from whom He cast out demons, who went out crying: *"Thou art the Son of God."* On which Gorran asserts, as I also affirmed a little before, that the demons knew by the Scriptures that the Son of God was to be incarnate, and therefore knew Jesus to be the Son of God in the same way as they knew Him to be the Christ. *"And rebuking them,"* not because they had said what was false, but because they spoke the truth with an evil intention, and because their confession was extorted, proceeding from servile fear: because from dread of heavier punishment they said these things, as a wicked and fugitive servant caught by his master, from fear of stripes confesses the truth and praises the master; *"He suffered them not to speak, for they knew that He was Christ,"* that is, He did not permit the demons to go on further or to resume the aforesaid words, namely that they knew Him to be the Messias. Why He forbade the demons to give testimony to Him has already been said; and it can now be added that this was also lest His passion be hindered. For if the Jews had known with certainty and firmly that He was the Christ, they would never have crucified or killed Him (1 Cor. 2:8). Whence Bede also says: "The very Apostles too are commanded by Christ to be silent about Him, lest, the divine majesty being proclaimed, the dispensation of the passion should be delayed." Lastly, "praise is not seemly in the mouth of a sinner" (Ecclus. 15:9), nor was it fitting that the purest mysteries of Christ should be laid open by the foulest tongues of demons, as Theophylact and Chrysostom protest. How they knew Jesus to be the Christ, has been set forth before: namely by conjectural, not certain and steadfast knowledge.

"And when it was day" (Luke 4:42), that is, on the day immediately following, in the morning, *"going out He went into a desert place,"* namely into solitude: first, to teach us to flee human praise and glory, especially when we have done something magnificent and are the more regarded and esteemed by all; second, to institute, commend, and confirm the secrecy of the solitary and eremitical life; *(p. 485)* third, to teach the prelates and preachers of others, nay all the faithful, that after external occupation and the tumult of men, they should flee to a secret place, where by praying and meditating they may recollect their heart, and attend to God more sincerely and steadily. *"And the multitudes sought Him."* For the common people clung to Christ more than the chief men of the Jews, and the Scribes and Pharisees, of whom few or none are said to have followed Him on this occasion. *"And came unto Him; and stayed Him, that He should not depart from them."* For they delighted in His eloquence, wisdom, virtues, and miracles.

"To whom He said" (Luke 4:43): *"To other cities also it behoveth me,"* that is, it is expedient, and opportune for the salvation of men — nay, even on a supposition it behoved, because God so preordained — *"to preach the kingdom of God,"* that is, to preach the beatitude of heavenly paradise, and how it is attained. The kingdom of God can also be understood as the state of the Church militant, or Holy Scripture. *"For therefore am I sent"* by the eternal Father through the mystery of the incarnation, and likewise by the command by which the Father, or the whole Trinity, enjoined this office on Christ according to His assumed nature, as He says in John: "As the Father hath given me commandment, so do I" (John 14:31). From which it is plain how divine and most excellent is the office of preaching, since the Only-begotten of God declares Himself sent for the exercise of it. And again it is plain from this how blind and damnable are the pastors or prelates who, from a certain pride, or negligence, or other insufficient cause, omit it, though it belongs especially to them, and they are bound so to live as to be fit for preaching. Some also excuse themselves most insufficiently, as that they are of bad memory: for whom it would be more salutary and safer to read sermons from a book (which Pope Gregory also often did) than to omit preaching.

"And He was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee" (Luke 4:44). In the synagogues indeed He taught, where the people flocked in greater numbers. For truth does not seek a corner, as Christ also protests in John: "He that doth truth cometh to the light, that his works may be made manifest" (John 3:21). Whence also at the time of the passion He said to the high priest: "I have always taught in the synagogue, whither all the Jews resort; and in secret I have spoken nothing" (John 18:20).

Luke 5: Draught of Fishes, Leper, Paralytic, Levi

Article XII — Exposition of the Fifth Chapter: "And it came to pass, when the multitudes pressed upon Him to hear the word of God"

(p. 485) "Now it came to pass, when the multitudes pressed upon Him to hear the word of God" (Luke 5:1) — that is, when the crowds, of whom it was said at the end of the preceding chapter, rushed upon Him, that is, came to Him with great fervour and in great numbers, *"to hear the word of God,"* namely Christ, who is the true and eternal Word of the Father, and also His discourse. For they desired not only to look upon Him and hear Him, but also to touch Him, and those behind pushed those before, so that they rushed upon Him with a certain violence. For who of good mind would not desire to look upon one so sweet and beautiful, to hear one so wise and eloquent, to touch one so virtuous and holy, to stand by the worker of so many and so great marvels, especially since He had a most gracious and delightful countenance? Nay, in the *Revelations* of the most holy Brigid it is credibly read that the most worthy Virgin Mary said to Brigid that whoever was desolate *(p. 486)* or sad, once he had looked upon the face of her Son, at once felt a consoling relief, so that those pressed by adversities or sorrow were wont to say: "Let us go to the Son of Mary, that we may be consoled by His countenance." Nor is it wonderful: for He it is of whom the Psalmist foretold, "Beautiful in form above the sons of men" (Ps. 44:3). Finally, many of the Saints are read to have been of such holiness and grace that they had a face as it were angelic, a wondrous serenity and brightness shining in their

countenance: how much more is this to be believed of Him in whom "all the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth corporeally" (Col. 2:9), not only by grace as in others, but by hypostatic union, whose soul enjoyed God beatifically, in whom there was as much grace as a created mind can hold?

"And He stood by the lake of Genesareth": which by another name is called the sea of Galilee, from the province in which it lies, and the sea of Tiberias (John 6:1), from the neighbouring city of Tiberias. *"And saw two ships standing by the lake"* (Luke 5:2), namely near the shore of that lake, as is the custom. *"And the fishermen,"* namely Peter and John and James, as is had below, and any who perhaps were associated with them, *"were gone out of them,"* that is, going out of the ships they had entered the water about the shore, *"and were washing their nets,"* that is, cleaning them, that when cleaned they might fold them, because they had taken nothing, and wished for a time to cease from fishing. *"And going up into one of the ships that was Simon's"* (Luke 5:3), that is, Peter's, and of his brother Andrew, as some say: whence in Matthew and Mark it is had that Jesus found Peter and Andrew intent together on fishing (Matt. 4:18; Mark 1:16); *"He desired him to draw back a little from the land,"* that is, to direct the ship a short distance into the water, so that it might be separated and distant from the bank, yet not so far that Christ could not be conveniently heard from it by the people standing on the shore. He entered the ship also because the crowds began to press upon Him, and standing on land with them He could not be so fittingly seen and heard by all as standing in a ship, where He turned His back to no one, and stood in the sight of all.

Furthermore it should be noted that Luke does not keep the order here in describing the history of the event, so that this passage is not continued with the one immediately preceding, in which the aforesaid signs are narrated: for Peter's mother-in-law, who is there described as healed, was cured after the calling of Peter and Andrew to the apostolate of Christ, as is shown from Matthew and Mark (Matt. 4:18–20; 8:14–15; Mark 1:16–31). In that calling Peter left the ship altogether; but now in this chapter, after the words introduced, is recounted the calling of Peter, John, and James to the apostolate of Christ, as some say, or to His familiarity and a certain discipleship, as others rather judge. — Further, there is shown here the great condescension, meekness, and kindness of Christ, that for so small a matter He asked Peter so modestly and humbly, though He had the right to command him: teaching prelates to be readier to admonish than to command, and to desire to be loved rather than feared. But fools act contrariwise, prone to command, and drawing the sword without suitable cause: to whom God reproaches through Ezechiel, "But you ruled over them with rigour and with a high hand" (Ezech. 34:4).

"And sitting, He taught the multitudes out of the ship" (Luke 5:3). The ship he now calls a little ship, because it was small, and the vessel of poor men. The Evangelist does not set down the words of Christ's preaching, just as none of the Evangelists follows out all His prodigies in particular. For the Evangelists wrote of His teachings and miracles as much as they knew sufficient for the edification of the Church, for the confirmation of faith, and for the salvation of the faithful, the Holy Spirit inspiring and directing them. Hence it is that they often do not care about observing order in the historical recital of Christ's deeds and signs, because for doing the things aforesaid it matters nothing what preceded in the event itself, or what is narrated first.

"Now when He had ceased to speak" (Luke 5:4), wishing to reward the owner of the little ship, a poor man, for the service already narrated, *(p. 487) "He said to Simon: Launch out into the deep,"* that is, move the ship further from the shore to the deeper places of the water: and so "the deep" (*altum*) is taken for "profound," as in John, "The well is deep" (John 4:11); and in the Psalm, "I am come into the depth of the sea" (Ps. 68:3). Or He says "into the deep" because water farther from the shore is higher than that nearer the bank, as is shown in the book *On the Sphere*. *"And let down your nets for a draught,"* that is, spread them out to catch fish. He says "launch out" to Peter in the singular, because this could be done by him alone; and adds "let down" in the plural, because this could be done more fittingly by several. — Mystically, by Peter the more perfect are signified, to whom it chiefly belongs to launch out into the deep, that is, to search the profound mysteries. By Peter's helpers are signified the lower prelates, whose part it is to let down the nets, that is, to

extend orderly connected words for the conversion of others.

"And Simon answering, said to Him: Master" (Luke 5:5), that is, Thou, O Lord, who art of such authority that Thou art deservedly called Master, whom one must straightway obey, *"we have laboured all the night, and have taken nothing,"* that is, no fish. Though this could have happened naturally, as it often does, yet it appears to have so fallen out then by divine dispensation, that the power of Christ might shine forth more clearly in the following miracle, and others be the more confirmed in faith. *"But at Thy word,"* that is, on account of Thy command; or "at Thy word," that is, from hope of the fulfilment of Thy bidding, *"I will let down the net,"* with my helpers acting likewise. In this the promptness of the obedience of St. Peter is proved, especially since according to nature it seemed fruitless to let down the nets, when there was no appearance of hope of naturally taking fish.

"And when they had done this, they enclosed a great multitude of fishes" (Luke 5:6). In this we are taught how fruitful it is to obey. As Peter let down the net for fishing at Christ's bidding, notwithstanding that before, with so great an effort and so long a time, he had taken nothing; so prelates, teachers, and preachers, according to the precept or exhortation of Holy Scripture, ought to let down the spiritual net, that is, to set forth connected propositions of teachings for the instruction, progress, or conversion of others, with confidence in the grace and help of God; and so, God working, they will often convert many in whom before they had accomplished nothing. *"And their net broke,"* that is, it began partly to break. Yet no fish escaped: which also was a miracle.

"And they beckoned to their partners that were in the other ship" (Luke 5:7), namely James and John, to come to them with their boat and help them. They "beckoned," that is, by a nod or sign, not by words, they intimated to them to come to their aid, because by the greatness of their astonishment they could scarcely speak, and out of reverence for Jesus scarcely dared to speak. So too spiritual shepherds, namely prelates and preachers, when they see that they cannot lead all to the harbour of safety and blessed end, whom they have already in some measure drawn from this wicked world as from a most stormy sea and led to penance, ought to seek, invite, and take other fit men as helpers, to guard, inflame, and perfect the converted and penitent. But some are over-presumptuous and proud, foolishly trusting in their own strength and virtues, thinking the help of others not necessary to them, though they are proved insufficient to rule themselves.

"And they came, and filled both the ships", not those partners alone, but together with Peter and his own, *"so that they were almost sinking."* Whence it is plain that a very burdensome and copious multitude of fishes was taken at once. So when many preach the word of God in concord, and live according to their own words, very many are converted. Wherefore Solomon says: "A brother that is helped by his brother is like a strong city" (Prov. 18:19). Moreover the little ships are the particular Churches, which are almost sunk by the multitude of the converted, while in those recently converted there remain some remnants of former vices and inclinations to evil and passions: *(p. 488)* by which others also are often endangered, who are not yet so perfect that they can bear their weaknesses with equanimity.

"Which when Simon Peter saw, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying" (Luke 5:8). For honour is due to the virtuous: therefore as he judged Jesus to be of the greatest virtue and holiness, so he showed Him great reverence. For even before this miracle he believed Jesus to be the Christ, namely when Andrew said to him, "We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ," and brought him to Jesus, as is had in John (John 1:41–42): whence, on seeing this miracle, this faith was increased in him. *"Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord,"* that is, I am unworthy to stand by Thee, to be present with Thee, to dwell with Thee, because I am a frail man and a sinner and an unprofitable servant, but Thou art so powerful, so holy, and Lord. So from the greatness of the miraculous effect he weighed the majesty of the cause; and because opposites set side by side are more clearly known, the more Peter attended to the power and excellence of Christ, the more evidently he understood his own guilt and littleness, and the more humbly confessed it. Hence he asked Christ to go out from him, not repelling Him indignantly, but honouring Him from the

deepest humility; yet he did not wish His spiritual presence, or the help of His grace, to be absent from him. In this he was like the centurion, who said: “Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof; but only say the word, and my servant shall be healed” (Matt. 8:8). Of this spiritual presence, always to be desired, Gregory says: “If you consider yourself a sinner, it is necessary that you do not drive the Lord from you.”

Truly, as Peter, on seeing this sign, ascribed nothing to his own merits, nor gloried vainly, but humbled himself wholly and rendered thanks to Christ, and confessed himself unworthy of His presence; so when a prelate, or preacher, or exhorter has converted many or some, let him attribute all to divine mercy, and giving thanks let him by no means be puffed up, nay let him judge himself most unworthy that the Holy Spirit should work such things through him, and let him prostrate himself before the Lord. From this also is shown the greatness of Peter’s devotion and fervour, that he alone fell at the knees of Jesus, though he was older than the others.

“For he was wholly astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken” (Luke 5:9), that is, vehement wonder occupied the hearts of these men on every side and totally, from the consideration of so great a prodigy: whose wonderfulness they knew the more certainly, the more practised they were in the art of fishing. Wherefore Christ, condescending to their weakness, wished to attract them by such a miracle, which belonged more to their office as to the matter of the deed: as He also led the Magi, intent on astronomy, by an appearing star (Matt. 2:2). Finally, so sudden a catch of so many innumerable fishes was altogether marvellous. It can also be asked how so many fishes were gathered there. To which it is easily answered that Christ by His divine power could suddenly and anew create fishes, or gather them from diverse places, which likewise by angelic ministry He could at once assemble. *“And so were also James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were Simon’s partners”* (Luke 5:10): wonder compassed them likewise; yet they did not fall at the knees of Jesus, although they were His kinsmen. So too wonder fills with just admiration everyone who duly weighs it, when he considers how, from the very Apostles of Christ, unlettered and simple men, in a manner the whole world was so quickly converted to so arduous a law and so incomprehensible a faith, which is reckoned a greater miracle than almost any miracle: in which the miracles once wrought, as it were, shine back in their effect. Whence there is no need that they be more frequently repeated, although God from His supremely immense clemency has many times repeated them, to rouse the sluggishness of men, who do not heed the past, nor subtly consider the beginning and progress of the Church, and to confute *(p. 489)* the madness of heretics and other unbelievers.

“And Jesus said to Simon”: who as he humbled himself singularly before Christ, so deserved singularly to be consoled by Him. For “a contrite and humbled heart, O God, thou wilt not despise” (Ps. 50:19), but gladdens and strengthens it. *“Fear not”*: with immoderate fear, from the consideration of thy littleness and guilt, and from the contemplation of this sign and of my excellence, so as therefore to ask me to depart from thee; but breathe again and rejoice in the consideration of my mercy and grace. This also is to be fulfilled by us all. *“From henceforth,”* that is, soon after this time; or, “from henceforth,” that is, after this office of fishing; again, “from henceforth,” that is, by the merit of this thy obedience and reverence shown to me, of thy wonder and humility, *“thou shalt catch men,”* that is, thou shalt be made a preacher and apostle, so that by example, speech, miracles, and prayers thou shalt convert many and gather them within the Church, as fishes are gathered and held within the net. For the Church herself is compared to a net, Christ saying: “The kingdom of heaven is like to a net cast into the sea, and gathering together of all kinds of fishes” (Matt. 13:47). The nets of the Apostles and preachers were the instruments and means by which they converted men, namely exemplary life, miracles, preachings, and prayers. According to this similitude the Lord speaks in Jeremias: “Behold I will send many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them” (Jer. 16:16).

“And having brought their ships to land” (Luke 5:11) — the two aforesaid — *“leaving all things”* which they had there, namely the ships and the instruments of the ships, and the fishes taken; or, leaving all the men

who were then present there, *"they followed Him."* For they accompanied Christ bodily, and adhered to Him with devoted mind.

But if it was said to Peter alone, "Thou shalt catch men," why did John also and James follow Christ? Moreover, in this place it is not written that Christ called them to follow Him. It must therefore be noted that there was a threefold calling of these disciples: one, the first, to the mere knowledge of Christ, which is described by John (John 1:37 ff.); the second was to the familiarity of Christ; the third, to the apostolate, which is related by Matthew and Mark (Matt. 4:18–22; Mark 1:16–20). Of the second, however, mention has been made. Some say, however, that this one of which Luke now writes is the same as that which Matthew and Mark narrate. But the Gloss openly contradicts this here: "Peter," it says, "is not yet chosen to the apostolate, but it is foretold to him that he is some day to be chosen." And this I think truer, because, as I said, in this place Christ is not read to have said to any of these disciples that he should follow Him. Besides, in Matthew and Mark it is had that He first found Peter and Andrew, to whom He also said: "Come ye after me." Then going on a little farther, He found James and John with their father in the ship, and called them. Here, however, it is had that when John and James had entered Peter's boat, He spoke these words to Peter, and then they went together with Christ; but further on Luke speaks of that calling of which Matthew and Mark speak. Whence, what is said in this place, "leaving all things they followed Him," is to be understood to mean that out of reverence for Christ they went with Him for a space: for even therefore, according to some, they brought the ships back to land, because they intended to return to them. Augustine, moreover, in the book *On the Harmony of the Evangelists*, touches on both ways of speaking, determining neither.

It should also be known that in John something like this miracle is written, namely how these disciples after the resurrection of Christ took in one cast a hundred and fifty-three great fishes (John 21:11); and there it is added as a miracle that, though they were so many, the net was not broken. Here, however, to insinuate another miracle, it is reported that the net broke and the little ships were almost sunk, though the fishes did not slip away. Whence by the fishing of which John speaks is signified the gathering of the elect within the triumphant Church, in which there is no rending and no danger; by this one, however, the gathering of believers within the militant Church, in which the good are mingled with the bad, and diverse dangers occur, heresies and schisms.

(p. 490) Next the cure of the leper is narrated. *"And it came to pass, when He was in a certain city"* (Luke 5:12), namely in Capharnaum, *"behold a man full of leprosy,"* that is, very leprous, so that the leprosy was spread over the whole body and manifest; and *"seeing Jesus"* with the outward eyes, and with the inward, because he believed and weighed His majesty and holiness with the eye of the mind, which is the intellect or reason (of this sight Christ speaks to Philip, "He that seeth me seeth the Father also" [John 14:9]; and elsewhere, "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God" [Matt. 5:8]); *"and falling on his face,"* that is, prostrating himself to the ground, as well for the dignity of Christ as for the ardent desire of the cure and his great need, hoping to be heard and healed the sooner the more humbly and sincerely he asked; *"he besought Him, saying."* In Matthew it is had that he adored Him (Matt. 8:2): which Athanasius explains of the adoration of *latria*, saying that the leper believed Jesus to be the Only-begotten of God, not a creature, but true God. According to Ambrose, however, his falling on his face was of humility and modesty. *"Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean,"* that is, I do not doubt that Thou canst cure me, if Thou wilt. Nor does he express more clearly what he desires, because it was sufficiently made known by his prostration, and because before Christ he was ashamed to say more in the sight of the crowd. Again, since bodily infirmity is not repugnant to the salvation of the soul as guilt is, nay is frequently salutary, therefore its remedy is not to be sought with great importunity and absolutely; but the whole is to be committed to the good pleasure of the divine disposition, with a humble interpretation of one's own desire, so that we seek to be cured only on condition that it be to God's honour and our salvation, and whatever God does may please us.

"And Jesus, stretching forth His hand, touched him, saying" (Luke 5:13). For as He took a body for our salvation, so through it He wrought our salvation. Whence He touched one whom He could have cured without touch: first, to show the greatness of His mercy, humility, and condescension, since He did not shrink from touching a man horrible at the mere sight; second, for our instruction, namely that we should not despise the bodily infirm and deformed, but if need be cherish them, carry them, touch them, with every feeling of compassion; third, that by bodily contact He might designate spiritual touch, namely that those are truly cleansed of all guilt whom He touches and visits by the gifts and grace of His charity; fourth, to show that He had assumed a true body, to confute the perfidy of the most impure Manichee. *"I will."* And what is added is to be read passively, namely, "Be thou made clean," that is, I command that thou be cleansed of the leprosy. Finally, Christ willed, commanded, and did this sign by divine and uncreated will and power, as by a cause simply first, principal, and authoritative. He also willed, commanded, and did it by human will and created and supernatural power, as by a secondary, instrumental, and subauthoritative or less principal cause: to which it was fitting to work miracles by commanding, not in such a way as to the divine will and power, nay in so far as it was instrumental to that; but because every creature was subject even to the created will and power of Christ, and because God by it so instituted to work. Whence some Saints too are read to have worked miracles as it were by commanding, not that they did this by their own power, but by the divine.

"And immediately the leprosy departed from him," that is, in a moment or instantaneously it perished and ceased. For to the divine power, since it is infinite, it belongs to act in an instant when it pleases; and the saying of Christ was efficacious. Augustine also testifies that for a thing to be done is the same as for God to will and do it.

It is asked how Luke can say this sign was done in a city, when Matthew writes that as Christ was coming down from the mountain, this leper approached Him and was cured (Matt. 8:1–3), *(p. 491)* and afterwards Christ is read to have entered Capharnaum. To this some say that the leper began to approach on the way, as Matthew relates, but was cured in the city. Matthew, however, for brevity follows out his cure before narrating Christ's entrance into Capharnaum. For the Evangelists do not always determinately observe the order of place and time in recounting what was done, but bring forward what is principal, and do not care to determine what is of no force.

"And He charged him that he should tell no man" (Luke 5:14). He did not absolutely forbid the leper to manifest and tell the benefit conferred on him: for it is added, *"But go, show thyself to the priest."* He willed therefore that he should first present himself to the priest, lest if the priests perceived before his coming that he had been cured by Jesus, they should out of envy refuse to admit him as cured, as Chrysostom says; also that the Saviour might teach that vain praise is to be avoided, and that we should not boast of what is nevertheless sufficiently apparent from elsewhere, as this deed declared itself and had been done before many. *"But go, show thyself to the priest, and offer,"* giving thanks to God, *"for thy cleansing,"* shown to thee, *"according as Moses commanded, for a testimony to them,"* that is, as Moses commanded those cured of leprosy to present themselves to the priests for a testimony to them, that is, that the priests might testify and judge that they were truly cleansed, and could dwell among men. For God commanded through Moses that one cured of leprosy should offer to God a cake of bread and two turtle-doves, and also a sextarius of oil, according to the rite described there (Lev. 14:2–31).

Finally, Christ, as the lawgiver of the new and evangelical law and the perfecter and consummator of the old, often graciously fulfilled the law, showing that the law was holy and divine; very often He does not keep it to the letter, but transcends it by authority. Whence He touched this leper too, though in Leviticus to touch a leper was forbidden (Lev. 13; Num. 5): although that precept was given according to the common state and course of men, and bound those who could be defiled by lepers rather than cleanse them, and did not bind those who by a singular gift of grace could heal lepers: as to touch a dead body also was forbidden (Num. 19:11), and nevertheless Elias and Eliseus lay upon the dead whom they raised, as the book of Kings testifies

(3 Kings 17:21; 4 Kings 4:34). Moreover, Christ sent this leper after the cure to the priest, lest He should give the priests an occasion unreasonably against Himself, and to teach that deference is to be paid to the priests for the honour of the Order, and also to offer them a cause for believing in Him. — Mystically, He did this to insinuate that in the evangelical law whoever has been cured of the leprosy of the soul, that is, sin, by contrition, must nevertheless confess to the priest and stand to his judgment in due time, if he can. Lastly, if this leper prostrated himself so humbly before Christ for the cleansing of bodily leprosy, how much more ought we to prostrate ourselves before Christ and most humbly supplicate for the purging of our spiritual leprosies, namely the expulsion of passions and vices, since this spiritual leprosy is incomparably worse and more harmful than the bodily?

"But so much the more went the fame abroad of Him" (Luke 5:15), that is, the report of the virtues and wisdom of Christ was spread daily more widely, one telling another what he had seen, and Christ daily working more prodigies, and in all things bearing Himself irreproachably, and preaching most wisely with most eloquent charm. Therefore it came to pass as is added: *"and great multitudes came together to hear and to be healed of their infirmities,"* desiring to be salubriously instructed, and to be cured of their bodily infirmities: not that all of them were bodily sick, but because among them many were such. But many of them also went devoutly to Christ that by His sermons they might be brought to amendment of life, and so be healed of spiritual languors. *"And He retired into the desert, and prayed"* (Luke 5:16): *(p. 492)* not that the crowd and tumult of men hindered Him in any way from contemplation of God and inward exercise; but He did this for our instruction, that after the occupations of the active life, after exterior exercises and the throng of men, we may flee to more secret places, in which we may more freely and steadily apply ourselves to the exercises of the contemplative life, examine our souls, and weep over whatever guilt we have incurred; there also in secret, by the favour of God, may we obtain the more ample charisms of graces, which, returning to the public, we may communicate to others, as Peter says: "As every man hath received grace, ministering the same one to another" (1 Pet. 4:10). Christ also willed to teach, found, and approve both the active and the contemplative life by word and deed; and by the aforesaid withdrawal He taught preachers, nay all, to avoid the applause and flattery of men.

Article XIII — Continuation of the Exposition of this Fifth Chapter, from the place "And it came to pass on one of the days, and He was sitting teaching"

Next is recorded another miracle of Christ, not so great in itself as magnificently and wonderfully done. *"And it came to pass on a certain day"* (Luke 5:17) of Christ's conversation and preaching in this world: at which time there was truly a spiritual day, a brightness or clarity in the hearts of believers, who were then enlightened by Christ, the sun of wisdom and justice (Mal. 4:2), as He says in John, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world" (John 9:5). *"And Jesus was sitting teaching,"* in a certain house of the city of Capharnaum, as Mark expresses (Mark 2:1). To sit befits teachers and judges. But Christ is the teacher and judge of all teachers and judges. *"And there were Pharisees sitting by, and doctors of the law,"* namely the Scribes, *"who were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem,"* which was the metropolitan city of Judea, for which reason it is specially named. For Jesus had already become famous in the aforesaid lands: whence the Scribes and Pharisees, wishing to be certified whether the matter was done by God, came out of every town of their dwellings to consider and observe the works of Christ, or some of them even to lay snares and calumniate, moved by envy, because, they being left, the whole people flocked to Jesus. Further, what is said, "out of every town," is to be taken under a suitable distribution; or it is said hyperbolically, to insinuate that they came from very many towns.

"And the power of the Lord was to heal them", that is, the power of Christ was ready and fit to heal those who needed it, both spiritually from sins and bodily from sicknesses. For the uncreated power of Christ is omnipotent; His created virtue also could do this, as an instrumental and meritorious cause. By the healing power of Christ can be understood mercy or wisdom, charity, or the operative force of signs; but Christ

Himself too can be understood by "the power of the Lord," as the Apostle says: "We preach Christ… the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. 1:23–24).

"And behold" (Luke 5:18). When "Behold" is said, it is intimated that what is reported is notable or worthy of consideration. *"Men brought in a bed a man who had the palsy"*: and there were four men carrying him, according to Mark (Mark 2:3). Palsy removes the natural heat of the limbs, motion, progress, *(p. 493)* mobility, and the vital spirit which carries the operations of the soul through the body. *"And they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before Him,"* that is, before the face of Christ, whom they believed of such clemency and power that, seeing so pitiable a sick man, He would have mercy on him and heal him. *"And not finding by what way they might bring him in, because of the multitude"* (Luke 5:19). For the house was full of men, and more stood outside, as Mark teaches (Mark 2:2): whence it is plain that they ran to Jesus with the greatest eagerness, chiefly for His miracles, which He wrought most abundantly and powerfully. *"They went up upon the roof"*: which in those parts was wont to be flat, so that men often sat there to converse; *"and let him down through the tiles,"* that is, through an opening made in the tiles of the roof which they uncovered, perhaps with cords, *"with his bed, into the midst before Jesus,"* in the midst of the men who were present.

"And when He saw their faith" (Luke 5:20), by the interior view of the mind: and faith is here taken for the elicited and internal act of faith; *"He said to the man: Man, thy sins are forgiven thee."* In Matthew Christ is read to have said: "Be of good heart, son" (Matt. 9:2). Whence, according to Augustine, Christ said both then. Finally, since it is said here that Christ, when He saw their faith, said to the sick man, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," it is clear that He forgave the sick man by the merit of the faith of those who carried him. Great indeed was their faith, so that its act could overflow into another: and God of His clemency helps one by the merit of another. Nay, since Christ is most liberal, surpassing the merits and desires of suppliants, He frequently gives more than is asked: as to this paralytic He first conferred health of soul, although neither he nor those who carried him intended to ask anything other than health of body. "For the works of God are perfect" (Deut. 32:4). Wherefore it is generally believed that Christ healed in soul all whom He healed in body.

But since for justification a movement of free will is required in adults, how did Christ forgive this man his sins, who did not intend or ask that remission, especially since Augustine testifies, "He who created thee without thee will not justify thee without thee"? It must be answered that Christ, of His mercy and also by the merit of the faith of the bearers, infused into the paralytic a certain displeasure at his sins, or contrition or attrition for them, before He forgave him the sins. Moreover, because this sick man had been afflicted by long infirmity for his sins (for he incurred the palsy itself because of his sins, according to Bede), Christ was therefore prone to heal him in mind and body, especially since this sick man had some faith in the power of Christ and in the receiving of health, as Gorran says. Ambrose, moreover, says: "Great is the Lord, who by the merit of others pardons others, and while He approves some, relaxes the faults of others. If you despair of pardon for grave sins, bring in intercessors, bring in the Church, to pray for you, in regard to whom the Lord may pardon what He could refuse to you." Lastly, if this paralytic at the time was perhaps without mortal sin, then what was said to him, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," is to be understood of venial sins, or even of mortal ones as to the remission of the penalties.

"And the Scribes and Pharisees began to think, saying" (Luke 5:21) within themselves, because, according to Chrysostom, for fear of the crowd they did not dare to say these things publicly: *"Who is this who speaketh blasphemies?"* that is, who basely usurps to himself what belongs to God? For he blasphemes who ascribes to a creature what belongs to God alone, or speaks irreverently and falsely of God. Since therefore they thought Jesus was not God, and that God alone can forgive sins, they judged that Jesus in uttering that word had blasphemed, nay had even deserved death, because according to the law blasphemers were put to death, and commonly stoned (Lev. 24:16). *"Who can forgive sins but God alone?"* For as in every sin God is

offended and His law infringed, so it belongs to Him alone to forgive sins, so that the stain of guilt is taken away. *(p. 494)* For if a man forgive another the injury inflicted, the stain of guilt or iniquity is not on that account taken away from the soul, unless God also indulge: who speaks through Isaias, "I am he that blot out thy iniquities" (Isa. 43:25); and to whom it is said in Job: "Who can make a man clean conceived of unclean seed? Is it not thou who alone art?" (Job 14:4).

Furthermore it should be noted that to forgive or relax sins belongs to different persons in different ways. To God it belongs by principal and proper authority. To Christ according to the assumed nature it belongs by singular merit, and also as a general and excellent instrumental cause, and likewise by conceded authority; to priests it belongs as to a ministerial cause. But it is also proper to the sacraments of Baptism and Penance to take away sins, by a certain instrumental concausality; to grace, however, formally. Lastly, these Scribes and Pharisees, according to the Apostle, had a certain zeal for God, but not according to knowledge (Rom. 10:2), because their zeal was indiscreet: nay, from the law and the Prophets and the very works of Christ, and from the words and acts of the Precursor, they should already have perceived that Jesus is the Messias, and also true God, as is shown from the Scriptures of the Old Testament.

"And when Jesus knew their thoughts" (Luke 5:22), which as God He knew from eternity. According to the assumed humanity also, He knew them from the beginning of the creation of His soul, as also all other things, present, past, and future: for all things which God knows by the knowledge of vision, the soul of Christ knew from the beginning of the incarnation; but now He willed to manifest that He knew them. *"Answering, He said to them: What is it you think in your hearts?"* (Luke 5:22), reckoning evil, supposing that I have blasphemed, and that I am not God, but a mere man? So Christ, by looking into and laying open the secrets of hearts, demonstrates His divinity. For although men by divine revelation can do such things, yet to accomplish them by one's own wisdom is proper to God: of whom it is written, "The Lord beholdeth the heart" (1 Kings 16:7); and Job: "No thought is hid from Thee" (Job 42:2); and in the Psalm, "God searcheth the hearts and reins" (Ps. 7:10). *"Which is easier, to say,"* that is, by saying to effect, *"Thy sins are forgiven thee; or to say, Arise and walk?"* (Luke 5:23), as if He should say: Each of these belongs to divine and infinite power alone, because as to forgive sins is proper to God, so to cure this paralytic by one's own power, with authoritative command, suddenly and perfectly, befits only the uncreated power of God. Yet to forgive sins is indeed greater in itself than to heal palsy; but to cure it in the manner aforesaid is of equal power as to loose guilt.

"But that you may know, by a sensible work, that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins" (Luke 5:24) — to those dwelling upon earth. Now these men knew that Jesus meant Himself by the Son of man. *"He saith to the sick of the palsy."* The Evangelist inserts this for clearer understanding. For Christ said: *"I say to thee,"* that is, I efficaciously command, *"arise,"* without the help of others, as one already healed by my action, *"take up thy bed,"* or pallet, *"and go into thy house,"* that is, in testimony of thy most entire and sudden cure, carry thy bed even to thine own house, thou who a little before couldst not carry thyself. *"And immediately rising up before them"* (Luke 5:25). For as soon as Christ commanded, he was altogether cured, because it belongs to divine and infinite power to act in an instant. *"Taking up the bed on which he lay, he went away to his own house,"* which is thought to have been in Capharnaum, *"glorifying God,"* that is, proclaiming the majesty of God, and by his cure showing and magnificently praising Him, and giving thanks to Christ, though perhaps he did not yet know that Jesus is God.

"And all were astonished" (Luke 5:26), that is, vehement wonder seized those present; *"and they glorified God,"* that is, confessed and praised Him as great and omnipotent. *"And they were filled with fear, saying: We have seen wonderful things today."* Now wonder arises when something great, rare, unusual, or unexpected happens, whose cause is unknown. *(p. 495)* These, therefore, since they were ignorant of the omnipotence of Christ, were vehemently amazed at His magnificent works. And although they saw so great a miracle gladly and delightedly, at least the common people, nevertheless they were filled with fear, partly

servile, partly reverential, because from so great a prodigy, weighing the greatness of divine power and the holiness of the Lord Jesus, they at once perceived their own frailty and guilt more clearly, nay were as it were compelled to look at it, for opposites set side by side shine out more clearly. From such consideration arose dread of the vengeance of divine justice, and a reverential awe toward the author of the miracle. Of this it was said above (cf. Luke 4:36). Although Christ did but one miracle, in curing this man, yet those who saw it professed that they had seen wonderful things, because in this one deed many wonders concurred: and the very manner of acting was most excellent and wonderful, in that so imperially, authoritatively, and suddenly He cured and strengthened a most infirm man; in that He so swiftly and publicly confuted the Scribes and Pharisees; in that He laid bare the secrets of their heart. According to some, however, they said "wonderful things" in the plural on account of the twofold cure of that sick man, namely bodily and spiritual. Yet they did not see his spiritual cure with bodily eyes. Whether they beheld it by faith, it appears certain that those who believed the words of Christ considered such a cure to have been wrought.

Spiritually, by the paralytic is understood anyone slothful (*acediosus*) and lustful: for as palsy renders the limbs immovable, so sloth retards the powers of soul and body from the service of God and the motion of virtues, and makes a man as it were insensible to those things which are of true salvation: which it is certain lust also does. And as the spiritual bed of a virtuous and fervent man is interior peace, castigation of the flesh, constancy of mind; so the bed of such a sluggish and slippery man is carnal pleasure, or bodily repose. Such a paralytic, therefore, since he cannot go to Christ of himself, because he is not enlivened by charity and virtues, must be carried to Christ by pastors, preachers, teachers, or true friends, that they may pray for the languid, squalid, and spiritually dead man, offering him to divine mercy to be cured. And when the crowd of carnal men has offered an impediment to approach, let them go up on the roof, that is, to the heights of contemplation, considering how the wisdom of God discerns all things, and does not repel those who knock perseveringly: and so through the tiles, that is, through the ways of such considerations, let them present the sick man to the sight of the divine clemency.

God, beholding their faith, will have mercy on the wretched, and will bid him take up the bed on which he lay, that is, lay carnal ease and pleasure upon his own heart, through the penitential memory, lamentation, and castigation of so great a sin, *"and go into his house,"* that is, to spiritual rest and mental peace, or the heavenly paradise, as it is written: "Return, O my soul, into thy rest" (Ps. 114:7). The sinful soul, however, not penitent, sits in sin by consent, lies by continuation or act, sleeps by habit, so that Paul, desiring to rouse it, cries out: "Rise, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead" (Eph. 5:14). Further, when others have beheld such a conversion of the sinner, they will wonder, saying, "This is the change of the right hand of the Most High" (Ps. 76:11), that is, of the power and sublime grace of God; they will also be filled with fear, because they themselves have not done, nor undertaken, a like penance, though they are entangled in the same or like excesses.

After this Luke describes the calling, conversion, and devotion of Matthew the apostle. *"And after these things"* (Luke 5:27), namely the paralytic cured in Capharnaum, and the words of Christ there delivered, and the things already set down being completed, *"Jesus went forth"* from the place where those things were done, *"and saw,"* with bodily sight, nay more with interior sight through the compassion of mercy and the affection of charity, *"a publican,"* that is, *(p. 496)* a man given to public business, as one who levied taxes or tributes, *"named Levi"*: who by another name was called Matthew, and the name Matthew was his common name for the time when he was a tax-collector. Whence the evangelist Matthew himself, describing these things, names himself Matthew out of humility; but Luke and Mark, honouring the Evangelist and Apostle, passing over his former name, call him Levi, because this name was not so usual to him in his former office. *"Sitting at the receipt of custom,"* that is, at the table, or place, or in the house where the tributes were reckoned or paid. Now what he says, "sitting," can be understood in two ways: first, that he then sat in bodily posture at such a table, place, or business; second, according to the common manner of speaking, in which

"to sit" is taken for "to remain" or "to be" somewhere, as in chronicles pontiffs are written to have sat so many years in the episcopate. And Moses in Deuteronomy: "You have sat in Cadesbarne a long time" (Deut. 1:46). So, therefore, the sense is: He saw him sitting at the custom-house, that is, attending or engaged in such an office.

"And He said to him: Follow me." Christ, not only as God but also as man, being prelate over every creature, could say this word, not only exhorting or counselling, but commanding: and He invited Matthew more to the spiritual imitation of Himself, or conversion of mind and holy conversation, than to bodily following; yet He called him to both imitations, but to the bodily on account of the spiritual. *"And leaving all things"* (Luke 5:28), that is, all his goods and riches, *"rising up,"* from the place where perhaps he bodily sat when he was called by Christ, or from his former iniquitous conversation and from earthly affections, *"he followed Him,"* namely Christ, by conversion of mind and by step of body. For as soon as he heard Christ inviting him, he was pricked in heart, and proposed to amend his life according to the doctrine of Christ, and so began to go after Him. For Christ, who called outwardly by the sounding word, drew inwardly by the inspiring grace. He at once changed, inclined, and inflamed Matthew's will by hidden inspiration and infused grace. Therefore Matthew did not act rashly in following Christ at once, as the wicked Porphyry falsely asserts, nor was it similar to consenting to Christ as to other men. Matthew also had heard so much of the holiness, power, fame, and miracles of Christ, that he could at once reasonably consent most securely, as Eliseus also immediately followed Elias, as is had in the books of Kings (3 Kings 19:20–21).

"And Levi made Him a great feast in his own house" (Luke 5:29) — that is, Matthew made for Christ and His disciples. Here appears Matthew's liberality, and his reverence for Christ, who in Matthew's heart was most worthy of all honour, therefore he gave Him a solemn banquet. — But if Matthew, rising at once, followed Christ, leaving all that he had, how did he make Him a great feast in his house? It must be answered, according to the expositors, that neither in Matthew nor in the present chapter is the order of time observed in the recital of this history. For Matthew's calling long preceded the cure of the paralytic, of which immediately before: nay, it preceded the sermon of Christ on the mount concerning the beatitudes and the other teachings. For in the following chapter it is read that Jesus, going up to the mountain before the aforesaid sermon, called His disciples to Him, and of them chose twelve Apostles, of whom Matthew was one (Luke 6:12 ff.). What is therefore written here of the calling of Matthew is inserted by recapitulation. What is added of his feast is connected, according to the right order of the history, with what was introduced about the cure of the paralytic. Moreover, according to many expositors, Matthew followed Him at once at Christ's first word. Afterwards, however, with Christ's leave, he returned to his house together with Christ and His disciples, to arrange (as is believed) his affairs, and perhaps to render account of his office *(p. 497)* to his masters.

"And there was a great company of publicans, and of others, that were at table with them," that is, with Jesus and His disciples. These publicans, and others who in Matthew are called sinners (Matt. 9:10), were familiar and known to Matthew, as being of the same office with him: who, seeing his conversion, came to him as if to bid him farewell, or, by his example, desiring to hear and follow Christ; many of whom Matthew also invited, exulting in Christ's presence and in his own conversion, and desiring to console and gladden the aforesaid, or rather, by the occasion of the banquet, eager to bring them to Christ and the way of salvation, as he did.

"And the Pharisees and their Scribes murmured," (Luke 5:30), *"saying to His disciples,"* namely of Christ: *"Why do you eat and drink with publicans and sinners?"* In Matthew they are read to have said, "Why doth your master eat with publicans and sinners?" (Matt. 9:11), likewise in Mark (Mark 2:16); but the sense comes to the same, because among those eating with the disciples one, and the principal, was Christ. Finally, in such things which the Evangelists describe as uttered by many, and seem to differ in describing, it is probable that some of the speakers used this form of words, others another, and accordingly the Evangelists

report diversely, though in the matter itself they supremely agree. So the Scribes and Pharisees, great in their own eyes, and by their own estimation better than the rest (for the Scribes specially swelled with knowledge, the Pharisees with religion), so despised publicans and sinners that they disdained to eat with them: whence they rebuked Christ and His disciples for such eating together. They had indeed an inordinate and rigid zeal for God and the law; and were falsely, not truly, just, because, as Gregory says, true justice has compassion, false justice disdain. But why did the Scribes and Pharisees not say this rather to Christ than to His disciples? To which I think it should be said that they feared to be confuted by Him, as a little before He had confuted them or those like them, in the cure of the paralytic (v. 22).

It could also be argued that the Pharisees and Scribes were justly moved, since Paul writes to the Corinthians of sinners: "With such an one not so much as to eat" (1 Cor. 5:11). And Solomon in Proverbs: "Eat not with a man that hath an evil eye" (Prov. 23:6); and the Psalmist: "With him that had a proud eye and an unsatiable heart I did not eat" (Ps. 100:5). But to these and like authorities it must be said that obdurate and pertinacious sinners, of whose correction there appears no hope, are to be avoided, especially by the imperfect, who could easily be infected by them. But if sinners are not obdurate, and there seems hope of their amendment, they are not to be avoided, especially by those who can, or whose duty it is to, correct them. Therefore Christ, who could not sin, ought not to avoid them: nay, from the greatness of His charity and mercy He so applied Himself to them, even in eating, that by His converse, preparation, and exemplariness He might draw them to salvation. — Ambrose says, however, that Christ, by eating with publicans and sinners, does not forbid us to go to a feast even with the Gentiles.

"And Jesus answering" (Luke 5:31), who, as is asserted in Matthew, heard the words of the Scribes and Pharisees (Matt. 9:12), *"said to them"* — those Scribes and Pharisees, who intended to blame the Master rather than the disciples: *"They that are whole need not a physician."* This is expounded in one way as said ironically against the Scribes and Pharisees, who boasted themselves just. As if He should say: Therefore I eat not with you nor visit you, because in your own estimation you are sound in mind and just. So in Genesis He says: "Behold, Adam is become as one of us" (Gen. 3:22). *"But they that are sick,"* that is, these publicans and sinners, who confess themselves wounded in mind by sins, need and recognize that they need my presence, who am the physician of souls. Second, it can be taken generally, that the sound, as such, do not need a physician formally so called, that is, as physician, *(p. 498)* whether we speak of the sound and the physician bodily or spiritually, since a physician as such is ordained to the cure of infirmities and wounds. Finally, Christ according to both His natures is the spiritual physician of souls: because according to the divinity He forgives and takes away sins, which are the wounds of souls, by principal authority, and infuses grace and virtues by uncreated power and creation; but according to the assumed humanity He cures sins and bestows the charisms of graces as an instrumental and meritorious cause, so that His whole conversation in this world, His persecution and passion, was meritorious for men and curative of the wounds of the soul. For He did and suffered all things for us, nor did He merit anything for Himself of the essential reward. By this proverb, therefore, Christ beautifully taught that He had come to convert sinners, and therefore ought not to avoid them. Lastly, although all need Christ as creator, to subsist, and as conserver, to continue, and as giver of grace, to live well; yet no one needs Him as physician, except him who is sick.

Next Christ applies this proverb to Himself. *"For I came not to call the just, but sinners to penance"* (Luke 5:32). Which is explained in two ways. First, as said ironically against the Pharisees and Scribes, namely that Christ does not therefore call them and those like them because they vainly presume themselves just. Yet Christ did in some manner call such to the way of salvation, rebuking, teaching, exhorting them; but He did not call them by the saving attainment of salvation, or consummately and effectively, as also He did not redeem the foreknown or reprobate, though He died for all, and redeemed all sufficiently, that is, so far as in Him lies (2 Cor. 5:15). By sinners are understood those who truly confess themselves sinners, and amend, of whom Christ testifies: "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

Second, it is expounded specially of the calling to penance, which belongs to none but sinners, and properly regards mortal sins: therefore to it Christ did not come to call the just as such, but sinners, to whom the sacrament of Penance is the second plank after shipwreck, according to Jerome. Hence the Evangelist notably added, "to penance."

Lastly, of the mystical meaning of the banquet given to Christ by Matthew I now pass over, because on Matthew I have given a twofold exposition thereof (cf. on Matt. 9:10).

Finally the Scribes and Pharisees, instructed, convicted, and confounded about their former question and murmuring, bring in another objection. *"But they said to Him,"* (Luke 5:33), namely to Jesus: *"Why do the disciples of John fast often"*, observing the legal fasts and adding some according to John's ordinance, as out of special devotion works of supererogation are done, *"and make prayers,"* persisting in long and frequent prayers? Now properly "supplication" (*obsecratio*) is when with the mention of something sacred, or by or on account of which sacrament, a petition is framed: as Daniel says, "For thy own sake, O my God, incline thy ear, and hear" (Dan. 9:17–18); likewise when we say, "By Thy passion save us, O Christ": and this is said to be the most efficacious kind of prayer. *"Likewise also the Pharisees"* fast often and make supplications. As is had in Matthew, the disciples of John proposed this question (Matt. 9:14). Whence according to Augustine in the book *On the Harmony of the Evangelists*, all these were in accord in so inquiring, and certainly joined together in asking. *"But Thine eat and drink,"* that is, Thy disciples refresh themselves well. Yet it is not to be thought that they omitted the fasts commanded by the law or the due prayers; but they prayed to the Father in secret (Matt. 6:6), and therefore their prayers were not so copiously known to others. For Christ, as is had below, spoke to them: "We ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke 18:1). *(p. 499)* So, according to the doctrine of Christ, they applied themselves to short and frequent prayers, as it were ejaculatory. Hence Christ in the following words does not say that they did not pray, but that they did not fast frequently.

"To whom He said: Can you make the children of the bridegroom" (Luke 5:34) — that is, my disciples, who are my spiritual children (for the Apostles themselves, of whom we now speak, are believed to have been baptized by Christ, according to Augustine; and by Christ also, through the wisdom of the evangelical law, they were spiritually regenerated or renewed and educated, and born again by His grace) — *"whilst the bridegroom is with them,"* by bodily presence, as master and father and lord, *"fast,"* frequently and afflictively? As if He should say: You cannot reasonably constrain them to this, nor is it fitting. For as long as they have such a bridegroom, namely Christ, present, it is the time of spiritual gladness, nuptial joy, and alacrity.

Further, the time of this alacrity and joy, namely the time of grace, began in the incarnation of Christ, in which in the womb of the Virgin He joined and espoused to Himself both human nature and the Church herself. From the time of the transgression of our first parents until the time of the incarnation was the time of sadness and mourning, the time of lamenting and fasting. So Christ names Himself the bridegroom, of whom the Psalmist said, "He, as a bridegroom coming out of his bridal chamber" (Ps. 18:6). Of this bridegroom Solomon prophesies in the Canticle of Canticles. And Christ alludes by these words to what the Baptist says of Christ in John: "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth with joy because of the bridegroom's voice" (John 3:29). Whence Christ fittingly spoke so before the disciples of the Precursor, as if recalling to them the words uttered by their master before this question. Cyril says: "The manifestation of our Saviour in this world was nothing else than a certain intelligible festivity, as if joining to Himself our nature as a bride, that she who was once barren might become fruitful: whose children of the bridegroom are those who are called by Him through the evangelical discipline."

"But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them" (Luke 5:35). These were the days when Christ was slain and buried, and certain following days. For on the day of the passion the Jews

took away the bridegroom from the Apostles; and on the day of the ascension Christ took Himself from them as to bodily presence, as in John: “I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again I leave the world, and I go to the Father” (John 16:28). But as to the spiritual and invisible presence of the divinity and the indwelling of grace, Christ remains with the faithful perpetually, and even as to the sacramental presence, as He promises in Matthew: “Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world” (Matt. 28:20). *“Then they shall fast in those days.”* For indeed in the three days of the burial they were most sorrowful, nor did bodily food delight them. Afterwards also the primitive Church in Jerusalem lived in the utmost sobriety: nay, after a few years from the passion of Christ it was there in great want, as Paul testifies in his epistles; who also says to the Corinthians of himself and his companions: “In all things let us exhibit ourselves as the ministers of God… in hunger, in thirst, in fastings many times” (2 Cor. 6:4–5; 11:27). Besides, as Augustine testifies, fasting is twofold: one in tribulation, to propitiate God for sins; the other in joy, when carnal things delight so much the less as the fatness of spiritual things is greater. Of the first fasting, Christ said that the children of the bridegroom ought not to fast while the bridegroom was present with them. That the second fasting existed in the Apostles, especially after the Holy Spirit was received, is most certain, when, as is asserted in the Acts, “All that believed were together… and took their meat with gladness and simplicity of heart” (Acts 2:44, 46).

“And He spoke also a similitude to them” (Luke 5:36): by which He showed that a great fast was not to be imposed on His disciples suddenly, or before the taking away of the bridegroom. Now similitude and exemplification chiefly contribute to *(p. 500)* clearer understanding. And since Judea is in the midst of Syria and a part of Palestine, according to Jerome and Chrysostom, and to the Syrians, and most of all the Palestinians, it is customary and familiar to apply a parable to every word, according to Jerome: Christ also, conforming Himself to their good custom, often used similitudes or parables throughout the whole Gospel. *“No man,”* that is, no one acting reasonably, *“putteth a piece,”* that is, a small portion of cloth, *“from a new garment upon an old garment”*: that is, one who wishes to patch or restore an old garment does not take a piece of cloth from a new garment with which to restore the old: *“otherwise,”* that is, if he does not so act and observe this, *“he both rendereth the new”* garment *“torn,”* breaking it by taking away a part necessary to it; *“and the piece taken from the new agreeth not with the old”* — that is, the portion of cloth cut from the new garment, since such dissimilar parts of cloth do not stand well in one garment.

By this Christ insinuates that in like manner it is not fitting, in the very beginning of their conversion, to enjoin great abstinence at once on those who are accustomed daily to eat to the full. Such He intimates His disciples to have been. But they are to be led little by little to the more perfect, that having tasted spiritual sweetness they may be stronger for the afflictions of the body; lest at once in the beginning of their conversion they be terrified or cast down by excessive rigour. By this confessors also are taught not to impose penances too heavy on the newly penitent and confessing, lest they recoil. So also mystically, in man the acts of the old and the new man ought not to be mingled: because according to Ambrose a many-coloured garment does not please Christ the bridegroom, who says through Jeremias: “Is not my inheritance to me as a speckled bird? Is it not as a bird dyed throughout? Come ye, assemble yourselves, and make haste to devour it” (Jer. 12:9). But the oldness of vices must be wholly put off, and the newness of virtues put on, as the Apostle says to the Ephesians: “Put off, according to former conversation, the old man, who is corrupted according to the desire of error; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and put on the new man, who according to God is created” (Eph. 4:22–24).

Moreover, Christ brings in a second similitude to the same purpose. *“And no man”* acting prudently *“putteth new wine into old bottles”* (Luke 5:37), that is, into ancient vessels, on account of their weakness: *“otherwise,”* that is, if he does the opposite, pouring must into old vessels, *“the new wine will break the bottles,”* that is, will burst such vessels by its strong and violent fermentation: *“and the wine will be spilled,”* poured into old skins, the vessels being broken, *“and the bottles will be lost,”* the old and weak skins

perishing, because they are burst. *“But new wine must be put into new bottles”* (Luke 5:38), strong ones, *“and both are preserved,”* namely the container and the contained, or the wine and the vessels.

Likewise the Saviour would have it that His disciples, still carnal, rude, and fragile, could not bear the arduous exercises of virtues in the beginning of their conversion, but were to be renewed and strengthened immediately after the resurrection and ascension of Christ, by the infusion of the Holy Spirit, which being done they were fit for all things. So spiritual fervour and perfection and abstinence are compared to new wine, because they best nourish, strengthen, and gladden the mind, and sprinkle it with the odour of good fame. The imperfect and fragile are compared to old skins, because if great perfection be demanded of them they utterly fail. That the Apostles were still such, their flight from Christ when He was taken (Matt. 26:56), and Peter’s threefold denial, proved. Hence in religion novices have a year of probation, in which they may try their strength and be gradually led to the more perfect. Hence of the indiscreet labourer it is written through Jeremias: “Because he hath done more than he could, therefore he is perished” (Jer. 48:36). And Paul says: “Your reasonable service” (Rom. 12:1). This is what Solomon says in Ecclesiastes: “Be not over just: neither be more wise than is necessary, lest thou become stupid” (Eccles. 7:17). All of which is therefore said that indiscretion may be avoided, and we may strive to advance little by little and in order. *(p. 501)* Yet the omnipotence of God and His grace are not bound by common laws. Whence some, as the apostle Paul himself, are suddenly so wonderfully prevented and filled by the grace of God that at the very beginning of their conversion they are counted among the perfect (Acts 9:3 ff.), as John the Baptist also was in his childhood.

Lastly, a third similitude is added. *“And no man drinking old wine, presently desireth the new”* (Luke 5:39), that is, does not suddenly turn himself to drinking only must. *“For he saith: The old is better”*: because commonly it is so; and although it were not so, yet it frequently appears so to one who is accustomed to drink old wine. For it is difficult to leave what we are accustomed to, since custom, like habit, is as it were a second nature: for which reason accustomed things please more. So Christ wills that His disciples should not be suddenly transferred from their former custom to the opposite, but gradually perfected. Hence even the Scribes and Pharisees, accustomed to the literal understanding of the Scriptures, could not grasp the spiritual doctrines of Christ. To carnal men also spiritual things do not at once taste sweet, though they are proved most sweet in themselves. Whence those things which are of God they at first perform with difficulty, which those habituated in good things pursue with delight.

Luke 6: Sabbath, Twelve Apostles, Beatitudes, Love of Enemies

Article XIV — Exposition of the Sixth Chapter: “And it came to pass on the second first sabbath”

(p. 501) Throughout the whole Gospel it is taught how the Scribes, and most of all the Pharisees, who wished to be reckoned more religious than the rest though they were hypocrites, laid snares for Christ and His disciples: because they saw the people, leaving them, flocking to Christ, on account of which they were tormented with envy. Whence at the beginning of this chapter another cavil of those crafty men is set down.

“And it came to pass on the second first sabbath” (Luke 6:1). On this Theophylact writes: The Jews called every festival a sabbath, because “sabbath” is interpreted rest. Now it often happened that a festival fell on the Parasceve, that is, the sixth day of the week; and they called the Parasceve a sabbath, on account of the feast; then the principal sabbath immediately following they called “second-first,” as second from the festivity of the preceding day, and first as principal in respect of that. Or, according to the abbot Isidore, it is therefore said “second-first” because the second was of the Pasch, but the first of the Azymes. For when the Jews immolated the Pasch in the evening, on the following day they celebrated the feast of Azymes. And that it is so to be understood Isidore proves, because the Apostles, as will be said at once, plucked ears and ate,

because at that time the ears are bent over with fruit, namely in those places. *"As Jesus went through the corn fields,"* namely by the trodden paths lying between the crops of the field, *"His disciples plucked the ears,"* removing them from the stalks, *"and did eat, rubbing them in their hands,"* that is, rubbing the ears with their hands, so as thus to draw the grains from the ears and chaff. For they had great hunger, and had not brought food with them. And Bede cites the words of Mark the evangelist, that so great was the concourse of the crowds to Christ that the disciples had no leisure to eat (Mark 3:20).

"And some of the Pharisees said to them" (Luke 6:2), kindled by spite, not by zeal for equity: *"Why do you that which is not lawful on the sabbath days?"* These Pharisees, like the envious, cloaked their passions with a colour of justice, as though to reprove; and by their reproof they showed their own ignorance, because they did not rightly understand the precept of the observance of the sabbath, *(p. 502)* as the Saviour consequently shows.

"And Jesus answering" (Luke 6:3). For it was His part to defend His simple and humble disciples against those perverse men. In Matthew and Mark, however, the Pharisees are read to have made this objection to Christ (Matt. 12:2; Mark 2:24); but since they were many, it is probable that some of them said these things to Christ, others to His disciples. Christ, however, fulfilled for His pious and meek disciples what was foretold through Isaias of Christ: "He shall judge the poor with justice, and shall reprove with equity for the meek of the earth" (Isa. 11:4). He said: *"Have you not read so much as this, what David did when himself was hungry, and they that were with him? How he went into the house of God,"* that is, into the tabernacle of the Lord in Nobe, the city of the priests. This history is had in the first book of Kings (1 Kings 21:1–6): how David, fleeing Saul, came to Achimelech the high priest in Nobe, and, suffering hunger, asked of the high priest food for himself and his companions. And since the priest had nothing but the loaves which by the law only priests might eat, he gave them to David and his servants. Yet David did not transgress the law, because necessity was there a sufficient cause of dispensation. This is what is added: *"and took the loaves of proposition, and did eat, and gave to them that were with him,"* that is, to his companions to eat. Now the loaves of proposition were twelve loaves which every sabbath were set hot on the table in the tabernacle of the Lord. *"Which is not lawful to eat but only for the priests,"* as is had in Leviticus (Lev. 24:5–9; cf. 8:31). Which is to be understood, save in a case of necessity and evident utility: for so also the other laws are understood. But where there is true necessity or evident utility, dispensation is praiseworthy: and if they be lacking, it will be not dispensation but dissipation of law, so that neither the dispenser, nor he who uses the dispensation, is excused before God the judge, as the supreme Pontiffs Leo and Gelasius write.

"And He said to them" (Luke 6:5) — Christ, namely to the Pharisees — *"That the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath."* As if He should say: I, the Son of man, since I am lord of the sabbath and of all days and times, have plenary power and authority to dispense concerning the observance of the sabbath; therefore by my authority my disciples are excused. By these words Christ confesses His divinity and majesty, because to be lord of times belongs properly to God alone, although Christ also according to the assumed nature is set over every creature and rules by conceded authority and participated power. By the authority of Christ, too, the celebrity of the sabbath has now ceased, and the first day of the week has become the celebrated day.

"And it came to pass also on another sabbath, that He entered into the synagogue and taught" (Luke 6:6). Why Christ taught and wrought many signs especially on sabbaths and in synagogues has been said more than once. *"And there was a man"* there, namely in the synagogue, *"whose right hand was withered,"* that is, contracted. *"And the Scribes and Pharisees watched if He would heal on the sabbath"* (Luke 6:7), that is, if He would heal some sick person supernaturally, *"that they might find an accusation against Him."* Behold infinite perversity, and how detestable envy blinds the unhappy soul: so that a man is made worse from that whence he should rightly have been edified. For envy makes all the deeds of him whom it hates, even though well done, be interpreted sinisterly: nay the envious man proposes to obscure, taint, and depress all the deeds of him whom he hates, and seeks ways to accomplish this. So the Pharisees and Scribes, greatly desirous of

human honour, tirelessly searched how they might apparently reprove before men the words and deeds of Christ, whom they hated. Let us avoid, then, their most vile rancour, fulfilling that of Wisdom: “Neither will I have fellowship with consuming envy” (Wis. 6:25); and the strong good deeds of others, which we cannot imitate or do not take pains to, let us *(p. 503)* love and praise, humbling ourselves by comparison with them. — Further, on that, “that they might accuse Him,” expositors commonly say: that they might accuse Him of transgression of the sabbath if He healed, or of cruelty and powerlessness if He did not heal. Yet from Christ’s words it is gathered that they intended to accuse Him only of the transgression of the sabbath if He healed, for He consequently rebukes this intention of theirs.

“But He knew their thoughts” (Luke 6:8), insidious and fraudulent against Himself; *“and said to the man who had the withered hand: Arise, and stand in the midst”*: that the miracle might be more clearly manifest to all, and the madness of the envious be more fittingly confuted; also that those beholding the contracted man might the more compassionate him. *“And rising he stood forth.”*

“Then Jesus said to them: I ask you” (Luke 6:9), not from ignorance but from prudence, to show and correct your folly and malice, *“if it be lawful on the sabbath days to do good,”* namely to bestow a work of mercy and charity on the needy, *“or to do evil”*: and it is certain that it is not lawful, nor ever, to do evil; *“to save life, or to destroy?”* and it is certain that it is lawful to save, and not to destroy. Now Christ, about to cure a body miraculously, inquires also about the salvation of the soul, because those whom He healed in body He healed also in mind, by taking away sins and infusing grace. Moreover, He ordered the care of bodies to the salvation of souls. Further, according to Matthew, the Pharisees asked Christ whether it was lawful to heal on the sabbath (Matt. 12:10). Luke, however, brings in Christ as having asked them this. To which Augustine in the book *On the Harmony of the Evangelists* replies that the Pharisees first proposed this question; but Christ, perceiving their snares, bade the contracted man stand in the midst, and then repeated their question, that He might more fittingly answer it. So by His question and providence He forestalled their calumny, confounded their cunning, and showed their ignorance.

“And looking round about on them all with anger” (Luke 6:10), *“being grieved for the blindness of their hearts,”* as is said in Mark (Mark 3:5): for there was in Christ anger through zeal, not preceding the judgment of reason, but proceeding from its assumed command; *“He saith to the man”* — because the Pharisees and Scribes did not answer — *“Stretch forth thy hand,”* the withered right hand. *“And he stretched it forth; and his hand was restored”*, that is, was given back to health and natural use. The deeds of Christ, however, were most efficacious, therefore at the very moment He commanded, “Stretch forth thy hand,” it was healed. For it could not be stretched forth unless its contraction or dryness were removed. Herein is manifest the eminence of the power of Christ, working so imperially, instantaneously, and supernaturally. Which can be done only by divine power: because although sometimes a contracted limb is cured by nature and art, yet certainly not in an instant or by command alone, since it is established that nature and art in such things work successively, not instantaneously.

“And they were filled with madness” (Luke 6:11), that is, with most foolish thoughts, error, envy, evil counsels: because from the very thing whence they should have become better, they became worse. Nor did they ascribe so imperious a miracle to divine power, but refused to acquiesce in the reasonable instruction of Christ, who, as is read in Matthew, most graciously and evidently declared their ignorance, saying: “What man shall there be among you that hath one sheep, and if the same fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not take hold on it and lift it up? How much better is a man than a sheep?” (Matt. 12:11–12). By which words the Saviour showed that they did not truly understand the precept concerning the observance of the sabbath. For God by Moses did not forbid every external act on it, but said: “You shall do no servile work therein” (Lev. 23:7–8; Num. 28–29). And if often He seems to forbid every work indeterminately, it is to be understood of every servile work, as when it is written in Exodus: “On the seventh day thou shalt do no work” (Exod. 20:10).

Wherefore it must be known that from servile works the sabbath was to be kept free, that the spirit of man might freely attend to God. *(p. 504)* Now a work is called servile in three ways: first, by the servitude of guilt, as an act of sin: and from such a work one was and is to keep holiday, or abstain, on all days. Second, by the servitude of fortune, as mechanical work, from which on sabbaths and feast days one had to rest: which Scripture more properly calls servile work. Third, by the servitude of nature, as work serving the sustenance of the body. And from such sometimes one must abstain, sometimes not: because either it was a work not hindering free leisure for God, but helping it, such as a short journey, and from such there was no need to cease on the sabbath or feasts; or it was hindering, and then either such work was necessary or not: if not, then it was to be abstained from; if necessary, either it could be anticipated or deferred, or not: if it could, it was to be abstained from; if it could not, then it had to be done. Therefore from the preparation of food one had to abstain on the sabbath, but not from the repelling or defending against attacking enemies. On account of which in the books of Machabees the Jews are read to have decreed that they should fight against enemies who attacked them on the sabbath (1 Mach. 2:41).

"And they were filled with madness, and they talked one with another what they might do to Jesus" (Luke 6:11), that is, what evil they might inflict on Him. Behold what malice, because for the greatest benefits they intended to repay evils, nay the penalty of death, according to that of Matthew: "The Pharisees going out made a consultation against him, how they might destroy him," that is, kill him (Matt. 12:14). And in Mark it is said that they took counsel with the Herodians (Mark 3:6). But it seems strange that Jesus, the lover of men, did not avoid such scandals of theirs which He had foreseen. To which it is answered that the scandal of the little ones is to be avoided, saving the threefold truth, namely of life, doctrine, and justice: as when a good work is not of the necessity of precept but of the abundance of supererogation. But the scandal of the Pharisees is not to be avoided, so that on account of it a good of supererogation be omitted or deferred: because the scandal of such arises not from infirmity or excusable ignorance but from malice, so that from delay no correction is to be hoped. Lastly, of this impiety of the Pharisees and Scribes the Psalmist foretold in the person of Christ: "They have spoken against me with deceitful tongues, and they have compassed me about with words of hatred: for that they should love me, they detracted me; and they repaid me evil for good" (Ps. 108:2–5). This also Christ testifies in John: "That the word may be fulfilled which is written in their law: They hated me without cause" (John 15:25).

Spiritually, by the man whose right hand withered are understood those who are ready to do evil, but impotent for good works, or rather slothful and unwilling. For by the hand the operative power is expressed: and so this power is called the left, as active of evils; but the right, insofar as it is productive of good works. Of such it is had in Jeremias: "They are wise to do evil, but to do well they have no knowledge" (Jer. 4:22). And Isaias: "Woe to you that are mighty to drink wine, and stout men at mingling drunkenness… and the work of the Lord you regard not" (Isa. 5:22, 12). Many such are found also among religious and clerics, who in the service of divine worship are soon wearied, yawn, and hasten, or go out, but in gossip and bodily comforts are seen strong and alert: in whom grace does not dominate nature, nor virtue sin, as is required or expedient for salvation. According to this tropology it is said through Zacharias of the negligent pastor who prefers temporal things to spiritual: "O shepherd and idol, that forsakest the flock! the sword upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall quite wither away, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened" (Zach. 11:17).

To such a sinner, then, contracted from good things and dry from the water of saving wisdom, Christ commands: *"Arise,"* that is, by penance rise again from the ruin of sin, according to that of the Apostle, "Rise, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead" (Eph. 5:14); *"stand in the midst,"* that is, do penance publicly, and do well, and persevere in grace, and show thyself an example to others, who hast publicly transgressed and scandalized others: according to that of the Apostle, "That you be blameless… *(p. 505)* without reproof in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, holding forth the word of life" (Phil.

2:15–16); *"stretch forth thy hand,"* that is, efficaciously apply to good works the power granted thee: according to that of Proverbs, "She hath stretched out her hand to the poor" (Prov. 31:20). It frequently happens, however, that Christ so commanding and furnishing the sinner with grace to fulfil it, those who see the conversion of the perverse sinner are indignant against the devout man through whose instruction Christ so converted the sinner, and lay snares for him.

Next is described the election of the Apostles. *"And it came to pass in those days"* (Luke 6:12), in which Christ preached in the world and wrought miracles. Yet what is subjoined and narrated here did not happen immediately after the things just said and done, but before, namely before Christ made the sermon on the mount: whence what is written here of the election of the Apostles is called a recapitulation. *"He went out into a mountain to pray,"* namely into the mountain where He made the sermon on the beatitudes and the other precepts and counsels of the evangelical law; *"and He passed the whole night in the prayer of God."*

Christ instructed us not by words only, but by things, signs, and acts. Why then, about to pray, did He withdraw from others, even from His devout disciples, and ascend into a mountain, and pray so long? All for our instruction, aid, and salvation He did. For Christ, even according to the assumed form of a servant, could not sin, nor be hindered from good, nay nor be helped by any adventitious thing to an increase of devotion: seeing that He was confirmed in good, and a comprehensor according to the supreme portion of the soul; and so adorned from the beginning of the incarnation with such perfection of virtues that in them He never advanced in Himself, but only as to manifestation. He withdrew therefore from others to pray, to teach us by His example that we also, about to pray more devoutly in private prayers, withdraw from others, that we may attend to God more freely, steadily, and quietly. Hence He also ascended a mountain, because the situation of such a place is provocative of interior elevation to God, since from it the creatures of God are seen more abundantly on every side, from the sight of which the majesty of the Creator is considered, loved, honoured, and held in admiration. Again, about to pray He ascended a mountain, to hint that everyone who prays ought to forget lowest and earthly things, contemplate heavenly, ascend the summit of the mind, and, standing in the supreme part of the heart, attend to God with fixed and free purity, as Christ testifies in John: "The true adorers shall adore the Father in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23).

Moreover, about to choose Apostles, He premised so long a prayer, to teach that to canonical elections of prelates most devout prayers are to be premised. Moreover, He spent the night in vigil of prayer, to teach us to persevere in holy prayers not only by day but also at night hours, and in them to continue long and fervently. As Chrysostom says, the night time is more apt for devotion and prayer, because then darkness, quiet, silence, the sight of the stars, induce compunction. Hence Jeremias admonishes: "Arise, give praise in the night, in the beginning of the watches: pour out thy heart like water before the face of the Lord: lift up thy hands to him" (Lam. 2:19). Therefore the Psalmist says: "My eyes have prevented the morning" (Ps. 118:148); and again, "In the day of my trouble I sought God, with my hands lifted up to him in the night, and I was not deceived" (Ps. 76:3). And Isaias speaks to God: "My soul hath desired thee in the night" (Isa. 26:9).

"And when day was come" (Luke 6:13), *"He called unto Him His disciples,"* who had remained near the mountain or gathered, and there awaited the command of Christ; *"and He chose twelve of them,"* to be principal beyond the rest, and chiefly ordained and directed to the preaching of the evangelical law, *"whom also He named Apostles."* For "Apostle" is the name of an office, as are Prophet and angel, according to Gregory. "Apostle" is said as "sent," or "after-sent," because they were sent by Christ to preach, and after His resurrection He sent them to preach *(p. 506)* throughout the whole world. Finally, according to Ambrose, the heavenly counsel is to be noted, in that He chose not the wise, not the rich, not the noble, but a publican and fishermen, to direct them: lest He should seem to have drawn the world to the faith by riches, or by the authority of power or nobility; that the reason of truth, not the grace of disputation, might prevail.

Then He expresses the names of the Apostles, lest anyone dare to inscribe another in the catalogue of the Apostles then instituted by Christ: although afterwards some also were divinely constituted Apostles, as

Matthias, Paul, Barnabas, and Silas (Acts 1:26; 13:2; 14:13). *"Simon, whom He surnamed Peter."* According to Bede, He did not call him Peter in this election, but long before, when Andrew led his brother Simon to Jesus: to whom Jesus then said, "Thou shalt be called Cephas, which is interpreted Peter," as John describes (John 1:42). But against this seems to be that of Mark, "And to Simon he gave the name Peter" (Mark 3:16); and Mark speaks there of the election of the Apostles. Therefore others say that that word of John, "Thou shalt be called Cephas," was not the imposition of a present name, but the foretelling of a future imposition of this name. But it seems it can be said otherwise too. For Peter is interpreted firm, or obedient, or principal. Cephas also is interpreted principal. When therefore it is written in John, "Cephas, which is interpreted Peter," Peter is taken as it is interpreted principal: and so the name Peter was then imposed on him, that is, a name which is of such import as Peter, according to this interpretation of Peter, because he was then called Cephas. Afterwards, however, he was called Peter, as Peter is interpreted firm or obedient, in which manner Christ elsewhere says to him: "Thou art Peter," that is, firm, "and upon this rock," that is, the firm confession of faith finally, "I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). — From this change of Peter's name, by which he who before the apostolate was called Simon was in the election to the apostolate called Peter, the custom was introduced that when one is made Pope another name is imposed on him, to designate the spiritual change by which he who is set over others as ruler and pastor ought to be changed into another and better man. But would that he be not changed into a worse and more arrogant one, as Saul also, to whom nevertheless it was foretold: "Thou shalt be changed into another man" (1 Kings 10:6).

"And Andrew his brother, James and John," whom He then called Boanerges, that is, sons of thunder, on account of their loud-sounding preaching (Mark 3:17). These were kinsmen of Christ, namely sons of Mary the wife of Zebedee, who was the sister of Mary the bearer of Christ. *"Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alpheus"* (Luke 6:15), who was called James the Less, because later in calling than James the brother of John. He was called also the brother of the Lord or of Christ, because he was most like Him in bodily disposition and form: whom, on account of his eminent holiness, the Apostles, having received the Holy Spirit, ordained the first bishop of the Christians in Jerusalem. *"And Simon, who is called Zelotes,"* that is, Chananean: for *cana* means zeal (Matt. 10:4). *"And Jude the brother of James"* the Less (Luke 6:16), who in Matthew is called Thaddeus (Matt. 10:3); and, according to Jerome, was also called Lebbeus, which means "little heart," that is, a diligent keeper of his own heart. These two, namely Simon and Jude, were brothers of James the Less and sons of Mary the wife of Alpheus, sister of the glorious Virgin, as is had in the *Passional of the Saints*. *"And Judas Iscariot, who was the traitor,"* that is, the betrayer of Christ. Although the Saviour foreknew that he would be the betrayer, He nevertheless chose him to be an Apostle: not ceasing, on account of his future malice and ingratitude, to do what befitted His goodness, especially since from the malice of this traitor He knew, could, and willed to draw out great good, namely the fulfilment of the Scriptures concerning His betrayal, and the showing of His ineffable mercy, in that He made him so familiar to Him and an Apostle, by whom He foresaw He was to be betrayed: of whom He said in John, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" (John 6:71).

(p. 507) "And coming down with them" (Luke 6:17), the twelve Apostles, from the higher places of the mountain, *"He stood in a plain place, and the company of His disciples."* By this word it is shown that He had many disciples: for besides the Apostles He designated seventy-two disciples and sent them two by two to the cities to which He Himself was about to come, as is had below (Luke 10:1); but He had also many other disciples, some of whom often withdrew from Him and no longer followed Him, as is had in John (John 6:67). John also writes that Joseph of Arimathea was a disciple of Christ, though secretly for fear of the Jews (John 19:38). *"And a very great multitude of people from all Judea, and Jerusalem"* — which was the metropolis of Judea, and therefore is expressly named — *"and the sea coast,"* that is, from the region lying about the sea: which according to Bede and the Gloss is not understood of the sea of Galilee, near this plain place, because that would not be a great thing, that they had come to Christ from those places; but is to be understood of the Great Sea, in which Tyre and Sidon could be comprehended. Whence it is added: *"and*

Tyre and Sidon," that is, a copious multitude of these Gentile cities. From which it is clear that the fame of Christ was very great, which drew even Gentiles from places so diverse and remote. *"Who were come to hear Him"* (Luke 6:18), that is, to be instructed and to profit by His doctrine or preaching: and perhaps not a few were drawn by a certain curiosity, desiring to look upon and hear Him of whose wisdom and eloquence, power and signs they had heard so much; *"and to be healed of their diseases"* who were sick: who in comparison with the others were few.

"And they that were troubled with unclean spirits," that is, possessed by demons, *"were cured,"* that is, were delivered from them by the power of Christ. For Christ by command alone expelled demons. Further, in that it is said "spirits," the subtlety of the nature of demons is touched; the perversity of their guilt is insinuated when it is added "unclean"; the abuse also of power, or their wicked operation, is expressed when it is said "troubled"; and their restraint is designated when it is added "were cured."

"And all the multitude sought to touch Him" (Luke 6:19), not only the sick, but others also, trusting by His touch to be guarded from adversities, cleansed from sins, made partakers of grace, or to obtain some benefit: nay, according to Mark, they rushed upon Him eagerly and in great numbers to touch Him (Mark 3:10). The cause of which is subjoined: *"for virtue went out from Him,"* that is, the power, virtue, and holiness subsisting in Him extended itself into operation and produced illustrious effects. So virtue flowed from Christ, not that the same numerical virtue went out from Him and entered others, but because the power of Christ impressed its efficiency on others, as an effect is said to proceed from its cause, and the cause to go out into the effect, namely by a certain influence. *"And healed all."* Nay even those who were sound in body He healed of the wounds of souls, that is, sins, provided there was no defect on their part, but they did what in them lay: to which doing and to receiving grace the touch of Christ disposed some of them, by a certain pious prevention of His mercy, by His virtue and merit. The Evangelist speaks specially of the miraculous bodily cure of the sick; but since Christ healed in soul those whom He cured in body, as the Saints testify, this is truly understood of both healings.

On this it is asked of what virtue of Christ this is understood, and how the humanity of Christ cooperated in miraculous effects. This question has often been touched above, and in some measure solved: which now is to be solved more diffusely and clearly.

Miracles, then, most properly so called, transcend the whole virtue, faculty, or authority of created nature: therefore it is certain that they are done by the sole power of Him who is creator and institutor of the whole of nature, as by a virtue principally operating. Wherefore the Psalmist says: "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone doth wonderful things" (Ps. 71:18) *(p. 508)* (Ps. 135:4 also). Nevertheless the Saints, both angels and men, are read to have done many miracles; and it is certain that by the prayers and merits of holy men God has frequently done signs, so that men cooperated in them meritoriously. But the difficulty is whether they cooperated causally by some virtue subsisting in them divinely given, so that that power is not the principal but an instrumental cause of the miraculous effect.

Augustine raises this question in the twenty-second book *On the City of God*, and leaves it undetermined. Gregory, however, in the book of *Dialogues*, seems to touch its solution, saying: "Those who adhere to God with devout mind, when the necessity of things demands, sometimes work wonders, at times by prayer, at times by power," namely divinely granted them. And this he proves by reason, because by the grace of adoption it is given to men to become sons of God: which is greater than to do signs, which is often granted even to the wicked. Therefore to virtuous men there seems to be given an instrumentally operative power of miracles. Finally, Peter, after prayer premised, raised Tabitha (Acts 9:40); but Ananias and Saphira his wife he slew, not by prayer, but by rebuke premised (Acts 5:1–10). Moreover, in a sermon on the Angels Gregory says how some of the elect work miracles by force of power received, so that they belong to that choir of angels by whom signs and miracles are wont to be done. — To the same purpose it is argued that among the gifts of grace freely given are placed the grace of healings and the working of miracles. As therefore some

gifts of grace freely given enumerated by the Apostle, namely the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, prophecy, the gift of tongues, posit something real, or a certain virtue in the soul; so of the grace of working miracles it seems to be said (1 Cor. 12:8–10). — Moreover, according to the doctors, the sacraments of the new law effect what they signify, so that a certain virtue subsists in them and is posited as instrumentally and causally cooperative to the production of sacramental grace, or at least of the disposition to it, namely the character, though these sacraments consist in sensible things. Much more therefore it appears that in the souls of the Saints there is a certain virtue concurring and cooperating by instrumental concausality to the production of miracles.

Which some concede: of whom some assert that this virtue is not in the Saints fixedly or permanently as a habit, but by way of disposition or a passing passion, like prophecy: wherefore they cannot always at will work miracles. Against which some say that although this virtue were in them as a habit, it would not follow that they could work miracles as often as they willed, because this virtue is instrumental, which does not act unless moved by the principal virtue. But on this matter very many difficulties could be raised, and reasons adduced for either side, which I think should rather be committed to disputants.

Moreover, those who posit this virtue in the Saints say that it is to be posited so much the more and the more sublimely in the humanity of Christ, as that is rather the instrument or organ of the Divinity or the eternal Word than the Saints and the sacraments: of which eternal Word it is the immediate, animated, conjoined, and proper organ, as my body is the instrument of my soul; but the other Saints are separate and common instruments of the Divinity, as an axe is the instrument of an artisan. According to this position, the aforesaid words of the Evangelist, namely, “Virtue went out from Him and healed all,” can be understood not only of the divine and uncreated virtue of Christ, principally working miracles, but also of His aforesaid supernatural created virtue, instrumentally productive of miracles: and this holds good for the understanding of the following matters concerning the miracles of Christ.

Article XV — Continuation of the Exposition of this Sixth Chapter: “And He, lifting up His eyes on His disciples, said”

(p. 509) “And He, lifting up His eyes on His disciples, said” (Luke 6:20). Although Christ spoke to all, He directed His bodily eyes specially on His disciples, to insinuate that what He was about to preach befitted and belonged chiefly to them; also to hint that He would set them before others as an example, and because they were more capable of His doctrine than the rest; again, to show His special love for them, and to draw them more closely to Himself, while in the presence of all He bore Himself so lovingly and reverently toward them: whereby He also incited others to be His disciples. *“Blessed are ye poor.”* Here it may be asked whether this sermon is the same as that described by Matthew. The pursuit and solution of this question I omit, because I have written this on Matthew. This, however, is to be known, that what Luke recites in this chapter and sermon, the glorious evangelist Matthew writes in three chapters much more fully and diffusely (Matt. 5–7). And that sermon, which he describes in those three chapters, is called the Sermon of the Lord on the Mount: on which Augustine composed a special book. In this sermon is contained and given the evangelical law, and whatever pertains to the best morals and the perfection of the Christian life. Of this sermon, since I wrote at length on Matthew, I now pass over more briefly.

Luke, then, expresses only four beatitudes: the first of which he sets the same as Matthew, but more briefly. For in Matthew it is had, “Blessed are the poor in spirit” (Matt. 5:3); here it is said, “Blessed are ye poor.” Which is explained in two ways. First, of voluntary poverty spontaneously assumed for God, desired or approved, by which earthly riches or temporal things are, so far as can fittingly be done, despised or cast away, that the mind may attend more freely and perfectly to God and contemplation. Whence Christ also says: “Whosoever he be of you that doth not renounce all that he possesseth, cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:33). For the soul tends the more perfectly and expeditiously to the higher one thing necessary above all

(Luke 10:42), the less it is occupied, divided, and distracted about many temporal things. Second, it is expounded: “Blessed are the poor,” that is, the humble, who are little, defective, or needy in their own eyes, especially in the sight of God; who confess that they have nothing good from themselves, and ascribe all good to God.

“For yours is the kingdom of God.” Because Christ directed His gaze on the disciples, therefore He directs this word to them. In every beatitude two things are posited: the first is by way of merit; the second, by way of reward corresponding to merit. So, after Christ proposed the merit, saying, “Blessed are the poor in spirit,” as those who in the aforesaid manner despise earthly things or humble themselves, He subjoins at once the proportionate and consonant reward, “for yours is the kingdom of God,” that is, the opulence of eternal felicity, the height of the heavenly kingdom. For to the aforesaid poverty that opulence corresponds, and to that humility this sublimity, as Christ says: “He that humbleth himself shall be exalted” (Luke 14:11). Most rightly also the possession of heavenly goods is promised to those who despise temporal goods for God.

Then the second beatitude is subjoined (Luke 6:21), which in Matthew is placed fourth (Matt. 5:6). *“Blessed are ye that hunger now.” (p. 510)* Since beatitude is the exclusion of pain and misery, it is strange that Christ asserts that those who hunger and weep and suffer persecution are blessed. But it must be noted that beatitude is twofold, namely of the way and of the fatherland. The beatitude of the way is the meritorious act of the beatitude of the fatherland, that is, the virtuous act which is merit and disposition to the felicity of the fatherland. So the hungering, weeping, those suffering adversities, the poor, and the rest whom Christ now asserts to be blessed, are blessed already in fact, speaking of the beatitude of the way, and are blessed in hope, speaking of the beatitude of the fatherland.

Further, what He says, “Blessed are ye that hunger now,” is first expounded of bodily hunger, as it is an act of virtue, namely of abstinence, by which one voluntarily for God chastises and afflicts his body and in a manner withdraws necessaries from it, as the Apostle says: “I chastise my body and bring it into subjection” (1 Cor. 9:27); and again, “They that are Christ’s have crucified their flesh with the vices and concupiscences” (Gal. 5:24). They also are blessed who hunger from lack of food, provided they bear this patiently for God, or for Him have chosen such want, or for Him are deprived of food by the impious, as is read of many martyrs. This hunger, therefore, is called blessed by Christ, because it is dispositive to grace, introductive to glory, satisfactory for sins and inordinate delights; it also merits from God special illumination and infusion of wisdom, as the Lord infused great wisdom into Daniel and his companions, because they gave themselves to the work of abstinence, as is read in Daniel (Dan. 1:8–17). And in Isaias it is asked: “Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand the hearing?” To which it is immediately answered: “Them that are weaned from the milk, that are drawn away from the breasts” (Isa. 28:9): that is, those who despise carnal delights, and subject sensuality to reason by abstinence and the other exercises of virtues. Therefore it is written: “He that loveth wine and fatness shall not be wise” (cf. Prov. 21:17). — Second, it is expounded of spiritual hunger, by which one heartily desires justice, as justice is the general virtue and all virtue. So to hunger spiritually is to desire daily progress in every virtue, to long for the honouring of God in all things, to desire inwardly the reformation and perfection of all: which comes from charity and zeal of justice. Let us hunger, therefore, after this justice; and let us never think ourselves just enough, but at every hour strive to advance, since the Apostle also says: “I do not count myself to have apprehended; but… forgetting the things that are behind, and stretching forth myself to those that are before” (Phil. 3:13).

The reward of this blessed hunger is added: *“For you shall be filled,”* that is, you shall be replenished with spiritual goods, especially with the gifts of glory in the fatherland, the Psalmist saying, “I shall be satisfied when thy glory shall appear” (Ps. 16:15). There indeed the whole capacity and desire of the soul are fulfilled, and its whole potentiality is perfectly reduced to act, by the fact that it contemplates God clearly by vision, and enjoys Him. Whence whatever it desires to know or have, it knows and has: which will be most of all after the glorification of the bodies. Finally, even in the present, those who so hunger are in some measure

satisfied with the charisms of graces and the sacramental bread, since the Psalmist also says: “Bless the Lord, O my soul… who satisfieth thy desire with good things” (Ps. 102:2, 5); and again, “Fear the Lord, all ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him” (Ps. 33:10). Of those too who are wont to experience how sweet is the Lord (1 Pet. 2:3): “They shall publish the memory of the abundance of thy sweetness” (Ps. 144:7). Now such belching comes only from a certain satiety or fulness, according to Bernard. Nay, often they are so graciously filled from above with such fervour of love, such wonder and sincerity of contemplation, such sweetness of the divine, most-sweet goodness, that they themselves cannot bear it, but fail and succumb in mind and body, grow stiff and languish: which he experienced who said, “My flesh and my heart hath fainted away” (Ps. 72:26). And Jeremias: “And there came in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was wearied, not being able to bear it” (Jer. 20:9). *(p. 511)* But this abundance is not continuous nor simply full, because it is often interrupted, and every such soul aspires to the face-to-face vision of the most blessed God and His unfailing beatific enjoyment, crying out with the Apostle: “Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” (Rom. 7:24).

There follows the third beatitude, which in Matthew is placed third (Matt. 5:5). *“Blessed are ye that weep now”*: that is, who lovingly and sorrowfully bewail your own or others’ sins, or, from desire of the heavenly fatherland, deplore the sojourn of this exile, or, meditating on the passion of Christ, mourn out of compassion for Him. There is, finally, another most noble and most blessed weeping, not flowing from any adversity, pain, or sadness, but from a most sincere complacency in the super-delicious God, when in high contemplation God with a certain singular clarity and sincerity shows Himself to the intellect of the contemplative, so that the bosom of the mind and the apex of affection are at once wholly opened, expanded, and absorbed in so incomparable and most beautiful an object, and the soul conceives and has ineffable complacency in Him, and from this sweet drops are poured forth through the eyes.

“For you shall laugh,” that is, you shall receive as a reward interior consolation and heartfelt joy in the fatherland. It is not therefore said of vain and exterior laughter, but of spiritual alacrity and gladness: of which in Proverbs it is said of the valiant woman, “She shall laugh in the latter day” (Prov. 31:25); in Job also, “Till thy mouth be filled with laughter, and thy lips with rejoicing” (Job 8:21). This reward of good weeping is begun even in this life, in those who with the Psalmist can say to God: “According to the multitude of my sorrows in my heart, thy comforts have given joy to my soul” (Ps. 93:19); and again, “How great is the multitude of thy sweetness, O Lord!” (Ps. 30:20). And likewise with the Apostle: “Blessed be God… who comforteth us in all our tribulation” (2 Cor. 1:3–4); and again, “As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so also by Christ doth our comfort abound” (2 Cor. 1:5). For the most clement Lord deigns even in the present frequently and abundantly to console and gladden His little servants, namely those who afflict themselves with the aforesaid mournings, who despise all carnal delight, according to that: “My soul refused to be comforted; I remembered God, and was delighted” (Ps. 76:3–4).

Further it is to be observed that in these two beatitudes Christ adds “now,” saying, “Blessed are ye that hunger now,” “Blessed are ye that weep now”: to insinuate that the time of the present life is the time of penance and mourning, because we dwell in a valley of tears, in a prison and exile, and innumerable perils abound.

There follows the fourth beatitude, which in Matthew is ordered eighth (Matt. 5:10–12). *“Blessed shall you be when men shall hate you”* (Luke 6:22) for truth, and your justice, or any other virtue and grace. Now so to hate befits none but vicious men. Whence “man” is here taken in the bad sense, namely as to that which men commonly follow more, which is sensuality and its passions. In which manner the Apostle says: “Whereas there is among you envying and contention, are you not men?” (1 Cor. 3:3). And again, “If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ” (Gal. 1:10); though elsewhere he protests, “I… in all things please all men” (1 Cor. 10:33). Moreover, as to love is to will good to someone, so to hate is to will evil to someone. Of such hatred Christ says to His disciples: “If the world hate you, know ye that it hath hated me before you”

(John 15:18); and elsewhere, “You shall be hated by all men for my name’s sake” (Luke 21:17). *“And when they shall separate you”* from their society, as unworthy of their fellowship: according to that of Proverbs, “The wicked are an abomination to the just” (Prov. 29:27); and again, “Bloody men hate the upright” (Prov. 29:10). Whence in John it is had: “The Jews had already agreed among themselves, that if any man should confess him to be Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue” (John 9:22). *“And shall reproach you,”* inflicting reviling and insults: according to that of Peter, “If you be reproached for the name of Christ, you shall be blessed” (1 Pet. 4:14). And to the Corinthians the Apostle writes: “We are reviled, and we bless” (1 Cor. 4:12). *“And cast out your name as evil,” (p. 512)* that is, the name and repute by which you are called Christians; or, “your name,” that is, yourselves, whom they execrate as the worst, shall have expelled altogether with violence; *“for the Son of man’s sake,”* that is, on account of the fact that you believe in me, or obey me, and live according to my precepts or counsels. So whoever suffers these things for justice or virtue, suffers for Christ. But it is no great thing to suffer these things for one’s own faults, nay we must beware lest we so suffer. Therefore in his first Canonical Epistle the prince of the Apostles says: “For what glory is it, if committing sin, and being buffeted for it, you suffer it? But if doing well you suffer patiently, this is thanks before God” (1 Pet. 2:20). And again he says: “But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief” (1 Pet. 4:15).

Moreover, although Christ calls blessed those who are hated and suffer the aforesaid adversities, yet on that account we must not desire that others hate and harass us, especially insofar as such things have the nature of sin: nay, this would be contrary to charity, to desire the ruin of others. But Christ says these things that in adversities we may keep an unshaken patience, and not, on account of the hatred and persecution of others, abandon the way of justice.

“Be glad in that day, and rejoice” (Luke 6:23): that is, while you suffer these things, rejoice in them with interior joy, and exult with exterior gladness, so that you may be glad in heart and body, or in the intellective and sensitive appetite: according to what is written, “My heart and my flesh have rejoiced in the living God” (Ps. 83:3). For exultation (*exsultatio*) is said as it were “leaping outside,” when interior joy overflows into the body and the sensitive powers, so that from the abundance of interior delight signs of gladness are shown outwardly. This the Apostles did, according to that of the Acts: “And they indeed went from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus” (Acts 5:41). And the most blessed Andrew the apostle, seeing the cross from afar: “Rejoicing,” he said, “I come to thee, that thou mayest receive me rejoicing.” Hence James: “My brethren, count it all joy, when you shall fall into divers temptations” (James 1:2). *“For behold your reward is great in heaven.”* Therefore you ought so to be glad and rejoice, because for these temporal persecutions you shall have a copious reward in the heavenly kingdom. Of which reward Isaias and Paul testify, that “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him” (Isa. 64:4; 1 Cor. 2:9). This reward is indeed so great that it is called innumerable; so precious that it is asserted incomparable; so great that it is inestimable; so lasting that it stands interminable. For eternal beatitude, as beatitude, is called the state made perfect by the aggregation of all goods. This is one reason of glorying in adversities. Wherefore the Apostle says: “That which is at present momentary and light of our tribulation worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory” (2 Cor. 4:17).

Moreover, in adversities we ought to rejoice because by the endurance of adversities we are made like the ancient and chief Saints. Therefore the Saviour adds: *“For according to these things did their fathers to the prophets,”* that is, in the aforesaid ways they persecuted them, by hating, casting out, reproaching, the carnal and impious fathers of the Jews of this time: by whom you also, my disciples, are to suffer adversities. Therefore in the Acts Stephen speaks to them: “You stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do you also. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?” (Acts 7:51–52).

So, from these most salutary words of Christ, exhortations and promises, let us learn to bear adversities with equanimity, to glory in them from the heart, and not be wearied but persevere unconquered to the end, not only for the causes already touched, but especially because by this we honour God most of all, when we gladly bear every adversity, since we frequently dishonour and offend God (whom the more sincerely and perfectly we love, the more our sins displease us, and every adversity *(p. 513)* and pain and confusion we the more willingly endure on that account, that some recompense at least be made to the most exalted God); likewise, because by adversities we are purged from vices, prepared for grace, advance in every virtue, are made like to Christ who suffered for us, escape future torments: nay the mercy and protection of God are most prone to help in tribulations, as is said in the Psalm: "I am with him in tribulation" (Ps. 90:15). Hence the Apostle admonishes the Hebrews: "Let us run by patience to the fight proposed to us: looking on Jesus, the author and finisher of faith, who, having joy set before him, endured the cross… For think diligently upon him that endured such opposition from sinners against himself; that you be not wearied, fainting in your minds. For you have not yet resisted unto blood" (Heb. 12:1–4).

It is to be contemplated here how the Son of God, who came to reprobate the glory of the world and to teach its perfect contempt, posits, beatifies, and commends the four aforesaid, which are most opposed to the four which worldly men chiefly seek and love, and in which they place their felicity. Of which the first is affluence of riches, which is the fuel of many vices: against which the Saviour says, "Blessed are ye poor." The second is the possession of carnal delights: against which Christ says, "Blessed are ye that hunger." The third is the dissolution of games, jests, and vanities: against which He says, "Blessed are ye that weep." The fourth is the procuring of temporal honours and worldly favours: against which He preaches, "Blessed shall you be when men shall hate you," etc. Lastly, these four brought in by Christ are fitted to the four cardinal virtues, namely: poverty, to temperance, which cuts off superfluities; hunger, to justice, whose part it is to chastise the body; weeping, to prudence, which chooses to mourn here that eternal joy may be acquired; the endurance of adversities, to fortitude, whose part it is to suffer most difficult things bravely.

Moreover, Christ, for the fuller and more evident commendation and praise of the four beatitudes brought in, blames and condemns the vices opposed to them: which by the lovers of the world are reputed certain felicities; but by Christ, the infallible judge, are judged miseries, because through them God, the fount of all true felicity, and His gifts, namely grace in the present and glory in the future, are lost, and eternal damnation is obtained. So He says: *"But, woe to you that are rich, for you have your consolation"* (Luke 6:24). As if He should say: Although you esteem yourselves happy, yet the sorrow of eternal damnation is due and hangs over you. Whence according to Chrysostom, in the Scriptures eternal damnation is designated by "Woe." Now Christ speaks of the rich who immoderately love their riches and abuse them, who nourish themselves delicately on them and have carnal consolations, and are therefore unworthy to taste spiritual consolation. And so in Matthew the Lord protests: "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:24). The Apostle also to Timothy: "They that will become rich fall into temptation, and into the snare of the devil, and into many unprofitable and hurtful desires, which drown men into destruction and perdition" (1 Tim. 6:9). Hence James says: "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl in your miseries, which shall come upon you" (James 5:1). But not all rich men are such, because some use them well, and are liberal and merciful, preferring spiritual things to temporal, and fulfilling that of the Psalmist: "If riches abound, set not your heart upon them" (Ps. 61:11). Hence in Ecclesiasticus it is had: "Blessed is the rich man that is found without blemish, and that hath not gone after gold, nor put his trust in money nor in treasures" (Ecclus. 31:8). How rare and difficult this is, is clear from what is at once subjoined: "Who is he, and we will praise him? for he hath done wonderful things in his life" (Ecclus. 31:9). Let us not, then, commit ourselves to the danger.

"Woe to you that are filled" (Luke 6:25), that is, woe to you gluttons, who refresh yourselves not for necessity but for pleasure, and superfluously fill your fetid flesh. Hence elsewhere the Saviour says: "Take

heed to yourselves, lest perhaps your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness" (Luke 21:34). And the Apostle: "Make not provision for the flesh in its concupiscences" (Rom. 13:14); and to the Romans, "If you live according to the flesh, you shall die" (Rom. 8:13). Therefore Jerome says: "It is not possible that one should fill his belly here and his mind in the future." *(p. 514)* This is what is subjoined: *"for you shall hunger."* As in the beatitudes, so in the vices opposed to them, Christ sets corresponding retributions or rewards. Whence in the book of Wisdom it is said: "By what things a man sinneth, by the same also he is tormented" (Wis. 11:17). Although, therefore, gluttons will hunger in hell by the lack of all delightful goods, yet by the vice of their gluttony they specially merit the affliction of hunger and thirst. Basil, moreover, says: "The subjection of the body is obtained by nothing else so well as by abstinence: by which, as by a certain bridle, the fervour of youth is to be restrained. Abstinence is therefore the destruction of crime, the removal of passions, the beginning of spiritual life, blunting in itself the sting of allurements."

"Woe to you that now laugh" (Luke 6:25). If eternal damnation is due to laughter, who can be secure? But Christ does not now speak of every laughter, but of the inordinate laughter of foolish gladness and vain dissoluteness, which is of such immoderation or frequency as to be preferred to or contrary to the spiritual joy of divine charity. Of which Ecclesiastes: "Laughter I counted error: and to mirth I said: Why art thou vainly deceived?" (Eccles. 2:2). Hence Ecclesiastes again protests: "Anger is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the mind of the offender is corrected" (Eccles. 7:4). Yet a moderate, honest, and measured laughter, for cause, place, and time, is not forbidden; but loud laughter and dissoluteness befit fools, according to that of Ecclesiasticus: "A fool lifteth up his voice in laughter: but a wise man will scarce laugh low to himself" (Ecclus. 21:23). Ecclesiastes also says: "As the crackling of thorns burning under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool" (Eccles. 7:7). Basil says in this place: "Since the Lord reproves one who laughs, it is plain that there will never be a time of laughing for the faithful, especially amid so great a multitude of those who die in sin, for whom one must mourn. Superfluous laughter is a sign of immoderation and of an unbridled motion of the soul; but to express the passion of the soul as far as pleasantness of countenance is not unseemly." Chrysostom also says: "Tell me why you are convulsed with laughter and melt away, you who ought to stand before the terrible judgment and give account of all you do?" But it may be objected that of Ecclesiastes, "A time to weep, and a time to laugh" (Eccles. 3:4): which is solved from what has been said. For this is said of modest laughter, as the virtue of *eutrapelia* also is posited, by which a man bears himself moderately in games. Such laughter holy Job shows himself to have had, saying: "If at any time I laughed on them, they believed it not" (Job 29:24).

Then the due penalty of vicious laughter is subjoined: *"for you shall mourn,"* with interior sorrow, *"and weep,"* with exterior penalty and wailing in hell, especially since in the body also there will be weeping, though not by the flowing of tears, but by disturbance of the brain and most mournful disfigurement of the countenance. Let us learn, then, to bridle laughter. And let him who is inclined to laughter by natural disposition apply special effort to restraining it: as he who is prone to anger, or to any vice, ought singularly to strive for its extirpation; and what he cannot by his own strength, he can by the help of divine grace. Nay, among the things from which it is easily weighed what a man is, laughter is one. Of which it is read in Ecclesiasticus: "A man is known by his look, and a wise man, when thou meetest him, is known by his countenance. The attire of the body, and the laughter of the teeth, and the gait of the man, show what he is" (Ecclus. 19:26–27).

Then vain favour, empty flattery, and worldly friendship are reprobated. *"Woe to you"* (Luke 6:26): woe of eternal calamity is due and hangs over you, O men turned back upon yourselves, *"when men shall bless you,"* that is, shall have praised you and your iniquitous deeds, caressed you with flatteries, all men, however many they be: which none are wont to do but the wicked. So Christ speaks of those whom vain praise pleases, who are attracted by flatteries, who seek *(p. 515)* the favour and friendship of this world. So woe hangs over both these and their blessers, because the tongue of the flatterer harms more than the sword of the

persecutor. Therefore, according to Bede, flattery is the nurse of sin, so that as oil cast into flames furnishes them fuel, so flattery nourishes guilt. And yet this is frequently done, the Psalmist saying: “For the sinner is praised in the desires of his soul, and the unjust man is blessed” (Ps. 9:24, Vulg.). But as it is written in Proverbs, “Better are the wounds of a friend, than the deceitful kisses of an enemy” (Prov. 27:6). With this speech of the Saviour that of Isaias agrees: “O my people, they that call thee blessed, the same shall deceive thee, and destroy the way of thy steps” (Isa. 3:12). Let us therefore avoid this hidden and most vile pest, after the example of the Saint who said: “The just man shall correct me in mercy, and shall reprove me: but let not the oil of the sinner fatten my head” (Ps. 140:5). And the Apostle says: “For neither at any time did we use the speech of flattery” (1 Thess. 2:5). Moreover, according to the Gloss, a great part of the penalty of sin is that crimes are not only not reproved but even praised as well done.

“For according to these things did their fathers to the false prophets” — that is, to false prophets they showed words of praise, blessing, and flattery — their fathers, that is, the carnal fathers of the Jews, who despised the words of the holy Prophets and applauded the pseudo-prophets. Of whom it is read in Isaias: “Who say to the seers: See not; and to them that behold: Behold not for us those things that are right: speak to us pleasant things, see errors for us” (Isa. 30:10). Of the false prophets, however, it is written: “Thus saith the Lord concerning the prophets that seduce my people, that bite with their teeth, and preach peace: and if a man give not into their mouth, they prepare war against him” (Mich. 3:5). Of whom much is written in Jeremias, the Lord speaking: “I sent them not: they speak a vision of their own heart” (Jer. 23:21, 16). These pseudo-prophets feigned many things to win the favour of princes and the people; and that they might be believed, they assumed the manner of speaking of the true Prophets, saying: “Thus saith the Lord.” At times they prophesied not only in words but also in deeds, as is plain in Jeremias of Hananias, who, when he had broken the chain that was on the neck of Jeremias, added: “Thus saith the Lord: So will I break the yoke of Nabuchodonosor the king” (Jer. 28:10–11). The same is plain in the books of Kings of Sedecias, who made himself horns of iron, saying to the king of Israel: “With these shalt thou push Syria” (3 Kings 22:11). These pseudo-prophets the Jews believed and applauded; but Jeremias contradicting Hananias, and Micheas contradicting Sedecias, they persecuted and imprisoned (Jer. 26; 3 Kings 22:24–27). Behold how in the words aforesaid the eternal and uncreated Wisdom, the only-begotten Son of God the Father, Jesus Christ, condemns the wisdom and prosperity of this world, and excludes all vanity. Whose words ought rightly to lead us to a hearty and full contempt of the world, especially since He so rigorously and terribly condemns those things which are scarcely thought evil by worldly men. For the Saviour does not say, Woe to murderers, woe to robbers, woe to adulterers; but, Woe to the rich, woe to the filled, woe to the laughing, woe to the lovers of the world’s glory. What then will become of the graver, if things which are not thought any excess are punished with eternal torments? Rather, therefore, in this very short course of this life, let us apply ourselves to acts of penance, let us desire to be reproved, chastised, and slighted, or at least bear it patiently, than for the delights, riches, honours of this most uncertain and most short life fall into infernal torments, nay, what is graver, be deprived of heavenly and everlasting felicity.

Article XVI — Continuation of this Sixth Chapter, from the place where it is said: “But I say to you that hear: Love your enemies”

(p. 516) A little before, Christ taught the disciples what they were to suffer from enemies; now He instructs what they themselves are to do and render to them. *“But I say to you that hear”* (Luke 6:27), that is, who diligently attend to what I say, and attend to my words not with bodily ears only but also with interior ones: *“Love your enemies,”* that is, to those who wish and desire or inflict evils on you, wish, on the contrary, good things. As to love is to will good to someone, so to hate is to will evil to someone. Good, however, is manifold, namely the delightful good, the useful good, and the honest good; again, one is the good of grace, another the good of nature, another the good of fortune. We ought, therefore, to wish for all men, however adverse, spiritual good, namely the charisms of grace in the present and the goods of glory in the future; other

goods are not to be wished for them, or need not be wished for them, except insofar as is expedient for their salvation. Enemies are to be loved, therefore, from charity for God's sake, as we love ourselves, that is, that we wish for them the same good of eternal felicity which we ourselves wish for ourselves. They are to be loved, therefore, as to their very good nature, by which they were made to the image of God and are capable of beatitude (Gen. 1:27; Wis. 2:23), not as to guilt: nay so are they to be hated, according to that, "I hated them with a perfect hatred" (Ps. 138:22). But so to hate them is truly to love, because it is of the same reason and proceeds from the same fountain of charity to love the good of someone and to hate his evil. Nothing is so evil, so harmful, so adverse to man as his own sin.

Further, according to Thomas in the *Secunda secundae*, we can speak of an enemy in three ways: first, insofar as he is an enemy. And so he is not to be loved, because his enmity is sin: it ought to displease us that he is hostile and sins. Second, the enemy is considered according to the being of nature, by which he was made to the image of God, but yet in the universal, insofar as he is man. And so the love of an enemy is of necessity of salvation, because he must not be excluded from that general love by which we are commanded to love God and neighbour (Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18). Third, he is considered as he is a singular person. And so the love of enemies is not absolutely of necessity of salvation, because we are not bound in special to that motion of love toward him, nay nor toward others, because it is impossible to love individuals singly. Yet love of an enemy in such special way is necessary to salvation as to the preparation of mind, namely that a man be prepared in mind to help the enemy if a case of necessity occurred, and also actually to be borne charitably toward him, when cause demands and the occasion offers; but without such necessity, to bestow love and help belongs to perfection, not to the necessity of precept. And accordingly it is true what Augustine says in the *Enchiridion*: "This so great good, to love enemies, is not of so great a multitude as we believe to be heard in the prayer in which we say: Forgive us our debts" (Matt. 6:12).

But against this precept of Christ it seems to be that in the Old Testament many things are read from which it seems that enemies are to be hated: as when Moses says, "Thou shalt not seek good for them, and thou shalt hate the enemy" (cf. Deut. 23:6; Matt. 5:43). In Jeremias also it is had: "Forgive not their iniquity, and let not their sin be blotted out *(p. 517)* from thy sight" (Jer. 18:23). To this Thomas in the said place replies that such imprecations and sayings can be understood in three ways: in one way, by way of prophetic announcement, as when it is said, "Let the sinners be turned into hell" (Ps. 9:18), that is, they shall be turned. Second, by way of wish from zeal of justice, yet not as to the punishment of the man, but as to the justice of the punisher, namely that the wisher conform himself to divine justice, because neither does God rejoice in the destruction of the wicked, but in His justice (Wis. 1:13). Third, that the desire be referred to the removal of guilt, not to the penalty, that is, that sins be destroyed. To which it can be added that the aforesaid imprecations of Scripture can also be so taken that we wish enemies in this life so chastised that they may not perish for ever; but if they be enemies of the Church and the common good, it can be wished that they be taken out of the way, because this also is expedient for them, lest they sin more gravely: and so from equity and charity this is desired.

"Do good to them that hate you." For it does not suffice to love inwardly unless the love proceed to work at fitting place and time, nay since no form works so promptly and delightfully as charity, which moves and excites all virtues to act, he does not truly love another who, when cause, place, and time require, does not succour him nor do him good. And since man consists of soul and body, we ought to do good to him according to body and soul, namely bestowing spiritual and corporal things, in the manner already touched, as Solomon speaks in Proverbs: "If thy enemy be hungry, give him to eat; if he be thirsty, give him water to drink" (Prov. 25:21; Rom. 12:20). This is what the Apostle says: "Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil by good" (Rom. 12:21). This also Christ shows Himself to have fulfilled, saying to the Jews: "Many good works I have showed you from my Father; for which of those works do you stone me?" (John 10:32).

"Bless them that curse you" (Luke 6:28), that is, those who curse you, so that you render not only good works but also pious and charitable words for the words of cursing to those who detract from you or blaspheme you. This Paul also writes to the Romans: "Bless," he says, "and curse not" (Rom. 12:14). To such, then, one must speak patiently, if there is hope that by conference or reply they may be amended; otherwise one must keep silence prudently, and bless secretly, and compassionate sinners, according to that of the Psalmist: "I set a guard to my mouth, when the sinner stood against me. I was dumb, and was humbled, and kept silence from good things" (Ps. 38:2–3). Yet if from the cursing of the perverse the faith of some or the common good were endangered, or justice suffered loss, one should answer wisely and justly, or resist; and if the cursers or persecutors are obstinate in evil, or lay snares against Religion, it is lawful to pray from zeal of justice that they be corrected or punished by God, as Isaias and Ezechias are read to have prayed against the king of the Assyrians (2 Par. 32:20). Lastly, that we should compassionate those who curse, Chrysostom shows, saying: "Those who strike their own souls are worthy of tears and weeping, not of curses. For nothing is more detestable than a cursing soul, nor anything more unclean than a cursing tongue. Thou art a man; vomit not the poisons of asps, nor turn into a beast. A mouth was given thee, not that thou mayest bite, but that thou mayest heal the wounds of others."

"And pray for them that calumniate you," that is, who falsely impute crimes to you, or otherwise oppose or injure you. How and when, however, these signs or works of love are to be shown to adversaries St. Thomas teaches: "The signs and effects of charity," he says, "proceed from interior love, and are proportioned to it. Therefore, as we are bound to love enemies in general, of necessity and by precept, but in special according to preparation of mind; so also to withdraw from them the common benefits and signs of love is wrong, such as are bestowed on neighbours in common: as when one prays for all the faithful, or does something for the community. If such were withdrawn from enemies, it would be a sign *(p. 518)* of envy and vengeance: against which Moses says in Leviticus, 'Seek not revenge, nor be mindful of the injury of thy citizens' (Lev. 19:18). Further, other signs or benefits of charity are special, which are shown to someone specially; and to bestow such on enemies is not of necessity of precept, except according to the preparation of the heart, that a man so stand that he would impart such to them if a case of necessity offered itself. Otherwise to do this is of perfection, by which one studies not only not to be overcome by evil, which is of necessity, but moreover to overcome evil by good (Rom. 12:21), striving to bring an enemy by benefits to love of him, which belongs to the crown of perfection, as the Gloss also insinuates." The more perfectly one loves God, the more, for His sake, he loves all men and the more abundantly does good to them, especially by praying for them: and this most of all because he most heartily desires God to be honoured and loved by all, and is chiefly saddened by His dishonour. This Christ also fulfilled hanging on the cross, praying, "Father, forgive them" (Luke 23:34): as was foretold through Isaias, "He hath borne the sins of many, and hath prayed for the transgressors" (Isa. 53:12).

"And to him that striketh thee on the one cheek, offer also the other" (Luke 6:29). This is a counsel, not a precept: therefore it is not always necessary to fulfil it in exterior work, but to have the heart prepared to sustain the striking of the other cheek, before the struck man raises scandal or does anything against charity. Whence Christ too, struck on the face by the sacrilegious man, did not offer the other, but wisely and charitably corrected the wicked man (John 18:22–23). This counsel is to be fulfilled, therefore, according as it seems to profit the neighbour. Here also it is to be weighed how much more perfect the doctrine of the evangelical law is than the Mosaic law, which commanded to render to the striker such a blow as he had inflicted (Exod. 21:23–25). Chrysostom says: "Physicians, when they are kicked by the insane and sick, then most of all have pity on them. Do you also have like piety toward offenders: for they especially are sick. Nor let us desist until they have vomited up all the bitterness: then they, returning to their heart, will give you abundant thanks; and God will crown you, because you have freed your brother from a most grievous sickness." But those act chiefly against this, as Basil says, who are not only indignant or avenge themselves when struck, but even if such reverence be not paid them as they think themselves worthy of. Again

Chrysostom says: “He who strikes back fulfils the commandment of the law, not of Christ. But you say: He deserves to be struck back. Granted; but you are not worthy to strike back, because you are the disciple of Him who, when He was reviled, did not revile (1 Pet. 2:23). If you knock out another’s eye, have you recovered your own? No; but with your member you have lost patience. The devil procures wounds of bodies for the sake of wounds of souls. If you do not strike back, you will seem indeed to be conquered by a man, but you have conquered the devil.” So it is sublime to fulfil this counsel, as Bede also affirms: “What is so great as to offer the cheek to the striker? Is not the mind of the indignant man broken, anger quieted, and by the patience of this one that one changed, or invited to penance?” Therefore by the fulfilment of this command and counsel man is conformed to Christ, the devil is conquered by man, full peace is obtained among men.

“And him that taketh away from thee thy cloak, forbid not to take thy coat also,” that is, not only bear quietly and patiently that he unjustly take thy cloak from thee, but permit him to take thy coat, which is nearer and more necessary to the body than the outer garment. On this Cyril says: “The Lord wishes thee to be a despiser of things. For this is the virtue of the soul which is wholly averse from the passion of the desire of riches: for it becomes the pious man to forget evils, so that even those things with which we help dear friends we may confer on persecutors.” Chrysostom also: “Christ did not say, Humbly endure the mind of the injurer, but, Proceed by wisdom, and dispose thyself further to suffer what the injurer desires to do, *(p. 519)* and overcome his insolence by the abundance of thy prudence, that, having conceived shame, he may depart at thy excellent patience. But thou wilt say, How can this be done? though thou seest God made man suffering so much for thee. And still dost thou ask and doubt how it is possible to forgive the wickedness of fellow-servants? What hast thou suffered like thy Lord Christ, when He was bound and scourged, bearing spittle, and suffering death?” Finally, similar to this is what Christ says in Matthew: “If any man will contend with thee in judgment, and take away thy coat, let go thy cloak also unto him” (Matt. 5:40). On which I have written much in that place: wherefore I refer the reader thither.

Some also say briefly that this is a counsel, and to be understood according to the preparation of mind, as the preceding word: namely that a man should rather bear that the aforesaid garments and the like be taken from him than raise scandal or do anything contrary to charity. But it would not be right to bear it when the robber would be nourished in his malice by such permission: nay in such a case it would not be good to bear it, except to avoid scandal or some greater evil: which is chiefly to be understood of the scandal of the little ones, arising namely from infirmity or ignorance. Or the scandal must be allayed in another way, namely that the erring man be first taught and instructed, that he may cease to be scandalized. But if he will not be informed, his scandal will then not be the scandal of the little ones or the weak, but of the Pharisees, which arises from malice: on account of which, to avoid it, temporal goods are not to be abandoned, because this would tend to the detriment of the common good, and would harm the robbers in soul. Therefore the word of Christ is to be understood according to the preparation of mind, that is, provided it is otherwise expedient. But the goods of the Church and of the commonwealth are not to be abandoned to avoid scandal, as neither the other things that are of necessity of salvation, because the preservation of such goods rests on those to whom they are committed. These things were brought in as a recital of the sayings of others.

“Give to every one that asketh thee” (Luke 6:30). What is asked is not always to be given, as if one should ask that all another’s goods be given him at once. So, if he asks discreetly and reasonably, what he asks is to be given him, if the means are at hand: and it is to be given according to the discretion of true prudence. But if one asks unreasonably, a spiritual benefit is to be given him, namely a word of right instruction, consolation, or edification, which is better than a bodily benefit, according to that of Ecclesiasticus: “Shall not the dew assuage the heat? so also a good word is better than a gift. Lo, is not a word better than a gift?” (Ecclus. 18:16–17). Ambrose says: “It is the same crime to take from one who has his own, and to deny to one in need what he asks, when you can give: because Chrysostom also protests: Men are not lords but

dispensers of riches." But this belongs chiefly to those who have the fat benefices of the Church, that they give liberally to the needy: to whom Bernard says that whatever they keep over for themselves beyond simple food and clothing is theft, rapine, and sacrilege. Of this fuller mention has been made on Matthew (cf. Matt. 5:42).

"And of him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again," namely with strife and contention, or with scandal of the little ones. With this agrees that of the Apostle: "Already indeed there is plainly a fault among you, that you have lawsuits one with another. Why do you not rather take wrong? why do you not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?" (1 Cor. 6:7). On this Augustine says: "This very thing is done by your sin, that you have matters among yourselves to be determined by judgment, because it is a sin to have judgment against a brother." Further, if this were understood absolutely, great liberty and occasion would be given to the unjust and imperfect for taking away the goods of others, especially of the innocent. Therefore some add that it is lawful for the perfect to seek back their goods simply, that is, without strife, without cause, without judgment, but it does not befit them to move a cause thereupon before a judge; but for the weak or imperfect it is lawful to seek back their goods before a judge, and to have judgment against a brother, *(p. 520)* but not contentiously or fraudulently, or before an infidel judge. But neither does this seem to be said satisfactorily. For the Church does not sin in having judgments, and it is lawful for religious to seek back their goods before a judge. The faithful also dwelling in the lands of infidels, and unable to have faithful judges, can, as appears, have recourse to infidel judges. Hence others say that it is lawful, but not expedient, to have secular judgments, and that it is lawful for religious and the perfect to seek back their goods before a judge as common goods, not as proper. So this word of the Saviour, like certain others before, is to be understood according to the preparation of mind, and provided it is otherwise expedient: so that a man be more ready to suffer loss than to raise scandal of the little ones, if it cannot otherwise be allayed; or to do anything else contrary to charity.

"And as you would that men should do to you, do you also to them in like manner" (Luke 6:31), by a reasonable and discreet will: for brotherly love requires this. Whence as we are bound to love our neighbours as ourselves, so we are bound to do to them as we desire to be done to us by them. Moreover among the precepts of the natural law there are two common and chief ones: of which the first is negative, as is had in Tobias: "See thou never do to another what thou wouldst hate to have done to thee by another" (Tob. 4:16); the other is affirmative, and is set down here by Christ. And since that affirmative is of greater perfection and contains more than that aforesaid negative, therefore it was fitting for it to be proposed by Christ in the evangelical law, which is the law of perfection. This precept is to be fulfilled in fit place and time. And the more perfectly one fulfils it, the more perfect in charity he is proved.

"And if you love them that love you" (Luke 6:32), that is, if you love only them, *"what thanks are to you,"* that is, what reward to be rendered by God? Certainly none of condignity, and unless by penance you have also loved your enemies. *"For sinners also love those that love them"*: because this is natural. Yet sinners do not always love those by whom they are loved spiritually: nay they frequently hate them, because they are corrected or chastised by them, as it is written in Proverbs: "The wicked loveth not one that reproveth him" (Prov. 15:12). And Amos: "They have hated him that rebuketh in the gate, and have abhorred him that speaketh perfectly" (Amos 5:10). A sign, moreover, that one loves friends not from charity, which is infused and spiritual and meritorious love, but from carnal, natural, social, mercenary, or similar love, is when he does not love enemies, because charity extends to all. He therefore who does not love enemies is in mortal sin, as disobedient to the divine command: therefore such a one merits nothing from God of condignity, nor any reward of eternal felicity, although God of His mercy leaves no good, even done in mortal sin, unrewarded, because He repays something in the present life for it. Further, to love friends spiritually, that is, for God's sake from charity, and not only because they are friends or because they love us, is meritorious of eternal life, as is every act proceeding from charity. Nay, it would be much more unnatural and vicious not to

love friends than not to love enemies: for there are more reasons to love a friend than an enemy. But grace does not destroy nature but perfects it. For which reason spiritual love, while it underlies and perfects natural love, is called most perfect. Which is better and more meritorious, to love a friend or an enemy, I touched on Matthew (cf. Matt. 5:46).

On this Chrysostom says: “There are many causes which constitute various loves; but spiritual love surpasses all. For nothing earthly begets it, not utility, not benefit, not nature, not time, but it descends from heaven. Why wonder, then, if it needs no benefit to subsist, when it is not even perverted by the fall of evils? A carnal father who has suffered injuries breaks the bond of love; a spouse after quarrels leaves her husband; a son, if he sees his father long-lived, is burdened. But the Apostle Paul *(p. 521)* went to those who were stoning him, intending to benefit them (Acts 14:5); Moses was almost stoned by the Jews, and yet prayed for them (Num. 14:10–20). Let us therefore acquire spiritual friendships, because they are indissoluble.” — Finally, he who loves another spiritually does so in view of God, so that God is the end and reason of loving, and he desires for his neighbour the goods of grace in the present and the gifts of glory in the future, so that he loves him either because he is good or that he may be good: therefore, though the other be ungrateful and wicked, he does not cease to love him. To love another for the good work he does is gratuitous; to love for benefit or one’s own advantage is mercenary.

“And if you do good to them that do good to you” (Luke 6:33), *“what thanks are to you,”* that is, what reward to be given from above? *“For sinners also do this,”* who, being in mortal sin, do nothing meritorious of eternal life. This again must be understood like the preceding word, namely that to do good to benefactors and not to evildoers or adversaries, as not in view of God, nor from spiritual love, but because they are benefactors, is of no merit before God. Nevertheless it would be most perverse and most unnatural not to repay benefactors in kind as far as one can, at the fit time: nay this is more a debt than to do good to others. But when one so does good to those who do good to him that he does not do good to others in fit place and time, it is a sign that he does good to them not from love of God but only because they have done good to him. *“And if you lend to them”* (Luke 6:34), that is, if you grant money or the like to those from whom you hope to receive back what you lent, *“what thanks are to you?”* that is, you will have no reward from God in the blessed life. Which is to be understood when a loan is granted to someone not from the spiritual charity of God and neighbour, and for the reward of eternal life, but from the affection of carnal or natural love, with the purpose of asking it back. *“For sinners also lend to sinners, for to receive as much,”* that is, so much or of such value as what they lent or granted. So those are judged more sinful by Christ who grant at usury.

“But love your enemies” (Luke 6:35), loving in them the nature or person, not the guilt. *“Do good to them.”* This has already been said a little before and expounded. *“And lend, hoping for nothing thereby,”* that is, seeking nothing beyond what you granted, neither favour, nor temporal service, nor anything like it; nor lending principally for some temporal thing, but principally from love of God for the sake of eternal felicity. Whence through Ezechiel the Lord commands: “Thou shalt not take usury and increase” (Ezech. 18:8, 17). And the Psalmist, describing the just man: “He hath not put out his money to usury” (Ps. 14:5). But what Moses says in Deuteronomy, “Thou shalt not lend to thy brother at usury,” namely the Jew, “but to the stranger” (Deut. 23:19–20), was the permission of a lesser evil, to avoid a greater, namely that they should not grant at usury to their own neighbours, as He permitted them to give a bill of divorce, lest they should kill their wives (Deut. 24:1), because they were prone to both vices. So a loan is to be given, since in Deuteronomy it is also written: “Thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor close thy hand: but shalt open it to the poor man, and shalt lend him that which thou perceivest he hath need of” (Deut. 15:7–8).

Finally, how great a crime usury is Gregory of Nyssa testifies: “If anyone call the malignant contrivance of usurers theft and murder, he will not sin. For what difference is it whether a man by digging through a wall possesses stolen goods, or by necessity of usury possesses unlawful things?” How difficult it is for one to take at usury is plain from the words of Basil, who says: “But you say: How then shall I get a living, if I

ought not to borrow from the usurer? Surely labour, serve, beg. Anything is more tolerable than a loan at usury." — From what has been adduced is gathered how very grave is the usury of clerics, especially of those who with the revenues or goods of the Church among themselves *(p. 522)* grant at usury. For even the Philosopher, led by natural reason, affirms that usury is most contrary to nature. To usurers especially applies that of Ecclesiasticus: "There is not a more wicked thing than a covetous man. Nothing is more wicked than to love money: for such a one setteth even his own soul to sale" (Ecclus. 10:9–10).

Moreover the word of Christ, "Lend, hoping for nothing thereby," Basil and certain others so understand that the loan is to be granted without purpose and hope of asking back and receiving it from him to whom it is granted, and that the reward is to be awaited from God alone. For Basil says: "Consider the power of the saying," namely the word of Christ, "Lend, etc., and you will wonder at the goodness of the author. When you are about to give to a poor man in view of divine charity, this is both a gift and a loan: a gift, on account of the unhoped-for repayment; a loan, on account of the munificence of the Lord, who in the poor man's stead will repay you. Whence also in Proverbs it is written: 'He that hath mercy on the poor lendeth to the Lord' (Prov. 19:17)." With this exposition agrees the following text in which Christ promises: *"And your reward shall be great,"* that is, you shall receive from me a copious reward in heaven: which neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, nor can the human heart comprehend (Isa. 64:4; 1 Cor. 2:9): nay God Himself, glorious and happy, is the objective reward and felicity of those who shall have fulfilled the aforesaid words of Christ. The exposition of Basil, however, applies chiefly to the needy who have not, or scarcely have, the means of restoring. The Gloss, however, expounds as was said above. For it says: "There are two kinds of benefit: first, when we give something benevolently; the other, when we communicate to one who will repay. But both ought to be done, not in hope of human repayment, but divine, because as God is the principle of all good, so He wills to be the end." And it is certain that to fulfil the words of Christ according to Basil's exposition is much more meritorious.

The word of Christ also, "Your reward shall be great," is not referred only to the word immediately preceding about lending, but to the other things brought in, especially the love and beneficence toward enemies. For of the more ample promise and reward it is added: *"and you shall be the sons of the Highest,"* that is, of the supreme God: whose sons are virtuous men fulfilling the aforesaid, by imitation of works, by the grace of adoption, by conformity of love: which is done in the present. For God bestows many goods on His enemies; nor does He do this for the sake of repayment, because He needs not our goods (Ps. 15:2), but from His own goodness, charity, and mercy, and finally for His own sake, since He is the highest and ultimate end of all good. Let us imitate His perfection, then, by loving enemies and doing good to them, and relieving the needy, finally for God's sake, not in view of private or proper advantage: that in good things we may not be reflected back upon ourselves, but stand ever purely turned to God. In the future, however, we shall be sons of God by a fuller likeness, because by the gifts of glory the Blessed are most perfectly assimilated to God, as St. John says: "Now we are the sons of God; and it hath not yet appeared what we shall be. We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like to him: because we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2). And Paul: "Then," he says, "shall I know even as I am known" (1 Cor. 13:12). For beatific knowledge and enjoyment conform the created mind eminently and ineffably to the most worthy God, so that it stands wholly, unceasingly and irreversibly transformed into God and deified in Him. Behold how great a dignity it is for men to be sons of the Highest, that is, of the incomparable God, who is altogether infinitely more excellent than all and each. Whence of the cause of this sonship it is subjoined:

"For He is kind to the unthankful and to the evil," that is, to sinners, who, not attending to the benefits of God nor rendering thanks to God the incomparable benefactor, are unthankful; and evil, by transgressing the divine precepts: or unthankful by the aversion of the mind from the supreme and unchangeable good; evil by the conversion of the mind to a perishable and vain good. According to which through Jeremias *(p. 523)* the Lord speaks: "For my people have done two evils. They have forsaken me, the fountain of living water, and

have digged to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns" (Jer. 2:13).

"Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful" (Luke 6:36). Mercy is a virtue by which one sorrows with another's misery and relieves it as far as he can. To God, then, mercy does not belong as to the first of these, because the affect of compassion does not fall within the unchangeable and impassible nature of the Divinity; but as to the second it befits God most perfectly, who succours all the needy and wretched who cry to Him, takes away the misery of guilt, provides necessaries, and at last leads those rescued from all calamity of guilt and punishment to eternal felicity: nay He most often graciously prevents the ungrateful and the worst, exhorts, converts, saves them. The gifts of nature also and the goods of fortune He bestows indifferently and copiously on good and evil. Whence in Matthew He asserts: "He maketh his sun to rise upon the good and the bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust" (Matt. 5:45). As therefore the most clement God Himself from His pure goodness and greatest mercy, not for any utility or gain accruing to Himself, but for our salvation, does these things and thus has mercy; so we also ought to compassionate and succour others from charity and mercy, for their utility, profit, and salvation, not in view of our own advantage. Such mercy greatly commends us to God, conforms us, makes us dear and pleasing: through which also we may obtain mercy from God, according to that of Matthew: "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy" (Matt. 5:7).

Moreover, misery is twofold: that of guilt, of which in Proverbs the Wise Man says: "Sin maketh nations miserable" (Prov. 14:34): and this misery is guilt itself, exclusive of and repugnant to beatitude. Another is the misery of punishment, namely of adversity, tribulation, or want, of which holy Job says: "They are come upon my miseries" (cf. Job 30:27). But the misery of guilt is much greater than that of punishment: therefore we ought chiefly to be merciful by succouring our neighbours that they may be purged from their sins, exhorting, teaching, correcting them, praying for them, and compassionating sinners, even when they sin against us, not at once being indignant, wrathful, or avenging. If we do this, then God will mercifully pardon us sinning, and infuse the grace of amendment. Finally, if we weigh how grave and harmful a wound sin is in the soul, we shall most heartily compassionate sinners, and first ourselves, as the order of charity demands, as it is written in Proverbs: "The merciful man doeth good to his own soul" (Prov. 11:17); and elsewhere, "Have pity on thy own soul, pleasing God" (Ecclus. 30:24). Hence, according to Ambrose, the sum of the Christian religion consists in mercy and piety.

"Judge not, and you shall not be judged" (Luke 6:37). By these words Christ forbids us the inordinate judgment of others, especially of our superiors and of the better and the wiser: whose part it is rather to judge us than the reverse. Of inordinate judgments, some is called usurped, as when the judging person lacks authority to judge; another rash and suspicious, which does not proceed according to the reason of prudence; another unjust and perverse, which proceeds not from the reason and virtue of justice but from the impulse of passion. Such inordinate judgments must be avoided, nor should we define uncertain and doubtful things as to with what mind they were done. Of manifest matters, however, and such as cannot be done with a good mind, we are permitted to judge.

Since therefore we are weak in reason, so that we are easily deceived and err, and are prone to passions and vices perverting right judgment, Christ rescues and preserves us from many perils and sins when He forbids us to judge: which is supremely dangerous to the passionate; and especially they must beware lest they be prone to judge those to whom they are less well disposed or inclined, and against whom they are quickly tempted, lest, blinded by passion, they judge vitiously of them. But let each one examine himself, *(p. 524)* attend, judge, rebuke, and chastise himself, since the Apostle says: "But if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged" (1 Cor. 11:31). Hence according to Cyril, Christ here quiets and removes the worst custom and passion of our souls, and the beginning of contempt of others. For while it befits men to look into themselves and to live according to God, many do not do this, but examine others' affairs, and if they see some weakening or falling, as forgetful of their own passions, at once detract. Chrysostom also says: "You

will not easily find anyone, neither a father of a family nor a cloistered man, free from this error. These are the snares of diabolical temptation. For he who severely scrutinizes others' matters will never deserve pardon for his own guilts."

Further, what the Saviour says, "You shall not be judged," is to be understood of the judgment of reprobation or condemnation, of which the cited authority of the Apostle speaks. Of which Christ speaks in John: "He that heareth my word… hath life everlasting, and cometh not into judgment" (John 5:24). From these Gregory of Nyssa infers: "Do not then with acrimony precipitate sentence on your fellow-servants, lest you suffer the like."

"Condemn not." Condemnation arises from judgment. As therefore not every judgment but inordinate judgment (of which it was said) is forbidden, so not every condemnation of others but inordinate is forbidden. By this word, therefore, prelates and princes are not forbidden to condemn criminals to death, or prison, or other punishment. Nor again is it forbidden to condemn one who sins inexcusably and most openly, that is, to assert him worthy of damnation, because Scripture teaches us this, that he who sins mortally merits hell; but to condemn on uncertain and light grounds, or him whom we are forbidden to judge, or absolutely to define this one or that to be damned or worthy of damnation, is rash and unlawful. For a sinner can at any moment be touched by the Holy Spirit and repent in the secret of his heart. Nor do we know what is happening in another, or what he who now seems vicious will afterwards be (1 Cor. 2:11). Yet openly wicked men, as such, and whom we see remaining in the act of impiety, it is lawful to condemn and reprobate under a certain implicit or explicit condition, namely, unless they repent: as if we see someone knowingly commit murder or adultery, there is no doubt that he is in mortal vice and worthy of damnation, and moreover to be condemned unless he repent. *"And you shall not be condemned"* with eternal damnation by God, if from charity you have avoided inordinate condemnation. For not to judge and not to condemn would not suffice to avoid the judgment of damnation, unless one avoid such things from the charity of God: which none fulfils but he who is in the state of salvation, and does what God requires of him.

"Forgive" the injuries done to you: according to that of the Apostle, "Put ye on… the bowels of mercy… bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if any have a complaint against another" (Col. 3:12–13); *"and you shall be forgiven"* the sin by which you did injury to God. Therefore in Ecclesiasticus it is written: "Forgive thy neighbour if he hath hurt thee: and then shall thy sins be forgiven to thee when thou prayest" (Ecclus. 28:2). And behold this is the infinite clemency and most sublime and incomparable condescension of God, that He wills to forgive his sins to him who forgives one sinning against himself: although sin by comparison with God has an enormity in a manner infinitely greater than by comparison with the man against whom it is done, as God is of dignity, holiness, and majesty infinitely greater than man. Let us not therefore be ungrateful to God, nor slow or heavy in forgiving our neighbours. — It can also be so understood: Forgive what the poor owe you, or captives whom it is expedient to release, or temporal goods, as Peter says: "Behold we have left all things" (Mark 10:28); *"and you shall be forgiven"* the sin by which you are bound to God and spiritually fettered, according to that of Proverbs: "He shall be held with the cords of his own sins" (Prov. 5:22). Hence in Isaias it is had: *(p. 525)* "Let them that are broken go free" (Isa. 58:6).

"Give" (Luke 6:38) bodily or spiritual benefits, nay both, especially to the needy, *"and it shall be given to you"* by God, a copious reward. And to him who gives temporal things for God, spiritual things are conferred by Him. But he who bestows spiritual benefits on another, by praying, exhorting, teaching, correcting, obtains from God great progress in spiritual charisms. Finally, it belongs to a generous mind to be prone to give, since according to the divine Dionysius, "The good is self-diffusive, and love is communicative of what it has." To give, too, belongs to the liberal. Liberality, however, makes a man very acceptable and dear to others, according to the Philosopher: as was plain in B. Martin, when he was still a soldier. The tenacious, however, and always turned back upon themselves, are of ignoble mind. Hence in the Acts Paul says: "You ought to remember the word of the Lord Jesus, how he said: It is a more blessed thing to give, rather than to

receive" (Acts 20:35); and in Proverbs also it is brought in, "Victory and honour shall he get that giveth gifts" (Prov. 22:9); and in Ecclesiasticus, "Let not thy hand be stretched out to receive, and shut when thou shouldst give" (Ecclus. 4:36). Yet few, alas, are those who are not more prone to receive than to give, according to that of Isaias: "They all love bribes, they run after rewards" (Isa. 1:23); and Paul testifying, "All seek the things that are their own" (Phil. 2:21). Nevertheless many would abound the more if they gave more readily, because to give and to be given are of one lot. For even God blesses the merciful and liberal also in temporal things. And it is a common saying: "He who does not give what he loves, does not get what he desires." In Proverbs also it is read: "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and give him of the first of all thy fruits… and thy barns shall be filled with abundance" (Prov. 3:9–10). Yet prodigality is not commended, but this giving ought to proceed from virtue and be ruled by reason.

Finally, in this short doctrine Christ teaches how we should live with our neighbours, namely that we forgive injuries and give benefits. Although the goodness of God, and His precept or counsel to these things, ought to inflame us enough and more than enough to fulfil the aforesaid, nevertheless Christ, not ignorant of our slowness, proposes promises, nay promises that far greater benefits will be rendered to us, that we may at least be provoked in view of the reward, if we are not of such perfection as to strive to do these things from sincere love of God. Hence it is added:

"Good measure, and pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall they give into your bosom." By all this circumlocution it is insinuated that the retribution of the works of charity and mercy in heaven will be ineffably copious: which retribution is expressed by measure, because the reward corresponds and is proportioned to merit, as the measured to the measure, and because God moderates all things according to the standard of His wisdom, and "hath ordered all things in measure, and number, and weight" (Wis. 11:21). Although this measure is efficiently given by God alone, Christ nevertheless speaks in the plural, "They shall give," namely the poor on whom you bestow works of mercy, because by their intervention and merits this reward is in part given. So, *"good measure,"* that is, lawful, so that not less than is due or fitting shall be rendered; *"and pressed down,"* that is, full and fat; *"and shaken together,"* that by compression it may hold more; *"and running over,"* that is, so abundant and heaped that it overflows on every side; *"shall they give into your bosom,"* namely into the bosom of the mind, in the most secret place of the heart, in the intellect itself and the will, that the intellect may contemplate the eternal truth and be refreshed by it, the will enjoy the supreme goodness. Furthermore, a fourfold good is given by God for works of mercy: namely the good of fortune, that is, exterior riches, which are subject to the instability of fortune. To these "good measure" can be referred. Other goods are the goods of nature: to which "pressed down" refers. The third are the goods of grace: to which "shaken together" belongs. The fourth are the goods of glory: to which "running over" looks.

(p. 526) "For with the same measure that you shall mete withal, it shall be measured to you again," that is, according to the manner of your action, or according to the proportion and degree of your conversation or merit, or as you shall have done to others, will be the measure, or mode and degree, of your reward: because the reward corresponds to merit, and is weighed more according to the greatness of the interior affection than of the exterior work: according to which in Mark the Saviour says that the widow who put in two mites cast in more than all (Mark 12:43). Hence in John He says: "In my Father's house there are many mansions" (John 14:2), that is, diverse degrees of rewards, according to the differences of merits. And Paul testifies: "He who soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he who soweth in blessings shall also reap blessings" (2 Cor. 9:6) — unto eternal life. In the Apocalypse also it is had: "As much as she hath glorified herself and lived in delicacies, so much torment and sorrow give ye to her" (Apoc. 18:7). And through Isaias the Lord says: "In measure against measure, when it shall be cast off, thou shalt judge it" (Isa. 27:8). Nor does it obstruct that for temporal merit an eternal reward is given, that the Lord likewise rewards the elect beyond condignity and afflicts the reprobate short of condignity: because this equality, identity, or proportion

of measure is considered in kind: that he who has sinned more is punished more; he who has merited more is crowned more gloriously.

But someone will say: If with the same measure with which we mete it shall be measured to us again, then, if we mete with an unjust measure, with an unjust measure it will be divinely measured to us again. But the solution is already plain. For this is not the sense, but that as we shall have done, so it shall be done to us, that is, it shall be repaid to us according to the exigency of our merits, and if we have been unmerciful and hard to others, God also will be severe to us, as James asserts: "Judgment without mercy to him that hath not done mercy" (James 2:13).

"And He spoke also to them a similitude" (Luke 6:39), namely to those to whom He made this sermon, especially to His disciples: *"Can the blind lead the blind? Do they not both fall into the ditch?"* In bodily things this is so; and it is not a similitude only but truth and fact. Nevertheless Christ said it for a similitude, because by it He designated something else, namely that it is so in spiritual things also: namely that he who is spiritually blind in mind, that is, ignorant, passionate, or vicious, is not fit to rule or lead others by the paths of equity to eternal beatitude; but both he and those subject or committed to him fall, now indeed into the ditch, that is, the depth of vices, of which in Proverbs it is brought in: "The wicked man, when he is come into the depth of sins, contemneth" (Prov. 18:3); then they rush into the pit of hell, of which it is more often said in Ezechiel: "They sleep with them that go down into the pit" (Ezech. 32:19 ff.); and in the Psalm: "I am counted among them that go down to the pit" (Ps. 87:5); and Job: "Plunge their faces into the pit" (cf. Job 40:8, 12).

By these words Christ taught His disciples, and all prelates, teachers, and preachers, that the wisdom of divine things, the knowledge of the Scriptures, the splendour of virtues, the clarity of mind are necessary to them that they may worthily preside over others: otherwise they precipitate themselves and others. Whence he who is passionate, and from others' defects or on account of an injury done him is at once angered, indignant, disturbed, cannot cure others infected with like diseases; but by word and example he ought to enlighten others, and by his humility, patience, meekness, and modesty cure the pride, anger, insolence, perversity of others. So a blind watchman, an ignorant teacher, a dumb herald, a lame forerunner, a negligent prelate, an unjust king, is a ridiculous, nay rather a dangerous thing. Therefore Gregory says: "When the shepherd walks through the steeps of vices, it is necessary that the flock follow through the precipice." For the shepherd is in the people as the eye in the body. Whence in Jeremias it is written: "Because the pastors have done foolishly, and have not sought the Lord: therefore they have not understood, and all their flock is scattered" (Jer. 10:21).

"The disciple is not above his master" (Luke 6:40). This is so generally, speaking of master and disciple formally: because the disciple as disciple is inferior to the master as master, *(p. 527)* as a father is also more worthy than a son; although materially the disciple, that is, the man who is a disciple, can be more powerful, higher, holier, more gifted, nay even more learned than his master. If, however, by master in this place Christ is specially understood, who in Matthew says, "One is your master, Christ" (Matt. 23:10), it is certain that no disciple is greater than this Master; but all are inferior and more imperfect than He, according as He is God of infinite virtue; and ineffably inferior also than He according to the assumed nature. *"But every one shall be perfect, if he be as his master,"* that is, if he be likened to him by imitation, or conformed by equality. Yet he will not be simply perfect, but perfect in a certain degree, state, or order, namely perfect as to that which he learns from his master. But if by master Christ be understood, it is plain that the more fully one imitates this Master, the more truly perfect he is found: nay the imitation of this Master is the perfection of all Christians, Augustine saying: "The sum of the Christian religion is to imitate whom thou worshippest."

Further, Christ spoke these things to set Himself before the disciples as an example. As if He should say: Since therefore I have fulfilled the aforesaid virtues, precepts, and counsels, by loving adversaries, doing good to enemies, and fulfilling the rest that have been said, it befits that you also, my disciples, do these

things. Hence in John He says: “I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also” (John 13:15); and again, “If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you… the servant is not greater than his lord” (John 15:20). Or Christ uttered these words brought in to show that a blind man cannot lead a blind man, that is, an unwise prelate rule others: because a prelate is as it were the master of his subjects, therefore when he errs, they equally err, nor are they more perfect than he, speaking by rule, although God does not desert His elect, but informs them by heavenly unction and angelic direction.

Then Christ exhorts each one to the guarding of himself, and likewise demonstrates by another similitude what He said above, namely that a blind man cannot be led by a blind man, or a sinner be amended by one like himself. *“And why seest thou the mote”* (Luke 6:41), that is, why dost thou consider the small and venial sin, *“in thy brother’s eye,”* that is, in the heart or intention or open work of thy neighbour, *“and seest not the beam that is in thy own eye?”* that is, the great and mortal sin by which thy heart is darkened? As if He should say, Thou actest foolishly in this: because, as Christ elsewhere testifies, “What doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself?” (Luke 9:25). Therefore charity ought to be ordered, that man first by charity heal himself, and show himself an example to others, and so be fit to reprove them, lest they be scandalized in his preaching. *“Or how canst thou say to thy brother”* (Luke 6:42), that is, to thy neighbour, *“Brother, let me pull the mote out of thy eye,”* that is, permit and patiently bear that I take the venial sin out of thy heart by rebuke and chastisement, *“thyself not seeing the beam in thy own eye?”* that is, not weighing the mortal sin in thy own heart? As if the Saviour said: O sinner, thou canst not wisely and in order say these things, since the order of charity requires that thou first cure thy soul of great wounds before thou proceed to heal others of small hurts. Thou art bound also, O prelate, to show thyself fit for the execution of thy office, namely that by obeying God and living virtuously thou pursue thy office not presumptuously but in order.

“Hypocrite”: because by the very fact that thou reprehendest others for small things or wouldst cure their faults, thou showest thyself a charitable and virtuous zealot of justice, and cloakest thine iniquity, though thou art vicious and presumptuous; *“cast first the beam out of thy own eye,”* that is, first by contrition, *(p. 528)* confession, and satisfaction purge thyself of thy great excesses, as thou art bound, not only as thou art a Christian, but moreover because thou presidest over or preachest to others; *“and then shalt thou see clearly,”* that is, thou shalt have the eye of the mind enlightened, *“to take the mote out of thy brother’s eye,”* that is, to purge or reprove him of lesser sins.

On this matter I wrote much on Matthew (cf. Matt. 7:3–5): nevertheless on account of its fruitfulness a few things are to be added.

First, then, it is asked whether it is lawful for a sinful and vicious prelate who lies in mortal vices, or a teacher or preacher living ill, to preach and rebuke or correct others. That it is not appears from the words of Christ already had. Finally, Thomas on the fourth book of the *Sentences* affirms that he who does not fulfil what he teaches and preaches sins mortally by that very fact: and assigns a fine reason there. Moreover Durandus says that a priest in every act of his office which he does unworthily, namely in mortal sin, sins mortally, namely by celebrating, hearing confession, or preaching. Ambrose also writes: “Let him judge of another’s error and fault who has not in himself what he should judge, lest when he judges of another he pass sentence on himself.” And Chrysostom: “Every priest,” he says, “who wishes to teach the people, let him first teach himself, otherwise let him neither reprehend nor teach another.” Many agreeing with these authorities affirm that if the sin of the one reproving or preaching or judging is public, and nevertheless he reprehends, teaches, or judges another, he sins by the sin of presumption and of scandal; if, however, his sin is hidden, he sins by presumption. Some say, however, that the sinner either corrects another as a prelate or as a private person. If as a prelate, then either he is a notorious sinner, and so by correcting another he sins, both by scandalizing and by executing his office unworthily; or hidden, and then he sins by officiating unworthily, and therefore is reprehended. Further, if he corrects as a private person, he does not sin, unless

perhaps by the sin of scandal, if he be a notorious sinner; to others, however, it appears that he is also stained by the vice of presumption. Thomas, however, testifies that if the sin of the prelate or judge is hidden, and it devolves on him by office to judge or reprove, he can do so with fear and humility. Whence others also say that if he is penitent in heart, he can reprove his brother with humility. — But on this it is asked what such a prelate or judge will then do, since whether he corrects or teaches, or does not, he incurs peril, and so seems to be perplexed. And it must be answered that he is by no means perplexed, but has counsel at hand, and finds a remedy: because he can and ought at once to repent and begin amendment of life.

It is plain, moreover, that venial sin is compared to the mote, mortal sin to the beam: because as a mote is lighter than a beam, so is venial than mortal: and as a mote does not blind the bodily eye, but troubles and somewhat hurts it, while a beam or a great part of it blinds it; so venial sin does not wholly blind the interior eye, but troubles it, mortal sin truly blinds. So those who are prone to reprehend others should be readier to reprehend themselves, and bear patiently when they are reproved by others. But we frequently see the opposite: nay the more one occupies himself in considering, observing, and reproving the defects of others, the less he attends to his own defects, and thinks himself of some virtue when he is nothing, and when he is corrected is indignant or abusive. Therefore Basil says: “Not only does the bodily eye, seeing external things, not use its sight upon itself, that is, does not look at itself, but our very intellect too, when it swiftly conjectures another’s sin, is slow about the perception of its own defects.” This befits teachers and prelates especially, according to Theophylact, who, while they punish the smallest faults of their subjects, leave their own unpunished. Therefore Christ calls them hypocrites.

Lastly, he who wishes to correct another should observe these things. *(p. 529)* First, let him correct himself, because as Solomon says, “The just is first accuser of himself” (Prov. 18:17). Second, let him do it piously and meekly, unless perhaps one seemed as it were incorrigible, or some special cause demanded otherwise. Therefore Augustine asserts: “Rarely, and not without great necessity, are objurgations to be applied.” Third, let it be done from zeal of charity and justice, not from impulse of passion. Fourth, let him weigh the opportunity of place and time, so that, as the Saviour says, secret correction may precede (Matt. 18:15).

Then Christ proves by certain similitudes and shows by examples that the vicious man and hypocrite is not fit to correct another, because the work of virtues truly does not flow from him. *“For there is no good tree that bringeth forth evil fruit; nor an evil tree that bringeth forth good fruit”* (Luke 6:43). This is so in trees. For by the very fact that a tree bears useful fruits it is deemed good. No tree is naturally evil, as though its nature were evil; but some are called evil, that is, useless, which do not produce useful fruits. For a tree is finally ordered to fruit or the utility proceeding from it. Therefore, if it bears evil fruits, it is rightly called evil. Hence it is added: *“For every tree is known by its fruit”* (Luke 6:44), as a cause is known by its effect. Whence if the fruits are good, the tree is good: because the effect receives its goodness from its cause, and the goodness of the effect pre-exists in the cause; nor does anything give to another what it does not have. This is consequently declared by example: *“For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor from a bramble bush do they gather the grape.”* Therefore, when one finds figs on a tree, he can conclude it is a fig tree, and where he finds clusters, he gathers that it is a vine. So trees are discerned from their fruits.

But Christ did not utter these things chiefly on account of trees or concerning the trees themselves, but insofar as by them good and evil men are figuratively or similitudinously designated. Hence, as it were expounding what had been said, He added: *“A good man”* (Luke 6:45), that is, virtuous and wise, *“out of the good treasure of his heart,”* that is, of his spiritual opulence, namely grace making pleasing, faith, hope, charity, and the other habits of virtues and gifts, *“bringeth forth that which is good,”* that is, virtuous and meritorious meditations, affections, words and deeds or works. For a habit is as it were a second nature. Virtue, moreover, is a habit which no one uses ill, according to Augustine. Therefore as nature is the principle of natural operations, so virtues and gifts bring forth the virtuous shoots already mentioned. *“And an evil man,”* that is, a vicious man, *“out of the evil treasure,”* that is, interior malice, evil custom, vicious

habit, *"bringeth forth that which is evil,"* that is, produces vicious things: because the effect is proportioned to its cause, and as each one is, such things he works; the operation also argues the form, that is, discloses what the form is whence it arises.

"For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh": because what abounds within bursts forth outwardly. So if virtue and grace, charity and devotion, reign and abound in the heart, divine, virtuous, and holy words will come from the mouth; but if vanity and sin abound in the heart, empty and wicked words will proceed from the mouth: because also the things that are in the voice are the marks, that is, signs or indications, of the passions that are in the soul. Therefore Seneca says: "As a man is, so is his speech"; and again, "Speech is the image of the heart." For what a man is, is weighed from his words. Therefore according to Scripture: "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matt. 12:37). When therefore we are talkative, clamorous, contentious, or stinging, what can be judged of us by the hearers but that we have a dissolute, unfearing, restless, and vicious mind? Hence religious especially are bound to bridle their tongues: and this most before strangers, lest they be scandalized. Wherefore in James it is had: "If any man think himself to be religious, not bridling his tongue, this man's religion is vain" (James 1:26). And Solomon in Proverbs: "Hast thou seen a man hasty to speak? folly is rather to be looked for than his amendment" (Prov. 29:20). *(p. 530)* And in the Psalm: "A man full of tongue shall not be established in the earth" (Ps. 139:12).

So by the tree man is designated, and by the good tree the virtuous man, by the evil the vicious. As therefore a good tree, as long as it remains good, cannot produce evil fruits, nor an evil tree, as such, produce good fruits: so the virtuous man, as such, does not work evil nor can do it, because he does not act except according to the inclination, form, and habit of virtue and grace; and the evil man, as vicious, neither does nor can do good. Yet it is not in all respects alike with trees and men: because a tree follows only the motion of nature; but man is of free will, therefore he can be converted and averted, so that the virtuous can become vicious, and the contrary, speaking of them materially and in the divided sense, not speaking of them formally and in the composed sense. Whence it is gathered in what sense these are true: "The proud man cannot be saved"; "The lover of God cannot perish": because in the composed sense they are true. For the proud man, as such, cannot be saved. According to which sense many things are read in the epistles of Paul and the other Scriptures, as when the Apostle says: "Neither adulterers, nor fornicators… nor the covetous… shall possess the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 6:9–10).

Finally, as out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks, so from the same abundance hand, foot, and the other members work and are moved, since the soul is the mover of the body, and the body is the instrument of the soul in acting. Hence, as a tree is known by its fruit, so a man is known by his acts. Whence what is said, "Powers are known by their acts and objects," is verified not only of the knowledge of powers as to their natural being, but also as to their formal being. Nevertheless, because hypocrites and the wicked and crafty work many evils under the appearance of good, because they fast, pray, and do the other things good in kind (on account of which in Matthew Christ says: "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in the clothing of sheep" [Matt. 7:15]); therefore such are not always quickly and easily recognized from their works, but often with great diligence and length of time, so that they are finally known. Further, whether a man is truly virtuous is chiefly weighed by whether he is patient in adversities, whether he does not detract from the good, whether he does not court human praise, whether honours do not change his manners. Hence in Ecclesiasticus it is written: "The furnace trieth the potter's vessels, and the trial of affliction just men" (Ecclus. 27:6). In Proverbs also it is said: "As silver is tried in the fining pot, and gold in the furnace: so a man is tried by the mouth of him that praiseth" (Prov. 27:21).

Moreover, as in a bodily treasure there are silver, gold, and gems, and precious garments, and herbs and ointments: so in the spiritual treasure there is gold, namely charity and wisdom, of which gold it is written in the Apocalypse: "I counsel thee to buy of me gold fire-tried" (Apoc. 3:18); likewise silver, that is, knowledge

and eloquence, according to that of the Psalmist: “The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried by the fire” (Ps. 11:7). The gems are the most excellent seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, by which the soul is consolidated in God. The precious garments are the virtues by which the soul is adorned, according to that of Isaias: “He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, and with the robe of justice he hath covered me” (Isa. 61:10). The herbs are exemplary life and good fame, as the Apostle says: “We are the good odour of Christ in every place” (2 Cor. 2:14–15). The ointments are works of penance and remedies of salvation, by which the wounds of souls are to be healed.

“And why call you me, Lord, Lord; and do not the things which I say?” (Luke 6:46) As if He should say: Uselessly do you call me Lord and double your cry, while you do not obey me. The Saviour says this lest anyone think abundance of words sufficient for salvation, because He had already said, “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh”; and likewise to teach us that observance of the precepts is necessary for the attainment of salvation, as He elsewhere says: “If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments” (Matt. 19:17). Whence he who *(p. 531)* names Christ his Lord, and yet does not obey Him, lies and is like a tree bearing leaves, not fruit, because it is of the nature of a servant to serve and obey his lord. Therefore through Malachias God spoke: “A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is my honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear?” (Mal. 1:6). Hence a wicked and impious Christian is more gravely damned than an infidel, because he is more ungrateful and has no excuse from ignorance. Nor does this word of the Saviour contradict what the Apostle says, “No man can say, the Lord Jesus, but by the Holy Ghost” (1 Cor. 12:3): for he takes “to say” strictly and properly for an attentive and affectionate expression, which requires charity.

Then the Saviour shows what is the utility of obeying His aforesaid precepts, or acquiescing in the aforesaid counsels. *“Every one that cometh to me”* (Luke 6:47). Christ could say this of the bodily approach of His hearers; but now it is expounded of the spiritual approach, by which through faith, charity, contemplation, devotion we approach Christ. *“And heareth my sayings,”* that is, the teachings, counsels, and precepts which I have said, listening with the ears of the body and of the soul, when they are uttered by man, or with the interior ears alone, when they are spoken within by divine allocution or angelic inspiration, according to that in the Psalm: “I will hear what the Lord God will speak in me” (Ps. 84:9); *“and doth them,”* that is, fulfils them in work: which must be understood not only of exterior work but also of interior action, because the precept of charity is chiefly fulfilled by interior acts. So also Christ takes “work” in John, saying: “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he hath sent” (John 6:29). So also “work” is to be taken when Scripture testifies that each one will receive from God according to his works (Apoc. 22:12). For it is established that in interior acts the reason of merit and demerit chiefly consists, and therefore according to these man is chiefly rewarded by Christ. So to hear the word of God is ordered to doing, because, as James says, “To him therefore who knoweth to do good, and doth it not, to him it is sin” (James 4:17). *“I will show you”* (Luke 6:47), that is, I will teach you, *“to whom he is like,”* in prudence and its exercise.

“He is like to a man building a house” (Luke 6:48), *“who digged deep,”* that is, into the depth. For “deep” in the Scriptures is taken for “profound,” as in the Psalm: “I am come into the depth of the sea” (Ps. 68:3); and in John, “The well is deep” (John 4:11). *“And laid the foundation upon a rock,”* that is, upon a solid and rocky place. *“And when a flood came,”* that is, the waters flowing together abundantly, *“the stream beat vehemently upon that house,”* that is, shook the walls of the house with violence, *“and it could not shake it,”* that is, hurt or destroy it; for it was founded upon a rock, therefore it was strong and stable. As therefore such a builder acted prudently and fruitfully, nor suffered damage to his structure, but was preserved in it from the overthrow of the rivers; so he who obeys the words of Christ founds the spiritual house, that is, the secret of his conscience and the chamber of his mind, or the edifice of virtues, and the joining and connection of good acts, upon the rock, that is, a stable foundation, namely Christ, of whom the Apostle says: “For other foundation no man can lay, but that which is laid; which is Christ Jesus” (1 Cor. 3:11); and likewise, “And

the rock was Christ" (1 Cor. 10:4). Or this foundation is faith, fear, or humility. Such a one also digs deep, that is, considers himself profoundly, foresees the last things, casts out earthly and carnal affections from the field of his heart. And when, with persecutions, adversities, and temptations abounding, the flood, that is, the abundance of temptations, rushes upon him, he will not be prostrated, nor will the structure of his virtues be cast down, but by the virtue and grace of Christ, on whom he leans, will resist and prevail and be saved.

Further, spiritually, the man to whom the obedient are likened is Christ Himself: who built the house, that is, the Church, upon a rock, that is, the firmness of faith, or upon Himself, as He says: "Upon this rock I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). He dug also *(p. 532)* deep, that is, in the depth of humility and poverty, with which He began the aforesaid sermon; and by the precepts of humility He cast vain and swollen things from the hearts of the faithful. To Him therefore the faithful are likened who follow the steps of their Lord. For "he that saith he abideth in Christ, ought himself also to walk, even as he walked," as John says (1 John 2:6).

"But he that heareth, and doth not" (Luke 6:49), what I have taught and commanded, *"is like to a man that built his house upon the earth, without a foundation: against which the stream beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great,"* so much the greater indeed as it lacked a stable foundation the more. This in exterior things is so, and is plain to the letter. To such a foolish builder, therefore, he is likened who does not observe in work the divine words which he hears or knows. For he builds his house, that is, the heap of his works, the machination of vices, his conscience, mind, or intention, upon the earth, that is, the love of earthly things, and upon these transitory, carnal, and perishable things, in which there is no true stability: therefore he lacks the foundation of virtues, and leans not on Christ. Hence, when the flood, that is, the abundance of temptations, rushes upon him, he at once falls and is overcome; and great is his ruin, because he is spiritually destroyed, nay even annihilated, so that he is stripped of all being of grace fit for merit, and is by God reputed as nothing, and slides down to the depths of hell. Great therefore is the ruin by which man falls through sin, since the rational soul dies spiritually, is cast down from the height of charity and grace, is plunged into the whirlpool of vices, is also deprived of heavenly felicity, and is overwhelmed with eternal and infernal calamity.

Lastly, by the man building foolishly, to whom others are likened, can be understood the negligent pastor, the vicious prelate, the preacher and teacher not working, who builds his house, that is, his own conscience, or the flock committed to him, upon the earth, according to the sense expounded. Such a one also, presiding, while he is carnal and savours of earthly things, is rightly called earth, as in Ecclesiasticus it is written: "Why is earth and ashes proud?" (Ecclus. 10:9). And when he persuades those over whom he presides or to whom he preaches to follow him, he builds them upon the earth, that is, upon himself and his wicked and vain works and examples. Wherefore such a house, or that congregation, is altogether cast down by temptations, according to that of the prophet Job: "Them that dwell in houses of clay, who have an earthly foundation, shall be consumed as with a moth" (Job 4:19). And in Ecclesiasticus: "According to the judge of the people, so also are his ministers; and what manner of man the ruler of the city is, such also are they that dwell therein" (Ecclus. 10:2).

Luke 7: Centurion, Widow of Naim, John's Embassy, Sinful Woman

Article XVII — Exposition of the Seventh Chapter: "And when He had finished all His words"

(p. 532) Because in the preceding chapter the Evangelist wrote the wonderful, supernatural, and unheard-of doctrine of Christ; he next narrates His illustrious miracles, possible only to divine power: by which it is shown that the teacher of such teachings spoke truly from God, since God so bears witness to him, and for the confirmation of His doctrine works such things; nay Christ Himself is proved true God, since by His own power and in an imperial manner He does such signs.

"And when He had finished all His words" (Luke 7:1), that is, had perfectly uttered all His words, written *(p. 533)* in the preceding chapter, *"in the ears of the people"*: for He spoke distinctly, eloquently, and intelligibly; and of some of the hearers He not only filled the bodily ears but instructed also the interior ones, so that they drank in the words of God fruitfully; *"He entered into Capharnaum."* First, however, He healed the leper, as Matthew has (Matt. 8:2–5).

"And the servant of a certain centurion, who was dear to him, being sick, was ready to die" (Luke 7:2), that is, was mortally ill: and was a paralytic, according to Matthew (Matt. 8:6); and would have perished of that sickness, had not Christ lent him aid. He was therefore about to die, according to lower, natural, and proximate causes, because his sickness was deadly: in which manner in the fourth book of Kings Isaias is read to have spoken to Ezechias: "Take order with thy house, for thou shalt die, and not live" (4 Kings 20:1; Isa. 38:1). But according to the higher cause, namely the providence of God, and the virtue and mercy of Christ, he was to be healed. *"Who was dear to him,"* that is, very dear: therefore he was solicitous for him as for a son, and as for himself, fulfilling that of the Wise Man: "Let a wise servant be dear to thee as thy own soul" (Ecclus. 33:31). — Finally, "centurion" is not the proper name of a person, but a name of dignity or office. For he is called centurion who has a hundred soldiers under him: as a quinquagenarian has fifty soldiers under him; a decurion, ten; a quaternion, four. This centurion, however, was a Gentile by nation, and set over by the emperor of Galilee in certain affairs, or deputed to its custody.

"And when he had heard of Jesus" (Luke 7:3), that is, the fame of Christ in wisdom, power, mercy, and miracles, and that He had entered Capharnaum, *"he sent to Him the ancients of the Jews"* dwelling in Capharnaum, *"desiring Him to come and heal his servant"* of his sickness. Some say that the centurion did not ask Christ to come to heal the servant, because below it is had that he said, "I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof" (v. 6). Yet because the Evangelist here manifestly says that he asked Jesus to come, I rather think that he first asked that Christ should come, but afterwards, weighing the majesty of Christ more profoundly, reckoned himself unworthy of His coming. Nor does it conflict with Luke's words that in Matthew the centurion is read to have approached Jesus and asked (Matt. 8:5). For he is said to have done this because he did it through his friends. He sent also the ancients of the Jews, both out of reverence for Christ, and that through them he might more easily be heard, because the aged are the more to be honoured and heeded; and also on account of the greatness of the cause: for he asked for a great thing, therefore he sent great legates. Why he did not come in person he himself confesses after a few words.

"But they, when they came to Jesus, besought Him earnestly" (Luke 7:4), that is, diligently, *"saying to Him: He is worthy that Thou shouldst do this for him,"* that is, grant the cure of the servant. *"For he loveth our nation"* (Luke 7:5). Perhaps he loved the Jews because he saw them to be worshippers of one supreme and true God, and given to a more honest religion than the Gentiles whom he knew; or because, dwelling among the Jews, he learned how great benefits God had conferred on that people, and that great Saints, namely Prophets and Patriarchs, had been among them. *"And he hath built us a synagogue,"* that is, had it built at his own expense for his own. Here "synagogue" means a house of divine worship: to which the Jews flocked, not to offer sacrifices, because this was not lawful outside Jerusalem, the temple being built and standing, but to pray and praise God, and to read and hear the books of the law and the Prophets. These two reasons these ancients allege, as if to say: Since he loves our nation, of which thou art a member or suppositum, it is plain that he loves thee, and thou oughtest to love him, both because he loves thee, and from love of thy people. Again, because thou art more religious than the rest, for this reason especially thou oughtest to bestow on him the affection and effect of charity, since he built a house of divine worship. It also appears from the circumstance of this evangelical reading that the centurion had become a proselyte, that is, converted to Judaism, or at least, having left the worship of idols, *(p. 534)* become a worshipper of the one true God, because he built a synagogue for the Jews: as no one now would build a church for Christians unless he worshipped Christ. — As the Jews so solicitously asked for the centurion, so we also ought solicitously to

pray to Christ reigning in heaven for our benefactors and lovers, and for our people, especially for those who increase divine worship or minister things necessary for the service of God.

"And Jesus went with them" (Luke 7:6): not because He could not heal absent, but lest He should seem to despise visiting a servant: and to give an example of humility and charity, lest we be readier to visit sick rich men than poor, especially since the poor need solace and aid more. Hence Christ refused to go to the son of the ruler, as is plain in John (John 4:47–50). Moreover He went with them lest He seem to reject the reasonable prayers of the ancients; and especially because He looked on the heart of the centurion: whence, on account of his faith, humility, devotion, prudence, and love, He was so ready to bestow on him what he asked.

"And when He was now not far from the house." For according to the humanity it befits Christ to be distant, to approach, to pass locally, who as God is nowhere absent, and fills all things (Jer. 23:24), nay glides into the very essences of things. *"The centurion sent his friends to Him, saying: Lord, trouble not Thyself,"* that is, to come even to my house, from which journey Thou mightest be bodily wearied: as is read to have been done in John, where Jesus is said to be wearied from His journey (John 4:6). *"For I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof,"* that is, into my house, because I am a sinner, and once worshipped idols. So Peter also said: "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (Luke 5:8). *"For which cause neither did I think myself worthy to come to Thee"* (Luke 7:7): for because I am unworthy to be joined to Thee, I did not presume to come to Thee. The centurion also knew that the Jews detested communicating with the Gentiles. Since therefore he saw Christ so shining before all the Jews in holiness, wisdom, and virtue, he thought himself unworthy of His approach. *"But say the word,"* that is, command, *"and my servant shall be healed."* In these words are shown the depth of humility and the greatness of faith in the centurion. Further, his servant he calls "boy" (*puer*): either from love for him, according to that of Ecclesiasticus, "Let a wise servant be dear to thee as thy soul" (Ecclus. 33:31); or because it is the custom, both in the divine writings and in the manner of speaking of many, that servants are called boys, as in the books of Kings David says: "The vessels of the boys were holy" (1 Kings 21:5).

It is asked how the centurion had so great faith concerning the dignity and power of Christ. And it must be answered that it is probable he heard the fame of Christ's miracles, and how imperiously and suddenly a little before He had cured the leper: perhaps also he heard something from the Jews about the coming of the Messias; and again how some said that Jesus was the Messias. Nevertheless, according to Ambrose and Bede, such faith was in him rather from divine inspiration, as were his other virtues. For he seems to have been a religious and good man, as is said of Cornelius the centurion in the Acts (Acts 10:1–2).

Next he shows, by an argument from the greater, that Jesus could heal even absent by command alone. *"For I also am a man subject to authority"* (Luke 7:8), set under the emperor, and governor, and tribune, *"having under me soldiers"* — a hundred — subject to my authority; *"and I say to one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh"*: that is, to one soldier I command, Go thither, to another, Come hither, and at once they obey; *"and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it,"* that is, whatever I command him, he at once obeys. After the mention of soldiers he names a servant, because besides soldiers he had also other domestic servants, as in the Acts Cornelius the centurion is read to have called two of his household, and a soldier, certainly one (Acts 10:7). Finally by these words the centurion hinted that much more could Jesus by the sole command of His power, or even by the ministry of angels, *(p. 535)* confer health, so that at His command the sickness should depart and health come.

"Which Jesus hearing, marvelled" (Luke 7:9) at the greatness of the faith and wisdom of the centurion, that he understood the majesty of Christ. How there could be admiration in Christ I treated diffusely on Matthew (cf. Matt. 8:10), and now touch briefly. Those who posit in Christ no acquired knowledge say that in Him there was not truly admiration, since according to Damascene admiration arises from a sudden imagination. But Christ, according to these, knew from the beginning of the incarnation all things, past as well as present

and future, and beheld them in the Word, nay and by habitual infused knowledge: therefore nothing was unforeseen or sudden in His apprehension. But what is asserted, that He marvelled, is to be understood to mean that He presented the habit or appearance of one marvelling, so that the marvelling was in the sign and appearance, not in the soul, nor as to stupor of one newly imagining: which appearance was not useless or deceptive, but fruitfully and reasonably assumed, because to this end, that Christ might teach that the faith of the centurion, and the wonderful conversion of others, and the incredulity of the Jews, ought to be marvelled at. Hence Bede says: "Who made that faith in the centurion, but Jesus who marvelled? But even if another had made it, why would He marvel who foreknew it? That the Lord marvels, therefore, designates that we ought to marvel. For all such emotions, when said of God, are not signs of a troubled mind, but of a teaching master." — Others, positing in Christ acquired knowledge, say that there was in Him truly admiration according to that knowledge, because so something was made known in Him anew, previously unknown as to this mode or habit of knowing, from whose recent apprehension He marvelled.

"And turning about to the multitudes that followed Him, He said," turning His bodily face to them: *"Amen,"* that is, truly, *"I say to you,"* that is, for your instruction, humiliation, and useful confusion, which begets penance, *"I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel."* This again has a difficulty: for the faith of the centurion was not greater than the faith of the glorious Virgin, or of Joseph her spouse; nor again greater than the faith of John the Baptist and his parents, or of Simeon and Anna. To which it is answered in several ways. First, because a multitude is said to do something or not do it when its principal part, or the greater part, does or does not do it. Since therefore the greater part and the principal men of the Jews were incredulous, Christ says that He had not found so great faith in Israel, that is, in the people of the Jews: nay because the believers from the Jews were very few in comparison with others, and what is little is reckoned as nothing, Christ spoke in the aforesaid manner; or the faith of the centurion is preferred by ease of believing. Some also affirm that Christ here takes Israel for the Synagogue, as it was distinguished from the primitive Church, to which the aforesaid Saints and disciples of Christ belonged. Other solutions are given on Matthew (cf. Matt. 8:10). Speaking plainly, however, it appears that Christ meant nothing else than that in the common Israelitic multitude, or that people commonly, He had not found so great faith.

"And they who were sent, being returned to the house, found the servant whole who had been sick" (Luke 7:10): because, as is had in Matthew, Jesus spoke to the centurion — not indeed mouth to mouth, but through intermediaries: "Go, and as thou hast believed, so be it done to thee. And the servant was healed at the same hour" (Matt. 8:13).

Morally, by the centurion is expressed any good prelate and faithful prince: whose servant or boy, that is, any subject, is spiritually weakened, disturbed, tempted, so that unless the grace of God come to his aid, he will straightway die in soul, falling into mortal sin, then into the eternal death of gehenna. For such a sick and passionate man, therefore, let him who presides be solicitous; and if he judges himself unworthy to pray *(p. 536)* for such a sinner, let him direct and induce the devout and religious to intercede for the languishing man. And then the Saviour, seeing the faith, humility, and charity of the prelate or prince, and the instancy of the intercessors, will graciously succour. — Again, by the centurion is understood the intellect, to which a hundred soldiers, that is, the whole body of good and strong meditations and affections, obey, as at its command they arise and are quieted. He, when he has the powers of the soul reformed, says to this thought, affection, or action, Come, and it comes, because at his precept a good thought or affection or action is present to him, stands by, clings; and to another he says, Go, and it goes, because now to one virtuous action, now to another, he must attend. Whence often a good thought or action of one virtue must be bidden to yield to another. Inordinate interior and exterior acts, however, must be bidden to depart. Further, the sick and paralytic servant about to die is the sensitive appetite vehemently infected, and to be subdued by passions unless Christ help: for whose reformation the intellect ought to pray, and send the ancients of the Jews to pray, that is, confessions of one's own guilt and of divine praise, by whose merit Christ will bestow aid. —

Lastly, if the centurion showed so great charity, humility, effort, and solicitude for the healing of the bodily sickness of a servant, how much more ought a prelate and father do this for the curing of the languors of vices in his subjects or sons? Another moral I set down on Matthew (cf. Matt. 8:5–13).

"And it came to pass afterwards" (Luke 7:11), that is, after the healing of the centurion's servant, though not immediately after it, as is proved from the other Evangelists, *"that Jesus went into a city that is called Naim"*: which was a small city, two miles distant from Mount Thabor, according to Bede. *"And His disciples went with Him, and a great multitude."* For daily the fame and magnificence of Christ grew, so that frequently many thousands accompanied Him: and from diverse causes diverse persons went with Him, as was said. Most of all, however, they flocked to Him on account of the incomparable excellence and frequency of His miracles: because through miraculous effects the heart of man is most attracted, shaken, conquered, and moved. *"And when He came nigh to the gate of the city, behold a dead man was carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow"* (Luke 7:12); *"and a great multitude of the city was with her,"* going to the burial of her son. St. Luke narrates this matter so distinctly for the greater certification of the truth.

"Whom when the Lord had seen" (Luke 7:13), with bodily and interior eyes, and with a most benign affection of compassion. Note that in the Scriptures one is not wont to be called simply Lord, especially by the Saints, unless he be the true God, who testifies through Isaias: "I am the Lord, this is my name" (Isa. 42:8); and in the Psalm: "The Lord is his name" (Ps. 67:5). Since therefore the Evangelists, especially Luke, frequently name Christ the Lord, they insinuate that He is true God. *"Having compassion on her,"* that is, compassionating the widow.

There were indeed many and most strong reasons to compassionate that widow: First, because she was set in the greatest grief on account of the death of her only son. For as nothing is dearer than an only son, so the grief for his death is most intense. For which cause in Jeremias it is had: "Make thee mourning as for an only son, a bitter lamentation" (Jer. 6:26). Zacharias also: "They shall mourn for him," namely Christ, "as one mourneth for an only son" (Zach. 12:10). Second, because such love for an only son is greatest in a widow: because she is destitute of the solace of a husband, therefore her grief at the death of her only-begotten is most vehement. Third, because a widow is a very pitiable person, like an orphan, and a ward, and a stranger, and a poor man. Therefore it is said in the Psalm: "The Lord keepeth the strangers; he will support the fatherless and the widow" (Ps. 145:9); and in Deuteronomy: "The Lord your God… doth judgment to the fatherless and the widow, loveth the stranger" (Deut. 10:17–18); *(p. 537)* and likewise in Ecclesiasticus: "Do not the tears of the widow run down the cheek, and her cry against him that causeth them to fall? For from the cheek they go up even to heaven" (Ecclus. 35:18–19). Hence Isaias upbraids cruel judges: "The widow's cause cometh not in to them" (Isa. 1:23). Hence therefore Christ, ineffably abounding in the bowels of mercy, had pity on this widow for the loss of her only son: especially since He Himself too was the only son of His most sweet Mother, and knew how much He was loved by her, and how much she would be saddened, would weep and be afflicted at His future death and passion. Fourth, because the widow's son died in his youth, therefore there was more to sorrow over. For the death of young men is more pitiable, because they were in the flower of their age, and by great labour and solicitude of their parents were brought to that age. Moreover young men are wont to be less disposed for death, since men at that age are accustomed to be more wanton, more unstable, and less experienced. Wherefore in Ecclesiastes Solomon says: "Youth and pleasure are vain" (Eccles. 11:10). In Proverbs also he professes that the way of a man in his youth is unknown to him (Prov. 30:18–19).

"He said to her" — to the desolate widow — a good word, a consolatory word: *"Weep not,"* because the cause of weeping will now be taken from thee, and thou shalt have copious cause for rejoicing, so much the greater as the more unlooked-for. *"And He came near"* (Luke 7:14), *"and touched the bier,"* that is, the repository of the lifeless body. *"And they that carried it stood still,"* hoping that Jesus would not say such

things in vain, and so approached. *"And He said: Young man, I say to thee,"* that is, by divine and proper omnipotent power I command, *"arise,"* that is, revive, and show signs of life by rising and walking. — It is asked to whom Christ said "Arise": for when He uttered this word the young man was still dead, therefore was not then a young man. And it must be answered that in the Scriptures often the part is put for the whole, and the whole for the part, as in John it is read: "There," namely in the sepulchre, "they laid Jesus" (John 19:42); and Mary Magdalene says, "They have taken away the Lord," namely out of the monument (John 20:13). So Christ by the name of young man could mean his body, which He commanded to be animated or vivified again; or his soul, which He commanded to be united again to the body; or both, though separate from each other, commanding them to be conjoined.

"And he that was dead sat up" (Luke 7:15), that is, at once revived, and raised himself, and sat upon the instrument on which he was carried, *"and began to speak,"* in sign that he truly revived. *"And He gave him to his mother,"* that is, assigned him living to his mother, that with him she might return gladly to her house: as Elias, having raised the widow's son, said, "Behold thy son liveth," as is read in the books of Kings (3 Kings 17:23). Eliseus likewise did when he had raised the son of the Sunamitess (4 Kings 4:36). Finally, as the other sick persons healed by Christ were at once fully restored to health and natural strength, as is plain of the paralytics, who, when cured, He at once commanded to carry their own beds (Mark 2:9; Luke 5:24; John 5:8); so I believe that this young man raised up came forth at once sound and strong. For the works of Christ were perfect, as Moses testifies in Deuteronomy: "The works of God are perfect" (Deut. 32:4). Hence Christ is believed to have raised this young man also spiritually, that is, to have cleansed him from vices, if he had any. And if he departed in mortal sin, this raising was the more magnificent in that it drew his soul from the pains of hell: to which, however, he would not then yet have been absolutely adjudged.

"And fear seized upon them all" (Luke 7:16), that is, fear invaded all who beheld this miracle. What kind of fear this was, and of its causes, is plain from what has been said. For it was not directly and properly an afflictive fear and one inducing desolation, but a fear of admiration and reverence, having consolation and great gladness mingled. *"And they glorified God,"* that is, professed God to be great, glorious, powerful, because from so miraculous, supernatural, and illustrious an effect they weighed, praised, and honoured the omnipotence of God. Whence also the grace of miracles, like the other graces freely given, is ordered to the utility of others, namely their edification *(p. 538)* in faith and reverence of God, as the Apostle says: "To every one is given the manifestation of the Spirit unto profit" (1 Cor. 12:7). Finally, in this miracle the manner of acting was more wonderful than the work, namely that Jesus did this sign so imperially and suddenly. For Elias and Eliseus did not raise the dead in this way, but by instant prayer and by stretching themselves upon the dead (3 Kings 17:21; 4 Kings 4:33–34).

"Saying: A great prophet is risen up among us": that is, of great holiness and power, has risen among us, that is, has appeared and shone forth among us. For although they did not yet think Jesus to be God, yet they did not doubt that He had done this sign by divine power: therefore they praised God principally, and Jesus as the minister of God, by whom and by whose holiness and merits God had done so great a prodigy. Further, by "a great prophet," some think they understood the Prophet of whom the Lord said through Moses: "I will raise them up a prophet out of the midst of their brethren, like to thee" (Deut. 18:15, 18). But this was said literally of Christ, as He Himself teaches. Either, then, those Jews understood that Scripture as foretold of Christ: which granted, they confessed Jesus to be the Messias, as the Samaritans in John, saying: "This is of a truth the prophet that is to come into the world" (John 6:14); or of some other chief seer: and so they did not intend to assert that Christ was the Messias. I rather think, however, that they took the name of Prophet commonly, intending that Christ was a great Prophet, as Elias and Eliseus and some others were. Whence also in another place, when Christ asked of the disciples, "Whom do men say that the Son of man is?" they answered: "Some John the Baptist, and other some Elias, and others Jeremias," etc. (Matt. 16:13–14).

"And that God hath visited His people", that is, has mercifully dealt with the people of the Jews, by sending them so great a Prophet, and by bestowing through Him so great benefits on His people. Why, however, the people of the Jews is specially called the people of God has been said more fully.

Lastly, Christ raised three dead bodily: by whose raising is designated a threefold kind of men spiritually dead in soul, whom He raises spiritually. For He raised the daughter of the ruler of the synagogue lying on her bed, and in the chamber (Mark 5:38–41): by whom are figured those who are dead in the soul by consent alone to sin, or only by a depraved affection or thought, or hidden vices. He raised also this young man carried out of the gate: by whom are designated sinners who have proceeded to the deed and sin publicly. He raised also Lazarus already buried (John 11:38–44): by whom are expressed those oppressed by vicious custom, over whom the pit has shut her mouth (Ps. 68:16), that is, who have fallen into the depth of vices, hardened in vices: of whom in Jeremias it is had: "They have made their faces harder than the rock, and they have refused to return" (Jer. 5:3).

Moreover, the Evangelist fittingly recited this miracle after the description of the cure of the servant mortally sick, that by this miracle that one may be confirmed. For although that servant was truly, according to the course of natural causes, about to die of his sickness, so that his cure was equivalent to the raising of a dead man; yet a perverse person could say that he was not so about to die, and that there was not in Jesus the power of raising the dead. But this is refuted by this miracle. Nor can it be said that this was invented, because it was known to all Judea; and when Luke wrote these things many lived who had seen it. Nor would he have dared to invent them: because even at the time when he wrote them Christians converted from paganism were most ardent, and many of them from great devotion went everywhere to the places of the Holy Land; and there is no doubt that they were solicitous to inquire into the truth of what is contained in the Gospel, if not from incredulity, yet from desire of knowing the truth more perfectly.

Finally it is subjoined: *"And this rumour of Him"* (Luke 7:17), *(p. 539)* that is, the report of this miracle, *"went forth throughout all Judea concerning Him,"* namely Christ, the author of so great a prodigy, *"and throughout all the country round about,"* that is, to the surrounding provinces, namely of Tyre and Sidon and Samaria.

Article XVIII — Continuation of the Exposition of this Seventh Chapter, from the place: "And his disciples told John of all these things"

"And John's disciples told him of all these things" (Luke 7:18) — John who is surnamed the Baptist from baptizing — that is, not only of the raising of the aforesaid dead young man, but also of certain other miracles of Christ. Whence in Matthew it is written: "Now when John had heard in prison the works of Christ" (Matt. 11:2). Moreover, according to Bede and the Gloss, the disciples of John told these things to their master not from a sincere heart, but from consuming envy, grieving that Jesus so shone forth, was so famed, and was preferred to their master John. But it seems strange that the disciples of so holy a master, than whom a greater among those born of women has not risen (Matt. 11:11), were so carnal and passionate, nay more imperfect than the common people: for the crowds extolled Christ and His works. To which I think it should be said that certainly some of John's disciples were truly devout and virtuous; but others carnal and imperfect, loving John and zealous for him, not wisely but indiscreetly, as the Apostle writes of the Jews: "I bear them testimony that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge" (Rom. 10:2). Nor is this much to be wondered at in some disciples of John, since even Josue, that chosen man, is read to have been inordinately zealous for Moses. For when the boy of Moses had reported that two men were prophesying in the camp, Josue said: "My lord Moses, forbid them." To whom Moses said reprovingly: "Why hast thou emulation for me?" (Num. 11:27–29).

"And John called to him two of his disciples" (Luke 7:19), the more prudent, according to Cyril, that, being themselves instructed by Christ, they might be fit to instruct the rest; *"and sent them to Jesus, saying."* He

sent two together, because one does not suffice to bear testimony, but in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall stand (Deut. 19:15); and likewise because it is solacing to one going by the ways to have a companion of the way, especially since man is naturally a social animal; moreover because it is safer for two to go together than one alone, to avoid dangers, according to that of Ecclesiastes: “Woe to him that is alone, for when he falleth he hath none to lift him up. It is better therefore that two should be together than one: for they have the advantage of their society; if one fall he shall be supported by the other” (Eccles. 4:9–10). Fourth, for the commendation of social life. Hence below it is had that Jesus, designating seventy-two disciples, sent them two by two into every city and place whither He Himself was to come (Luke 10:1).

“Art Thou He that art to come, or look we for another?” That John most certainly knew Jesus to be the Christ promised and foretold in the law and the Prophets, no Christian doubts: for even before his imprisonment, bearing testimony of Him, he said: “There cometh after me one mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to loose” (Mark 1:7); and again, “Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). Finally, when John asked this question, Christ had already come. Why then does he inquire, “Art thou he that art to come?”

It must therefore be noted that these words are expounded in two ways. For some, following B. Gregory, expound them: Art Thou *(p. 540)* He who art to come to the passion and to the limbo of hell, or look we for another who shall suffer for the salvation of the world? Whence according to Gregory, John asked two things: first, whether Christ would of Himself descend into hell, that is, into the aforesaid limbo; second, whether He would deign to die for the salvation of the world: and of these, according to Gregory, John doubted.

But this is not commonly held, because John was a prophet, and filled with the Holy Ghost in his mother’s womb (Luke 1:15), nay more than a prophet, and was not less but more enlightened about the mysteries of Christ than the Prophets of the Old Testament, to whom it was evident that Christ would suffer: nay in Isaias (Isa. 53), and in the psalm whose beginning is, “O God, my God, look upon me” (Ps. 21), the passion of Christ was so clearly and diffusely foretold that the matter seems rather narrated as done than predicted as future. Jerome, however, says in the Prologue on Daniel that none of the Prophets prophesied so evidently of Christ and His passion as Daniel: which is to be understood as to the determination of time: because he not only foretold that Christ would come and suffer, but also expressed a certain time; he also added most certain signs accompanying the passion of Christ, saying: “And the people that shall deny him shall not be his: and a people with their leader that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary: and the end thereof shall be waste, and after the end of the war the appointed desolation” (Dan. 9:26); as is more fully written by Daniel. Through Zacharias, moreover, the descent of Christ to limbo was foretold, the Prophet speaking to Christ: “Thou also, by the blood of thy testament, hast sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water” (Zach. 9:11). John therefore was not ignorant of these things.

Besides, the saints who were in limbo most certainly awaited that Christ would come to lead them out; nor were they ignorant that Christ was already born, and of manly age, because His infancy they could, and did, hear from Simeon and Anna and the parents of John. That He was to suffer, however, and was near to the passion, to say nothing else, they could know from Moses before Christ suffered: for before His passion Moses and Elias appeared with Him on the mount, and spoke with Him of His future passion (Luke 9:30–31). It is also to be believed that holy angels more frequently visited the aforesaid saints, and consoled them about their near liberation as the time of the passion drew nigh.

Hence Cyril, reprehending the aforesaid exposition, says: “Such an opinion is altogether to be rejected. For nowhere do we find Holy Scripture saying that the Baptist announced Christ’s coming to those in hell. John also knew that Christ would enlighten hell, that is, those detained in limbo, when He had tasted death for all, namely living and dead: but because Scripture foretold Him as to come as God and Lord, while other Saints were sent as servants before Him; therefore the Saviour and Lord of all was named and designated by the

Prophets by these words, ‘He who cometh,’ or ‘He that is to come,’ according to that in the Psalm, ‘Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord’ (Ps. 117:26); and in the prophet Habacuc, ‘Yet a little while, and he that is to come will come, and will not delay’ (Hab. 2:3; Heb. 10:37). And so the Baptist, taking the name from Scripture, asks: ‘Art thou he that art to come?’ that is, art thou the Christ who was foretold to come as chief and highest of all?” With these words of Cyril agrees that of John: “Those men, when they had seen what a sign he had done, said: This is of a truth the prophet that is to come into the world” (John 6:14).

John therefore asked Jesus whether He was the Christ, not from doubt or ignorance, but to instruct the ignorance of his disciples, that from the words and deeds of Christ they might be edified in faith, and drawn to reverence and love of Christ. For John knew how fruitfully and excellently Christ, the uncreated and infinite wisdom of God the Father (1 Cor. 1:24), would answer. Moreover Ambrose touches another exposition, *(p. 541)* namely that John doubted not whether Jesus was the Christ, but whether He was to die for men: yet so that he doubted thereof not as one in doubt but as a pious seer, so that he doubted not by faith or infidelity but by piety, as Peter also, when he had heard from Christ that He was to be crucified, said to Him: “Lord, be it far from thee, this shall not be unto thee” (Matt. 16:22). But this cannot stand, nor does B. Ambrose write this by asserting it but by reciting the opinion of others. For such piety would not have been true or laudable piety, and would have flowed from error or imperfection of knowledge, or inconsideration, or ignorance. Wherefore Christ answered Peter to the words aforesaid: “Go behind me, Satan, thou art a scandal unto me: because thou savourest not the things that are of God, but that are of men” (Matt. 16:23). Lastly, John before the passion of Christ was of no less perfection in holiness and wisdom than the Apostles after the passion of Christ and the receiving of the Holy Spirit. No piety, then, so affected him toward Christ as to make him believe or think He would not die for the world, as neither the glorious Virgin, although she was affected toward Christ with greater piety, both natural and infused: for they had certain and firm knowledge of the passion of Christ. Therefore it is not like Peter’s case, who, as also the other Apostles, before the passion of Christ was of great simplicity and rudeness, as Christ often shows in the Gospel, and John the evangelist testifies of himself: “For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead” (John 20:9). Although therefore Peter, on hearing the words of Christ in which He foretold that He was to suffer, did not think them false; yet because he had not firm and fixed knowledge thereof, a certain piety led him to contradict or doubt.

“And when the men were come to Him, they said” (Luke 7:20): *“John the Baptist hath sent us to Thee, saying: Art Thou He that art to come,”* that is, the Christ whom the Prophets foretold would come into the world for the redemption of men, *“or look we for another,”* another Christ and redeemer, that is, ought we to await? These were faithful legates, faithfully setting forth the words of the sender, neither adding nor taking away. Whom we ought to follow, unless perhaps someone through us should announce such things as it would not be expedient to be carried in their former form. For it is written in Proverbs: “A faithful ambassador is health” (Prov. 13:17). Again it is written: “A third tongue hath disquieted many” (Ecclus. 28:16). But also in Proverbs it is read: “He that repeateth a word, separateth friends” (Prov. 17:9).

“And in that same hour” (Luke 7:21) at which they proposed this question, *“He cured many of their diseases,”* that is, of graver or more protracted illnesses: which are by nature more difficultly cured, according to that of Ecclesiasticus: “A long sickness is troublesome to the physician” (Ecclus. 10:11); but in Christ, the heavenly physician, this had no place, since to Him no word was difficult, nay all things were equally possible to Him according to the divine nature; *“and hurts,”* violently inflicted or accidentally arisen; *“and evil spirits,”* that is, demons: whose nature indeed is good, because created by God, yet with their whole mind they are unchangeably intent upon evils; and if they do something good in kind or say what is true, either they do it unwillingly or refer it to an evil end. *“And to many that were blind He gave sight.”* For Christ, beholding all things, and knowing why John had sent his disciples, then wrought more abundant miracles, that not by words but by deeds He might show Himself the Christ, and take away their error.

"And answering, He said to them: Go" (Luke 7:22), that is, departing from this place, *"and tell John,"* friend and kinsman, baptist and paranymph, herald, forerunner and my angel (Mal. 3:1), *"what you have seen,"* that is, the miracles which in this hour in your presence I have done, which are at once subjoined, *"and heard,"* that is, the miracles which you have heard that I did from others, or my doctrine: *"the blind see,"* that is, those who before were blind, now, I miraculously restoring sight to them, see bodily, *"the lame walk."* That many blind and lame were cured by Christ, Matthew, Luke, and Mark copiously testify: none of them, however, *(p. 542)* explicitly teaches that anyone blind or lame from birth was restored by Christ to sight or gait. But each of these John the evangelist writes (John 9:1–7; 5:5–9): yet he recites it only of one blind man, and one lame. Whether Christ cured more such, is not known. For not all things were written: nay of the miracles of Christ, comparatively speaking, few in particular were written by the Evangelists, as is plain to readers of the Gospels (John 21:25). Whence of the blind, lame, and deaf, of whom mention is now made, it is uncertain whether some of them were such from their mothers' wombs. Further, the lame are of two kinds: for some of them wholly lack the act of progression; others cannot walk rightly or expeditiously. Christ cured both: to the former wholly giving gait, in the latter reforming or perfecting it.

"The lepers are made clean," at my command. In the whole Old Testament no one is read to have cured a leper but Eliseus the prophet, who also healed but one leper (4 Kings 5:1–14). But Christ cleansed very many such: nay, as is had below, at one time He cured ten lepers (Luke 17:12–14). *"The deaf hear,"* that is, those who a little before were deaf, I acting, receive hearing. *"The dead rise again."* If Christ, when He said these words, had raised only one dead man, it is probable that He would not have said in the plural, "The dead rise again." It is therefore piously to be believed that He had raised more before these words, although from the Gospel it is not known that He had raised before these words any but the widow's son: though perhaps He had also raised the ruler's daughter before this. It is written in the Gospel that He raised three dead; but whether He raised more is unknown, especially since three Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, omitted to write that most solemn raising of Lazarus (John 11). Matthew also and Mark wrote nothing of the raising of the widow's son.

"To the poor the gospel is preached," that is, they are by me pronounced blessed, who say, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:3): whereas the world reputes the rich blessed and vilifies the poor. For Christ hath made foolish the wisdom of this world (1 Cor. 1:20); and the prudence of the flesh is death (Rom. 8:6). Or, "are evangelized," that is, are instructed by me in the evangelical law and grace, so that I do not prefer the rich to the poor, nor am I a respecter of persons (Acts 10:34): according to that of Isaias, where Christ says of the Father: "He hath sent me to preach to the poor" (Isa. 61:1; Luke 4:18). If, however, "to be evangelized" be a deponent verb, according to ancient grammar, the sense can be that the poor evangelize, that is, preach the Gospel: because the disciples of Christ, who left all things (Matt. 19:27), baptized and instructed the people, as is made known in John and elsewhere (John 4:1–2). And this is true, whether by the poor be understood the humble, or the voluntarily needy.

Moreover it is plain that to John's question Christ answered not by words but by deeds, and indeed supernatural deeds, that the solution of the question might be so much the firmer and more certain, as the testimony of work is more efficacious than of speech. Again, Christ bade these things be reported to John, knowing him to be supernaturally learned in the Prophets, so that from these miracles he could prove to his disciples that Jesus is the Messias: because He did these things so imperiously, and for the confirmation of His doctrine, by which He declared Himself to be the Christ (for God does not attest to falsehood by doing anything in confirmation of it), and because these things were foretold of Christ through Isaias: "Behold your God will come… Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall be free" (Isa. 35:4–6). Whence in John Christ says: "The works that I do in the name of my Father, they give testimony of me" (John 10:25); and again: "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though you will not believe me,

believe the works" (John 10:37–38).

Moreover, as has been often touched, those whom Christ healed in body He healed also in mind. So He spiritually cured the blind, deaf, lepers, lame, and dead: *(p. 543)* nay meanwhile innumerably He did this, and does daily. Whence six incommodities of man are here touched, according to the tropological sense, which Christ takes away from us by His grace. The first is the blinding of reason, namely error, ignorance, or perfidy of mind: which Christ takes from the soul, enlightening the intellect by faith, and the other virtues and gifts perfecting the intellect, such as wisdom, knowledge, counsel, and prudence. The second is the lameness of the interior man, namely wavering, instability, sloth, or obliquity of affection, by which the progress of the mind to God is hindered, according to that in the Psalm: "The strange children are inveterate, and have halted from their paths" (Ps. 17:46). And in the books of Kings Elias said to the vain children of Israel: "How long do you halt between two sides?" (3 Kings 18:21). This evil is healed when God inflames the soul with divine love and makes it alert. Hence according to Augustine the foot of the soul is love: which, if it be right, is called charity; if inordinate or crooked, is called cupidity. The third is the leprosy of the soul, namely the foulness of carnal concupiscence, which reigns more among the rich and powerful: which Christ takes away, cleansing man from the vices of gluttony and lust. The fourth is the deafness of the soul, namely its hardness or rebellion in obeying the words of God: which Christ removes, softening the mind by grace, that it may be docile and obedient, as through Ezechiel the Lord speaks: "I will put a new spirit in the midst of you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and will give you a heart of flesh" (Ezech. 36:26). The fifth is the death of the soul, that is, its separation from God by mortal sin: which Christ takes away, vivifying the soul by charity, or rousing it to penance. The sixth is poverty, that is, lack of grace and virtues: which Christ takes away by infusing spiritual charisms. And so the poor are evangelized, that is, those who were without grace are by the infusion of grace judged blessed.

"And blessed is he whosoever shall not be scandalized in me" (Luke 7:23), now in hope, and by inchoation and merit of future felicity, that is, who from my words and deeds and persecutions shall not be led to the ruin of sin, by envying me, detracting from my works, interpreting them sinisterly, or disbelieving of my majesty and truth, on account of the adversities and passion of death which I shall endure. Many indeed, seeing the miracles of Christ, believed Him to be the Messias, but, seeing His most ignominious slaying, fell from the faith: nay even the Apostles themselves, scandalized at the capture of Christ, fled (Matt. 26:56), as He foretold, "All you shall be scandalized in me this night" (Matt. 26:31). — Further, Christ directly scandalized no one, because every word and deed of His was most orderly; but many from their own infirmity or perversity were scandalized in Him, so that He was the occasion and matter, not the direct cause, of such scandal. By the words introduced, moreover, Christ touches and admonishes the disciples of John, who, as was said, were scandalized in Christ, grieving that their master John was so preferred to by the people.

"And when the messengers of John were departed" (Luke 7:24), the two disciples, returning to their master, *"He began to say to the multitudes concerning John,"* that is, to commend him publicly: which He did not do in the presence of John's disciples, lest He should seem to flatter.

First, however, He praises John for constancy of mind: and this lest the people, who before had heard John bearing testimony to Jesus Christ, and had now heard the form of his question, "Art thou he that art to come?" etc., should think John unstable, and from levity to have testified before, and now from ignorance to have inquired. *"What went you out into the desert to see,"* that is, what sort of man, to the desert where John dwelt? For many ran through the roads of so long a desert to see him, according to Cyril. *"A reed shaken with the wind?"* This is to be read inquisitively and negatively. As if He should say: Did you go out to see a light, unstable, ignorant, and carnal man, who now asserts something and soon after denies or doubts it, who is like a reed or cane which the wind drives to every difference of place? *(p. 544)* Such John the Baptist was not; but such are passionate, weak men, and especially lovers of their own praise, who by the impulse of

passions are easily cast down from the mean of reason, and now immoderately rejoice, now inordinately grieve, now are too much inclined or affected toward someone, now too much averted from him, are lifted up by prosperity, broken by adversity, are bent from the rectitude of justice by praise as by reproach, because they are unhappily full of private love, not rooted in virtues. Such then let us not be, but fix our mind in God, nor let anything disturb us: nay let us have an unperturbed mind, desiring to please God alone, nor seeking anything outside Him, nay of adversities, reproaches, and injuries glorying, insofar as through them we approach salvation.

Whence inconstancy is a vile and great vice. To stability of mind, however, Holy Scripture especially exhorts us. For the Apostle says: "Be ye steadfast and unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58); and elsewhere, "That you be not easily moved from your sense" (2 Thess. 2:2); and again, "It is best that the heart be established with grace" (Heb. 13:9). And in Ecclesiasticus: "Winnow not with every wind… be steadfast in the way of the Lord, and in the truth of thy sense" (Ecclus. 5:11–12). As virtue and wisdom stabilize the mind, according to that of Solomon, "A wise man is strong, and a learned man is stout and mighty" (Prov. 24:5); so sin and passion beget inconstancy, according to that of the Psalmist: "Not so the wicked, not so: but like the dust, which the wind driveth from the face of the earth" (Ps. 1:4). So, following John, let us fulfil that of the Apostle: "That henceforth we be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine" (Eph. 4:14).

Next Christ praises John for the rigour of justice in chastisement of the body. *"But what went you out to see?"* (Luke 7:25) that is, to see what sort of man did you go out into the wilderness? *"A man clothed in soft garments?"* As if He should say: If you did this, you erred, because John did not use precious and delicate garments, but a most humble, cheap, and rough garment, namely woven of the hair of camels. This is the sense of the text, although some take by the soft garment flattering words. Gregory says: "Let no one think that in luxury and care of garments sin is absent, since the Apostle says, 'Not in costly attire' (1 Tim. 2:9)." Jerome also testifies: "Soft garments induce softness of soul"; and Chrysostom: "Soft clothing dissolves a rigid soul." *"Behold they that are in costly apparel,"* that is, use precious garments, *"and live delicately,"* that is, in the pleasures of the flesh and vain delights, *"are in the houses of kings,"* that is, are wont to be in the courts of princes. But John was not there, but dwelt in solitude; and he preferred to reprove Herod justly, and for it be imprisoned, rather than to flatter his sins, and by that have his familiarity (Matt. 14:3–4; Mark 6:17 ff.). Christ touches these three things, belonging to carnal life, namely costly garments, sensual delights, pleasant places: which three are to be despised by the penitent.

Then, having shown what John is not, He consequently shows what he is, that is, declares his perfection and excellence. *"But what went you out to see?"* (Luke 7:26), that is, to see what did you go into the desert? *"A prophet?"* that is, did you go out to behold John as a prophet? Christ in asking this does not deny, but grants and adds. For it is subjoined: *"Yea, I say to you, and more than a prophet,"* that is, John, to see whom you went out, was more than a prophet. He was indeed a prophet, foretelling the mysteries of Christ, and preparing the way for Him by prophetic words and works. Whence it was said above: "And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest" (Luke 1:76). He was also more than a prophet, because he showed the Scriptures of the Prophets to be fulfilled, by pointing out Christ present, and so fulfilled the office of an Evangelist (John 1:29–36). And as Christ, so John himself was prophetically foretold, and was sanctified in his mother's womb (Luke 1:13–17), and there bore witness to Christ, and was midway between the law and the Gospel. *(p. 545)* Nor does it obstruct that, as is had in John, John, when asked, "Art thou a prophet?" answered, "No" (John 1:21). For he takes the name of Prophet adequately, for one in whom beyond this gift no higher revelation is found.

That John was prophetically foretold is subjoined: *"This is he of whom it is written"* (Luke 7:27), through Malachias: *"Behold I send my angel"*; God the Father speaks, that is, John, a man of angelic conversation, and exercising the work of an angel by announcing the coming of Christ. Yet he was not an angel by nature.

In the Old Testament, however, “angel” is very often put for “messenger,” as in Isaias: “Go, ye swift angels, to a nation rent and torn in pieces” (Isa. 18:2); and again, “The angels of peace shall weep bitterly” (Isa. 33:7). In the prophet Aggeus also, where Jerome translated, “Aggeus, the messenger of the Lord, said to the messengers of the Lord” (Agg. 1:13), another translation has, “Aggeus, the angel of the Lord, said to the angels of the Lord.” *“Before thy face,”* O Christ my Only-begotten, that is, immediately before Thee, or before Thy manifestation and presentation in public. For Christ did not begin to preach publicly and to do signs except after the beginning of John’s preaching. *“Who shall prepare thy way before thee,”* that is, shall by his preaching, attestation, and baptizing dispose men to receive Thy faith, doctrine, and precepts, O Christ, before Thou preach publicly. This was expounded more fully above, where it is had: “Thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways” (Luke 1:76). How John was also foretold through Isaias, and prepared the way for Christ, was once expounded, on that: “The voice of one crying in the desert: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight his paths” (Isa. 40:3; Matt. 3:3). The evangelist Luke, however, alleges the words of Malachias more as to sense than as to form of words. For so our translation has: “Behold I send my angel, and he shall prepare the way before my face” (Mal. 3:1): and so these words are spoken in the person of the Son of God.

“For I say to you” (Luke 7:28), to confirm that John is more than a prophet: *“Amongst those that are born of women, there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist,”* that is, none of the Prophets is greater than he, in spiritual greatness, that is, holier and worthier. And “woman” is here taken for a female mixed with a male, and so Christ, born of the Virgin, is excepted; and the Virgin herself, bearer of Christ, is to be set not among those born but those who bore. Matthew, however, writes more fully and broadly: “Among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist” (Matt. 11:11): by which words Christ shows that none of them was greater than he. Yet He does not deny that some are equal to him. For great was the holiness of Moses and of Elias. Jerome also says on Jeremias: “I think no one holier than Jeremias.” Some, however, affirm that John is greater than the aforesaid. But since, as Solomon protests, “The Lord is the weigher of spirits” (Prov. 16:2), let us be content with the words of Christ, nor rashly add, although it is certain that as to some things John was greater than the aforesaid Saints: since in virginity and martyrdom he is greater than Moses. Many prerogatives also are considered in him which others lacked, as Bernard most beautifully teaches in a certain sermon. Lastly, Christ, judging so securely of the Saints, shows Himself the ruler and judge of men.

“*But he that is the lesser in the kingdom of God, is greater than he.”* By the kingdom of God Christ in the Gospel frequently understands the Church militant, as when He says: “The kingdom of heaven is like to a net cast into the sea, and gathering together of all kinds of fishes” (Matt. 13:47); and again, “The Son of man shall send his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all scandals” (Matt. 13:41). At times, however, by the kingdom of heaven He takes the triumphant Church, as when He says: “Not every one that saith to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father” (Matt. 7:21). — If therefore in this place by the kingdom of God be understood this present militant Church, the sense is: He that is lesser in the kingdom of God, that is, Christ, who in birth and in the estimation of some was later and lesser than John, whom *(p. 546)* all the Jews for a time thought to be the just Messias, is greater than he. For Christ as God incomparably and immensely exceeds John in all dignity, holiness, and perfection; and according to the assumed nature also, as united to the Word and adorned with the fulness of grace, He is greater than he, nay than every created intellect. And so Christ uttered these words lest anyone from the praise of John introduced should fall into the error of thinking that John was greater even than Jesus Christ Himself. Obscurely, however, He spoke, lest He seem to boast. — Further, if by the kingdom of God be understood the triumphant Church, the sense is: He that is lesser in the kingdom of God, that is, the lowest of the Blessed enjoying God in the fatherland, is greater than he. For every comprehensor is more perfect in contemplation and love than any pure wayfarer, nor does merit equal reward in actual perfection. Nevertheless many wayfarers, especially the most worthy Virgin, in this life were of greater merit than many

angels ever, nay than any of the angelic spirits, speaking of the glorious Virgin: and so in proximate disposition they were greater than they. — Moreover it is to be noted that when Christ said this, the gate of the heavenly kingdom was not yet opened: therefore, Christ Himself excepted, no man was in heaven. Hence what He says, "He that is lesser in the kingdom of God," is understood of the holy angels: who not only in the gifts of grace or glory, but also in specific nature, were greater than John. And so Christ by these words excluded the error of those saying that John was an incarnate angel.

"And all the people hearing this, and the publicans" (Luke 7:29), that is, the common crowd, hearing the aforesaid commendation of John by Christ, *"justified God,"* not effectively but ostensively, that is, said that He is just, and manifested it by works, *"being baptized with the baptism of John,"* by John himself. For from the fact that they heard John so praised by Christ, they praised God in His servant John, by whose preaching and baptizing they themselves, God acting, returned to justice from vices: whence they said that God had also acted justly, in work professing that of the Psalmist, "The Lord is just in all his ways, and holy in all his works" (Ps. 144:17). — Finally we justify God: first, when we confess that He hates injustice and every guilt, according to that of Wisdom, "To God the wicked and his wickedness are hateful alike" (Wis. 14:9); second, when we ascribe to Him that He loves justice and every virtue and goodness, according to that, "The Lord is just, and hath loved justice" (Ps. 10:8); third, that all justice proceeds from Him; fourth, that He justly glorifies the virtuous and justly condemns the wicked.

"But the Pharisees" (Luke 7:30), who reputed themselves and wished to appear more religious than the rest, though they were hypocrites and full of vainglory, *"and the lawyers,"* who swelled with knowledge of the law, *"despised the counsel of God against themselves,"* that is, the counsel of Christ, namely His saving instruction on the correction of life, they cast aside; the counsel of God also, that is, that secret decree of eternal wisdom concerning the manner of saving the human race through the incarnation and passion of the Word, they scorned to receive, refusing to believe Christ teaching this. Of this counsel Paul speaks in the Acts: "For I have not spared to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). The contemplation of this counsel tasted sweet to Augustine, according to what is told of him, that he was not satiated, for the sweetness of God, in considering the height of His counsel on the salvation of the human race. They despised also the counsel of God, that is, the counsels of Christ about poverty and other acts of supererogation. Whence when Christ preached against avarice, they derided Him, saying: "He hath a devil, and is mad: why hear you him?" (John 10:20). Lastly Christ Himself is called the Counsel of God the Father, according to Augustine, by a certain appropriation, as He is called the truth, art, and wisdom of the Father (John 14:6; 1 Cor. 1:24). For because He proceeds from the Father by way of intellectual emanation, what pertains properly to the intellect is appropriated to Him. This uncreated counsel of God these despised, saying: *(p. 547)* "He hath Beelzebub" (Mark 3:22), and, "We know that this man is a sinner" (John 9:24).

Moreover these words, which have now been expounded as interposed by the Evangelist between the preceding words of Christ in which He praised John, and the following in which He rebukes the Pharisees and Scribes, can be understood as uttered by Christ immediately after the aforesaid words. And the sense will be: All the people hearing the preaching of John before he was taken, justified God, submitting themselves to Him, and confessing their own sins: by which they showed God to be just, as hating sins. But the Pharisees and Scribes despised the counsel of God, by which through John He taught them to confess, be baptized, and receive Jesus for Christ. This, then, they despised against themselves, that is, against their own selves, against the salvation of their souls, to their own perdition and destruction. Or, "They despised the counsel of God against themselves," that is, directed to themselves. Of this blindness and perversity of theirs the Lord foretold through Isaias: "Who is blind, but my servant? who is deaf, but he to whom I sent my messengers?" (Isa. 42:19). *"Not being baptized by him,"* namely John, whose baptism, doctrine, and testimony of Christ they despised: as even to this present, some who seem more religious and learned than the rest are more difficultly corrected.

Then Christ subjoins the rebuke of the unbelieving Scribes and Pharisees. *"Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation"* (Luke 7:31), that is, of this incredulous gathering? to whom that of Deuteronomy is fitting: "They are a perverse generation, and unfaithful children" (Deut. 32:20). "Generation" is here also taken for the men generated. *"And to what are they like?"* Christ asks, and doubles the question, to render the hearers attentive to the solution. *"They are like to children sitting in the market place,"* etc. (Luke 7:32). As Cyril says, there was a certain game among the children of the Jews, so that when the children came together, their band was divided into two parts: who, to designate and contemn the sudden transmutation of the transitory things of the present life, so ordained that one part of them should rejoice and sing a joyful song, the other, mourning, sing a mournful dirge. Moreover, those mourning did not rejoice with those rejoicing, nor those rejoicing sympathize with those mourning; then they reproved one another, why one part did not conform itself to the other.

To these Christ likens the Scribes and Pharisees, and their favourers. For He says: *"They are like to children sitting in the market place"*: because in the market place children publicly did these things, and sitting apart did the aforesaid; *"speaking one to another, and saying,"* that is, one half of whom said to the other: *"We have piped to you,"* that is, for your exhilaration we have sung a canticle of joy, *"with pipes"*: because together with musical instruments such singing was done, as David also, chanting psalms with the mouth, played at the same time with the harp (1 Kings 16:23; Ps. 32:2, etc.); *"and you have not danced,"* that is, you have not congratulated us, nor shown signs of gladness by dancing. For a certain consonant melody resounds from a musical instrument: according to which, when man moves himself with foot and consonant motion of body, he manifests the interior disposition of the heart. Then follow the reproachful words of the other half, namely of the mourners to the rejoicing. *"We have lamented,"* that is, we have sung a mournful song to you, to provoke you to compassion, *"and you have not wept,"* that is, you have not compassionated us, nor by the weeping of compassion shown your affection.

Then Christ expounds this comparison and applies it to the proposed matter. *"For John the Baptist came"* (Luke 7:33), that is, was born, God acting and sending, lived in the world, came to men going out from the desert, *"neither eating bread"*: for his food was locusts and wild honey, as Matthew and Mark have (Matt. 3:4; Mark 1:6); *"nor drinking wine"*: as the angel said above, "He shall drink no wine nor strong drink" (Luke 1:15). Whence in this place by bread and wine the customary and delicate dishes and cups of men are signified. *"And you say: He hath a devil,"* that is, John is possessed. The impious, namely, when they see someone keeping an unaccustomed abstinence and singular rigour of life, *(p. 548)* perverting his holy works, defame him as obsessed. *"The Son of man is come"* (Luke 7:34), that is, I have appeared to you, and conversed among you, *"eating and drinking,"* that is, using the usual refreshments of men, and living socially among them; *"and you say of me,"* detracting from me: *"Behold a man that is a glutton,"* that is, gluttonous, *"and a wine drinker,"* that is, a drunkard and lover of the pleasure of gluttony, *"a friend of publicans,"* that is, of great transgressors, *"and sinners,"* the lesser, that is, conforming Himself to such, applying Himself and applauding them, that He may be invited and delicately sustained by them, and so cherishing the evils of guilt in them. So the Scribes and Pharisees are compared to the aforesaid children, since as one part of those children did not sympathize with the other part mourning; so these Jews, John the Baptist singing a mournful song, that is, living rigorously, teaching penance, and inviting to wholesome mourning, did not consent, nor conform themselves. Again, as the other part of those children did not rejoice with the rejoicing part; so the aforesaid Jews, Christ conversing sweetly among men, preaching the joys of the future life, inviting to spiritual consolation, refused to acquiesce and conform themselves.

Such there are even now in the Church, many men of perverse sense, who interpret all the works of others, even good ones, for the worse, nay judge the best to be the worst. And because excellent works of holiness of this kind seem to them impossible to men, they suppose and say that such things are done by the cooperation of demons, because by the help of demons many things can be done which men cannot naturally do or suffer,

as we see in the frenzied and possessed. For demons can so alter and disorder the bodily nature and harmony of man that for many days a man is not affected toward food or drink, nor needs it: because heat does not act in the natural manner on the radical humour. These perverse men, then, judging all the deeds of others in the worst way, are men of evil inclination or habituation, vain and envious, who do not congratulate the progress of others but are saddened that someone appears more perfect than themselves: and therefore the good which they lack they do not praise, nor follow, nor venerate, but persecute in others, detractors and scoffers, hateful to God (Rom. 1:30): by which vice some who think themselves religious stain their own souls, their malice blinding them (Wis. 2:21). Further, others are men of good inclination or disposition, readier to congratulate the prosperity of others than to detract from their progress or defect: what they do not have in themselves they piously admire, honour, follow in others; and so by loving, fostering, rejoicing together, they become partakers of the grace of others.

It is also plain that the part of the rejoicing children is fitted to Christ, who, as a bridegroom conversing among His own, provokes to spiritual gladness; but the part of the mourning children is fitted to John, who led a most strict life in the desert. For since Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10), He deigned to eat with sinners and conform Himself to them (Matt. 9:10), that by His charity, communion, familiarity, and clemency He might draw them to penance, build them up in virtues, allure them to His discipleship: and so He loved their nature or person, not their vices. — Lastly, on the exposition of these words fuller things were said on Matthew (cf. Matt. 11:16–19).

So let us not be likened to the Scribes and Pharisees, to whom the indocile and incorrigible are conformed; but let us be docile and tractable, and acquiesce in the children sitting in the market place, that is, holy men, devout prelates, true preachers in the church, which is the Lord's market place, where the faithful come together to speak with God, where also the laws of heavenly precepts are enacted: so that we rejoice with those rejoicing spiritually and exhorting to rejoice in God, and with those weeping their own or others' sins, or for other reasonable causes, *(p. 549)* we compassionate, conform, and mourn with them, as the Apostle says, "Weep with them that weep, rejoice with them that rejoice" (Rom. 12:15): so that neither inordinate gladness nor immoderate sadness be found in us. Yet as Gorran writes here, some are still like the Scribes and Pharisees, who if they see anyone studying humility judge him a hypocrite; if meekness and patience, a coward; if simplicity, a fool; if maturity, phlegmatic; if devotion, singular; if peace and silence, melancholic or fantastic; if prayer and vigils, indiscreet; if he corrects others, a disturber of peace. He who dwells with such can say that of Job: "I was the brother of dragons, and companion of ostriches" (Job 30:29).

"And wisdom is justified" (Luke 7:35), that is, reputed just, honoured and known — the wisdom, that is, the evangelical doctrine of Christ, sapiential and divine, or Christ, the power and wisdom of God the Father (1 Cor. 1:24) — *"by all her children,"* that is, by all truly loving truth and wisdom, or by all the disciples of Christ. Of whom through Isaias He testifies: "Behold I and my children whom the Lord hath given me" (Isa. 8:18). In John also He says: "Little children, yet a little while I am with you" (John 13:33). As if the Saviour said: Though I am contemned by you, O unbelieving Jews, and affirmed to teach vain things, nevertheless the elect Jews hearing me recognize, confess, and honour me as truly wise and preaching wise things. Now Christ also speaks of sons by the grace of adoption, of whom the Apostle says: "For whosoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:14). At times, however, some are called sons of God by reason of creation, or of some special providence: of whom through Isaias the Lord speaks, "I have brought up children, and exalted them: but they have despised me" (Isa. 1:2); and Christ in the Gospel: "The children of the kingdom shall be cast out into the exterior darkness" (Matt. 8:12).

Moreover, one is said to be justified in three ways: first, when from unjust he becomes just: and so the doctors say that man is not justified without the infusion of grace. So Christ is not justified. Second, when the just becomes more just by progress, according to that of the Apocalypse: "He that is just, let him be justified still; and he that is holy, let him be sanctified still" (Apoc. 22:11). And in John the Saviour says: "Every

branch that beareth fruit he will purge it, that it may bring forth more fruit" (John 15:2). So again it does not befit Christ to be justified, save as to manifestation, as the Forerunner said of Christ: "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30). Third, as to the recognition, honouring, or showing by others: as when one's equity is declared to others, or is by them known, praised, and honoured. And so it befits God, and Christ according to both natures, to be justified, as also to be magnified and glorified.

Article XIX — Exposition of the Remaining Part of this Seventh Chapter: "And one of the Pharisees desired Him to eat with him"

What the Evangelist at the end of the preceding article said doctrinally, he now teaches by example, namely that wisdom, which is Christ, is justified by His devout ones, and despised by others. *"And one of the Pharisees desired Him,"* namely Jesus, *"to eat with him"* (Luke 7:36) — whose name, as is said below, was Simon. *"And He, going into the Pharisee's house, sat down,"* that is, ate with him. Christ, the master of all humility, *(p. 550)* and the exemplar of every perfection, neither with publicans on account of their manifest sins, nor with Pharisees on account of their hidden vices, especially pride, nor with the rich, nor with the poor, scorned to eat, in all loving the nature as capable of felicity and made to the image of God: and at the same time instructing us to perfect humility, that none of us rashly spurn or avoid anyone, except so far as the Church teaches or commands.

"And behold a woman that was in the city, a sinner" (Luke 7:37). Who this woman was, there was sometimes among expositors great dispute ; but now holy Church, with the blessed Pope Gregory, holds that she was Mary Magdalene. Augustine and Bede assert the same. That this is true is shown evidently not only from the legend of the most blessed Mary Magdalene, but also from the canonical Scriptures, namely from the Gospel, as I showed on Matthew (cf. Matt. 26:7). Hence there seems to be no further room for doubt on this, and what I wrote in the place cited I judge need not be repeated. — Again, there is a question about the city, namely in what city this which is now written was done. Bede answers that it was in a certain city of Galilee; others, that it was in Jerusalem. For Bede, following Augustine and Gregory, says that Mary Magdalene anointed Christ twice: once, and first, in a city of Galilee, in the midst of the Gospel preaching; the second time in Bethania, a village of Judea, near the end of the said preaching, when the Passion was at hand, as the other Evangelists recount (Matt. 26:6–7; Mark 14:3; John 12:3). Again, it is asked why Luke does not give this woman her proper name, but calls her a sinner. The answer is plain from the evangelist Mark. For Mark says: "Jesus rising early the first day of the week, appeared first to Mary Magdalen, out of whom he had cast seven devils" (Mark 16:9): by which are understood the seven mortal sins with which she was filled. Luke also testifies the same at the beginning of the following chapter, that seven devils were cast out of her (Luke 8:2). Several of the Saints also intimate that she was subject to acts of luxury. Hence, as one habituated and abounding in crimes, she is called a sinner. She is also so called in order that by her example we may be provoked to penance, not broken by despair and pusillanimity, but inflamed with confidence in the divine mercy, however vicious we may have been. Moreover he calls her a sinner now, because her amendment was not yet known to others, but she was still reputed a sinner by all.

"Which when she knew that He sat at table" (Luke 7:37), that is, was eating, *"in the Pharisee's house, she brought,"* that is, carried with her, *"an alabaster box of ointment."* Alabaster, according to Bede, is a kind of white marble interspersed with various colours, which is wont to be hollowed out to keep ointments, because it is said to preserve them incorrupt best of all. Alabaster is therefore here taken for a vessel made of such marble, in which was contained the ointment which Mary used in the time of her vanity, for the fragrance, refreshment, and softness of her body.

"And standing behind at His feet" (Luke 7:38). For considering the enormity of her sins, she so despised herself that she reckoned herself altogether unworthy to appear before the face of Christ, to look upon His countenance, to lift her eyes to Him; even as the publican durst not lift up his eyes to heaven, but struck his

breast, saying: “O God, be merciful to me a sinner” (Luke 18:13). This also this Mary said, though not in words, yet by the whole disposition and bearing of soul and body. For she confessed her sins, not in words, but in deeds and tears, most ready indeed for confession of the mouth; but such confession was not yet commanded, for Christ first instituted the sacrament of Penance or Confession. Finally, because she was a public sinner, she reckoned her sins sufficiently open to all. *“She began to wash His feet with tears.”* O how great, how heartfelt, intense, and penetrating was this woman’s compunction, contrition, and devotion, who, uncalled, entered before so many reclining at table, presenting herself to be seen by all, and so abundantly bewailing herself before them, *(p. 551)* though she was of such nobility and opulence! But because she clearly adverted to her sins, duly weighed them, humbled herself most profoundly, and ineffably despised herself, therefore she not only did not fear to be confounded, despised, and derided; nay, she desired all these things, that she might make some recompense and honour to God, whom she had dishonoured; since as she had dishonoured God most of all by her sins, so, to recompense His honour, she offered herself to be most utterly confounded. *“And wiped them with the hairs of her head.”*

So first she stood behind Christ’s back, then she cast herself down at His feet, bedewing them with tears. For by Christ’s preaching she was ineffably inflamed, pierced with compunction, and as it were wholly dissolved into tears, and began to love Christ Himself most ardently. And though she judged herself unworthy of touching Christ’s feet, yet, overcome by the greatness of her love, she could not restrain herself. For fervent love knows no measure, keeps no rule, follows no reasoning. Yet it does not work directly, blameworthily, or irrationally, but superrationally, following the touch, the kindling, and the upward action of the Holy Spirit; for which reason it is not confined by the common law.

“And she kissed His feet,” from a serene and spiritual ardour of love, and as it were giving thanks to those holy feet which bore that body, by whose mouth, or preaching, she herself was converted. Moreover, because the feet are the lower parts of the body, she approached them the more boldly and confidently. It is also plain from this that Christ walked barefoot. *“And anointed them with ointment”*; for this ointment was cooling, of good odour, and soothing to the body. As the Apostle says, “Every creature of God is good” (1 Tim. 4:4), namely as to that which it has received from the Creator naturally, purely, and of infinite goodness. But to those who abuse them some creatures are evil, as is read in the book of Wisdom: “The creatures of God are turned into a snare to the feet of the unwise” (Wis. 14:11). Mary Magdalene, therefore, began to use well in Christ the creatures which she had abused, namely her own members and other things. For the eyes, with which she had gazed on many so wantonly and lasciviously, she now afflicted with weeping; the hair, with which she had vainly adorned herself, she stretched out to wipe away the dust and uncleanness of Christ’s feet; the lips, which she had applied lustfully to others, she tearfully pressed upon the feet of Christ. So too she now used most excellently her ointment, which before she had used perversely.

“And the Pharisee, who had invited Him, seeing it” (Luke 7:39), that is, who had invited Jesus to dine: seeing, I say, how this woman bedewed Christ’s feet with her tears, wiped them with her hair, kissed and anointed them, *“spoke within himself,”* that is, thought, *“saying,”* in a mental word, which is the conception of the mind from which the vocal word proceeds: *“This man,”* that is, this Jesus whom I invited. He thought thus scornfully, indignant that Christ permitted Himself to be so handled by a sinner. Hence, as at times from indignation we do not name expressly in a vocal word him of whom we speak, as the Jews at the time of the Passion said of Christ, “We have found this man perverting our nation” (Luke 23:2); and again, “Not this man, but Barabbas” (John 18:40): so sometimes in thinking of someone we disdain to express him by name in the interior word, but mark him by something common. *“If he were a prophet,”* whose office it is to see hidden things by divine revelation. So, if he were a prophet, as many think, and he himself intimates, he would surely know, God revealing it, *“who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him,”* determinately and by name, that is, what person, and of what manner of life, or how contemptible and vile, is the woman that touches him, washing, wiping, kissing, anointing his feet: *“that she is a sinner,”* that is, a

great and inveterate transgressor. — Sometimes in the Scriptures anyone who has sinned is called a sinner, even if he sinned only venially and has done penance; nay, even if he never actually sinned and is free from all fault, but was at some time subject to original sin. Otherwise it could not be verified that it is written: “No man is clean from stain, although his life be but of one day upon the earth” (Job 14:4–5). And nevertheless it is certain that baptized infants lack every stain of guilt, and if they die fly straightway to heaven. Chrysostom also in a homily says of John the Baptist that he was a sinner. *(p. 552)* At other times he is more properly called a sinner who has transgressed mortally, although he has repented and is without mortal sin. So Paul names himself not only a sinner but the first of sinners (1 Tim. 1:15). Most properly, however, he is said to be a sinner who lies knowingly in mortal vices, especially who long and with hardened mind so remains: and so the Pharisee names this Mary a sinner, insinuating that he himself is not a sinner.

Moreover, in these mental words this Simon erred and sinned in many ways. First, by rash judgment, because he judged both Christ and Mary culpable in this deed. Second, by vicious indignation, because he was indignant both at the penitent woman and at Christ receiving and showing mercy. Third, by culpable reprehension: for he blamed Mary for her act of penance, and Christ for His act of mercy, as if for vicious acts. Fourth, by lying in two ways: for it does not follow that if one is a prophet he therefore knows all the secrets of others; nor was this Mary, when she did these things, a sinner according to the Pharisee’s meaning; nay, she was already justified by heartfelt contrition, and was kindled with divine love.

But, as Gregory says, true justice has compassion; false justice, indignation. Whence if this Mary had prostrated herself at the feet of the Pharisee, he would perhaps have spurned her with his heels. And behold, down to the present, many are like this Pharisee: who, notwithstanding that they themselves have been or are squalid, full and torn with sins, defects, and passions, yet quickly grow unmercifully indignant at others who sin, detract and mock, do not condole nor help, not weighing that of the Apostle: “Let him that thinketh himself to stand, take heed lest he fall” (1 Cor. 10:12); and again, “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in any fault, you who are spiritual, instruct such a one in the spirit of meekness” (Gal. 6:1); and likewise, “Bear ye one another’s burthens, and so you shall fulfil the law of Christ” (Gal. 6:2). These are imperfect, empty, and light, who, when they have begun a little of justice and virtues, straightway glory foolishly, are puffed up derisibly, and despise others: who, if they were truly enlightened, wise, and virtuous, would compassionate others charitably, and assist them with counsel and help. Hence Gregory says: “It is necessary that when we behold any sinners, we first lament ourselves in their calamity or vices, because in like things we have either fallen or can fall. Let us therefore always weigh our own infirmity, and heartily condole with every sinner, considering that we too would fall as much or more gravely, or would have fallen, had not divine piety mercifully been with us and were not with us.” If we so act, we are truly wise and merciful, and there shall be fulfilled in us what Christ promised: “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy” (Matt. 5:7). Wherefore the Apostle admonishes: “Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted” (Gal. 6:1).

“And Jesus answering” (Luke 7:40), not by vocal words, but to the mental words or thoughts of the Pharisee. By which He shows Himself more than a prophet, by beholding, disclosing, and instructing the thoughts of the heart: since to inspect the thoughts and affections of the mind is proper to God, nor does it belong to the Prophets save by divine revelation; *“said to him,”* namely to Simon: *“Simon, I have somewhat to say to thee.”* Behold how sweetly and familiarly Christ, about to reprove the Pharisee, addresses him, and expressing him by his proper name makes him attentive: to intimate that he who desires or is bound to correct another ought to do so piously and mildly, provided that by such rebuke the other can be amended. Therefore it is written: “The just man shall correct me in mercy, and shall reprove me” (Ps. 140:5). *“But he said: Master, say it.”* Then Christ proposes an example or parable, which according to the superficial sense has no difficulty, as is plain in the text; but its mystical understanding is more beautiful. *(p. 553)* This parable is, then, of a certain most pious creditor and two poor debtors. Christ says: *“A certain creditor had two debtors, the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty”* (Luke 7:41). *“And whereas they had not*

wherewith to pay, he forgave them both" (Luke 7:42), that is, remitted those debts to both. By the creditor, therefore, is mystically designated Almighty God, most liberal giver of all good, and most just avenger of every sin: who is called a creditor on a twofold ground: first, because for guilt He exacts and inflicts punishment, nay, for temporal guilt eternal punishment; second, because for the gifts of nature and of grace which He bestows on us, He exacts the good use of them, and thanksgiving, and profit from us.

According to this twofold reason why God is called creditor, the debtors can be understood in two ways. For if God is called creditor on the first ground, by the debtors are to be understood sinners, who are bound for their excesses to make satisfaction to God, or to pay the punishments due. Whence by the debtor of five hundred pence is to be taken one who has offended God very gravely and manifoldly; by the debtor of fifty, one who has sinned less. These debtors have not wherewith to pay, because by their own powers, without the grace of God, they cannot satisfy or be absolved, and especially they have not wherewith to satisfy God for the debt of infinite punishment. But God forgives both, that is, grants indulgence, while they ask pardon and do what is in them: nay, sometimes from His immense piety He wholly and most graciously prevents them and rouses them to Himself, as is plain in Paul the apostle (Acts 9:1 ff.). Again, God forgives both, that is, infuses the gratuitous gift of grace, because without the gift of grace there is no remission of guilt nor justification, as the Apostle says: "Being justified freely by his grace" (Rom. 3:24). — But if God is called creditor on the second ground, the debtors are understood to be those who have received various benefits of God: and by the debtor of five hundred pence, one who has received many greater ones; by the other, one who has received lesser. These have not wherewith to repay, that is, they cannot render to God a worthy return, nor give sufficient thanks or service, especially for that the only-begotten Son of God has taken, done, and borne so great things for them: and yet, if according to their power they humbly give thanks to God and fervently serve Him, God, most kind, knowing the weakness and insufficiency of the human race, not only does not despise them for their imperfection, but also forgives, that is, increases in them the gifts of grace and His various benefits. "For to him that hath," that is, who gives thanks for what he has received, "it shall be given, and he shall abound" (Matt. 13:12).

Then Christ, wishing to convict the Pharisee out of his own answer, asks him: *"Which therefore of the two loveth him most?"* (Luke 7:42), that is, which of the two debtors is bound to love most that creditor, nay, that forgiver? *"Simon answering, said: I suppose that he to whom he forgave most"* (Luke 7:43). The Pharisee speaks cautiously, fearing to be convicted by Christ out of his own words, whose wisdom he knew to be great. Because he to whom *"he forgave most,"* that is, who has obtained greater indulgence or beneficence, other things being equal, is bound to love more, because more was given him. For the greater the goods or the greater pardon one has obtained from another, the more he is bound to love him. And this is especially true and happens in human affairs, where love is frequently caused by preceding gifts: therefore the greater love proceeds from the greater gifts. *"And He said to him: Thou hast judged rightly,"* that is, thou hast duly discerned the true from the false, and affirmed the truth. By this example of Christ, therefore, the utterance of truth is to be approved by whomsoever it is pronounced, nor ought we, from hatred or contempt of the person, to contradict or resist the truth uttered by him, or the equity done by him, as is the custom of men subject to passions.

Next the Saviour applies this parable to the matter in hand. *"And turning to the woman"* (Luke 7:44). This is verified in a twofold conversion. For when the aforesaid words were spoken, Christ turned His bodily face in position toward the woman, standing behind at His feet, or rather lying prostrate, wiping and kissing them. *(p. 554)* He also turned spiritually to her, by a most pious regard of His mind and a greater infusion of grace. For He had so turned to her even before, as Gregory says: "Why do we marvel, brethren, at Mary coming, or at the Lord receiving? Shall I say receiving, or drawing? But to confess more truly, I say both drawing and receiving. For He drew her inwardly to penance, who outwardly received her in meekness." *"He said to Simon: Dost thou see this woman?"* that is, thou oughtest to look upon and consider rightly the person and

these deeds of hers. Whence Christ says pointedly, “This woman,” as if to say: Attend to this very notable woman, whose deeds are most worthy of consideration, since she is the model of penance, the exemplar of sinners, and a vessel of hope and election, in whom, as formerly sin abounded, so now grace more abounds (Rom. 5:20).

“I entered into thy house,” invited by thee: therefore I ought to have been received by thee courteously, charitably, and cheerfully; yet it was not so done, at least not so perfectly as was fitting. *“Thou gavest me no water for my feet,”* that is, thou hast neither washed my feet with water, which is ready at hand, nor caused them to be washed: though this is of right or of the custom of hospitality, and ought especially to have been done to Christ, who, going barefoot, often had feet weary, dusty, afflicted. Hence in Genesis Abraham and Lot are read to have said to the angels, whom they thought men: “Wash your feet” (Gen. 18:4; 19:2). And again Laban is read to have given water to wash the feet of the camels and of the men who had come with Abraham’s servant (Gen. 24:32). *“But she”*: whom Christ does not name expressly, not from scorn of her, but from esteem, and because she was a conspicuous example in the work of penance, in the display of example, and in the other acts which Christ deigns so carefully to enumerate; *“with tears hath washed my feet”*: though tears are drawn from within, and are not so ready at hand, and are a precious liquid: whence it is plain that she greatly excels thee toward me, who gave me not even water for the washing of my feet. Moreover, how blessed is the pious outpouring of tears Chrysostom shows, saying: “As where a violent shower bursts forth there comes serenity, so when tears are poured forth the tranquillity of the mind arises and appears, and the gloom of guilt perishes; and as by water and the Spirit, so by tears and confession we are cleansed anew.” *“And with her hairs hath wiped them”*: whence it is clear how much she now despises the former adornment of her hair, who wipes away the uncleanness of the feet with it, though women are wont to glory especially in the beauty and arrangement of their hair.

“Thou gavest me no kiss” (Luke 7:45); *“but she, since she came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet”*: whence it appears that she bore herself more charitably and humbly toward me than thou, who gavest me not even a kiss of the mouth: which is a sign of peace and friendship, and was wont to be done in the primitive Church at the mutual meeting and greeting of Christians, in fitting place and time. Wherefore Paul often writes in his epistles: “Salute one another with an holy kiss” (Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:12; 1 Pet. 5:14). For Christ also was wont to receive His disciples returning to Him and saluting Him with a holy kiss. Wherefore, when the Passion was at hand, the traitor said: “Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is he” (Matt. 26:48). From which it is manifest with how full a love Christ loved human nature and the persons of men. These things, however, are to be understood of the spiritual kiss, which flows from true and inward love. Moreover, as carnal love is wholly vicious and foul, so is the kiss proceeding from it.

“My head with oil thou didst not anoint” (Luke 7:46), though I go with bare head, and such oil as this woman bestows on me would be fitting for me; *“but she with ointment hath anointed my feet,”* though the feet are *(p. 555)* inferior to the head in place and dignity: whence it is plain that she has esteemed my feet more highly than thou my head.

From what has been set forth Christ concludes: *“Wherefore I say to thee”* (Luke 7:47), that is, because she has borne herself so charitably, reverently, and humbly toward me, I say to thee: *“Many sins are forgiven her,”* that is, all her sins, which are many, are remitted to her by me, with authority, as I am God, and ministerially, as I am man: mortal sins, indeed, as to guilt, are likewise remitted; *“because she hath loved much”*: for the fervour of love is a spiritual fire consuming sins. Wherefore Solomon protests: “Charity covereth all sins” (Prov. 10:12). Therefore Peter exhorts: “Having a continual mutual charity among yourselves: for charity covereth a multitude of sins” (1 Pet. 4:8).

Concerning these words a difficulty arises. For above Christ asserted that one loves more because more has been forgiven him; but here He infers the opposite, saying that many sins were forgiven this woman because she loved much: so that in the parable He intimates that the greatness of remission and pardon, or gift, is the

cause of great love; but now He affirms that love is the cause of the gift, and great love the cause of great remission. Moreover, if many sins were forgiven her because she loved much, it appears that love, nay great love, precedes the remission of sin: and so mortal sin and charity will be in the same subject.

To this it is to be answered that sin is said to be forgiven in two ways, namely as to guilt, and as to punishment. Christ is now speaking of the remission of sin as to punishment: and this remission great love precedes and effects, notwithstanding that from the remission of greater guilt greater love arises, as to the act of loving, speaking of one and frequent cause of greater love, other things being equal. For it frequently happens that those who remember having sinned more gravely become more fervent, and give more thanks to God, and are more earnest in penance and service, as the Apostle says: “Where sin abounded, grace did more abound” (Rom. 5:20). It does not follow, however, nor does Christ mean to say, that those to whom more sins have been forgiven always love more or possess greater grace. For the thief crucified with Christ, and obtaining pardon, did not become more fervent than Peter, John, or James, nor any of these more than the glorious Virgin, to whom no actual sin was ever remitted: because not the remission of sin alone, nor the receiving of a gift, causes and increases love, especially speaking of divine love, which at times from the sole goodness of God is bestowed more perfect and intense on some. Hence Christ now speaks of the cause of love and its effect as it suited His purpose, to repress the Pharisee’s error.

Others, however, have answered otherwise, saying that there is one love preceding the remission of guilt, and another following it: because in the justification of the ungodly there are three things, namely the infusion of first grace, that is, of faith, hope, and charity; the contrition of the heart; and the remission of guilt. And although these three are simultaneous in time, they are not in causality. For the infusion of grace is the cause of contrition, and contrition is the cause of the remission of guilt. Thus it is plain that the first love precedes the remission of sin. But there is another love which follows the remission of guilt. For when the soul feels itself inspired by the Holy Spirit, and believes with probability that guilt has been forgiven it by God, it loves more, and is more moved to act well: and perhaps this second love is an augmentation of the preceding, caused by the consideration of the remission of the preceding sins. Therefore what is said, “Many sins are forgiven her,” is understood of the first love; but of the second the Pharisee spoke: “I suppose that he to whom he forgave most loveth more.” It is therefore certain that Mary, or any penitent, had the first love of God and grace before *(p. 556)* the remission of sin, not by priority of time, but of causality, especially in the genus of formal cause, since naturally the being of grace is prior, as of any thing, to its acting: and so the being of grace is prior to its opposite office, namely to expel sin.

Finally, with this saying of Gorran agrees what Thomas asserts in the First of the Second, that the passive justification of the ungodly is his movement toward justice, even as passive heating is a movement toward heat. Then he shows how for this justification are required the infusion of grace, and the motion of free will to the consent and acceptance of the infused grace, and the motion of faith, the motion also of charity, without which nothing meritorious exists, and likewise the motion of free will against sin, resisting it and fleeing it. Lastly the remission of guilt is required, because by this the motion of justification is completed, that guilt is remitted. Thomas also asserts that although the justification of the ungodly is done in an instant, nevertheless among the things just mentioned which are required for it there is an order: so that in natural order the infusion of grace is first, then the motion of free will toward God, or in acceptance of grace, in the third place follows the motion of free will against sin; but the remission of guilt is last, because to it the whole motion is ordered. Yet on the part of man, the remission of guilt is prior to the infusion of grace, according to the way of generation. For the impediment must be removed before the introduction of the opposite. All this St. Thomas declares beautifully near the end of the Summa aforesaid: which I omit, to avoid prolixity.

Next the Saviour says: *“But to whom less is forgiven, he loveth less.”* This we clearly see, that often those who offend less gravely confess or are converted more slowly, and after conversion bear themselves more

remissly than those who sinned more gravely: for the former think less has been indulged them, and the latter more. Yet on this account no one ought to sin the more boldly, because this word of Christ is to be understood other things being equal, and as for the most part, not simply and in all cases. For Mary Magdalene does not love God more than the blessed Virgin, bearer of Christ: although less was forgiven the glorious Virgin, nay no actual sin was forgiven her; but from another source she has a greater reason for loving God than Magdalene. Others also, persisting in their innocence, have served God far more fervently than many chief sinners converted: as is certain of the most holy children of Christ, Gregory and Bernard and Thomas, and innumerable others. Hence Chrysostom says: "We have need of a fervent soul, because nothing hinders a man from becoming spiritually great. Let no one, therefore, placed in sins despair, let no virtuous man slumber, nor be variously confident, for often the harlot goes before him; nor let the unjust distrust, for it is possible for him to surpass the first."

"And he said to her: Thy sins are forgiven thee" (Luke 7:48), by God, all your sins. For the large piety of God does not halve pardon. Moreover, as to what He says, "are forgiven," etc., if it be understood of remission as to guilt, it must be expounded "have been forgiven," as was touched on before. But if it be taken of remission as to punishment, it can be expounded by way of the present time: for, as is said, on this occasion Christ forgave Mary Magdalene her sins, as to the punishments due to them, fully or totally, on account of her ardent love for Christ and her vehement horror of her faults. For the remission of mortal sin is either none, or total; but the remission of punishment commonly takes place by parts, and not all at once, according to the common (as was touched on) course, although at times it takes place all at once, because of the immense ardour of charity, the shame of sin, the intensity of contrition, the humility of confession, the detestation of vices: all which were in Magdalene, because although she did not confess with words, yet she did it by tears, sighs, and works; nor was the sacrament of Confession then required.

"And they that sat at table with him began to say within themselves" (Luke 7:49), that is, to think: *"Who is this that forgiveth sins also?"* as if they should say: How presumptuous is this man! or, How dares he so speak? *(p. 557)* For although Christ had not said, "I forgive thee," but "Thy sins are forgiven thee," yet they took these words as though He had said, "I forgive thee," etc. For Christ frequently spoke of Himself as of another in the third person. They also noted that to forgive sins is proper to God, who says through Isaias, "I am he that blot out thy iniquities" (Isa. 43:25); and to whom in the book of Job it is said: "Who can make him clean that is conceived of unclean seed? Is it not thou who only art?" (Job 14:4). But these things are not against the Saviour, who, as God, forgives sins with authority, nay with the Father and the Holy Ghost is one forgiver of sin; but according to the assumed nature He relaxes sins instrumentally, and as a meritorious cause.

"And he said to the woman" (Luke 7:50). For He did not answer their perverse thought, because, as Gregory says, "The heavenly physician rejects the sick whom he sees made worse by the medicine." It does not follow, however, that Christ did not answer them, though the Evangelist does not write it. For the Saviour did and said many things which none of the Evangelists wrote: nay, of what He did and said they wrote but few in particular, as is clear to him who reads the Gospel volumes (John 21:25). *"Thy faith hath made thee safe,"* that is, by the merit of thy faith thou art freed from thy sins. Whence in the Acts of the Apostles it is said of God: "Purifying their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:9); and Paul says: "Without faith it is impossible to please God" (Heb. 11:6). For faith is the foundation and principle of the virtues, and by it the mind is first joined to God. Nor does it obstruct that a little before Christ asserted that many sins were forgiven this woman because she loved much: for to the same virtuous act many virtues can concur. Here also mention is made of formed faith, which includes love, and works by it (Gal. 5:6). *"Go,"* that is, departing from me persevere in peace of heart, until thou be brought to the peace of eternity; cease also from vices, nor fall back into the former disorder of vices, but give thanks to God continually: as the Apostle says to the Romans, "Being justified therefore by faith, let us have peace with God" (Rom. 5:1). This is true and good peace, the tranquillity of the

mind in God, which the Apostle to the Galatians places among the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22): by which the unjust are not tranquillized, according to what is read in Isaias: “There is no peace to the wicked, saith the Lord” (Isa. 48:22; 57:21).

Concerning what has gone before it is asked, who is bound to love and give thanks more, the innocent, or the converted sinner. It appears that it is the innocent, since the gift of innocence is greater than the gift of restored grace. Augustine also confesses: “Thou oughtest to love God far more ardently, who hast not permitted thee to fall into those things which He forgave to the wicked.” The opposite appears from what the Saviour said, approving Simon’s words: “He to whom more is forgiven, loveth more”; and “to whom less is forgiven, he loveth less.”

To this question Thomas in the Second of the Second replies, saying: Where grace is greater on the part of the giver, greater thanksgiving is required on the part of the receiver. But grace on the part of the giver is said to be greater in two ways: in one way, according to the quantity of the thing given: and so the innocent is bound to give God more thanks, since the gift of innocence is greater than the gift of grace restored, other things being equal; the gift of innocence is also more continued, and more unceasingly preserved. In another way grace is said to be greater because it is given more gratuitously: and so the penitent is bound to give more thanks. The same reasoning holds for loving more or less. Some also say that the innocent is bound to love God and render Him thanks for what has been committed, but the penitent for what has been forgiven. Therefore, since the state of innocence, speaking absolutely, is better than the state of penance, it is plain that, other things being equal, and simply speaking, *(p. 558)* the innocent has more to love and to give thanks for.

Finally, how mystically the Jewish people is designated by the Pharisee, and the converted Gentile world by Mary, the blessed Gregory pursues sufficiently in a homily.

Luke 8: Holy Women, Sower, Lamp, Storm, Gerasene, Jairus

Article XX — Exposition of the Eighth Chapter: “And it came to pass afterwards, that He travelled through the cities and towns”

(p. 558) “And it came to pass afterwards” (Luke 8:1) that the Only-begotten of God Himself *“travelled through the cities and towns”* of Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, *“preaching,”* exhorting to well-doing, *“and evangelizing the kingdom of God,”* that is, openly proclaiming the felicity of the heavenly kingdom to be given as a reward to the just. It is called the kingdom of God, and the heavenly kingdom: the kingdom of God from the One who reigns and gives; the heavenly kingdom, or kingdom of heavens, from the place or the citizens of that kingdom. The Saviour also evangelized the kingdom of God, that is, the state, the progress, the grace and the reward of the Church militant, which is abundantly called in the Gospel the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heavens. So let us too follow Christ, bringing forth not vain and frivolous things, but heavenly ones, and setting forth what builds up, weighing that saying of Jerome: “Whatever does not edify the hearers turns to their peril.”

“And the twelve,” that is, the Apostles, *“with him.”* The Apostles, indeed, more continually and familiarly than the other disciples, clung to Christ wherever He went: of whose election and institution it was spoken above (Luke 6:13–16). *“And certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities”* (Luke 8:2). This can be understood in two ways: first, that some of them had been obsessed; second, that they are said to have been healed of devils because by Christ’s preaching and grace they were cleansed from very many and great vices. For certain demons take their names from certain vices, because they tempt, incline, and lead specially to them. Whence it is said: the spirit of pride, the spirit of fornication. And those who are defiled with such vices are spiritually possessed by demons, as their captives and slaves. “For by whom a man is overcome, of the same also he is the slave,” as Peter says in his second Canonical Epistle (2 Pet. 2:19). And

Paul, speaking to the impious: “That they may recover themselves from the snares of the devil, by whom they are held captive at his will” (2 Tim. 2:26). *“And infirmities,”* that is, bodily ones. Rightly therefore did they follow Christ as master and physician of their hearts and bodies, grateful, and desiring to persevere and to advance more. Namely:

“Mary who is called Magdalen.” So called from the castle, Magdalum. For she was the sister of Martha and Lazarus (John 11:1 ff.), daughter of a wealthy and most noble man, and by inheritance from her parents this castle came to her. *“Out of whom seven devils were gone forth,”* that is, the seven mortal sins with which she was at one time filled. Whence in Mark also it is read: “Now Jesus rising early the first day of the week, appeared first to Mary Magdalen, out of whom he had cast seven devils” (Mark 16:9). *“And Joanna the wife of Chusa, Herod’s steward”* (Luke 8:3): perhaps of the one who lived at the time when these things were done, namely of the Herod who beheaded the Baptist. *“And Susanna”*: who, by constancy of heart, and virtue and prudence, was made like that renowned Susanna of whom we have in Daniel (Dan. 13). Of Joanna, however, it is told below that with Mary Magdalene she came with the spices to the sepulchre, and saw two holy angels (Luke 24:10); and perhaps the same is to be understood of Susanna, as the same is conjectured from the words of St. Luke. *(p. 559) “And many others.”* The female sex, indeed, is wont to be more disposed to devotion than men are, because women are commonly of a humbler and softer heart.

“Who ministered unto him,” namely to Christ, *“of their substance,”* and to His disciples, who were poor, or had left all things (Matt. 27:55), that is, out of their means, for they were wealthy and devout: and they thought it reasonable that as they themselves daily received spiritual things from Christ, so they should minister to Him in temporal things, especially because they had been freed from the diseases of body and soul by Christ. Nor could they repay Him anything condignly, since it is written in Ecclesiasticus: “Better is a strong body than immense riches” (Ecclus. 30:16). As Jerome writes against Julian, it was a custom of the Jews that devout women should minister food and clothing out of their substance to their masters and teachers. But because this could cause scandal among the Gentiles, Paul protests that he cast it aside. Nevertheless the same Apostle reckoned it a small thing if he should be sustained by the temporal goods of those on whom he bestowed spiritual things, when he says: “If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we reap your carnal things?” (1 Cor. 9:11). Hence again he says: “Have we not power to lead about a woman, a sister, as also the rest of the apostles?” (1 Cor. 9:5). So Christ, receiving such things from devout women, gave an example to the faithful that those who impart spiritual things to others may lawfully be sustained from their temporal goods. Wherefore the Apostle says to the Corinthians: “So the Lord also ordained that they who preach the gospel should live by the gospel” (1 Cor. 9:14).

Next the preaching of the Saviour is described. *“And when a very great multitude was gathered together, and hastened out of the cities unto him”* (Luke 8:4): as is read in Matthew, where also the things that follow are had (Matt. 13:1 ff.). In this multitude many were carnal and imperfect: whence they had not all flocked to Christ for the same cause; but some from devotion, some from curiosity to see miracles, some from envy to lay snares, some to be healed, some to be fed. *“He spoke by a similitude,”* that is, He used parabolic speech, setting forth parables. A parable is a comparison made, under some similitude, of things of dissimilar kind. Moreover, many causes are assigned why Christ spoke to the crowds in parables. First, that divine secrets and heavenly mysteries might remain unknown to the carnal and unworthy, according to that of Matthew: “Give not that which is holy to dogs” (Matt. 7:6). Hence the divine Dionysius says to Timothy in the Mystical Theology: “See that none of the uninstructed know these things.” Second, that the faithful might have occasion of fruitful exercise in learning, searching out, and expounding parabolic sayings, according to what is introduced in Proverbs: “A wise man will hear parables and the interpretation, the words of the wise, and their riddles” (Prov. 1:6). Third, that the perfection of the Godhead and the properties of divine things might be taught to shine forth in some manner in all sensible and created things, as the theologian Dionysius protests: “There is nothing,” he says, “that is wholly without participation of the divine goodness.” And to

the Romans the Apostle says: “The invisible things of God… are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made” (Rom. 1:20). — Moreover, by the fact that the Saviour so often used similitudes taken from the order of corporeal things, the madness of Manichaeus is most clearly condemned, who said that these earthly things were created by the prince of darkness, the devil.

Then the parable is added. *“The sower went out to sow his seed”* (Luke 8:5). This, like what follows, as to the sense immediately signified by the words, has no difficulty. But the principal sense, nay even the literal sense, in parabolic discourses, is not that which is immediately insinuated by the words, but that which is intended through the things signified by the words: and so these things are to be expounded. So He says: *“The sower went out,”* that is, Christ, the sower of the heavenly word in the hearts of men, went out to sow, that is, for sowing, *(p. 560) “his seed,”* that is, the preaching of the evangelical doctrine. This is the spiritual sowing, of which it is read in Osee: “Sow to yourselves in justice, and reap in the mouth of mercy” (Osee 10:12). Of which the Apostle says: “He who soweth in blessings, shall also reap blessings” (2 Cor. 9:6), and “shall reap life everlasting” (Gal. 6:8).

Moreover, although what the Saviour now says of His going forth to sow ought to be understood of His going forth from heaven to earth by the mystery of the Incarnation (which going forth is called descent, of which the Apostle says, “Now that he ascended, what is it, but because he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?” [Eph. 4:9], and the Psalmist, “His going out is from the end of heaven” [Ps. 18:7]); likewise of his going forth from the Virgin’s womb, according to that of the Psalm, “And he, as a bridegroom coming out of his bride chamber” [Ps. 18:6]; also of the local going forth, by which He went out of the house to a public place, where He might be more suitably heard by many: nevertheless going forth befits Christ even according to the divine nature, because by the very fact that He is eternally begotten of the Father, He is said to come out or go forth from Him, as He says in John: “I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world” (John 16:28). Wherefore Hilary says in the sixth book on the Trinity: “To have come from the Father, and to have gone out from God, are not of the same signification, since it is one thing to have gone out from God into the substance of nativity, another to have come from the Father into this world to accomplish the sacraments of our salvation, since to go out from God is to subsist from nativity.” Augustine also on John: “He went out from the Father,” he says, “because He is of the Father; He came into the world, because He showed His body to the world.” Of which going forth of Christ Micheas also asserts: “His going forth is from the beginning, from the days of eternity” (Mich. 5:2). Again, going forth befits Christ according to the divine nature as to His operation outwardly, so that, as God, He is said to go forth, that is, to proceed into act: nay, thus God is said to walk and dwell among men, according to that of Deuteronomy: “The Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp” (Deut. 23:14). And through Habacuc it is said to God: “Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, for salvation with thy Christ” (Hab. 3:13). Hence St. Dionysius says that God, going out to all things and proceeding, by the communication of His goodness remains in Himself, unmoved and not going out.

“And as he sowed, some fell by the way side,” that is, while Christ was evangelizing the word of saving wisdom, a great part of Christ’s preaching fell into the hearts of worldly men, who prefer carnal things to spiritual: who are by the way side, that is, cling to the broad ways of this world, namely to vicious works, nor are willing to remove themselves from the broad way of perdition. Against which it is said through Jeremias: “Learn not according to the ways of the Gentiles” (Jer. 10:2). There is, however, another good way, of which Isaias speaks, “They shall feed beside the ways” (Isa. 49:9): for this he says of the virtuous. *“And it was trodden down,”* that is, by the din of evil thoughts, temptations, and vicious affections it was hindered from the fruit of good work, trodden down and overcome. *“And the fowls of the air,”* that is, the demons or aerial powers: who are called fowls of the air because they dwell in the dark air, and by reason of the subtlety of their nature, likewise on account of the instability and levity of their mind, and because they have striven to ascend inordinately. At times, however, by the bird are understood the holy angels, and also Christ, on

account of the sublimity of contemplation and the swiftness and agility in them. *"Devoured it,"* that is, took away the word of God from the hearts of the aforesaid hearers by their temptations. To which spiritually pertains that of Osee: "Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knew it not" (Osee 7:9).

"And other some fell upon a rock" (Luke 8:6), that is, into hardened and rebellious hearts, of whom Jeremias speaks: "They have made their faces harder than the rock, and have refused to return" (Jer. 5:3). Whence the Apostle admonishes the Hebrews: "Exhort one another every day, that none of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Heb. 3:13). *"And as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away,"* that is, when the word of God in a heart of this kind has begun to bear a little fruit, it presently ceases from good work and is taken away, *"because it had no moisture,"* that is, the streams of saving wisdom, *(p. 561)* the dew of grace, and the nourishment of charity. In such hearts, indeed, there are not virtues and gifts of the Holy Ghost, at least not stably. As the moisture of waters feeds and preserves the trees, so the grace of God, the virtues, and the gifts of the Holy Ghost nourish and preserve the mind, as the Apostle says: "It is best that the heart be established with grace" (Heb. 13:9). Hence through Jeremias the Lord says of the impious man: "Cursed be the man that departeth from the Lord… for he shall be like tamaric in the desert, and shall dwell in dryness" (Jer. 17:5–6). In Job also the Scripture says: "Can the rush be green without water?" (Job 8:11). So, as the Saviour says here, we see at times that by the preaching of the heavenly word stony, hardened hearts are pricked for an hour by fear of death and hell and the divine judgment. But when some passion or temptation arises in them, presently they consent to depravity and wither, as it is written: "He that is hasty… shall fall into evils" (Prov. 28:14, 18).

Then the third difference of hearers is set down. *"And other some fell among thorns"* (Luke 8:7), that is, into passionate, ambitious, and vain hearts, which are affected, pricked, and tormented by superfluous cares, inordinate fears, and deadly sadnesses, while they immoderately aspire to temporal riches and perishable honours. Hence they tremble to lose such things, envy those who have them, and are saddened when they are lost. Hence, according to Gregory: "Nothing is more quiet than to desire nothing of this world; nothing more restless than, having left the supreme and unchangeable Good, to cleave to vain and transitory things." Yet, as it is written in Job, there are many who count it a delight to be under those same thorns (Job 30:7). *"And the thorns growing up with it, choked it,"* that is, the aforesaid inordinate affections and solicitudes, bursting forth together with the word of preaching received and beginning to bear fruit, oppressed the fruit of good work, and overcame and drove out the germ of virtue, according as virtue and its works are said to be rooted out by vices. For when men of this kind begin to think or do anything good, straightway thoughts and affections concerning temporal things rise up and mingle themselves, and prevail. Such are men subject to passions, who do not fence the field of their mind from such thorns and brambles. How foolish this is, Solomon declares: "I passed by the field of the slothful man, and by the vineyard of the foolish man; and behold it was all filled with nettles, and thorns covered the face thereof" (Prov. 24:30–31). Passions and vices, therefore, are to be removed from the heart, that the word of God may grow strong in it. Wherefore the Lord speaks through Jeremias: "Make a new fallow ground for yourselves, and sow not upon thorns: be circumcised to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your hearts, lest my indignation come forth like fire, and be kindled, and there be none that can quench it" (Jer. 4:3–4).

The fourth difference of hearers follows. *"And other some fell upon good ground"* (Luke 8:8), that is, into a docile and devout heart, or one disposed to devotion, which truly and stably acquiesces in the words; *"and being sprung up,"* that is, proceeding into act and germinating, *"yielded fruit a hundredfold,"* that is, a perfect work, and bore abundant fruit: even as somewhere the earth is reported to be so fertile that seed cast into it is multiplied a hundredfold. Whence in Genesis it is read of Isaac that he found in that same year a hundredfold (Gen. 26:12), although this perhaps was from a supernatural fruitfulness of that land. Concerning this fruit-bearing He introduces a threefold difference, saying: some a hundred, some sixty, some thirty (Matt. 13:23), which is expounded more diffusely on Matthew.

Behold, Christ sets down four differences of hearers of His preachings, and asserts that only in the fourth does His discourse profit. For few of the Jews, comparatively speaking, were converted through Him. Let not the preacher, therefore, exhorter, or orator be immoderately saddened, cast down by pusillanimity, or desist from the good begun, if his preaching or oration profits not so much as he desires: nay, let him reckon it a great thing, and worthy of every labour, if he can gain even one, for whom *(p. 562)* the blood of Christ was shed. Christ indeed is the sower, as He professes in Matthew: "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man" (Matt. 13:37). The other preachers are, as it were, baskets of that sower, who by them and through them scatters the heavenly words into human minds. For he has his chair in heaven who teaches the hearts of men on earth. Hence Augustine says: "I, through whom Christ sows, what am I but the basket of the sower? Look not to the meanness of the basket, but to the power of the seed and the charity of the sower."

"These things saying, he cried out," when He had spoken these things parabolically, to make the hearers well attentive and to show that His words contained great mysteries: *"He that hath ears to hear, let him hear"* (Luke 8:8). Although this is commonly expounded of the interior ears, so that the sense is, He that hath intellectual ears, that is, mental capacity for understanding, let him hear, that is, let him diligently attend to what I say: nevertheless it can be expounded also of bodily ears; and the sense will be: He that hath ears to hear, that is, bodily ears, through which the primordial or sensitive hearing takes place, let him hear, not only bodily, but let him consider intellectually also the things heard. For it is natural to man that his intellective knowledge take its beginning from the sensitive. The interior hearing, however, is the intellect itself, which is taken for any interior sense, or is expressed through any of them, as Basil says. Lastly, a threefold hearing is assigned, namely sensitive, intellective, and obediential, because we are then properly said to hear the precepts of God when we obey them. This distinction of ears Moses touches when in Deuteronomy he speaks to the Israelites: "You have seen all the things that the Lord hath done before your eyes… and the Lord hath not given you a heart to understand, and eyes to see, and ears that can hear" (Deut. 29:2–4). Finally, as Bede asserts, as often as in the Gospel or Apocalypse this admonition, "He that hath ears," etc., is interposed, it is shown that what is said is mystical and to be inquired into more intently.

"And his disciples asked him what this parable might be" (Luke 8:9), that is, what it signified. They asked this, not immediately when the parable was proposed, nor in the boat from which He was preaching; but, as is had in Mark, when He was alone, that is, apart and free from the crowd (Mark 4:10). So disciples of the truth ought to be eager and zealous to know the truth, and when they have not understood what they have heard or read, they should not omit to seek the understanding from masters and doctors, nor be ashamed, because the Apostles did this. Further, as Origen adds, a parable is a discourse as of a thing done, yet not done according to what is said, but possible to be done, significative of things by a transference of the things delivered in the parable. An enigma, however, is a progress of speech in things which are said as if done, which yet were not done, nor are possible to be done, but signify something in secret, as is said in the book of Judges: "The trees went to anoint a king over them" (Judg. 9:8).

"To whom," namely the Apostles, *"he said: To you it is given"* (Luke 8:10), that is, granted from above, and frequently granted, by singular grace, as to those eternally predestined to so great beatitude, *"to know the mystery of the kingdom of God,"* that is, openly to understand the spiritual and mystical senses of divine Scripture, or the sacred secrets of the Church militant. For both Scripture and the militant Church are called the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heavens, in which the felicity of the heavenly kingdom is announced, and the delicious refection of spiritual banquets is contained. Or the wisdom of the evangelical law is called the mystery of the kingdom of God, because it is something hidden from unbelievers and the perverse, by which the heavenly kingdom is attained, and because what the blessedness of the kingdom or country of the Blessed is, and what is their state, is learned in it. Whence in John the Saviour says: "Father, I have manifested thy name to the men whom thou hast given me out of the world" (John 17:6); and again, "This is eternal life: that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent"

(John 17:3). Elsewhere also: “I confess to thee, O Father… because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones” (Matt. 11:25). *(p. 563)* Finally, to the Apostles, as the chief doctors of the Church after Christ, the mysteries of Scripture and divine secrets were to be revealed more luminously, that they might teach others of them.

“But to the rest in parables”: that is, to the rest it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God in parables, that is, enigmatically and obscurely, on account of their incapacity or fault, *“that seeing they may not see,”* spiritually, because beholding my humanity and miracles outwardly, they have not considered my divinity and the power of the miracles, *“and hearing may not understand,”* because hearing my words with bodily hearing, they understand them not with mental sight. And as for what the Saviour says, “That,” it is taken not causally but consecutively: for Christ did not speak parabolically to the end that they should be blinded, but upon His preaching their blindness followed; and by a just judgment spiritual understanding was denied them as unworthy, because even if they had heard it they would perhaps have despised it.

“Now the parable is this” (Luke 8:11), that is, so as follows is it to be expounded. *“The seed is the word of God,”* that is, by the seed is understood the preaching, or doctrine, of the heavenly word, or of Scripture. The word of God is most aptly called seed, since it makes the mind fruitful, begins meritorious work, brings forth the fruit of virtue, refreshes the soul, and like seed is scattered in the hearts of the hearers. But Christ Himself, the uncreated Word of God, is also called seed, according to that in Genesis: “In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 22:18; 26:4; 28:14). Christ also began to preach that He might sow Himself into the heart of the hearers, that they might believe and hope in Him, and so by faith, hope, and charity He might abide in them, as the Apostle says: “That Christ may dwell by faith in your hearts” (Eph. 3:17). Moreover, a fourfold seed is assigned. The first is the seed sown and incarnate for us in the womb of the Virgin, namely Christ, as the Apostle says: “He saith not, And to his seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ” (Gal. 3:16). The second is the seed sown in us, namely the word of God, grace, virtues, and the gifts of the Holy Ghost: of which seed the discourse here is. The third is the seed sown by us, namely virtuous works, according to that of the Psalm: “Going they went and wept, casting their seeds” (Ps. 125:6). The fourth is the seed sown from us, namely ourselves, whom Christ has sown in His Church: of which seed it is written in Isaias: “Unless the Lord of hosts had left us seed, we had been as Sodom” (Isa. 1:9). Of which also in Matthew Christ speaks: “The good seed are the children of the kingdom,” that is, the elect (Matt. 13:38). Whence in Isaias it is said of Christ: “If he shall lay down his life for sin, he shall see a long-lived seed” (Isa. 53:10).

“And they by the way side are they that hear” (Luke 8:12), that is, the hearers designated by the place near the way, wholly unfruitful, these are they who hear the word of God with the bodily hearing and with a formless or disobedient understanding, to whom that of James applies: “If a man be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like to a man beholding his own countenance in a glass; for he beheld himself, and went his way, and presently forgot what manner of man he was” (James 1:23–24). *“Then the devil cometh,”* not by entering into the essence of the soul, but by assailing it through the suggestion of temptation: whose coming is dangerous and the worst to the vicious and reprobate, according to that of the Apocalypse, “Woe to the earth and to the sea, because the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath” (Apoc. 12:12). He envies, indeed, human salvation; and then he desires most to tempt each man when he sees him begin something good. And because the hearing of the word of God is the beginning of a better life, he especially lies in wait for the word of God, and labours to take it away from the heart of the hearers. Wherefore it is added: *“and taketh the word out of their heart,”* that is, by his temptation he takes from them the saving memory of the word and the obediential execution of it, because they do not rightly resist the devil; *“lest believing they should be saved,”* by formed faith, escaping sins, obtaining the charisms of graces and the gifts of everlasting glory. For he grieves greatly that we mortals and corporeal ascend to that beatitude, and endeavours *(p. 564)* to hinder it, from which he himself, an immortal and incorporeal spirit, has fallen. Hence, as is had in the

book of Wisdom, “By the envy of the devil, death came into the world” (Wis. 2:24).

Then He expounds the second difference of hearers, and the sense has already been given. *“For they upon the rock”* (Luke 8:13), that is, those signified by the stony and barren place where the seed was sown in vain, these are they who *“when they hear, receive the word with joy,”* that is, willingly and cheerfully hear the preaching, delighted by the truth itself, and approving their own justice by synderesis, as are especially men of good disposition. *“And these have no roots,”* that is, deep, fixed, and habitual perfections or fruitfulness of grace and virtues, and a firm purpose and stable foundation, from which fruitful and meritorious works spring, as the shoot from the root. Hence in the book of Wisdom it is said: “The offspring of the adulterers shall not thrive, nor shall the bastard plants take any deep root” (Wis. 4:3); and in Osee: “Their root is dried up, they shall yield no fruit” (Osee 9:16). Moreover the word of God is finally rooted only in the elect. Wherefore in Ecclesiasticus God the Father says to Wisdom, who is Christ: “Take root in my elect” (Ecclus. 24:13). Hence in John it is written: “Whosoever is born of God, committeth not sin; for his seed abideth in him” (1 John 3:9). For he who is of God by predestination does not sin finally, that is, is not consummated in sin, but the grace of God is finally rooted in him.

“Who for a while believe,” with a faith in some measure tending toward work, *“and in time of temptation they fall away,”* that is, when they are assailed by enemies, visible or invisible, the world, the flesh, the devil, they are turned in mind away from the good, and being conquered consent to falsehood. Such are men unstable of heart, changeable like a sheep; and as a tree is therefore deprived of root because it is very many times transplanted, so these are not made firm by the roots of virtues, because they are changed too easily from good to evil. And as Saul prophesied among the prophets, and raved among the wicked (1 Kings 10:10–12; 19:23–24), so these are pricked among the virtuous, and soon subverted among the vicious. Against which it is written: “Winnow not with every wind… be steadfast in the way of the Lord, and in the truth of thy sense” (Ecclus. 5:11–12). And the Apostle: “Be ye steadfast and unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:58). Lastly, Christ most fittingly spoke these things literally of His own hearers, many of whom, having seen His miracles and heard His teachings, believed that He was a prophet or the Christ; but afterwards, when the persecution of the priests and Pharisees and Scribes arose against Christ, they withdrew from Christ. Especially at the time of the Passion they fell away from His faith, when the whole people cried: “His blood be upon us” (Matt. 27:25); and, “Not this man, but Barabbas” (John 18:40).

Next the Saviour interprets the third difference of hearers. *“And that which fell among thorns”* (Luke 8:14), that is, those designated by the thorny and barren earth, *“are they who have heard,”* the word of God from the preacher, *“and, going their way, are choked with the cares”* (that is, the superfluous anxieties of earthly things: whence the Apostle says, “Be nothing solicitous” [Phil. 4:6]; and Solomon, “The expectation of the solicitous shall perish” [cf. Prov. 11:7]) *“and riches,”* that is, the immoderate love and abuse of riches: against which the Psalmist says, “If riches abound, set not your heart upon them” (Ps. 61:11). For not the substance of the creature, but the superfluous love and inordinate use of the possessor, are in fault and condemned. *“And pleasures of this life,”* that is, the delights of carnal life, which are wont to follow opulence. For the rich man runs to what is lawful, and slips to what is unlawful. Wherefore the Lord protests through Jeremias: “I fed them to the full, and they committed adultery” (Jer. 5:7). *“Going,”* that is, conversing in this world and exile, which they love as a country, or going bodily from the place of preaching to their own business, *“they are choked,”* that is, spiritually oppressed and slain, losing the life of grace, and falling into mortal vices, which are the death of the soul. Hence the Apostle says: “They that will become rich, fall into temptation, and into the snare of the devil, and into many unprofitable and hurtful desires, which drown men into destruction and perdition” (1 Tim. 6:9). *(p. 565)* And in Ecclesiasticus also it is read: “Go not after thy lusts, but turn away from thy own will. If thou give to thy soul her desires, she will make thee a joy to thy enemies” (Ecclus. 18:30–31). Rightly, moreover, are riches called by Christ thorns, because they generate pungent affections in the soul of the possessor, in that they are possessed with fear of losing

and lost with sorrow. *"And yield no fruit"*: that is, for the word of God announced to them, they bring back no work or merit of obedience. To whom is to be feared that saying of the Prince of the Apostles: "It had been better for them not to have known the way of justice, than after they have known it, to turn back" (2 Pet. 2:21). For there has befallen them that of the true proverb: "The dog is returned to his vomit; and, the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire" (2 Pet. 2:22).

Lastly, the fourth difference of hearers is explained. *"But that on the good ground"* (Luke 8:15), that is, those figured by the fruitful earth and by the seed cast into it, *"are they who in a good and very good heart"*—good by the gifts of nature, and very good by the gifts of grace: for the gifts of nature dispose a man to virtues and serve grace—*"hearing the word, keep it,"* that is, retain in memory the preaching heard, according to that in the Psalm: "Thy words have I hid in my heart, that I may not sin against thee" (Ps. 118:11); *"and bring forth fruit,"* that is, produce virtuous works, fulfilling what they know, as James admonishes: "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" (James 1:22). *"In patience,"* they bring forth fruit; that is, by even-minded endurance of adversities and long-suffering expectation of future rewards, faithfully and unbrokenly awaiting the disposition of God, as the Apostle writes to the Hebrews: "Abraham, patiently abiding, obtained the promise" (Heb. 6:15); and again, "Let us run by patience to the fight proposed to us" (Heb. 12:1). Whence Gregory says: "The good ground yields fruit by patience, because the good things we do are nothing, if we do not bear with even mind the evils of our neighbours." And in James it is read: "Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, patiently" (James 5:7). Nay, to say it briefly, without patience no one can advance, have peace of mind, or please the glorious God. Therefore Paul confesses to the Hebrews: "Patience is necessary for you, that doing the will of God, you may receive the promise" (Heb. 10:36). For patience is a moral virtue by which the immoderate sadness arising from the adversities of the present life is restrained. Since, then, this life is full of adverse encounters, and since a man is the more vexed by the devil the more manfully he strives to stretch himself toward virtues, it is plain that without patience none of us can advance.

"No man lighting a candle covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it upon a candlestick, that they who come in may see the light" (Luke 8:16). According to the surface of the letter, in outward things it is certain that no one acting rationally lights a candle except that someone may use its light: even if the candle be hidden for an hour, yet it is lit that at a fitting time it may give light to others. But by the candle Christ understands the Apostles enlightened by Him, to whom He disclosed the mystery of the heavenly kingdom: plainly in order that they should declare it to others. Whence of John the Baptist Christ testified: "He was a burning and a shining light" (John 5:35). Again, by the candle can be understood the evangelical doctrine and command, according to that of Proverbs: "The commandment is a lamp, and the law a light" (Prov. 6:23). And in the Psalm: "Thy word is a lamp to my feet" (Ps. 118:105). This lamp Christ kindled and illumined in the hearts of the Apostles, that they should not hide it but make it known to all, as He says in Matthew: "That which you hear in the ear, preach ye upon the housetops" (Matt. 10:27). Moreover, as Maximus says, Christ Himself as man is the lamp, which God the Trinity illumined, that He might shine on all dwelling in the house, that is, this world; and He is set upon a candlestick, that is, upon the Church, as He says in the Psalm: "But I am appointed king by him over Sion his holy mountain, preaching his commandment" (Ps. 2:6).

Further, by the name of vessel can be understood the hiding of the word of God proceeding from carnal fear; by the bed is signified the hiding of the word of God springing from the prosperity and delight of earthly quiet: *(p. 566)* both of which are forbidden, Christ saying: "Fear ye not them that kill the body" (Matt. 10:28). The candlestick, however, is called the Church, according to that of the Apocalypse: "The seven candlesticks are the seven churches" (Apoc. 1:20). The Saviour therefore teaches that preaching must be evident and public, so that neither from fear of adversity nor from love of prosperity the lamp of the divine discourse be hidden. As, moreover, the candlestick is lifted high and the light is raised upon it, so those who

are set over the Churches ought to be sublime by virtuous life, within lucid by faith, right intention, and wisdom, and without shining by doctrine and exemplary conversation: in sign whereof the Creator from the beginning set the luminaries in the firmament, which is the higher part of the world, but the beasts upon the earth, because the carnal and foolish ought not to be prelates, but subjects. But alas! it is done in the contrary way today, according to what Solomon says in Ecclesiastes: "I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking on the ground as servants" (Eccles. 10:7). For Aristotle also says: "He who is deficient in reason and prudence is by nature a slave, even if accidentally he rule; and he who excels in prudence is by nature a lord, even if by chance he be a slave."

"For there is nothing hidden that shall not be made manifest; nor secret that shall not be known, and come abroad" (Luke 8:17). By the hidden can be understood what by its own nature is concealed from men, as are the thoughts and affections of the heart; by the secret, what is concealed by human craft, as are the outward works of the cunning, which have the appearance of good, though they are evil. The Saviour therefore wishes to affirm that every secret of this life will be made public in the day of judgment. And so these words are as it were minatory of punishment, and by way of threat they induce men that the word of God be publicly preached. Second, these words are understood of the mysteries which Christ manifested to the Apostles, and commanded to be opened to men by them (Matt. 10:27): He wished that what He Himself taught in obscurity should be announced by them clearly in the world. *"Take heed therefore how you hear"* (Luke 8:18), that is, weigh carefully with what reason and intention I announce these things to you, and listen diligently, and preach the same to others as I have committed them to you. *"For whosoever hath,"* that is, whoever solicitously hears the gifts of God and the word of doctrine, keeps them in memory, guards them vigilantly and fulfils them, *"to him shall be given,"* increase of grace and virtues. Again, *"Whosoever hath,"* that is, is grateful to God the giver, considering whence he has received, and giving thanks, greater grace shall be given him: but to him that has grace and merit, glory and reward are given; to him that has a good purpose and fervent affection, the grace of execution and the faculty of working are given. *"And whosoever hath not,"* that is, does not duly guard the gift which he has, or renders not thanks to God, or has little, so that in comparison with others he seems to have as it were nothing (as those signified by the stony and thorny place seem to have almost nothing in respect of those noted by the good ground), *"that also which he thinketh he hath,"* that is, securely or stably possesses, *"shall be taken away from him"*: because by his ingratitude and negligence he deserves to be deprived of the goods granted him, as was said of the evil hearers of the heavenly word, who by the temptations and tribulations that rush upon them are conquered, and are destitute of the gifts of grace. — Therefore, the more diligently and fearfully one guards the grace conferred on him, and strives to grow in it, the more he will abound in spiritual goods, and his mind be filled by God with manifold gift; but the more heedless, unguarded, and vainly secure he is, the sooner he will lose the grace of God. Hence Scripture says: "Blessed is the man that is always fearful" (Prov. 28:14); and again, "With all watchfulness keep thy heart" (Prov. 4:23); and likewise, "Unless thou hold thyself diligently in the fear of the Lord, thy house shall quickly be overthrown" (Ecclus. 27:4). But because many do not fulfil these things, they quickly fall away from a good purpose, when they are moved by the objects of the riches, delights, or honours of this world. *(p. 567)* It is necessary, therefore, that we be steadfast in virtues, and have our passions subject to reason, and be able promptly to overcome every inordinate motion.

"And his mother and brethren came unto him" (Luke 8:19), namely unto Jesus: that is, his kinsmen, not the sons of Mary the bearer of Christ, as the unclean Helvidius lyingly said; nor sons of Joseph by another wife, as some think: whose opinion Bede refutes, asserting that St. Joseph also remained in virginity, that he might be a worthy guardian and spouse of the most chaste Virgin. Of these or such brethren of Christ it is written in John: "For neither did his brethren believe in him" (John 7:5). It is indeed the custom of Scripture that the kinsmen of anyone are called his brethren: as in Genesis Abraham says to Lot, "We are brethren" (Gen. 13:8); and in the books of Kings Joab says to Amasa, "God save thee, my brother" (2 Kings 20:9). *"And they could not come at him,"* that is, approach him, *"for the crowd."* Some, following Chrysostom, say that the

devil, seeing how Christ showed himself to be the Son of God, led on His carnal parents, that by their presence he might obscure His divinity, namely lest He should be believed by the people to be the Son of God while His carnal kinship was present. But I think by no means that the most blessed Virgin was moved to this approach by the inducement or suggestion of the devil, but from the fervent love of her only Son, nay rather from the ordination of the Holy Ghost, for our instruction, given on the occasion of this approach, as is subjoined.

"And it was told him: Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee" (Luke 8:20). Luke in this place does not observe the order of the thing done, because, as is plain in Matthew and Mark, what is now said happened while Jesus was in the house, before the sermon described above (Matt. 12:46 ff.; Mark 3:31 ff.). And although some say that he who told Christ preaching that His mother and brethren were present was a plotter and maliciously moved, as an advocate of the devil, wishing to test whether Christ would omit the act of preaching on account of carnal kinsmen; which if He did, He would rebuke Him for carnal affection: nevertheless it is to be believed absolutely what is manifestly had in Mark, namely that this man had been sent to Him by the mother of Christ and His brethren (Mark 3:32). "*Who answering, said to them: My mother and my brethren are they who hear the word of God, and do it"* (Luke 8:21). This can be understood in many ways. First, that Christ says that the hearers and doers of the word of God are His mother and brethren, that is, as dear to Him as a mother is loved by her son, and brethren by a brother. Second, that they are the nearer to Him in proportion as they are the more intent on divine things. Third, that the mother of Christ be named spiritually: because by contemplation they conceive Him in the heart, and by preaching and exemplary conversation they beget Him in the hearts of others, as the Apostle says to his disciples: "In Christ Jesus, by the gospel, I have begotten you" (1 Cor. 4:15), that is, I have brought you to spiritual being, that Christ by faith and charity might begin to be and to dwell in your minds. Of which generation some say with probability that is to be understood what was foretold through Isaias of Christ: "Who shall declare his generation?" (Isa. 53:8). For there it is subjoined, "Because he is cut off out of the land of the living," as Jerome translated. The Septuagint interpreters, however, translated, "Because his life is taken from the earth": and it comes to the same. And it is certain that the cutting off of Christ from the land of the living, namely His crucifixion, is not the cause of the ineffability of His divine generation from the eternal Father, nor even of His maternal generation from the Virgin; but that slaying is the cause that the spiritual generation of Christ in the heart of believers is ineffably admirable, by the multiplication of the faithful. It is, indeed, supremely and ineffably marvellous that almost the whole world could be converted to a faith so incomprehensible and a law so arduous, of a man put to death on a gibbet. — Lastly, such are also the brethren of Christ, not only because they communicate with Him in human nature, but because they are adopted sons of the eternal Father, and assimilated to Christ in affection and work. Whence in John it is asserted: *(p. 568)* "As many as received him, he gave them power to be made the sons of God" (John 1:12). The Apostle also says to the Hebrews of Christ: "It behoved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren" (Heb. 2:17); and again: "He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying: I will declare thy name to my brethren" (Heb. 2:11–12).

Moreover, Christ uttered the aforesaid words not as excluding the honour and love of parents, since He Himself commanded by Moses, "Honour thy father and thy mother" (Exod. 20:12); nor as spurning and denying His mother and carnal kinship, as though He had a phantastic body, as Manichaeus feigned: but, according to Ambrose, to show that He owed more to the Father's mysteries than to maternal affections, and that the unions of minds are more religious than those of bodies, and that for an external work the divine work ought not to be omitted; likewise to declare that He has not only a carnal mother and brethren, but spiritual ones also; and again, to teach us to cast away carnal affection, and that on account of kinsmen or parents we ought not to withdraw from the service of God, nor to prefer anything to the work of God. Finally Christ spoke thus, to show that spiritual conception is more blessed in itself than carnal. Therefore Augustine in the book On Virginity testifies: "Mary was more blessed in professing the faith of Christ than in

conceiving the flesh of Christ: for maternal nearness would have profited her nothing, had she not borne Him more happily in her heart than in her flesh."

From these words and deeds of the Lord Jesus it is plain how reprehensible are Christians, especially clerics, and most of all religious, who on slight occasion, within the Hours or the prayers due, give answer to those who come, without necessity, or leave the choir, and interrupt the divine office, or mingle idle words. Would that they honoured God, of infinite dignity and glory, as much as they honour a man of some reputation, to whom, if they were conversing, they would not so abruptly and irreverently turn away from him or depart, especially if one inferior to him sought to address them. In this, therefore, let us amend ourselves, weighing what the Most High says in the books of Kings: "Whosoever shall glorify me, I will glorify him; but they that despise me shall be despised" (1 Kings 2:30).

Article XXI — Continuation of the Elucidation of this Chapter, at the place where it is said: "And it came to pass on one of the days, that He went up into a boat"

Because the doctrine and law which Christ delivered were supernatural, it was needful that they be strengthened by supernatural arguments, namely by miracles possible to God alone, that it might be established that they are divine, since God, who can be neither witness nor confirmer of falsehood, wrought such things for their confirmation. Hence in the evangelist John the Saviour says: "The works which the Father hath given me… themselves give testimony of me" (John 5:36). Whence through the whole text of the evangelical law the teachings and miracles of Christ are described in intermixture, that the one may be supported by the other. Now, therefore, a certain magnificent work of the Son of God is narrated.

"Now it came to pass on a certain day" (Luke 8:22). As is had in Mark, what is here described happened on the same day as the preaching of the parable of the sowing, and the approach of the Virgin Mother just described (Mark 4:35). *"That he went into a little ship."* For the master of poverty and humility chose things abject and small, and in all things invited us to humility (1 Cor. 1:27): therefore He, of whom the Psalmist says, "For the sea is his, and he made it" (Ps. 94:5), was wont to enter a *(p. 569)* small boat. *"And his disciples,"* that is, the Apostles, who clung to Him more familiarly. *"And he said to them: Let us go over to the other side of the lake,"* that is, beyond this standing water, not flowing: which is also called sea, according to the property of the idiom of the Hebrews, who name any great gathering of waters a sea. This water is also called a lake (stagnum), from standing: because it has not a channel by which to flow out of its own place, as rivers do, but, standing in its own place, is restless with winds and storms; and hence it is called Genesareth, as it were generating a breeze, as its waves curl from the impulse of the winds. *"And they went up into the boat."*

"And when they sailed, he slept" (Luke 8:23). He who foresaw the storm soon to come and the trepidation of the Apostles, slept, not by chance or without great reason, as the danger was impending. *"And there came down a storm of wind upon the lake,"* either from natural causes, or rather by God miraculously so ordaining, to show forth the power of Christ; *"and they were filled,"* the little boat filled with water, according to that of Matthew: "And behold a great tempest arose in the sea, so that the boat was covered with waves" (Matt. 8:24). *"And were in danger"*: so that the peril of death was upon them; and it would have befallen had not the Saviour come to their aid. *"And they came and awaked him, saying: Master, we perish"* (Luke 8:24). As if they should say: Thou who so imperially workest miracles, look upon the necessity of Thy servants and disciples. To command and to rule, moreover, belongs most properly to Christ by reason of His divinity, because thus by His own authority and independent power He commands and rules as subject to none. These also befit Him according to His humanity, inasmuch as it is set above every creature and hypostatically united to the Eternal Word, having over every creature an imperial power, yet dependent and instrumental. Wherefore He Himself said: "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18): not that it was first given Him after the resurrection, but from the beginning of the incarnation it was given Him; yet after

the resurrection it is said to be given, as to manifestation and a more ample use or execution than before.

"But he, arising" from sleep: which was in Christ according to His sensitive nature, not as to the intellective part of His soul. For the intellect and will of Christ's soul never ceased from their acts, namely from the acts of beatific fruition, but incessantly through the beatific vision and happy fruition were intent upon the Godhead. And it is certain that sleep does not fall upon the divine nature. Christ, therefore, when the storm was at hand, of His own will gave Himself to sleep, to show in Himself the truth of the human nature, and that He should not be asked to help until the storm fully prevailed, and so might work the future miracle more gloriously. For if He had watched, the disciples at the beginning of the storm would at once have implored Christ's help. He also wished this storm to come that His disciples, by so sudden and supernatural a calming of so great a tempest, might be confirmed in faith, and that He might show Himself Lord of the sea, as before, by the signs wrought on land, He proved Himself Lord of the land. For on this account too He entered the boat, according to Origen.

"Rebuked the wind and the rage of the water," that is, by way of one rebuking He addressed the wind and the tempest, that is, the commotion of the water: not that, according to the follies of certain Platonists and heretics, all the elements are animate, but because they obey and are subject to the Creator at His nod, as if they were of an intellectual nature. Whence vital acts are metaphorically ascribed to them, according to that of the Psalm: "The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee, and they were afraid" (Ps. 76:17); and likewise, "The sea saw and fled" (Ps. 113:3). Hence it is written: "Rising up, he rebuked the wind, and said to the sea: Peace, be still" (Mark 4:39). Therefore in all created nature is placed the obediential potency by which in all things it obeys God the Creator. But now it is subjoined: *"And it ceased, and there was a calm," (p. 570)* both material in the sea, and spiritual in the minds of the disciples rejoicing at their deliverance: in which miracle He showed His divinity, because He did these things so imperiously and suddenly.

"And he said to them," that is, to the disciples: *"Where is your faith?"* (Luke 8:25). According to Matthew, He said: "Why are you fearful, O ye of little faith?" (Matt. 8:26). Mark, however, writes that He said: "Why are you fearful? Have you not faith yet?" (Mark 4:40). But there is no discord among the Evangelists, because the whole comes to the same. Nay, according to Augustine in the book On the Consent of the Evangelists, He could say, and perhaps did say, all these words, namely: "Why are you fearful? Where is your faith, O ye of little faith?" etc. So He says: Where is your faith? as if to say: It is plain from this your trepidation that you have not yet perfect faith: which if you had, you could have calmed this tempest, nay even move mountains (Matt. 17:19). They had, however, some little faith, by which they believed that Jesus could help. Moreover, that they awoke Jesus proceeded from imperfection of faith and from ignorance. For they supposed that to Christ sleeping not all things were so clearly known as to Him waking, as though sleep in Him interrupted the act of reason, and He, sleeping, did not perceive their danger, or knew not their prayers.

"Who being afraid, wondered, saying one to another": Although some say it was not the disciples but others who were in the boat who wondered, yet it is rather to be believed that all who were present wondered, because neither had the disciples before seen such a miracle, nor did they perfectly know the majesty of Christ. But why did they fear when the calm was made? It must be said that this was a fear of reverence and stupor, as Peter also feared when he saw the miracle of the miraculous draught of fishes (Luke 5:8–9); or they feared also because, comparing and considering the holiness and majesty of Christ, they attended more deeply to their own imperfection, frailty, and guilt, and so dreaded the divine judgment and the spiritual peril of their souls. Or certainly they feared to approach Christ, judging themselves unworthy of His presence, as Peter too said: "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (ibid.). So it is read in the Life of the most blessed Maurus, disciple of St. Benedict, that the illustrious Florus, subjecting himself to St. Maurus, having seen the most splendid miracles of Maurus, durst not touch him, and scarcely without reverential fear durst look upon him. *"Who think you is this?"* (Luke 8:25), as if they should say: He is greater than we know, or

than the people esteem, so that something above man appears in Him. *"That he commandeth both the winds and the sea, and they obey him?"* From which they considered that He was either God, or dear and familiar to God, since at His command the elements at once obeyed: even as Josue, as if commanding, spoke to the sun and moon to stand still (Jos. 10:12).

Lastly, of the mystical signification of these things I pass over, because I have written of it on Matthew (cf. Matt. 8). We, however, following the footsteps of Christ's disciples, let us go up with Christ into the boat, that is, let us not disdain to suffer the adversities and tribulations of this world; but let us manfully cross this great and spacious sea (Ps. 103:25), that is, the present exile full of unrest and bitterness, knowing that "through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:21). Finally, when the tempest of temptations assails us, let us at once approach Christ with most devout prayers and with all confidence, and as it were rouse Him from sleep, saying: "Arise, O Lord, help us" (Ps. 43:26). For He who in Himself now never sleeps, in a manner sleeps for us, while He permits us to be tried. Nay, the more worthy the soul is than the body, the more instantly let us cry out to heaven that we be rescued from the perils of the soul, namely sins, than from the harms of the body. And when by the virtue and grace of Christ we feel ourselves helped, let us humbly admire His charity and clemency toward us most wretched sinners, and heartily and continually give thanks to Christ.

After this another miracle of Christ is recited. *"And they sailed"* (Luke 8:26), that is, crossing the aforesaid lake, Christ and His disciples came *"to the country of the Gerasens"*: whose region is so called from the principal city of that land, named *(p. 571)* Gerasa. Concerning which Bede says: "Gerasa is a famous city of Arabia beyond the Jordan, near Mount Galaad, which the tribe of Manasses held, not far from the lake of Tiberias, in which the swine were precipitated." But Cyril says: "The truer copies have neither Gerasenes nor Gadarenes, but Gergesenes. For Gadara is a city in Judea; but no lake or sea is found in it. And Gerasa is a city of Arabia, having neither sea nor lake beside it. But Gergesa, from which also the Gergesenes, is an ancient city near the lake of Tiberias, around which is a cliff near the lake, from which it is shown that the swine were cast down by the demons. Yet since Gerasa and Gadara border on the land of the Gergesenes, it is likely that the swine were driven thence to their land." So Cyril. This region was on the other shore of the aforesaid sea, therefore it is added: *"which is over against Galilee,"* that is, opposite to it.

"And when he was come forth to the land" (Luke 8:27), the region just named, *"there met him a certain man,"* called a man not by reason of virtue but of sex, *"who had a devil,"* that is, was possessed by a multitude of demons, as will presently be plain from the text, *"now a very long time,"* so that he was long insane; *"and he wore no clothes,"* because by the greatness of his madness and fury he tore the garments put on him; *"neither did he abide in a house"*: for the demoniacs are impatient of rest; *"but in the sepulchres,"* that is, in pits or caves prepared for the burial of the dead. The demon, therefore, the inventor of death and its first occasion, makes the vessels possessed by him willingly dwell in the sepulchre, desiring to draw souls to the infernal lake.

"And when he saw Jesus, he fell down before him" (Luke 8:28). The possessed man saw Jesus bodily; but the demons knew Jesus spiritually, and moved the vessel possessed by them to fall down and to speak: therefore the words uttered by this demoniac are ascribed to the demons and belong to them, in whose person the demoniac spoke. The devil, however, fell down before Jesus not by humility but by necessity; not from love of the good but from fear of heavier punishment. And in like manner he confessed and spoke the following words. *"And crying out with a loud voice,"* the demon through the man, *"said: What have I to do with thee, Jesus, Son of the most high God?"* as if he should say: There is no communion of will between us, no conformity of intention and life: why then dost Thou come to me? This is what the Apostle says: "What concord hath Christ with Belial?" (2 Cor. 6:15). And in Ecclesiasticus it is written: "What fellowship hath the wolf with the lamb? so the sinner with the just" (Ecclus. 13:21). "What agreement hath a holy man with a dog?" (Ecclus. 13:22). Then the cause is touched why the devil, who is a liar from the beginning (John 8:44),

and speaks lies from his own and gladly, but truths unwillingly or by compulsion, or with a perverse intention, namely to seduce at last by mingling falsehood with truths, said the aforesaid words of truth and of praise of Christ. *"I beseech thee, do not torment me."* The devil, indeed, had already experienced how powerfully and imperially Christ cast out malignant spirits: therefore he dreaded to be expelled by Christ and restrained from harming men: which is the more penal to him the more he hates the human race. But Christ's presence also was penal to him, as the judge's presence to a guilty man, and the master's presence to a fugitive slave. He feared also to be thrust back by Christ into hell. Already in this multitude of demons there began to be fulfilled what the Apostle says: "In the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth" (Phil. 2:10). Nor is it a wonder that the demon feared to be tormented by Christ, whose penal dominion he already began to feel.

"For he commanded the unclean spirit to go out of the man" (Luke 8:29). But if Christ commanded this, why did the demon not go out at once? It must be answered that Christ did not command the devil to go out at once: nay, he went out in the very moment in which Christ willed him to go out. Why, however, Christ, not yet asked, so greatly had compassion on this possessed man, is subjoined: *"For many times it seized him,"* that is, the devil invaded this man, possessed him, agitated *(p. 572)* and vexed him; *"and he was bound with chains"* on his hands, lest with his hands he should hurt anyone, *"and kept in fetters,"* that is, his feet were bound and fastened with fetters, lest by running about he should hurt anyone: *"and breaking the bonds, he was driven by the devil into the deserts,"* that is, the devil impelling him, he ran through desert places: to which the demon drove him, lest the man, tried by some art or power, should again be bound, and that he might be deprived of all human help in the desert. For the devil knew how truly it is written: "Woe to him that is alone, for when he falleth he hath none to lift him up" (Eccles. 4:10).

"And Jesus asked him, saying" (Luke 8:30). Not from ignorance did He inquire, but that from the demon's answer the excellence of Christ's power in the expulsion of demons might shine out more clearly; and for our manifold instruction, that we may recognize how innumerable is the multitude of our invisible adversaries, and so with fear and trembling work out our salvation, trusting in the Lord (Phil. 2:12). *"What is thy name?"* Christ knew that a multitude of demons was in the man; but because one spoke for all, Christ asked of him the name either of that one or of the whole band. *"And he said: Legion."* This he answered for himself and for the whole band possessing the man with him. What follows are words of the Evangelist, disclosing the cause of this answer: *"Because many devils were entered into him,"* that is, into this man. Whether, however, there was there precisely a legion, namely six thousand six hundred and sixty-six, is thought uncertain.

"And they besought him" (Luke 8:31), namely Christ, one of them perhaps speaking for all, *"that he would not command them to go into the abyss,"* that is, into the depth of hell or of the sea. Whence in Mark it is had: "They besought him that he would not drive them away out of the country" (Mark 5:10). They desired, indeed, to remain among men, or with them, not from love but from hatred, that they might harm. The abyss is taken in various ways in the Scriptures: first, for the immeasurable depth and mass of the great sea, according to that of Genesis, "All the fountains of the great deep were broken up" (Gen. 7:11); second, for the most profound vastness of the infernal prison; third, for formless matter, as again, "Darkness was upon the face of the deep" (Gen. 1:2); fourth, for the inscrutability of the human mind; fifth, for the incomprehensibility of the divine disposition, according to that in the Psalm, "Thy judgments are a great deep" (Ps. 35:7). These demons, however, chiefly feared to be cast into the depths of hell: to which, nevertheless, they knew they would at last be plunged by the power of Christ, at least on the day of judgment, according to that of Isaias: "And it shall come to pass in that day, the Lord shall visit upon the host of heaven on high," that is, the aerial powers and contrary forces, "and upon the kings of the earth; and they shall be gathered together as in the gathering of one bundle into the pit, and they shall be shut up there in prison" (Isa. 24:21–22).

"And there was a herd of many swine" (Luke 8:32), namely two thousand, according to Mark (Mark 5:13), *"feeding,"* that is, taking nourishment, *"on the mountain."* Nor does it obstruct that Mark says, "Near the mountain" (Mark 5:11). For in so great a multitude of swine it is plain that some went near the mountain, some upon the mountain. *"And they besought him,"* not from humility, but from forced subjection and fear of greater torment, *"that he would suffer them to enter into them."* From which it is plain that without divine permission they can do nothing or harm to a rational creature, when they cannot harm even brutes unless permitted by God. Whence, as is plain in Job, neither the substance and family of holy Job, nor Job himself could they harm with any evil unless licensed from above (Job 1:12; 2:6). But why did they ask to enter the swine? One answer is that the swine were near that place, and that they might escape a heavier punishment, as if a criminal to be killed by fire should ask for the sword; likewise, because by swine are signified the luxurious, in whom demons gladly dwell. Some moreover say that so great is the rancour of the demons against men that they desire to harm even their beasts and other possessions. *"And he suffered them,"* to enter into the swine, not on account of the prayers of the demons, who are unworthy to be heard, *(p. 573)* but for other reasonable causes. First, that the dignity of the rational creature over the irrational might be shown, since for the cure of one man so great a plurality of brutes is permitted to be suffocated. Second, that on the occasion of the slaughter of the swine this miracle might be more eminently divulged to the glory of God and the edification of men. Third, that the cruelty of the demons might be more fully disclosed. And perhaps also on account of the sins of those men He permitted their swine to be killed. *"The devils therefore went out of the man, and entered into the swine"* (Luke 8:33); *"and the herd ran violently down a steep place,"* that is, very precipitately and swiftly, driven by the demons, *"into the lake,"* that is, the sea of Genesareth, *"and were stifled in the water."* In which deed the cruelty of the demons is plain.

"Which when they that fed them saw done" (Luke 8:34), namely the keepers of the swine, *"they fled,"* lest the loss of the swine be imputed to them, and from fear lest they too be assailed by the demons. So horrible and unaccustomed an event also turned them to flight, lest something similar should befall them in body. *"And told it in the city of Gerasa, and in the villages,"* that is, in the places where dwelt those to whom the swine belonged. *"And they went out to see what was done"* (Luke 8:35): the inhabitants of the aforesaid city and of the villages. For it is natural to men to see willingly new and wonderful and unaccustomed things, nor is it enough for them to have heard of them. For man is an animal given to wonder, naturally desiring to know. *"And they came to Jesus,"* whom they perceived to be the author of these wonders, *"and found the man out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at his feet, clothed and in his right mind,"* as humbly giving thanks, desiring to learn, and wishing henceforth to cleave to Christ; *"and they were afraid"*: in the same manner and for the same causes, as was said a little before, those were afraid who were with Jesus in the boat when at Christ's command the sea and wind straightway obeyed (verse 25).

"And they that had seen it told them" (Luke 8:36), to those coming thus from the aforesaid city and villages, *"how he had been healed from the legion,"* that is, those who were present with Christ when He healed the one obsessed by a legion of demons. These, I say, narrated to them how Christ delivered the demoniac, because perhaps the people were not content with the herdsmen's statement, but intended to exact the damage from them, as Laban from Jacob (Gen. 31:39); but these excused the herdsmen. *"And all the multitude of the country of the Gerasens besought him"* (Luke 8:37), namely Jesus, that is, a great part: and perhaps the principal men of that people, after the manner of speaking by which a city is said to do something because its principal persons do it, *"to depart from them."* The cause of this petition is subjoined: *"for they were taken with great fear,"* that is, they were seized with great terror, in the manner touched above of those who were in the boat with Christ (verse 25). And therefore they asked that He would depart from them, either because they thought themselves unworthy of His presence, or because they feared like or greater losses if He should dwell longer among them or cure more. But these wretched and weak men begged the fountain of salvation to depart from them, whose instruction they so much needed: and why? but because they knew Him not, and lacked true discernment in spiritual things, and were affected more to earthly things than to heavenly

and spiritual.

"But he," going up into the boat, *"returned back"* to the places and people of the Jews, to whom first and specially he was sent by the Father (Matt. 15:24). So the sick who felt Him a burden to them He left, out of His own goodness, giving an example to preachers that when they see themselves not profiting in one place they should migrate to others, lest by their importunity some be made worse. Wherefore in Ecclesiasticus it is written: "Where there is no hearing, pour not out words" (Ecclus. 32:6). And again Scripture says: "Speak not in the ears of fools, for they will despise the instruction of thy speech" (Prov. 23:9); and likewise, "He that telleth a tale to him that heareth not, is like one that speaketh to one asleep" (Ecclus. 22:8).

"Now the man out of whom the devils were departed, besought him" (Luke 8:38), that is, Jesus, *"that he might be with him,"* that is, that He would permit him to cross with Him, *(p. 574)* and accept him as a disciple: which he therefore begged, lest, removed far from Christ, he be again seized by the demons, and that he might be more fully instructed in Christ's doctrine. But he also conceived a special affection of love toward Christ for so great benefits, and was delighted in His presence, efficacy, and eloquence, because He was beautiful above the sons of men, and grace was poured abroad in His lips (Ps. 44:3). Therefore he desired henceforth to cleave to Him inseparably and to be present bodily: in which indeed he was reasonably moved. But more reasonable was what Christ committed to him, as is subjoined. *"But Jesus sent him away,"* that is, bade him return from Him, and enjoined him to go back to his own, *"saying"* (Luke 8:39): *"Return to thy house,"* the material house, or to thy kindred, *"and tell how great things God hath done to thee,"* that is, declare to all thine the benefits conferred on thee by God, for the glory of God and their conversion.

Concerning the above some questions occur. First, why Christ commanded this man to preach the wonders wrought in him, when He had bidden others cured by Him to be silent (Matt. 8:4; Mark 5:43)? Second, why He did not take this one as His disciple? To the first it must be said that Christ bade this man narrate His miracles, and the others to be silent about them, because often from humility such things must be concealed, but often from the charity of God and neighbour they must be made known. He also therefore ordered this man to narrate them, because that region was deprived of the worship and knowledge of the true God. And Christ was withdrawing from them, so left him as a vicarious preacher among them. Moreover, since Christ, giving an example of humility, said to the healed man, "Tell how great things God hath done to thee," not "how great things I have done to thee": therefore when He refers the miracle to the Father, He says, Tell; but when He speaks of Himself, He exhorts to be silent. From this the answer to the second is clear. To which, however, some answer that to the disciples who followed Christ He gave power of working miracles, as is had below (Luke 9:1). If, however, this man after his cure had worked miracles, the malicious, and even simple men, might have supposed that he did such things by cooperation of demons, and so perhaps the prodigies of the other disciples would already have been defamed. And from this they say it is customary in the Church that demoniacs and madmen, although cured, are not promoted to ecclesiastical offices.

Then the obedience of this cured man is described. *"And he went through the whole city,"* that is, through the whole city whence he was, or through every city of the aforesaid region, *"publishing how great things Jesus had done to him."* Jesus, however, had commanded him to publish how great things God had done to him; but he published how great things Jesus had done to him, because he believed the works of Jesus to be wrought by divine power, or, as some say, already by supernal illumination believed that Jesus is God.

Moreover a question arises why Luke narrates only one demoniac cured by Christ in the aforesaid place, when Matthew asserts that two were cured by Christ together in the same place (Matt. 8:28). To this the holy fathers answer that one of them was more celebrated, or more insane; but a greater number does not exclude a lesser, nor conversely, when it is expressed absolutely: therefore among the Evangelists there is no discord. — Furthermore, concerning the words of the devil by which he said above, "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, Son of the most high God?" it might be inquired what knowledge the devil had of Christ. To this a full answer was given above (Luke 4:34).

According to the spiritual understanding, by this most ferocious and most furious demoniac can be understood any sinner hardened in vices, sinning without shame, who, although he hear the words of God many times, yet consents not to amend himself. Such a one is obsessed by a crowd of demons, because by as many mortal vices as he is defiled, he is as it were possessed by so many malign spirits, who have miserably taken from him spiritual sense and the wholesome use of reason: so that he feels not the wounds of his own mind, nor suffers them to be shown him, nay is indignant at those who desire to cure him; nor in those things which concern his salvation does he obtain right judgment, but truly judges sweet things bitter, and prefers darkness to light. *(p. 575)* Finally, he uses no clothing, because his soul is not adorned with the grace of God, gifts, and virtues. Nor does he abide in a house, that is, in the chamber of his conscience, nor in the saving obedience of ecclesiastical unity; but in the sepulchres, that is, the filth of vices, and in his mortal, vile and foul body, according to that: “Their throat is an open sepulchre” (Ps. 5:11). He was also bound with chains and fetters, that is, with vicious habits and most depraved customs, as with the snares of demons, he was entangled and wrapped, as it is written in Proverbs: “His own iniquities catch the wicked, and he is held with the cords of his own sins” (Prov. 5:22). But breaking the bonds, that is, the depraved habits bursting forth into act, he is driven into the desert, that is, runs through the widest ways of vices, and will be tamed by none. The chains and fetters can also be understood as the precepts of the natural and evangelical law, by which the soul of man is well bound, that it be not drawn off to vices. But the impious man, though these are set before his soul or are known to it, nevertheless breaks them, spurns and transgresses them, as the Lord says through Jeremias to the rebellious people: “Of old thou hast broken my yoke, thou hast burst my bands, and thou saidst: I will not serve” (Jer. 2:20). Such especially was the Gentile people before it was converted by Christ’s Apostles to the equity of the evangelical law. Whence Augustine and many others understand by the land of the Gerasens the whole region of the Gentiles, and by this demoniac that people. And so by the fact that Christ, after the crossing of the sea, the sleep in the boat, and the awakening, entered the province of the Gerasens, is figured that after His conversation in this world, of which He says, “I am come into the depth of the sea” (Ps. 68:3), after His sleep on the cross and in the sepulchre, and His resurrection, He entered the lands of the Gentiles, by sending to them His Apostles, and entering their minds by the infusion of faith and grace.

Finally, although a man obstinate in vices seems unconvertible, and according to the common course is rarely amended, yet at times by the omnipotent clemency of God he is touched, pricked with compunction, and saved, so that he is clothed with virtues, and sits at the feet of Christ in his right mind, that is, is faithfully intent on His doctrines, so far that all who see it are amazed. To such a one thus converted it is commanded that he declare to his neighbours how great things God has done for him, to the glory of God and their edification, and thus impart to others according to his strength the grace granted him, and say: “What shall I render to the Lord for all the things that he hath rendered to me?” (Ps. 115:12). Therefore Peter exhorts: “That you may declare his virtues, who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light” (1 Pet. 2:9); and again: “As every man hath received grace, ministering the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God” (1 Pet. 4:10). Whence also Isaias says: “I will remember the tender mercies of the Lord, the praise of the Lord for all the things that the Lord hath bestowed upon us, and for the multitude of his good things to the house of Israel, which he hath given them according to his kindness” (Isa. 63:7).

Article XXII — Explanation of the Remaining Part of this Chapter, from the place where it is said: “And it came to pass, when Jesus was returned”

(p. 576) In the remaining part of this chapter two illustrious miracles of Christ are recounted, in which, as in his other prodigies, the manner of acting appears to have been more glorious and wonderful than the work, as will be plain: although one of these signs could be done only by divine power. *“And it came to pass, when Jesus was returned”* (Luke 8:40), from the land of the Gerasens to Galilee, as was touched in the preceding article (verse 37), *“the multitude received him,”* gladly and devoutly. For the common people clung more to

Christ, and few of the chief men. Whence in John the Pharisees say: “Hath any one of the rulers believed in him? But this multitude, that knoweth not the law, are accursed” (John 7:48–49). *“For they were all waiting for him,”* desiring him to return from the aforesaid land, that they might be instructed by his most eloquent discourses and most splendid signs. All therefore who were in that multitude were looking for him. *“And behold there came a man whose name was Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue”* (Luke 8:41).

Mark recites this miracle in the same order as Luke (Mark 5:22). But a difficulty arises as to the letter, because Matthew says in his book, in which it is read that Christ, returning from the aforesaid land, entered His own city, and there cured the paralytic brought by four men. Then He called Matthew from the custom house to be His disciple. And He entered his house and ate with him; and while Christ was speaking there, this Jairus came to Him (Matt. 9:1–18). Hence in the book On the Consent of the Evangelists Augustine asserts: “Where he adds, ‘And behold a man named Jairus,’ it is not to be understood as done immediately, but after that of the banquet of the publicans, as Matthew narrates; with which matter he so conjoins this that no other deed can be understood as following.” So it is plain that the Evangelists do not everywhere describe the deeds and words of Christ in the same order: as in the other books of the Old Testament, and the prophetic books, the order of time is frequently not observed in the description of deeds.

Luke also puts the name of this man, for the greater certainty of the fact: which name was not expressed by Matthew. Therefore Titus says: “The name is put on account of the Jews who then knew what happened, so that the very name might become a kind of demonstration of the miracle.” Wherefore it is to be noted what Lyra says here: “This man in the Hebrew idiom was called Jair; but Hebrew proper names, when they are translated into Latin, commonly take this syllable *us* at the end: as Jacob in Hebrew, Jacobus in Latin; and Saul, Saulus; and in the same way Jair, Jairus.” Finally, he was a ruler of the synagogue. For although the Jews had but one temple for offering sacrifices, yet in their several cities they had certain houses, to which for prayer, reading, and divine praise they gathered at fixed hours: these houses were called synagogues, as now they are called churches; and those who presided over these houses and over those gathering to them were called archisynagogues, or rulers of the synagogue, of whom one was this Jairus.

“And he fell down at his feet” (Luke 8:41), namely Christ’s. In which his humility is plain, by which he fulfilled that written in Ecclesiasticus: “The greater thou art, humble thyself in all things” (Ecclus. 3:20). *“Beseeching him that he would come into his house: for he had an only daughter, almost twelve years old, and she was dying”* (Luke 8:41–42). *(p. 577)* In Matthew it is read thus: “Behold a certain ruler came up, and adored him, saying: Lord, my daughter is even now dead; but come, lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live” (Matt. 9:18). In Mark, however, it is written: “He fell down at his feet,” namely Christ’s, “and besought him much, saying: My daughter is at the extremity; but come, lay thy hand,” etc. (Mark 5:22–23). Luke, then, does not give the form of this ruler’s prayer, but discloses the cause why he so affectionately and humbly besought Christ: and he intimates a threefold cause. The first is that his daughter was dying. The second, that she was also an only daughter, and therefore the more beloved, and the grief at her death the heavier. The third, that she was of almost twelve years, and so as it were had come to marriageable age, and was the great hope of her parents’ posterity: and therefore he was most vehemently saddened at her death, as were the parents of the younger Tobias when he delayed to return (Tob. 10:1–7).

But concerning this a question arises. How does Matthew say that the father of the girl said to Christ, “My daughter is even now dead,” when Mark asserts that he said, “My daughter is at the extremity”? The solution is plain from what Luke says here, namely that she was dying. Whence it is evident that when Jairus left his daughter to come to Jesus, the daughter was in her agony, and began to dispose herself for death. Therefore Jairus, when he came to Christ, probably supposed she was dead; and asserted her dead, according to the manner of speaking by which a thing is said to be done when it is nearly done already, or is certain to be done presently: as we affirm that man dead whom we know to be about to die. Another solution I set down on Matthew (cf. Matt. 9:18).

"And it happened as he went" (Luke 8:42): Christ with Jairus, to whose prayers He acceded because He had compassion on his grief and necessity. Jairus also had besought Christ faithfully and humbly, although his faith was not so perfect as the centurion's; nor did he know Christ's divinity, since he thought His bodily presence necessary for the raising of his daughter, as is proved by the words of Matthew and Mark. Yet on this account he is not to be judged to have come unfaithfully. For he was not yet obliged to so explicit a faith concerning Jesus. Further, it is to be observed how the things that are more eminent in the world are frequently more cheap with Christ, or less regarded. For asked by the nobleman to come down to his house to heal his son, He did not consent to come down, although asked (John 4:47–50); but to the daughter of Jairus, asked, He went; and to the servant of the centurion, even unasked, He willed to come (Matt. 8:7). *"And it happened as he went, that he was thronged by the multitude"*: because not only the disciples, but a copious crowd, according to Mark, went with Christ (Mark 5:24). They hoped, indeed, to see a glorious miracle.

"And a certain woman having an issue of blood" (Luke 8:43) *"twelve years,"* that is, for twelve years at certain hours endured a flow of blood, *"who had spent all her substance on physicians,"* that is, all her riches, *"and could not be healed by any,"* either because naturally incurable, or very difficult to cure. Frequently, too, a plurality of physicians is dangerous, because they often contradict one another in many things, and hinder one another in the healing of the sick, and easily err about particulars, as Hippocrates says: "Life is short, art long, experiment fallacious, and judgment difficult." From this it appears that this woman was not Martha, the sister of Mary Magdalene, although some have said so. For Martha remained opulent until Christ's passion: otherwise she would not so liberally have entertained and fed Him and His disciples. And she herself, after the sending of the Holy Ghost, is read to have sold her riches and laid the price at the feet of the Apostles.

It is therefore thought more truly what Eusebius of Caesarea writes in the Ecclesiastical History, that this woman was a citizen of Caesarea Philippi. He says therefore in the seventh book of the said History: "The woman whom the Evangelists have handed down as cured by the Saviour of a flow of blood, it is established was a citizen of Caesarea Philippi; and before the doors of her house *(p. 578)* a certain pedestal is shown, placed in a conspicuous place, on which is seen a brazen image of that woman, as it were on her knees, and suppliantly stretching out her hands for health. There stands also another statue cast in brass, namely the image of Christ clothed in a robe, and extending His right hand to the woman. And at the foot of this statue a certain herb of a new kind springs up, which when it has sprung up is wont to grow as far as the hem of that robe: and when the herb growing with its top touches it, it thence acquires strength to drive away all diseases and languors, so that whatever bodily infirmity there be, it is driven off by a small draught of the moistened shoot. This herb has no power if, before it has touched the summit of the brazen hem, it be broken off. They handed down that this statue was formed in the likeness of the countenance of Jesus: it remained even to these times, as we ourselves have seen with our own eyes. The said famous triumphs of the benefit conferred on her by Christ, this woman herself set up in memory of the deed." Moreover the Evangelist has so carefully expressed the long duration, incurability, and costliness of the said infirmity that the miracle presently to be described may be shown the more splendid.

"She came behind him" (Luke 8:44), from shame and humility, and because she wished to touch him secretly. According to the law also she was unclean (Lev. 15:25). *"And touched the hem of his garment."* On this some say that Christ wore a garment according to the custom of the Jews: as in Numbers God is read to have commanded the children of Israel to make for themselves four fringes at the four corners of their cloaks, in which they should put ribands of blue, by looking on which they might remember all the commandments of God (Num. 15:38–39). This pertained to the ceremonial precepts, and was observed by Christ, as were certain other ceremonial commands. *"And immediately the issue of her blood stopped."* For with great devotion and faith she touched Christ's garment, because, as Matthew says, she said within herself: "If I shall touch only his garment, I shall be healed" (Matt. 9:21). She believed so much that holiness and power were

in Christ that it overflowed and was diffused even to His garments, and so these would be an instrument of curing, inasmuch as they were Christ's garments.

"And Jesus said: Who is it that touched me?" (Luke 8:45), that is, what person has so touched me? Not from ignorance does He ask, nor did He inquire about any touch whatever, since He was not only touched by many but even pressed; but He asks, that from the woman's humble confession the crowd might be edified, and Jairus strengthened in faith and hope, and the woman herself obtain merit, and God be glorified by all. *"And all denying,"* that they had touched him. But how could all deny this, since many had touched him? It must be answered that "all," that is, some of all, denied it, so that the distribution is for the kinds of individuals, not for individuals of the kinds. *"Peter said, and they that were with him,"* namely the Apostles, among whom Peter was eminent, and therefore spoke for all: *"Master."* He called Christ Master because he saw that He so imperially wrought wonders, and because he thought it fitting that all should obey Christ; also because He was especially the teacher and Lord of His disciples. Masters, moreover, are wont to be called preceptors. Whence Alexander also often calls Aristotle "preceptor" in the epistles he sent him. *"The multitudes throng and press thee,"* that is, by pressing they inflict on Thee a kind of bodily pain (for to be so pressed by a crowd is penal), *"and dost thou say, Who touched me?"* as if he should say: It is strange that Thou askest this. For Peter thought Christ was inquiring about an ordinary and simple contact. But Christ, intimating that He was inquiring about a certain singular touch proceeding from the greatness of faith, repeats the question and adds its cause. For it is subjoined:

"And Jesus said: Somebody hath touched me" (Luke 8:46), that is, some person: for He does not mean to declare that He was touched by a man; *"for I know that virtue is gone out from me." (p. 579)* This is explained in two ways, because by virtue can be understood the miraculous effect of the cure, and likewise the active power of this effect, which went out, that is, proceeded into work and diffused itself. Nor is it a wonder if that virtue as healing proceeded from Christ's divinity, since certain gems and herbs can cure by their touch. Moreover that virtue went forth from Christ's divinity as from the first and principal cause, and from His humanity as from a secondary and instrumental cause: because the humanity of Christ was the animate, conjoined, immediate, and proper instrument of His divinity, as our body is the instrument of our soul. And it has been said above that all the crowd sought to touch him, because virtue went out from him and healed all (Luke 6:19).

"And the woman, seeing" (Luke 8:47), from Christ's repeated inquiry, and the assertion by which He said, "I know that virtue is gone out from me," and from the disposition of His countenance, that *"she was not hid,"* namely Christ, her cure — whence it is plain that this woman had an imperfect knowledge of Christ, thinking that He did not know hidden things — *"came trembling"*: because so great was the interior fear that it overflowed into the body and caused trembling in it. Perhaps also she feared to be rebuked by Christ because, against the common law, she, being unclean, had dared to touch Him (Lev. 15:25). *"And fell down before his feet,"* from humility, and as it were giving thanks and asking pardon if she had offended Him in anything; *"and declared before all the people for what cause she had touched him,"* and how she was immediately healed. For this whole matter pertained to the glory of Christ her healer. *"But he"* (Luke 8:48), as most indulgent and truly most sweet, *"said to her: Daughter"*: because, as is believed, she was of the race of Abraham, and a daughter on account of Christ's paternal charity toward her, and because chosen by God, and also a partaker of faith and grace; *"thy faith hath made thee whole,"* that is, by thy faith formed by charity thou hast deserved to be cured, nay even in mind to be healed, if thou hadst any guilts. For those whom Christ cured bodily He is said to have healed spiritually also. *"Go thy way in peace,"* that is, be secure, and in tranquillity of mind give thanks to God and remain.

According to the mystical sense, by the woman who for twelve years flowed with blood can be understood any soul perishing through the instability of vices, and especially one that by the works of carnal concupiscences stinks, is squalid, and wastes away. Such a soul often longs and endeavours to amend herself;

but is retarded and conquered by the vehemence of desires and pleasures. Therefore she consults physicians, that is, spiritual men and preachers, begs them to pray for her, and that they may do so bestows on them her outward goods. By whom when she perceives she cannot be cured, because she persists in the affection of sinning, and so puts an obstacle to the hearing of their prayer, then she comes behind to the hem of Christ's garment, that is, personally puts her hand to the plough, and endeavours to follow the footsteps of Christ, humbling herself and undertaking works of piety and penance. And so by touching the hem of Christ's garment she is healed, that is, by receiving the sacraments of the Saviour (under which Christ or His grace is covered and consists), she is cured of her faults.

"As he was yet speaking" (Luke 8:49), that is, while Christ was speaking these words to the woman, *"there cometh one to the ruler of the synagogue, saying to him: Thy daughter is dead, trouble him not."* Mark, however, thus says: "While he was yet speaking, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain who said: Thy daughter is dead; why dost thou trouble the Master any further?" (Mark 5:35). But there is no discord among the most blessed Evangelists, since not only in Holy Scripture but in common usage of speech the singular number is frequently put for the plural, and conversely: and also the lesser number does not exclude the greater, nay the greater includes the lesser. Furthermore, it is plain from these words that the daughter was not yet dead when her father departed from her to Christ. The messenger also of whom Luke tells seemed to pretend something good, because he did not wish Christ *(p. 580)* to be troubled in vain, that is, wearied by going to the house of Jairus; but he erred in two ways: first, because he thought that Jesus could not raise the dead girl; second, because he thought that Christ, after the manner of others, was wearied of necessity by passing over, whereas this was done by His will, and by pious dispensation and condescension, that He might show in Himself the truth of humanity and by His weariness and labours merit manifold grace for us. Moreover it was not irksome to Christ to impart mercy, since it is proper to Him to have mercy and spare: nay, He intimates that to exercise the rigour of justice and vengeance is as it were irksome to Him, saying through Isaias: "Ah, I will comfort myself over my adversaries, and I will be revenged of my enemies" (Isa. 1:24). For that work is alien and strange to Him who is by nature good and pious; and from our perversity He does it, as is had in Isaias (Isa. 28:21).

"But Jesus hearing this word" (Luke 8:50), *"answered the father of the maid,"* that is, said to him, comforting him most piously and strengthening him in faith and hope: *"Fear not"*—that I cannot raise her from the dead—*"believe only,"* not looking to the course of nature and the order of causes, according to which it is impossible to raise the dead, *"and she shall be safe,"* that is, she shall return from death to life and health. From which it is plain how secure Christ was about the miracle He was to work.

"And when he was come to the house of Jairus" (Luke 8:51), *"he suffered not any man to go in with him"* to the place where the maid lay dead, *"but Peter and James and John, and the father and mother of the maid."* These Christ made more familiar to Himself and eminent above the rest: whence they were present at His transfiguration (Matt. 17:1), and when the Passion was at hand He took them, and began before them to fear and be sad (Matt. 26:37). Three also sufficed to bear witness of the miracle, as Scripture says: "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word stand" (Deut. 19:15). Moreover by removing the crowd and the other disciples from beholding the raising of the maid, He taught us to flee vainglory, and to do nothing for ostentation, especially in supernatural deeds. He permitted also the father and mother of the maid to enter with Him, because at the father's instance He did this sign, and the maid pertained especially to her parents.

"And all wept and bewailed her" (Luke 8:52): all who were in the house of Jairus, that is, deplored with heart and eyes the death of the deceased. There were also there, according to Matthew, flute-players, that is, certain persons singing a mournful song, to provoke others to compassion and weeping, as was then the custom at the funerals of the Jews (Matt. 9:23). *"But he said: Weep not,"* that is, do not weep immoderately for the death of the maid, as if she were not soon to be raised. So also the Apostle writes to the Thessalonians: "We would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep, that you be not

sorrowful, even as others who have no hope" (1 Thess. 4:12). Christ does not forbid a pious and moderate lamentation for dear departed, since in Ecclesiasticus it is read, "The mourning for the dead is seven days" (Ecclus. 22:13); but such weeping ought not to be excessive, especially because the dead cannot naturally be recalled to life: therefore a man ought to console himself, and consider that by weeping he profits nothing. In unavoidable losses also, dangers, and defects, the chief remedy and solace of sadness is forgetfulness. Hence David says: "While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept for him; but now, because he is dead, why should I fast? Shall I be able to bring him back any more? I shall go to him rather: but he shall not return to me" (2 Kings 12:22–23). Yet there are various causes why the dead are more or less to be deplored: either because they were taken away unprepared, or because from their death danger threatens others. *"For the maid is not dead, but sleepeth."* By this He did not wish to deny that the girl was truly dead with the death of nature; but intended to say that in respect to Himself she was not altogether dead, but rather like one sleeping, because He could more easily recall her to life than any of us can wake a sleeper from sleep.

"And they laughed him to scorn" (Luke 8:53), not the parents of the girl, but the tumultuous crowd that was in the house, *"knowing that she was dead." (p. 581)* But they did not understand the height of the sense of Christ's words, and thought that He who is essentially the truth (John 14:6) lied: and perhaps they derided that He who offered himself to raise the dead was deceived by so great an error. Finally, Christ is frequently read to have been derided by the reprobate and wicked, yet on this account He did not cease from the efficacy of His piety. Let us not therefore take it ill if we are derided by any, nor on account of their derisions cease from a good begun. But neither let us rashly judge those our derisors, nor please ourselves vainly, if we desire to be disciples of the Saviour. For he who says that he abideth in Christ ought himself also to walk, even as he walked (1 John 2:6). And Paul says: "We that are stronger ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Rom. 15:1). Hence Augustine says: "All who wish to live piously in Christ must needs suffer from the impious and the unlike as though insane and foolish, since the just themselves lose present goods, and seek invisible and future ones." Lastly, let derisors weigh that of Solomon: "Judgments are prepared for scorners, and striking hammers for the bodies of fools" (Prov. 19:29).

"But he taking her by the hand, cried out, saying: Maid, arise" (Luke 8:54). He could surely have raised her without touch and cry; but with His hand He grasped her hand, to show that His inward power quickened the inward parts of the maid, and that His body was the instrument of His divinity. Nay, as according to the Philosopher the hand is the organ of organs, so according to Augustine the word is the sign of signs. Wherefore Christ used a cry: which He did also to demonstrate the greatness of the miracle, and to exclude every suspicion of hidden sorcery; and likewise to show that long distance by which the soul of the girl was distant from her body. For her soul was either in purgatory, if she had not satisfied for venial sins; or in the limbo of the fathers, if she had satisfied; or in hell, if she died in mortal sin: which, however, I do not suppose. But since, when Christ cried these things, there was no maid, but a lifeless body, why did the Saviour say, "Maid, arise"? To which it is easily answered that here the part is put for the whole, as in John nineteen: "There, namely in the sepulchre, they laid Jesus" (John 19:42).

"And her spirit returned" (Luke 8:55), that is, her soul, which is a spiritual nature. It returned, I say, from its hidden receptacle to the lifeless body, Christ commanding and a holy angel (as is believed) bringing it back. *"And she arose immediately."* In which it is plain how powerfully, imperially, and most gloriously He wrought so great a miracle. For He is not described as having poured forth a prayer; and the sound of His words was still resounding in the air when so miraculous an effect, possible to the divine power alone, followed. Let us recall how in the Old Testament Elias and Eliseus raised the dead, praying and frequently stretching themselves upon the dead (3 Kings 17:21; 4 Kings 4:34): and then we shall know more certainly the excellence of the person and works of Christ above them, and above their signs. *"And He bid them give her to eat,"* to prove that she was truly raised: as also Christ, after His resurrection appearing to the disciples who doubted of the truth of His resurrection, said: "Have you here anything to eat?" (Luke 24:41). Mark also

testifies that the maid forthwith walked (Mark 5:42).

"And her parents were astonished" (Luke 8:56), with exceeding great astonishment, according to Mark, from admiration at so great a miracle so suddenly and imperially exhibited (Mark 5:42); *"whom he charged to tell no man what was done."* This Christ commanded, not because He thought so great a miracle ought to be concealed, but to teach us to love humility and shun vanity and ostentation. Let us therefore, by Christ's example, spurn human praise and boasting. Whence the Greek says: "He commanded that they tell no one, showing that He is the bestower of goods, not covetous of glory, and gives all, receiving nothing; but he who hunts after the glory of works exhibits something and receives something." *(p. 582)* Lastly, although Christ commanded that this miracle be concealed, yet it was forthwith divulged on every side by the crowd which derided Christ and knew that the maid had been dead, according to that of Matthew: "And the fame hereof went abroad into all that country" (Matt. 9:26).

Mystically, by the ruler of the synagogue is designated a prelate of the Church: who, if he see his daughter, that is, his congregation committed to him, either spiritually dead by mortal sins, or already near to such death by disposition to vices, let him straightway with solicitude and fervour approach the throne of the grace of Christ (Heb. 4:16), and, prostrate on the ground, invoke the help of Christ. If meanwhile it be told him, "Thy daughter is dead," that is, hardened and made incorrigible, let him not presently despair, nor cease most fervently to implore God for her reformation. And then Christ, beholding the charity, humility, and diligence of so good a prelate and father, will inwardly console him, and most piously raise him from the dejecting and oppressing fear, and inwardly, or through the Scriptures or an angel, will say: "Only believe, and she shall be safe" (Luke 8:50), that is, distrust not my grace, but believe that I am infinitely greater and more powerful in all piety, goodness, and indulgence than the impiety of anyone is or can be: therefore the congregation or person committed to thee I will graciously save, provided thou persevere faithfully knocking.

And so Christ, coming by spiritual visitation, rebukes the flute-players, that is, those who bewail such a congregation or person as if hopelessly fallen, saying: "Weep not so, for the congregation or person is not irreparably dead, as the damned by the death of sin, but sleepeth with the sleep of negligence and faults, so that by my grace, who am the omnipotent physician, she can be cured." If, however, the aforesaid mourners deride Christ asserting this, that is, some vicar or minister of His consoling thus on Christ's behalf, Christ nevertheless, out of His immense benignity, extends the help of His power to the spiritually dead; and by a sublime cry, that is, fervent exhortation, by His own inward inspiration, by angelic direction, by the preaching of prelates, by the information of the holy Scriptures, by manifold infliction of adversities and tribulations, restores the life of grace to such dead; and commands their spiritual parents to give them to eat the bread of mental refection, namely the sacrament of the Eucharist, the bread of penitential tears, the bread of saving obedience.

Luke 9: Mission of the Twelve, Loaves, Peter's Confession, Transfiguration, Journey to Jerusalem

Article XXIII — Elucidation of the Ninth Chapter: "And having called together the twelve apostles, He gave them power"

(p. 582) After the Saviour had instructed the Apostles in many ways, and strengthened them in faith by miracles, He next directs them to the instruction of others; and, that they may be listened to more diligently, supernatural power to work miracles is given them, by which also they may confirm that they are sent from God.

"Then calling together the twelve apostles, he gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases" (Luke 9:1); that is, "power" (virtutem) and authority over all demons, and to cure languors: that is, he bestowed on them the force of healing diseases. Hence what he says, "power," can be referred to the

casting out of demons; and what he subjoins, “authority,” to the miraculous healing of languors. Or “power” is referred to the interior force; “authority,” to the effective execution. In Matthew it is written more fully: “He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of diseases, and all manner of infirmity” (Matt. 10:1); where by “disease” can be understood an inveterate and grave sickness, hard to cure. But all these outward prodigies, like the very preaching of the Apostles, were ordered to the spiritual healing of souls, that by the aforesaid means the hearers might be brought to it. *(p. 583)*

Concerning this it is asked in what way Christ gave the Apostles the aforesaid power and authority of working miracles: whether, namely, so that henceforth there was in the Apostles themselves some real force inhering in them, causally cooperating and concurring to the miraculous effects; or rather so that He Himself willed henceforth to work signs through the Apostles, no such force existing in them. But the solution of this was given above (art. XIV, on Luke 6).

Finally, in this conferring of such power, Christ shows the truth and omnipotence of His divinity. For to work miracles, properly so called, transcends the natural faculty of a creature, according to that of the Psalmist: “Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone doth wonderful things” (Ps. 71:18). But to confer this power on others is altogether divine, and proper to the Godhead. Wherefore Cyril says: “Mark here the divine power of the Son, not befitting a corruptible nature. For to work miracles was present to the Saints, not by nature, but by participation of the Holy Ghost; but to grant this power also to others was altogether foreign to their virtue. For how could a created nature have dominion over the gifts of the Holy Ghost? But our Lord Jesus, as being by nature God, imparts grace to whom he will, not invoking upon them a foreign virtue, but pouring it out from His own storehouses.” This therefore is plain from what has been said, that it belonged to Christ on the part of His Godhead to confer this power, not from His humanity, except instrumentally. — But against this it might be objected that Elias, about to ascend into paradise, said to Eliseus, “Ask what thou wilt, that I may do it for thee, before I be taken away from thee”; and Eliseus asking that a double spirit of Elias might be in him, obtained what he asked, Elias (as it appears) doing or giving it (4 Kings 2:9): and there by the double spirit is wont to be understood the grace of the Holy Ghost for prophesying and for working miracles. And it must be answered that Elias neither made nor gave Eliseus his double spirit, save by way of an instrumental and meritorious cause, namely by impetrating it for him from God.

Lastly, in this donation made to the Apostles, the height of diabolical pomp was vehemently humbled, when to those humble, unlettered, and simple Apostles, poor fishermen, power over all demons was distributed. Thus it plainly befitted that the impious spirits, who wished to be likened to the Lord of immense majesty, should be subjected to mortal and corporeal creatures.

“And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God” (Luke 9:2), that is, to announce to men the heavenly goods and eternal beatitude, and to promise them to those who obey God. Concerning which Chrysostom says: “Consider that nothing sensible is committed to them to preach, as Moses and the Prophets promised earthly goods; but the kingdom of heavens, and whatever is contained in it.” He sent them, moreover, to preach two and two, as Mark says (Mark 6:7), *“and to heal the sick,”* of the infirmities of body and of soul. Christ therefore added the grace of miracles to the office of preaching, that the showing of miracles might attest the greatness of the promises: for, as Jerome says, to those rustic men, without graces of eloquence, promising the kingdom of God, no one would have believed unless they worked signs, that the power displayed might give faith to the words, and that they who taught new things might do new things.

“And he said to them: Take nothing for your journey” (Luke 9:3), that is, none of those things which will presently be specially named. For since the way is narrow (Matt. 7:14), the traveller ought to unburden himself, especially if he desires to follow Him who “hath rejoiced as a giant to run the way” (Ps. 18:6). *“Neither staff.”* The same is had in Matthew, where shoes also are forbidden the Apostles (Matt. 10:10). — But there seems to be a contradiction in that the Saviour says in Mark: “Take nothing for the way, but a staff only; and to be shod with sandals” (Mark 6:8–9). And it must be answered that, according to Augustine in

the book On the Consent of the Evangelists, Christ literally permitted the Apostles to carry a staff, to show that the necessaries of life were due to them from their hearers. For it was a custom among the Jews that their doctors and preachers bore a rod in the hand, *(p. 584)* as a sign of doctrine, and likewise as a sign that those to whom they preached were bound to supply them food. Further, in this place and in Matthew the staff is taken metaphorically and spiritually, for the leaning of the heart upon any temporal thing, so that the sense is: "Neither staff," that is, lean not upon any temporal thing, but upon God; according to that of Isaias: "Who is there among you that feareth the Lord… that hath walked in darkness, and hath no light? Let him hope in the name of the Lord, and lean upon his God" (Isa. 50:10). Of sandals it must be said that they are incomplete shoes, and are not reckoned for shoes.

"Nor scrip," that is, a repository of victuals, *"neither bread,"* how much less delicate foods, *"neither money; neither have two coats,"* that is, possess not superfluous clothing. Hence the Gloss, following Bede, testifies: "A simple garment is whatever is necessary to anyone according to the quality of place or time; a double one is what is beyond necessity." Jerome also says: "He does not say that in cold weather one ought to be content with a single tunic, but that by 'tunic' we should understand clothing: lest being clad in one, we keep another for ourselves from fear of the future. In which they are reproved who wear Parthian robes, and who load horses with changes of raiment." So, according to Gregory Nazianzen, Christ sending the disciples to preach so wills them to be virtuous, so constant and modest, and, to speak briefly, heavenly, that the evangelical doctrine should be propagated no less by their manner of life than by their word. Whence according to Chrysostom He made them as it were angels out of men, commanding them to be free from all solicitude and cupidity for earthly things, that they might be held by the sole care of doctrine, and place all their hope in God, and with free mind attend to preaching and the other divine acts.

But concerning this it is asked: Christ "began to do and to teach" (Acts 1:1); why then did He forbid these things to the Apostles, when He Himself in preaching carried a purse, a scrip, money, of which He set Judas as keeper? To whom, when at the Supper He had said, "That which thou dost, do quickly," the Apostles thought that Jesus had said to him, "Buy those things which we have need of for the festival day," or that he should give something to the poor: for he also had the purse, and carried the things that were put therein (John 13:27–29; 12:6). Finally in John it is had how the disciples went into the city of the Samaritans to buy meats (John 4:8). And it must be answered that Christ, having these from alms, carried and had them for the common necessity of His flock and of the needy, not as His own private goods: giving posterity a pattern that for the sustenance of the whole community these may lawfully be had. This also must be known, that according to the diversity and fitness of times, places, and affairs, Christ gave different precepts to the disciples. Twice He sent the disciples to preach: once before the passion, and then He gave them the aforesaid commands, because then enough was supplied them by the hearers, since they were gladly heard, in that they did not preach such incomprehensible and supernatural things of Christ as after His passion. When they were sent a second time by Christ to preach, and preached the superwonderful things of the Lord Saviour, and began publicly to rebuke the vices of Jews and Gentiles, on which account they were unwillingly heard by many, as the Saviour foretold, "You shall be hated by all men for my name's sake" (Luke 21:17): then they were permitted to carry the aforesaid things with them. Whence at the Supper Christ said to the Apostles: "When I sent you without purse and scrip and shoes, did you want anything?" (Luke 22:35). *(p. 585)* To whom answering, "Nothing," He added: "But now he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise a scrip" (Luke 22:36), that is, carry it with him.

Next Christ teaches the disciples whence they shall have necessaries. *"And whatsoever house you shall enter into"* (Luke 9:4), for the sake of lodging, refreshment, rest, and instructing, *"abide there, and depart not from thence,"* that is, leave it not entirely, as though not to return to it, so long as you wish to preach in the same city or village: and this is to be understood unless a reasonable cause of changing lodging should occur. And as to what He says, "Into whatsoever house," it is to be understood not of any house, but of an honest

house. Wherefore in Matthew it is said: “Into whatsoever city or town you shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy” (Matt. 10:11), namely of your entrance, that he be of good repute and of praiseworthy life, lest from the ill-fame and vices of your host you incur infamy, and others be scandalized in you, and despise your doctrine. Christ therefore forbids a frequent and inordinate change of lodging, a roving of levity or gyrovagation. Hence Ambrose says: “It is alien from the preacher of the heavenly kingdom to run about from house to house, and to change the laws of inviolable hospitality.” And Cyril: “He bade them remain in one house, that they might neither burden their host by leaving him, nor themselves incur the suspicion of gluttony and levity.” Hence in Ecclesiasticus it is written: “It is a wicked life to go from house to house as a guest” (Ecclus. 29:31). Whence, that we may be able to stabilize our mind in God, let us learn to restrain our body from vain wanderings; and let him who is a preacher of the word of God or a shepherd of Christ’s sheep, preaching and outward necessary or useful occupation ceasing, betake himself to a quiet place, and be intent on God, praying, reading, providing, and contemplating, nay searching himself shrewdly, purging and perfecting himself, that there he may obtain from God the charisms of graces, which afterward he may most devoutly set forth and communicate to the people.

“And whosoever will not receive you” (Luke 9:5), that is, shall have denied you lodging, and despised your words; *“going out of that city,”* that is, when you depart thence, *“shake off even the dust of your feet for a testimony against them,”* that is, for a testimony or sign of the greatness of their guilt and damnation, cast towards them the dust that clave to your feet, not from impatience but from zeal of justice. The dust of the feet, then, is to be shaken off against them: first, in testimony that they reached as far as them, so that they have no excuse of their ignorance (John 15:22); second, in testimony of their perversity; third, in testimony that you sought not their earthly goods; fourth, in testimony that you would not communicate with them; fifth, in testimony of their future damnation, by which they shall be shaken out into hell.

Furthermore, as is gathered from what has been said, Christ in this place forbids seven things to preachers, pastors, and prelates. The first is a plurality of burdens or multiplicity of temporal loads, when it is said, “Take nothing for your journey.” Wherefore the Apostle writes: “Every one that striveth for the mastery refraineth himself from all things” (1 Cor. 9:25). A preacher and prelate, if he be truly such, contends in the agony against sinners. The second is immoderate rigour, when He says, “Neither staff.” The third is curiosity of diet, when He says, “Nor scrip.” The fourth is avarice, when it is written, “Neither money.” The fifth is superfluity of garments. Whence the Apostle says: “Having food, and wherewith to be covered, with these let us be content” (1 Tim. 6:8). The sixth is instability, when He says, “Abide there.” The seventh is not to communicate with the iniquitous and hardened, when it is subjoined, “Whosoever will not receive you.”

Then the obedience of the Apostles is subjoined. *“And going out”* (Luke 9:6), that is, departing bodily from Christ to the places appointed, *“they went about through the towns,”* and through the cities too, as is plain from the words of Matthew (Matt. 10:5 ff.). Whence it is plain that the smaller places are not to be neglected on account of the paucity of the inhabitants, especially since it is a great thing, and to be desired above all the riches of the world, to convert even one. *(p. 586)* *“Preaching the gospel,”* that is, delivering salutary teachings to others: not feeding themselves delicately on their goods, as now many do who feed on the milk and wool of the sheep and clothe themselves, and yet do not preach to them. On which account through Ezechiel eternal damnation is foretold them (Ezech. 34:2 ff.). *“And healing everywhere,”* bodily weak bodies, and spiritually sinful souls, without respect of persons, that is, in every place to which they were directed, and where they found the sick desiring a cure. But now, alas, there are many who profess themselves physicians of souls, and yet by evil example slay those whom they are bound to heal spiritually. Mark, moreover, expressing more fully these deeds of the Apostles: “Going forth, they preached that men should do penance; and they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them” (Mark 6:12–13). John the evangelist also testifies that they baptized (John 4:2). And behold, of these working so magnificently one was the traitor Judas (Luke 6:16)! Let no one therefore presume, nor promise

himself a dangerous security; but let us desire the gifts of grace that maketh pleasing, humility, meekness, patience, rather than the gifts of grace freely given, the casting out of demons, the efficacy of cures.

"Now Herod the tetrarch heard" (Luke 9:7). This is Herod Antipas, son of the Herod in whose time Christ was born. This Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, as was said more fully above (Luke 3:1). *"All the things that were done by him,"* that is, the aforesaid miracles of Christ, and how He sent the disciples to preach and to heal, and baptized by them. He heard all the works of Christ more in general than in particular, although he perceived many things also in particular. For the fame of Christ was poured abroad everywhere, since in the Old Testament no one is read to have wrought so many miracles, nor to have given so great power to his disciples. *"And he was in a doubt,"* anxiously doubting concerning Jesus who He was. Concerning which Chrysostom says: "Sinners, knowing and not knowing, dread every noise: for sin betrays a man with none accusing, condemns with none charging, and makes the delinquent slothful and timid."

The cause of the fear is also subjoined: *"Because it was said by some: That John was risen from the dead"* (Luke 9:7). Hearing which, Herod was afraid lest perchance he should be smitten by him who seemed, and was, of so great power, as the fifty captains were smitten by Elias (4 Kings 1:9 ff.). So these believed Jesus to be John. But it is certain that these had not long, or never, known and seen Jesus face to face. For if they had known Him before the beheading of John, they would not have so judged. — Concerning this it is asked how Luke asserts that Herod doubted, when in Matthew and Mark it is written that Herod affirmed Jesus to be John. For Matthew says that Herod said: "This is John the Baptist: he is risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works show forth themselves in him" (Matt. 14:2; Mark 6:14). To which Augustine answers in the book On the Consent of the Evangelists that Herod at first doubted on account of the variety of rumours; but afterward believed Jesus to be John, as did certain others, on account of the holiness of His life, the eminence of His fame, and because He gathered many disciples and baptized by the Apostles. These also supposed that John after his resurrection was promoted to greater power, and therefore already worked miracles, although before his beheading he had done no sign.

"But by some, that Elias had appeared" (Luke 9:8). They did not say, He is risen, but, He has appeared, as if returned from paradise, knowing that he was not dead, but translated (4 Kings 2:11). These therefore thought Jesus to be Elias, on account of the power of His miracles and the zeal of justice. *"And by others, that one of the old prophets was risen again,"* that is, from the number of the ancient seers, supposing Jesus to be some one of them. There was, moreover, manifold error among the Jews, and some of them thought that souls pass from body to body. Theophilus also says in this place: "The Jews expected the resurrection of the dead in carnal life, and in feastings and drinkings." *(p. 587)*

"And Herod said" (Luke 9:9). According to Matthew, he spoke to his servants (Matt. 14:2): *"John I have beheaded."* He said this, according to Chrysostom, not by way of displaying his crime, but of consoling his fear. Yet to him can be said that of David: "Thy own mouth hath spoken against thee, saying: I have slain the Lord's anointed" (2 Kings 1:16). *"But who is this of whom I hear such things?"* as if to say: He seems to be something great. *"And he sought to see him,"* whether it were John, whose face he knew, and from curiosity desiring to see miracles. But Herod's desire was mingled with sloth, pride, and indevotion: otherwise he would easily have come to Jesus, then preaching in Galilee. Chrysostom says: "How great a thing is virtue! For Herod dreaded John when dead, and for fear even philosophizes about the resurrection."

"And the apostles, when they were returned" (Luke 9:10), from the places in which they had preached, to Jesus, *"told him all they had done,"* in casting out demons, healing the sick, instructing men. These things they announced to their master, as ascribing all to Him, not boasting of themselves. *"And taking them, he went aside into a desert place, which belongeth to Bethsaida,"* that is, near the city so called, from which Peter and Andrew were (John 1:44). Finally, as Matthew and Mark describe, John having been beheaded by the wicked Herod, his disciples came and announced it to Christ (Matt. 14:12–13; Mark 6:30–31). Which being heard, He departed, as already said, not from fear of Herod, whom He could annihilate with a single

command, but for other causes: one of which Mark touches, saying, “For there were many that came and went, and they had not so much as time to eat” (Mark 6:31). Another reason was that He might teach preachers and prelates, after external occupations of the active life, to betake themselves to a retired place, to be free for the acts of the contemplative life.

“Which when the people knew, they followed him” (Luke 9:11). Diverse men, indeed, for diverse causes, as has been said, were wont often to follow the Saviour. *“And he received them,”* charitably and piously, delighted by the devotion of the simple. For the lesser and simple followed, the greater and the half-learned persecuted, as befalls even to the present. *“And he spoke to them of the kingdom of God,”* namely of the greatness of the heavenly joys and the beatitude of the future life; *“and them that had need of healing,”* namely the sick, *“he healed,”* as a most pious physician. Those also who were in sins and desired to be spiritually cured and acquiesced in Him, He healed of the languors or sins of their souls.

Then a splendid miracle of Christ is described. *“Now the day began to decline”* (Luke 9:12). Whence Matthew says: “And when it was evening” (Matt. 14:15). *“And the twelve,”* the principal disciples, more familiar to Christ and bolder to speak to Him, *“coming, said to him: Send away the multitude,”* which by teaching and healing Thou detainest with Thee, *“that going into the towns and villages round about,”* that is, near this place, *“they may lodge, and get victuals: for we are here in a desert place,”* in which nothing appears for sale. Although the Apostles seem to have said this from a certain compassion and providence, yet in these words they manifested in many ways their imperfection: not believing, or rather not weighing, that Christ could miraculously refresh the multitude; supposing also that the crowds remaining with Christ could be endangered by hunger.

“But he said to them: Give you them to eat” (Luke 9:13). This said the wisest of all masters, piously rebuking the imperfection of the disciples’ faith, as if to say: Not I alone, but you also can refresh them, if you have the faith you ought. *“But they said: We have no more than five loaves and two fishes”*: which loaves, according to John, were of barley (John 6:9); *“unless perhaps we should go and buy food for all this multitude.”* So the disciples spoke, not as being indignant at their master, or wishing to intimate that he had spoken irrationally, but to point out how impossible it was for them by their own power to fulfil what Christ had said. Wherefore it is subjoined: *“Now there were about five thousand men”* (Luke 9:14), *(p. 588)* besides women and children, as the other Evangelists testify (Matt. 14:21). Men too are called in the Scriptures those who have attained at least twenty years (Num. 1:3). The other Evangelists also absolutely affirm that there were five thousand men (Mark 6:44; John 6:10). For divine Scripture does not make a point of the minutiae of numbers, namely whether they were a little more or fewer.

Finally, in John, where this miracle is described, Christ and the disciples are read to have conversed some things among themselves on this matter, which the other Evangelists did not write. For there it is had that Jesus asked Philip, saying: “Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?” Then Andrew said: “There is a boy here that hath five barley loaves and two fishes; but what are these among so many?” (John 6:5–9). But this is easily reconciled with these. And as Augustine asserts in the book On the Consent of the Evangelists, from this variety of speaking we are wholesomely taught that nothing is to be sought in words save the will of the speakers: to showing which all truthful narrators ought to give heed, when they narrate anything of a man, or an angel, or God.

“And he said to his disciples,” that is, to the twelve Apostles: *“Make them sit down by fifties in a company”* (Luke 9:14), so that fifty sit in one rank. It is the part of a wise man to do all things in order; and those so ordered the food could be brought to more easily. But what is in Mark seems to obstruct: “They sat down in ranks, by hundreds and by fifties” (Mark 6:40). To which Augustine in the book On the Consent of the Evangelists answers that this ought to move no one, because Luke said a part, and Mark the whole. *“And they did so”* (Luke 9:15): the Apostles, as Christ enjoined them, *“and made them all sit down.”*

"And taking the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven" (Luke 9:16), signifying that He was sent by the eternal Father, and that He was about to work this miracle only by heavenly, divine, and supernatural power, and likewise that "every good gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights" (James 1:17); *"and blessed them,"* namely the loaves and fishes, giving them to be presently multiplied: as in Genesis He is read to have blessed the irrational creatures (Gen. 1:22). By which deed He instructed us not to take food without a preceding blessing. *"And he broke,"* the loaves, into some great parts: He did not cut them into crumbs, but they were multiplied in the breaking; *"and distributed to his disciples,"* to set the multiplied loaves and fishes before the crowds. *"And they did all eat"* (Luke 9:17), *"and were filled"*, not by the five loaves and two fishes alone, but by that which the omnipotence of Christ multiplied, the five loaves and two fishes. *"And there were taken up of fragments that remained to them, twelve baskets"* (Luke 9:17). From which it is plain that so few loaves and fishes were multiplied into a very great multitude of loaves and fishes, since from the remnants so many baskets were filled.

Of the spiritual understanding of this miracle so much has been said by the doctors that it seems almost superfluous to add anything; so I do not now intend to dwell on the moral sense, especially since I have written much about it on John (cf. John 6, art. XVI); now I touch it only moderately. By the aforesaid multitude, then, which followed Christ bodily, all the faithful can be understood, who even to the present imitate His footsteps, as John says: "He that saith he abideth in Christ, ought himself also to walk, even as he walked" (1 John 2:6). By the Apostles are signified prelates, to whom Christ commands that by teaching and living exemplarily they feed those committed to them. But because prelates without Christ's help and grace avail nothing, they profess themselves unable by their own strength for this spiritual nourishment: therefore it is necessary that the gifts of grace granted them, which are figured by the five loaves and two fishes, be perfected and multiplied by Christ. And when they have rightly asked this aid of Christ, He gladly helps them, commanding them to make the flocks committed to them sit down, and to communicate to them the gifts granted to themselves.

Moreover, by the first loaf is to be understood the bread of penance, that is, *(p. 589)* heartfelt contrition for sins, confession of the mouth, and satisfaction of work: to which bread prelates ought to exhort their subjects, and move their hearts to compunction. Of this bread can be understood that in the Psalm: "Thou shalt feed us with the bread of tears" (Ps. 79:6); and again, "I am smitten as grass, and my heart is withered, because I forgot to eat my bread" (Ps. 101:5). The second is the bread of doctrine: of which in Ecclesiasticus it is read, "She shall feed him with the bread of life and understanding" (Ecclus. 15:3). Whence the Lord speaks through Jeremias: "I will give you pastors according to my own heart, and they shall feed you with knowledge and doctrine" (Jer. 3:15). The third is the bread of exemplary life: which is especially necessary to subjects, particularly since without it the bread of doctrine profits little. For whose life is despised, his preaching is little regarded. Therefore the Apostle says: "Be thou an example of the faithful in word, in conversation, in charity" (1 Tim. 4:12). The fourth is the bread of the Eucharist, which is to be offered to those well confessed and wholesomely instructed. Of which the Apostle says: "Whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord" (1 Cor. 11:27). The fifth is the bread of prayer or devout meditation, which greatly strengthens the mind. Whence prelates ought incessantly to intercede for their subjects, and to induce them to pray, since the Apostle says: "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17). — Moreover, by the two fishes, which give a good savour to the loaves, are understood the consolation of grace in the present, and the hope of future felicity: which two render all things sweet to the soul, even adverse things, so far that with the Apostle it says: "The sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come, that shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18); and likewise, "Blessed be God… who comforteth us in all our tribulation" (2 Cor. 1:3–4). This consolation he felt most abundantly who said so affectionately: "How great is the multitude of thy sweetness, O Lord!" (Ps. 30:20).

Lastly, the flocks of the subjects being so refreshed, copious remnants remain: because the more liberally spiritual goods are communicated, the more they abound and are increased, so that even the prelates themselves are helped by the merits of those whom they nourish with the aforesaid loaves. — Finally it might be asked literally whether, or what, this crowd thought in the aforesaid refection. What I judge of this I wrote on John (cf. John 6:13).

"And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples also were with him" (Luke 9:18). There seems to be in these words an opposition in the adjunct. For if He was alone praying, how were His disciples with Him? Or, if they were with Him, He was not alone praying. But to this it is easily answered: First, that if this prayer be taken in the formal sense, so that the word "alone" excludes, not companionship of person, but of the act of praying, He could be alone praying, even if He stood in the midst of many thousands not praying. Second, that what is said, "His disciples also were with him," need not be understood to mean that they stood near His body, but that, when the multitude that had been fed went away, the Apostles did not depart, but were with Him, that is, not far from Him. Third, "alone" can in this place make an exclusion of strangers, and not of members of the household, as a bishop is said to be alone in the house, though his household be with him. So Christ, as man, about to pray, withdrew apart, not that His mind could be in any way impeded in devotion, attention, or contemplation by the tumult or noise of others; but for our instruction He did this, that especially at the time of prayer we should avoid the hindrances of devotion and the occasions of distraction. Wherefore in Matthew the Saviour says: "When thou shalt pray, enter into thy chamber, and having shut the door, pray to thy Father in secret" (Matt. 6:6). Moreover, as John relates, Jesus, the miracle of the aforesaid refection having been done, fled into the mountain, knowing that those whom He had fed would come to take Him by force and make Him king (John 6:15): so perhaps now it is said that He was alone praying.

"He asked them, saying: Whom do the people say that I am?" Not from ignorance does He ask, but that on the occasion of the disciples' answer He may instruct them. *"But they answered and said"* (Luke 9:19): *(p. 590) "John the Baptist; but some say Elias, and others say that one of the former prophets is risen again."* Matthew adds that some also said He was Jeremias (Matt. 16:14). Why some said that Jesus was John the Baptist, others Elias, others one of the ancient seers, was told a little before (verse 8). All these, therefore, believing in the resurrection, thought that holy men after their resurrection were of greater power: and because Christ above the other seers was glorious in miracles, they said He was one of the preceding Prophets. Nevertheless certain of the crowd believed and said that Jesus was the Christ, as is easily shown in the Gospel of John, who also asserts that many of the rulers believed in Him (John 7:40–41; 12:42). And in John it is had: "Those men therefore, when they had seen what a sign he had done," namely in the aforesaid refection of the multitude, "said: This is of a truth the prophet that is to come into the world" (John 6:14), namely the Christ: as Chrysostom touches, who on the words of John says thus: "From their saying, 'that is to come into the world,' it is manifest that they were awaiting a certain principal Prophet; and therefore what is said, 'This is of a truth the Prophet,' is put in the Greek with the article, to show that He is distinguished from the other Prophets."

Moreover, as Matthew relates, this interrogation was made in the parts of Caesarea Philippi (Matt. 16:13), but Mark narrates it as made on the way in the aforesaid land (Mark 8:27): which does not disagree, because being in that province He walked in it, and walking in it, He came and was in it. Luke, however, does not express where this question was made: nor was it made immediately after the refection of the multitude, as is plain from Matthew and Mark, unless it be said to have been made more than once. One Evangelist, moreover, omits certain things which others put, nor do the most blessed Evangelists themselves always observe the order of the things done in describing them.

"And he said to them: But whom do you say that I am?" (Luke 9:20), you who are more familiar to me, and know my deeds and my wisdom beyond the rest, nay know them by experience? *"Simon Peter answering,"* before all and for all the other Apostles (who from his infancy was called Simon, and afterward was called

Peter by Christ [John 1:42]), *"said: The Christ of God,"* that is, the king Messias chosen by God, promised by God in the law and the Prophets, and sent divinely in this our time. Matthew, however, expresses Peter's answer more fully, writing: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16). *"But he strictly charging them, commanded they should tell this to no man"* (Luke 9:21). Peter alone answered; but because he gave answer for all, perhaps the Apostles themselves requiring it of him, Christ rebukes all. But why does He rebuke them, since Peter spoke the truth: nay, as is read in Matthew, Christ for this answer greatly praised Peter, saying: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona," etc. (Matt. 16:17 ff.)? And it must be answered that "rebuking" is here taken broadly for a serious commission of silence uttered by way of rebuke. Whence Mark: "He threatened them" (Mark 8:30). Or perhaps He rebuked them for some other fault, that they might observe the commission more diligently, as is the custom.

Moreover it is asked why He bade the Apostles keep silence on this, since He Himself had often openly said that He is the Christ, nay even true God, saying to the Jews: "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30); and, "That which my Father hath given me is greater than all" (John 10:29), namely the divine essence, which the Son has from the Father by eternal generation. And again: "What things soever he doth, these the Son also doth in like manner" (John 5:19); and, "As the Father hath life in himself, so he hath given to the Son also to have life in himself" (John 5:26); and many such things, which the most sacred John writes. Finally, John the Baptist publicly preached that Christ had come, and pointed with the finger to Jesus as the Christ (John 1:26–36). And it was most useful to the Jews to know that Jesus was the Christ. Why then did He forbid this very thing to the Apostles? And it must be answered that Christ, as the uncreated and infinite wisdom of the Father (1 Cor. 1:24), *(p. 591)* did all things in order and wisely (Wis. 8:1), in fit place and apt time: therefore some goods He forbade to some for a time, that afterward they might be done more fittingly. So far also He declared by words and signs that He is the Christ, that the Jews cannot excuse themselves altogether by ignorance (John 15:22); yet He did not manifest it so evidently before His passion as afterward, lest His passion be hindered, who came for this, to suffer: whom if they had known to be the Lord of glory, they would not have dared to crucify (1 Cor. 2:8). Hence before His passion He would not have it preached by the Apostles that He is the Christ, that after His resurrection and ascension they might do it more opportunely. The Apostles themselves also were not, before Christ's passion, of so great wisdom and fortitude in God that they were fit to preach the divinity of Christ, or to bear persecution and death for it, as Ambrose touches; who also says: "The Lord Jesus Christ was unwilling to be preached at first, that no uproar be born, and that He might deceive the prince of this world, avoid boasting, teach humility, and that the rude and as yet imperfect disciples might not be oppressed by the greatest burdens of preaching." Lastly, Christ Himself added the reason of His prohibition, as is subjoined.

"Saying: The Son of man must suffer many things" (Luke 9:22), *"and be rejected by the ancients"* of the Jews, who were as it were their ordinary judges, *"and chief priests,"* namely the pontiffs, *"and scribes,"* that is, doctors of the law. How this was done is described below, in the two chapters in which the passion is contained (Luke 22–23). *"And be killed, and the third day rise again."* How this "must" be, that is, was necessary, is had below diffusely. And now it can briefly be touched that it was necessary, not because the human race could not otherwise be freed by Almighty God, speaking absolutely, but because no other mode was so apt. Again, it was necessary, not by absolute necessity, but rather from supposition, because God so foretold, and by conditioned necessity, namely if the Scriptures were to be verified.

After the Saviour foretold His passion, He next declares that those who desire to obtain salvation through Him must follow His footsteps. For it follows: *"And he said to all"* (Luke 9:23), namely to the crowd in general. For He revealed His more secret mysteries to the disciples alone, but what is required for the salvation of all He made known to all. *"If any man will come after me,"* that is, follow me spiritually, be conformed to my conversation, attain to the country of felicity, "that where I am, there also may he be with me" (John 12:26), *"let him deny himself,"* that is, let him relinquish his own will, forsake his former vices,

expose his life to death for God and the truth. That is called the own will of man which is contrary to God and the precepts and documents of Holy Scripture, by which one seeks his own advantages and is inordinately bent back upon himself and strives to obtain what displeases God. Hence Basil says: "Denial of oneself is a total oblivion of things past, and withdrawal from one's own wills." *"And take up his cross,"* that is, let him bear, carry, and sustain evenly a cruciform or penitential conversation, and manfully bear every tribulation, temptation, or persecution, and adversity that befalls him, chastise his body, subdue it, and subject it to reason and the service of God, as the Apostle says: "They that are Christ's have crucified their flesh with the vices and concupiscences" (Gal. 5:24). To which also exhorting us to the Romans: "I beseech you… that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, pleasing unto God, your reasonable service" (Rom. 12:1). Moreover, according to Gregory, the cross is taken up in two ways: first, by afflicting the body (as was said) by abstinence; second, by afflicting the mind through compassion for others, as the Apostle says: "Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is scandalized, and I am not on fire?" (2 Cor. 11:29). And again: "Weep with them that weep" (Rom. 12:15). These things, however, are to be done not on one day only, but perseveringly to the end (Matt. 24:13). Wherefore He adds: *"Daily."* Whence also Zacharias spoke: "That we may serve him in holiness and justice before him, all our days" (Luke 1:75). *(p. 592) "And follow me,"* that is, by the aforesaid cleave to me, obey, and follow my footsteps by the paths of life, by the ways of virtues.

Finally, according to the exposition set forth, it is necessary for the salvation of all the faithful to deny themselves, and take up their cross daily: namely that, as to those things which are repugnant to the divine precepts, and the other things required for salvation, we deny ourselves and take up our cross daily, going by the narrow way that leadeth to life (Matt. 7:14).

In another way these words are expounded, as they pertain to the counsels and works of supererogation, and concern religious, so that the sense is: *"If any man will come after me,"* that is, tend and attain to perfection, as I in all things offered myself as the form of all perfection, *"let him deny himself,"* that is, wholly relinquish his own will, offering it to God by the vow of obedience, obeying the vicar of God as God in all that regards the profession, as cloistered religious do: who must most diligently weigh what Scripture says of the faithful and speedy discharge of such a vow. It is written in Deuteronomy: "That which is once gone out of thy lips, thou shalt observe, and shalt do as thou hast promised to the Lord thy God" (Deut. 23:23). In Ecclesiastes also it is commanded: "If thou hast vowed anything to God, defer not to pay it; for an unfaithful and foolish promise displeaseth him" (Eccles. 5:3). Nay, according to the doctors, that promise binds more than an oath, so that a cloistered religious who does not strive to fulfil his profession is found worse than a perjurer. (However, to the first exposition of these words belongs what Gregory says on these words: "Because unless one fail from himself, he does not draw near to Him who is above him; nor can he apprehend what is above himself, if he knows not how to slay what he is.") Christ, moreover, counsels a threefold denial, on which is founded the profession or promise of three virtues, which are said to be of the essence of every religious order. The first is the denial of exterior things: of which it is had below, "Whosoever doth not renounce all that he possesseth, cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:33). On this poverty is founded. The second is the denial of those things which are partly within us and partly outside us, as are wife, offspring, and kindred. Of this denial the Saviour says below: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife… he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26). On this continence is founded. The third is the denial of oneself, of which it is here: on this obedience is founded.

"And take up his cross daily," that is, let him observe the regular observances, strict and arduous, or the monastic statutes, rightly: which is truly to be fastened to the cross with Christ, and to communicate and suffer together with His passions (Gal. 2:19); which is also especially meritorious of consolation of grace in the present, and of glorification of the country in the future, according to that of the Apostle: "As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so also by Christ doth our comfort abound" (2 Cor. 1:5). And again: "A

faithful saying: for if we be dead with him, we shall live also with him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with him" (2 Tim. 2:11–12). Therefore he who now desires to taste inward consolation, and at length to possess eternal beatitude, who wishes to be conformed to Christ in glory, let him not now disdain to suffer reproaches, hard and adverse things, nay let him glory in such, as the most blessed Peter exhorts us: "Rejoice, being partakers of the sufferings of Christ, that when his glory shall be revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy" (1 Pet. 4:13); and Paul: "Always bearing about in our body the mortification of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor. 4:10–11). — *"And follow me,"* who came down from heaven, "not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me" (John 6:38).

To observe these things, therefore, belongs to religious, who have offered themselves totally to God as a holocaust in their profession, reserving nothing of themselves as their own: who, if they worthily fulfil what they have vowed, are the best; but if they neglect to fulfil it, are proved the worst. *(p. 593)*

That this denial and daily bearing of one's own cross must be assumed, Christ next shows. *"For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it"* (Luke 9:24). This saying, taken by itself, can be understood in two ways; but because it is presently subjoined, "For he that shall lose his life for my sake, shall save it," the literal sense is this: Whosoever will save his life, that is, will in the present nourish and conserve it in his own wills and desires, or obtain carnal salvation, or rescue it from the pains of temporal death by fleeing martyrdom, *"shall lose it,"* that is, will make it liable to eternal damnation, and will find it lost in the future: so that fleeing temporal death for justice he will incur eternal death; and embracing carnal prosperity he will lose true salvation. Hence it is commonly said that it is impossible now to rejoice with the world and afterward to reign with Christ. On the contrary it is subjoined: *"For he that shall lose his life,"* that is, in the present shall have mortified its wills and concupiscences, like Paul who said, "And I live, now not I; but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20), or shall have exposed it to the pains of death so as to be deprived of the present and sensitive life, *"for my sake,"* that is, for love of me, and finally for me, that he may possess me forever as the object of supreme felicity, *"shall save it,"* that is, will lead it to true salvation, and through death or temporal mortification will attain to the eternal life of glory. Similar to this is what Christ says in John: "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, keepeth it unto life eternal" (John 12:25).

Moreover, what is said, "Whosoever will save his life, shall lose it," taken by itself can also be expounded thus: Whosoever will truly make it safe or blessed in the future, shall lose it, that is, in this world will expose it to afflictions or the pains of death. For through tribulations one comes to rest, according to the Psalmist: "We have passed through fire and water, and thou hast brought us out into a refreshment" (Ps. 65:12); and likewise: "How great troubles hast thou shewn me, many and grievous, and turning thou hast quickened me" (Ps. 70:20). Whence Judith says: "All that have pleased God, passed through many tribulations faithfully; but they that did not receive the trials with the fear of the Lord, and impatiently, were destroyed" (Judith 8:22–23).

Furthermore, that the soul must thus be lost temporally that it may be saved eternally, Christ subjoins: *"For what advantageth it a man, if he gain the whole world"* (Luke 9:25), that is, acquire the delights, riches, and honours of the whole of this world, and possess all temporal things, *"and lose himself,"* that is, merit and incur eternal damnation, *"and cast away himself,"* that is, be deprived of the goods of grace in this world and of the gifts of glory in the future, and so spiritually make himself as it were nothing and void, falling into the loss or want of spiritual goods? as if to say: Such a one profits not, but ineffably fails; and the more he seems happier in obtaining present things, the more wretched, vile, and poor he is, lacking spiritual goods and deserving eternal torments. Whence, the more the soul excels the body, so much the more are its goods to be chosen and obtained, namely virtues and the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and eternal felicity. But also every vain delight of the present life is to be avoided with unspeakable contempt, from love of heavenly joys. Finally, this authority is wont to be applied against certain persons who seem to have zeal for souls, but not according to knowledge (Rom. 10:2): who so occupy themselves about the conversion or progress of others that they

neglect themselves. These act against the order of charity, because a man is bound after God chiefly to love himself and provide for his own salvation, and first of all to fulfil what God requires of him. Whence charity is said to begin from itself.

Next Christ, by the threat of punishment, induces to the observance of the aforesaid. *(p. 594) "For he that shall be ashamed of me and of my words"* (Luke 9:26), that is, from worldly and vicious shame shall have omitted to confess me and my doctrines, being ashamed publicly to confess before the adversaries of faith and justice that he believes in the crucified man, hopes in him, and adores him; being ashamed also to confess the things that are of the Christian faith, as that God is one and three, that the Only-begotten of God was incarnate and crucified, that Christ in unity of person is God and man, that there will be a resurrection of the dead: which to confess at times was to expose oneself to the derision of innumerable unbelievers and cruel tyrants, *"of him the Son of man shall be ashamed,"* that is, He will bear Himself toward him in the manner of one ashamed, casting him away as if He were ashamed of him: even as a father of a family disdains to name an impious servant, and to admit him to himself and to assert that he belongs to him; *"when he shall come in his majesty"* (Luke 9:26), that is, in his great and supreme power, virtue, and glory, *"and that of his Father,"* that is, in the aforesaid divine majesty, which to Him and to the Father, and doubtless to the Holy Ghost who is to be adored, is one and common, *"and of the holy angels,"* that is, with the mighty and immense army of angels: which shall be on the day of judgment, when Christ in majesty and glory, surrounded by the hosts of all the Blessed, shall descend to judge the living and the dead, as is more clearly described below (Luke 21:27). Then indeed He will judge, repel, and condemn the reprobate.

Or, what He says, "in his majesty," can be referred to His glorified humanity and its created power, set above every other created power. For in the second coming He is not to come in humility, passibility, and infirmity, as in the first coming, when He came to be judged; but in glorified, impassible, all-powerful humanity, to judge. So He will come in His created, human majesty, and that of the Father, that is, also in the divine majesty common to Himself and the Father: and then He will be known by all to be God and man; yet His divinity will not be known by the reprobate by vision; *"and of the angels,"* because this majesty is asserted to be theirs inasmuch as they serve Him. — It can also be understood thus: "When he shall come in his majesty," that is, when after His passion, resurrection, and ascension He shall have appeared and sat down in His heavenly and glorious kingdom, which is also the kingdom of the Father as of the prince, and of the angels as of citizens and servants. For from then Christ, in the perfectly glorified human nature, began to exercise particular judgment. — It may also be expounded in this way: "When he shall come," that is, shall have become known, "in his majesty," that is, in true deity and divine majesty, as true, eternal, immense God. For until the sending of the Holy Ghost and the public preaching of the Apostles, Christ was not known as true God by wayfarers save by very few; but the Holy Ghost being sent, through the preaching of the Apostles this began to be known to many. It is, moreover, the custom of Scripture that something is then said to be done, to be, or to come, when it is made manifest.

Concerning this it is asked whether, when, and how the confession of faith is necessary to salvation. To this Thomas in the Second of the Second replies: Since to confess the faith is something affirmative, it falls only under an affirmative precept. But affirmative precepts bind always, but not for always: nay, they bind only according to place and time, and according to the other circumstances required for acts of virtue. Hence to confess the faith is of necessity for salvation only when by the omission of this act the honour due to God, or the utility of neighbours, would be withdrawn. If, however, the faith is seen to be in peril, then everyone is bound to confess the faith publicly; but if from the confession of faith greater sedition arises, or the derision of unbelievers, and no utility of neighbours, then it would not be laudable to confess the faith, lest the holy be given to dogs (Matt. 7:6).

But since what Christ forewarned or commanded about the cruciform imitation of Himself, the endurance of martyrdom, and denial of self is arduous, He consequently draws them to it by a promise of solace and of

reward in the present life. *(p. 595) "But I tell you of a truth"* (Luke 9:27): *"There are some standing here, and hearing this my discourse, who shall not taste death,"* that is, shall not experience or feel natural and bodily death (which is said by the Saints to be tasted, because it passes so quickly over them, and they receive it as it were the entrance of eternal life), *"till they see the kingdom of God,"* that is, the Church militant in this world gloriously exalted, innumerably multiplied as to the believing individuals, and diffused through the four quarters of the earth. Which is established to have been fulfilled not only before the death of the blessed John the Evangelist, but even before the slaying of Peter and Paul: which I have shown sufficiently elsewhere. And Paul himself testifies to the Colossians: "The gospel is come unto you, as it is also in the whole world" (Col. 1:6); and again, "The gospel which you have heard, which is preached in all the creation that is under heaven" (Col. 1:23). So Gregory expounds. Ambrose, however, and Theophilus expound thus: "Till they see the kingdom of God," that is, the glory in which the just shall be. This He said of His transfiguration, which was a form of the future glory in the heavenly kingdom. "There are some standing here," namely Peter, James, and John, "who shall not taste death" until at the time of my transfiguration they see in what glory shall be those who confess me. For that glorification of Christ's body was a likeness and sign of the glory which the bodies of the elect are to have in the heavenly kingdom. So from the receiving of present gifts the expectation of future ones is made certain.

Article XXIV — Continuation of the Explanation of this Chapter, from the place where it is said: "And it came to pass, about eight days after these words"

Here it is described how Christ fulfilled what He said at the end of the preceding article: "There are some standing here," etc. *"And it came to pass about eight days after these words"* (Luke 9:28), written in the preceding article, that is, a time of about eight days had passed, and it happened as is subjoined: *"He took Peter and James and John, and went up into a mountain to pray. And whilst he prayed, the shape of his countenance was altered, and his raiment became white and glittering"* (Luke 9:28–29). Matthew describes this more clearly and fully, so that what is there had is as it were an exposition of these words. For thus it is said there: "Jesus taketh Peter, and James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart: and he was transfigured before them. And his face did shine as the sun: and his garments became white as snow" (Matt. 17:1–2).

Concerning this it is first inquired why Luke says, "It came to pass about eight days after these words," etc., when Matthew and Mark affirm that after six days He did what is here written (Matt. 17:1; Mark 9:1). To which it is answered that although Luke had said absolutely, "After eight days," still there would be no repugnance, because it is to be understood by the inclusion of the day on which Christ foretold these things, and likewise of the day on which He fulfilled them. If, however, by saying "about eight" he understood seven days, it is to be understood by the inclusion of one of those days. Matthew and Mark, indeed, counted the whole intermediate days.

It is also inquired why He took with Him only three Apostles, and why these rather than others. And it must be answered: that in the mouth of three witnesses might stand the testimony of His transfiguration (Deut. 19:15), and to designate the mystery of the Most High Trinity. The number three also is reckoned perfect for diverse reasons. For the Philosopher also says: "We put all things under three." *(p. 596)* The Saviour, moreover, took these three Apostles as specially familiar to Him and eminent; and, as Damascene asserts: He took Peter as the future president and pastor of the whole Church; James as to die for Christ before the others; John as the purest organ of theology, that the glory of the Son having been seen, which is not subject to time, there might resound that: "In the beginning was the Word," etc. (John 1:1). Ambrose, moreover, says: "Peter is taken, who received the keys of the kingdom of heaven; John also, to whom the Mother is committed; and James, who first ascended the priestly throne." From which word of Ambrose it seems to follow that this James was James the Less, who was the first bishop of the Christians in Jerusalem: which Augustine also seems to think on the epistle to the Galatians. But since in the aforecited word of the

evangelist Matthew it is plainly had that he took James and John his brother, it must be held most certainly that he was James the Greater. Some, however, piously excuse what Ambrose says and is had in the Gloss, saying that by the priestly throne they understand heaven, which is the throne of Christ the first pontiff, or martyrdom, because in the primitive Church priests and bishops were first drawn to martyrdom. And it is certain that among the Apostles James the Greater first by the palm of martyrdom ascended the heights of the empyrean heaven (Acts 12:2).

Christ therefore went up into Mount Thabor in Galilee (on which afterward He showed Himself to the eleven Apostles, as is read in Matthew [Matt. 28:16]; of which mountain Peter in his second Canonical Epistle speaks, as will be said [2 Pet. 1:18]), *"to pray,"* intimating that especially at the time of prayer the mind is to be lifted up to God and separated from earthly affections. *"And whilst he prayed, the shape"* (Luke 9:29), that is, the disposition or figure, *"of his countenance was altered,"* that is, wonderfully changed, because radiant and flowing with splendour like the sun; not, however, was the substance of the flesh of Christ changed substantially, nor its quantity, but its quality clarified; nor was the face of Christ alone, but all His flesh was suffused with such splendour. And if He assumed so great a clarity as after the resurrection and now He has in His body, it is plain that His countenance was ineffably brighter than the sun. Finally, it was rightly done while Christ prayed, to signify that at the time of prayer the interior face of the mind is divinely illumined, that by prayer we also merit future glorification, and that the fervour and devotion of prayer is a disposition to the transfiguration and ecstasy of the mind. Whence in the Acts it is said that Peter praying, an ecstasy of mind fell upon him (Acts 10:10).

Moreover, in the future resurrection there will be four dowries of glorified bodies: clarity, agility, impassibility, and subtlety: which, it is said, will be in the bodies from the redundance of the beatitude of the blessed souls into their bodies. Since, then, the soul of Christ from the first instant of its creation saw the Divinity by vision as clearly as now, the aforesaid dowries would from then have been in His body from the aforesaid redundance, had not that redundance been delayed by divine dispensation: which nevertheless in this transfiguration was permitted, as to clarity; although some say that that clarity was not a dowry, nor had the nature of a dowry, though it was, according to essence, of the same nature with the clarity which is put as a dowry. For it is of the nature of a dowry that it be inherent fixedly and permanently; but that clarity was present transiently.

Furthermore, on this matter Thomas writes in the Third Part: "Christ willed to be transfigured before His disciples, that He might show them the reward to be expected in the country, to be given for the tribulations of the present life, that by this they might be encouraged in the labours and sufferings of this life, and be made certain of the reward." The dowries of a glorious body, moreover, are derived from the beatitude of the soul; therefore that clarity of Christ in the transfiguration took its origin from His divinity and the felicity of His soul. *(p. 597)* Hence Damascene asserts: "The face of Moses also was made bright (Exod. 34:29), but by a clarity coming from without. Christ, however, was made bright by the innate splendour of the divinity."

"And his raiment became white and glittering." This St. Mark describes more clearly, saying: "His garments became shining and exceeding white as snow, so as no fuller upon earth can make white" (Mark 9:2). But how this was done is assigned in different ways: for Augustine seems to think that the clarity or whiteness appearing in Christ's garments was not subjectively in them, but from the illumination of the air they appeared white and splendid, as the part of heaven nearer the sun. To others, however, it appears that, to declare the future glorification of the bodies of the elect, the garments of Christ were truly whitened and glorified in themselves. For the clarity of Christ's garments prefigured the future clarity of the Saints, and the glory of the resurrection to come: on account of which the angel, witness and messenger of the Lord's resurrection, is read in Mark to have appeared in a white robe (Mark 16:5).

"And behold" (Luke 9:30). Rightly he premises this demonstrative, "Behold," because a very great and notable thing is subjoined. *"Two men were talking with him. And they were Moses and Elias, appearing in*

majesty” (Luke 9:30–31), that is, in great clarity, dignity, or reverence. These two appeared before the others, because before the other fathers of the Old Testament they are in many things excellently praised and preferred to the rest, especially in the glory of miracles and in sanctity of life; and as Moses was the meekest (Num. 12:3), so Elias was the most zealous for justice (Ecclus. 48:1 ff.). It was most fitting, therefore, that such renowned members, as the chief persons of the Synagogue, should appear and speak with Christ, the Lord of the Synagogue, because Christ too was at once the meekest (Matt. 11:29) and the most just. — These two men also have a special conformity with Christ. For Moses was lawgiver and mediator of the people of the Old Testament, and spoke face to face with God (Exod. 33:11), whom he is even believed to have beheld by vision in this life; and he had a face of so great clarity that the children of Israel could not look upon him (Exod. 34:30). So Christ is the lawgiver and mediator of the people of the New Testament, whose soul from its beginning incessantly saw God by vision, and in this transfiguration had a face of such splendour that it dazzled the gaze of the Apostles. Elias, however, shall precede the second coming of Christ (Mal. 4:5), and by his prayers shut and opened heaven (James 5:17–18), and remained in virginal purity: so Christ shuts and opens the heavenly kingdom, whose entrance He forbids to the impious and grants to the elect. Again, through Moses truly dead, and Elias not yet dead, it was shown that Christ is judge of the living and the dead. By whose appearing also are most plainly condemned the heresies of those who assert that the God of the law and the Prophets is other than the God of the evangelical law, and that the Prophets did not speak beforehand of Christ. — Finally, Christ wished as witnesses of His transfiguration to be present both the Saints of the Old Testament and the Saints of the new and evangelical law, to insinuate that men of both Testaments are saved through Him.

It must also be held that Moses and Elias were present personally and truly, not in some similitude, nor angels in their person, as some have said. Some, however, say that Moses was raised from death for an hour and appeared in his own body. Whence Jerome says that he rose from hell. Augustine also on John, discussing the burial of the most blessed John the Evangelist, seems to think the same, saying among other things: “As if the divine power could not have raised the body of Moses for an hour,” namely at Christ’s transfiguration. Others hold that he appeared in an assumed body, like the angels: which Thomas also affirms in the Third Part. Lastly, of Elias it is to be held that he was brought in his own body from the earthly paradise by divine power, perhaps by angelic ministry.

“And they spoke of his decease” (Luke 9:31), that is, his passion, *“that he was to accomplish at Jerusalem,”* that is, fully to suffer, or to complete, *(p. 598)* because He delivered Himself to death, as in John He says: “No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of myself” (John 10:18). And it was said by Isaias: “He hath delivered his soul unto death” (Isa. 53:12). The Apostle also: “I live in the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered himself for me” (Gal. 2:20). The passion or death of Christ is called an “excess” (excessus), because in it was shown the excess of His supreme love and piety toward us, and by reason of His excessive sorrow for us, and on account of the excessive cruelty of the Jews against Him. Finally in the book of Machabees it is had that the excess of Antiochus’s life was so (1 Mach. 6:9). Whence it is plain that by the excess of life death is designated, in which the present life is exceeded, since beyond its inner term it is passed over. These most renowned men, therefore, talked with Christ of His passion, as of the deepest and greatest mystery, giving Him thanks, praying for the salvation of the world, marvelling at the impiety of the Jews and grieving at it.

“But Peter and they that were with him,” namely James and John, *“were heavy with sleep”* (Luke 9:32). If before this sleep they began to behold the aforesaid clarity of Christ, and also Moses and Elias, it is strange that they so quickly fell asleep, since so unaccustomed a vision is wont to strike fear, stupor, and a great alteration and shock of all nature, by which sleep is for a good while taken away and hindered. Hence Chrysostom, asserting that they saw the clarity of Christ before this sleep, understands by sleep the vehement stupor struck into them by the aforesaid vision: for it was not night time, but the excellence of the light

weighed upon the weakness of their eyes. Ambrose also seems to agree, saying: “The incomprehensible splendour of the Divinity oppresses the senses of our body, nor can the corruption of human members bear the glory of God.” Nevertheless it seems more consonant with the text that this be expounded of natural sleep or bodily slumber: for it is straightway subjoined, “And waking,” etc. I think, therefore, that before they began to see the transfiguration or clarity of Christ, they were oppressed with sleep, Christ praying a good while before His transfiguration: He meanwhile being transfigured, the Apostles awoke, and then began to behold the splendour of Christ. Which the text also seems to insinuate. For it is subjoined: *“And waking, they saw his glory,”* that is, his magnificent clarity and his eminence above Moses and Elias, of whom it is subjoined, *“and the two men that stood with him”* on the top of the mountain. Hence Theophilus says: “Christ being at prayer, Peter is weighed down with sleep, because he was weak, and he fulfilled what was human; but being roused, he beholds His glory.”

It is asked how Peter and the other two Apostles then knew Moses and Elias, whom they had not seen before. To which some say: by the illumination of the aforesaid clarity. I think, however, that Moses and Elias turned most kindly to the Apostles, and looked on them lovingly, and made themselves known to them by some sign; or perhaps Christ, the Apostles hearing, addressed Moses and Elias by name, as friends meeting are wont to salute one another by name.

“And it came to pass, as they were departing from him” (Luke 9:33), namely Moses and Elias from Christ: because suddenly, when it pleased Christ, they vanished and returned to their own places; *“Peter said to Jesus: Master, it is good for us to be here,”* that is, it is very delightful and safe for us to abide with Thee on this mountain, that we may joyfully contemplate Thee in so great clarity and glory. Perhaps Peter said this also because he saw how the Scribes and Pharisees were laying snares for Christ; therefore he desired to remain in this safe place. Chrysostom, however, says that he said this because he heard from Moses and Elias that Christ was to suffer at Jerusalem. But it does not appear certain that Peter heard those words of Moses and Elias. For Luke has already written their words uttered, before he describes the sleep and rousing of Peter and the other Apostles. *“And let us make three tabernacles,” (p. 599) “one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.”* He asked that not six but three tabernacles be made, reckoning that he and his fellow-disciples could abide in the tabernacles of those three great ones, as servants dwell in the houses of their masters: yet he himself desired to abide in the tabernacle of his Master. He thought also that it was more desirable for Elias to abide on this mount with Christ than in the earthly paradise. These things Peter spoke as in vehement stupor and ecstasy of mind. Therefore it is subjoined: *“Not knowing what he said,”* that is, from the greatness of affection, admiration, delight, and devotion, not much or not sufficiently adverting to the sense of his own words, nor considering what should be considered. For he did not consider that if Christ should abide there, He would not preach nor work miracles, nor die for the salvation of the world, and so the salvation of men would be hindered. Besides, the place of final abode is to be sought not on earth but in heaven, nor is felicity to be placed in the contemplation of the clarity of Christ’s human nature, but of His divinity. — Mark, however, assigns another cause of this inadvertence of Peter, saying that he and the other disciples were sore afraid (Mark 9:5): for this too is natural to man, when he sees something unaccustomed, supernatural, and magnificent, to be afraid, as was said more fully of the fear of Zacharias (Luke 1:12). Excessive fear also, like other immoderate or predominant passions, greatly hinders the use of reason. For the soul vehemently occupied in the act of one power is said to be lessened and weakened in the use and act of the other powers.

“And as he spoke these things, there came a cloud” (Luke 9:34), bright, according to Matthew (Matt. 17:5): which seems to have been made supernaturally by angelic ministry, because it also descended lower than clouds are wont to descend, as will presently be plain; *“and overshadowed them,”* that is, tempered the light and covered them, namely Christ, Moses, and Elias, according to some. For Theophilus says: “Peter saying, ‘Let us make three tabernacles,’ the Lord fashions a tabernacle not made with hands, and enters into it with

the Prophets, to show that He is not less than the Father: for as in the Old Testament the Lord was said to dwell in a cloud (Exod. 40:34; 3 Kings 8:12), so now the cloud received the Lord, not dark but bright. For the obscurity of the law had passed." But since it was just now said, "It came to pass as they were departing from him," namely Moses and Elias, "Peter said, It is good for us to be here"; others expound this otherwise, saying that the cloud overshadowed, not Moses and Elias who had already gone, but the Apostles, tempering to them the splendour of the transfigured Christ for their beholding. Augustine also in the book On the Consent of the Evangelists testifies that these things happened after the departure of Moses and Elias.

"And they were afraid" — the Apostles — from so admirable a vision. Nor does it obstruct that they also rejoiced and were filled with the sweet affection of devotion, because about the same thing, according to diverse considerations, diverse affections are conceived. The Apostles, then, congratulated the glory of Christ, and were delighted at the sight of so great beauty: for which reason they desired to remain there. Such fear, however, is a sign and effect of human frailty, which cannot bear the sight of great things without dread. Therefore Gregory says: "Into what misery have we fallen, that we cannot bear the very good for which we were created?" *"As they entered into the cloud"* — namely Moses and Elias, as some say, into the cloud. But since it has been said that Moses and Elias had now gone away, it is rather referred to the Apostles: who are said to have entered the cloud because it covered and protected them, though they were terrified by so unaccustomed a covering.

"And a voice came out of the cloud, saying: This is my beloved Son" (Luke 9:35). This was diligently expounded above (Luke 3:22). For Christ is the Son of God the Father, coeternal, consubstantial, and coequal with the Father, infinitely beloved by the Father, inasmuch as He is God; inasmuch as He is man, He is more loved by the Father, *(p. 600)* or by the whole most blessed Trinity, than the whole universe of creatures taken together. *"Hear ye him,"* with the ears of the heart and of the body, obeying Him in all things, since He is the way, the truth, and the life, and no man cometh to the Father but by Him (John 14:6). For He is the supreme master and the saving mediator. And if they sinned gravely who heard not Moses, the servant of God, nor obeyed his commands, how enormously do they sin who attend not to the only-begotten Son of God, nor venerate Him by obedience!

Finally, a like apparition and testimony was made at Christ's baptism and at the transfiguration. But there the Holy Ghost was shown in the form of a dove, to show Christ's innocence (Luke 3:22); here, however, in a shining cloud, by which the illumination of the Holy Ghost and the gracious refreshment from the heat of vices are designated. Hence Bede asserts: "As when the Lord was baptized in the Jordan, so also when He was glorified on the mount, the mystery of the whole Trinity is declared, because His glory, which we confess in baptism, we shall see in the resurrection. Nor in vain did the Holy Ghost appear here in a bright cloud, there in a dove, because he who now with simple heart keeps the faith he has received, will then in the light of open vision behold what he has believed." Again, since Christ's baptism was the figure and cause of our regeneration in grace, and His transfiguration the figure and cause of our clarification in glory, it was fitting that in both places testimony should be given to Christ by the Father for the confirmation of our faith.

A dove, in fine, which is of the earth, more fittingly prefigures the grace of the present life; a cloud, however, appearing from heaven, the glory of the heavenly life: therefore at the baptism a dove, at the transfiguration a cloud, was shown.

Moreover, the Prince of the Apostles speaks illustriously on this matter in his Canonical Epistle: "For we have not by following artificially devised fables, made known to you the power and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ… For he received from God the Father honour and glory, this voice coming down to him from the excellent glory: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him" (2 Pet. 1:16–17). Hence John also writes: "He that believeth not the Son, maketh him a liar, because he believeth not in the testimony which God hath testified of his Son" (1 John 5:10).

Lastly, Thomas in the Third Part says: “In the transfiguration and the baptism of Christ the voice of the Father was heard, ‘This is my beloved Son,’ to show that Christ is the natural Son of God: of whose filiation the faithful obtain a certain likeness by grace, which is given in Baptism, and by the light of glory, which was signified in His transfiguration: whence the Holy Ghost appeared in a bright cloud at the transfiguration. For in the future glory all the Saints shall shine as the sun” (Matt. 13:43).

“And whilst the voice was uttered” (Luke 9:36), the Father’s voice, which is said to have been formed by angelic ministry, *“Jesus was found alone,”* that is, bodily separated from Moses and Elias. It is not, however, to be understood that Moses and Elias remained with Jesus until the utterance of this voice, because, as has been said, they had gone away before, lest the voice be believed to have been made to one of them: but, as Matthew says, when that magnificent and trumpet-like voice was made, the disciples hearing it fell on their faces, and were very much afraid; and Jesus came and touched them, and said to them, “Arise, and fear not”; and then Jesus was found by them alone, and the clarity of His countenance ceased, so that they could behold Him with eyes unscorched (Matt. 17:6–8).

“And they held their peace, and told no man in those days any of these things which they had seen”: for, as Matthew and Mark describe, as they came down from the mountain Christ charged them, “Tell the vision to no man, till the Son of man be risen from the dead” (Matt. 17:9; Mark 9:8). Of this command there are many causes. The first, that Christ might teach us to conceal our own perfection or excellence while we live here, unless perchance a very fitting cause require the opposite. The second, that He might give to devout persons an example of not readily, nor without reasonable cause, manifesting their revelations. Whence Paul too described his rapture only after fourteen years (2 Cor. 12:2). *(p. 601)* The third, lest this vision on account of its greatness be thought incredible, and so others by not believing should sin. The fourth, lest at the time of the passion those who before could be edified by the relation of this vision should be more gravely scandalized. The Apostles also, by faithfully and obediently keeping silence, left us an example of holding in secret what is secretly intimated to us or committed to us to be concealed: nay, to do the opposite is against fidelity and by its kind a mortal sin, according to Thomas. Wherefore in Ecclesiasticus it is written: “He that discovereth the secret of a friend loseth credit” (Ecclus. 27:17); and, “To disclose the secrets of a friend is the wound of an unhappy soul” (Ecclus. 27:24). In Proverbs also Solomon says: “He that walketh deceitfully revealeth secrets; but he that is faithful concealeth the thing committed to him by his friend” (Prov. 11:13). Damascene moreover says that Christ therefore commanded the vision to be kept silent, because He knew the other disciples were as yet imperfect, as not yet having obtained the full infusion of the Holy Ghost: therefore they would perhaps have been immoderately saddened, if they had known themselves shut out from so most splendid a vision; and lest the traitor be roused to envy.

Next the wonderful cure of the possessed is described. *“And it came to pass the day following”* (Luke 9:37), *“when they came down from the mountain,”* namely Jesus with Peter, John, and James, from the mountain on which the transfiguration of Christ was made. These words sound as if Jesus and these three Apostles had passed the night on the mountain, as is written above: “He went out into a mountain to pray, and he passed the whole night in the prayer of God” (Luke 6:12). *“A great multitude met him,”* which was gathered about the other nine Apostles; and, as is had in Mark, seeing Jesus, running to him they saluted him (Mark 9:14–15). As Christ went up the mountain with the disciples to pray and to do divine things, then returned with the disciples to the crowds that he might fulfil the works of fraternal charity; so prelates with their officials and good sons ought often to flee to secret places, that they may give themselves to the acts of the contemplative life, and again return to the works of the active life, that they may help their neighbours. If, however, any of the subjects, having tasted the sweetness of the contemplative life from beholding the beauty of the uncreated, wish to withdraw their prelate from the holy works of the active life, and to remain with him in the exercises of contemplation, they are not to be acceded to, but to be induced to descent, when charity requires it.

"And behold a man among the crowd cried out, saying: Master, I beseech thee" (Luke 9:38), that is, I ask thee by sacred things: and obsecration is the most worthy kind of prayer, and most efficacious for obtaining; *"look upon my son,"* that is, deign to behold him with the eye of piety and succour. This prayer was one of probity and sagacity, because he spoke in general terms, and confessed the look of Christ to be saving. *"For he is my only one"*: therefore I am the more to be pitied, in that I lack the solace of other offspring, and this son is so dear and necessary to me. *"And lo, a spirit"* (Luke 9:39), evil, namely the devil: who from the subtlety of his nature is called a spirit, and by reason of sin, a devil; *"taketh him,"* that is, invades and besets him, *"and suddenly he crieth out,"* this my son, from sudden and violent pain; or the spirit crieth out through him, or makes him cry out; *"and he throweth him down,"* that is, prostrates him, according to that of Matthew: "He falleth often into the fire, and often into the water" (Matt. 17:14); *"and teareth him, so that he foameth,"* that is, as it were breaks his members, vexing, wearying, and weakening him on every side, so that he makes him foam, according to that of Mark: "Wheresoever he taketh him, he dasheth him, and he foameth, and gnasheth with the teeth, and pineth away" (Mark 9:17); *"and with much ado departeth from him,"* that is, often only with great difficulty recedes from my son and ceases from his vexation, *"bruising him,"* that is, afflicting him most grievously, in such alternate departure. By which words it is intimated that this youth was not continually possessed, but at certain hours, like a madman: therefore it is written in Matthew: "Because he is a lunatic, and suffereth much" (Matt. 17:14). They are called lunatics, indeed, because according to the lunations or at the time of new moons they incur frenzy. *(p. 602)*

"And I desired thy disciples to cast him out" (Luke 9:40), that is, the nine Apostles, who, thou being on the mountain, remained with the crowd, *"and they could not."* Some say that this man falsely accuses the Apostles, so that the failure of the casting out of the devil was not on the part of the Apostles, but of this man, namely on account of his unbelief: and this would seem sufficiently defensible if only the words of Luke and Mark were regarded; but looking at what is written in Matthew, the opposite is found. Therefore it must be said that this failure was partly from the imperfection of the disciples' faith, partly from the imperfection of the faith of this father of the possessed. Matthew says: "Then came the disciples to Jesus secretly, and said: Why could not we cast him out? Jesus said to them: Because of your unbelief" (Matt. 17:18–19). In Mark, however, Jesus speaks to this father: "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And immediately the father of the boy crying out, with tears said: I do believe, Lord: help my unbelief" (Mark 9:22–23). It is plain therefore that he had faith (otherwise he would not have asked in this matter, first the Apostles, afterward Christ), but imperfect.

"And Jesus answering, said: O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you?" (Luke 9:41). This Christ speaks to the father of the boy, as some say, and to the other unbelieving Jews. Others say that He spoke these things not to the father of the boy, but only to the hardened Jews. Scripture, however, speaks of a twofold generation, namely good and evil: so that the whole body of the elect living virtuously is named the good generation: of which it is said in the Psalm, "This is the generation of them that seek the Lord, of them that seek the face of the God of Jacob" (Ps. 23:6). The reprobate and vicious men are called the evil generation: of which in Deuteronomy, "A wicked and perverse generation" (Deut. 32:5); and in Matthew, "All these things shall come upon this generation" (Matt. 23:36). So the generation is called faithless as to the intellect; perverse as to the affection, as turned away from God and from the way of truth and equity. Moreover, Christ spoke these words not from culpable indignation, but from the affection and zeal of justice, which at times is called good indignation, namely against sins. — So He says: "How long shall I be with you," by bodily presence, "and suffer you," that is, your infidelity and perversity, which I detest, and for which I am sad? This He said, insinuating that He would soon depart from this world by His passion, and that He desired to return to the Father; also that He utterly abominated the vices of men. He did not, however, utter these words as impatient or overcome by weariness, but declaring the gravity of their infidelity, in that after so many of His teachings, examples, and miracles, they were not converted.

"Bring hither thy son." This Christ commanded the father of the possessed, not that He could not cure him absent, but that for the edification of others the miracle might be done publicly. *"And as he was coming to him"* (Luke 9:42), *"the devil threw him down,"* that is, cast him to the ground, *"and tore him"*: as has been expounded. Christ, however, permitted this demon to exercise this his cruelty on that boy, that the malignity of the demon might shine out the more to the crowd, and so at least from fear of punishments they might correct their life; likewise that the greatness of the miracle might be more clearly shown to the honour of God; and to insinuate that the devil then more strongly tempts men when he sees that they wish to correct their life, and that he must be driven from them. *"And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit"* (Luke 9:43), namely the devil, for his great ferocity: because although he did not enter the youth without divine permission, yet he vexed him cruelly and with perverse intention. In Mark it is more openly written: "Jesus threatened the unclean spirit, saying to him: Deaf and dumb spirit, I command thee, go out of him, and enter no more into him" (Mark 9:24). From which it is plain that the devil was deaf and dumb. The devil is called deaf and dumb from the effect, because he makes the one possessed by him deaf and dumb. But concerning this a question arises, because it has been said that this boy, seized by the demon, presently cried out. *(p. 603)* And it must be answered that he made him dumb, that is, unable to speak, not to cry out confusedly.

"And healed the boy", by casting out the demon, and by healing the boy of his bodily infirmity, restoring to him also hearing and speech. And so four signs were wrought at once in the same: when the demoniac is freed, the sick is healed, the dumb speaks, and the deaf hears. But these three latter signs stood to the first by a kind of concomitance, since this youth had not from a natural cause the defect of speaking or hearing, but the demon indisposed the organs of his senses and powers, and by vexing induced the sickness: therefore the devil being expelled, the other inconveniences would have ceased little by little. But Christ made them cease supernaturally, rescuing the boy from them more quickly than nature could have. For Mark testifies: "And crying out, and greatly tearing him, he went out of him; and he became as dead, so that many said: He is dead. But Jesus taking him by the hand, lifted him up, and he arose" (Mark 9:25–26). *"And restored him to his father"*: so that his father possessed him who a little before was obsessed by the demon, and taken from his father.

"And all were astonished at the mighty power of God" (Luke 9:44), that is, at so magnificent a sign showing divine power, so imperially wrought, they greatly marvelled: nay from consideration of the effect they were moved to contemplation and admiration of the cause, so that they admired the immensity of the divine power. And this is the chief fruit of this miracle, that from the sight of it men be led to the veneration of God. Although Christ, the author of this miracle, was true God, yet they did not know this, but believed that He did it by divine power. The Saviour also says in Matthew that this kind of demons is not cast out but by prayer and fasting (Matt. 17:20): which was expounded there.

According to the mystical understanding, Christ ascends to the perfect, illumining them by the grace of contemplation; to the imperfect and the crowds He descends, while He instructs them in the easier things, and sets before them and commands lighter things, those who cannot grasp the high. Further, by the lunatic possessed, deaf and dumb, is understood any great sinner: who, like the moon, is changed, and in vices now grows, now decreases; who is deaf in heart to obediently hearing what concerns his salvation, and dumb in devoutly praising God, wholesomely confessing, instantly praying. Such a one the devil seizes, by inducing him to love of sin and consent; and makes him cry out, by the intent affection of sinning, by murmuring, presumption, and the garrulity of impious words. He throws him down, by precipitating him into diverse vices; tears him, by the corruption of inordinate affections and evil thoughts; makes him gnash, by anger, impatience, and rancour; makes him foam, by luxury; makes him dry up, by indevotion and omission of good works; scarcely departs, by holding the sinner in vicious custom; bruises him also, by wounding natural goods, or infecting the powers, and rendering them weak to good. *(p. 604)*

Article XXV — Elucidation of the Remaining Part of this Ninth Chapter: “And while all wondered at all the things He did”

What is wisely counselled in Ecclesiasticus, Christ shows Himself to have fulfilled, who, while all were magnifying Him, attends to His future passion and contempt, and foretells it to His Apostles, as the Evangelist proceeds. *“But while all wondered at all the things he did”* (Luke 9:44), that is, all who saw His miracles, wondering at all the marvels He wrought: for not less admirable was His manner of acting than His miraculous deeds, in that He wrought miracles so powerfully and imperiously; *“he said to his disciples,”* namely the Apostles, to whom as familiars and friends he revealed his secrets; to whom also He had said, “To you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God” (Luke 8:10): *“Lay you up in your hearts these words,”* not only in books, as many do, nor only in the hearts of others, as those who preach what they do not fulfil, and keep them as a deposit (2 Tim. 1:14), namely the mystery of the passion. *“For it shall come to pass that the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men,”* that is, of those who follow sensuality. Whence what He says here, “Men,” sounds in a bad sense, as when the Apostle says: “Whereas there is among you envying and contention, are you not carnal, and walk according to man?” (1 Cor. 3:3). At times, however, in the Scriptures this name “Man” sounds in a good sense, and insinuates virtue, as when Paul testifies: “If, according to man,” that is, rationally, “I fought with beasts at Ephesus” (1 Cor. 15:32), that is, I disputed against bestial men at Ephesus. The reason of this diversity is that although man receives his species from rational perfection, so that he is properly called man who follows reason, and human what is pious and rational: nevertheless the greater part of men follow not reason but sensuality, or concupiscences and its other passions: so that he is called man who is carnal, and human what is erroneous and frail, as we say, “It is human to fail and to sin.”

“But they understood not this word” (Luke 9:45), *“and it was hid from them”*, that is, it was concealed from their understandings and unknown. This is the veil of ignorance, of which the Apostle says: “The veil is upon their heart” (2 Cor. 3:15). *“That they perceived it not”*, that is, they did not taste, nor penetrate, the sense of these words. In which their great simplicity is manifest, since the Prophets so evidently foretold the passion of Christ, and Christ Himself so clearly predicted it. For He not only uttered the words which Luke here recites, but, as Matthew and Mark have, added to these words: “And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall rise again” (Matt. 17:22; Mark 9:30). But the words of Bede are to be noted: “This ignorance of the disciples sprang not so much from slowness as from love: for being as yet carnal and ignorant of the mystery of the cross, they could not believe that He whom they knew to be the Son of God was to be killed. And because He was wont to speak by figures and parables, even what He foretold of His betrayal they thought signified something else figuratively.” But the contrary seems to be what is written in Matthew, “And they were troubled exceedingly,” namely on hearing these words (Matt. 17:22): which would not have been, unless they had understood Him to be speaking of His passion. To which it seems to be answered that some of them understood these words in some measure, though not fully: for a little before Peter, James, and John heard on the mountain Moses and Elias conferring about the passion of Christ. *(p. 605)*

“And they feared to ask him concerning this word”, that is, what this discourse meant. The cause of which the expositors assign: because they had already heard Peter sharply rebuked by Christ when he persuaded the opposite to His foretelling that He would be killed, saying: “Lord, be it far from thee, this shall not be unto thee”; for which he heard from Christ: “Go behind me, Satan, thou art a scandal unto me; because thou savourest not the things that are of God, but that are of men” (Matt. 16:22–23). If therefore for this cause they feared to ask Christ about the understanding of these words, it appears that they surely considered that He was speaking of His passion. To which I think it must be said that some of them suspected this very thing, but were in doubt, not fully understanding: therefore they desired to ask, but feared to be rebuked.

“And there entered a thought into them, which of them should be greater” (Luke 9:46), that is, they began to think of this, either from diabolical suggestion, as some say, or from the vanity of human infirmity: and this

was a certain temptation of ambition, because they were solicitous in mind about prelacy. And as Chrysostom says, Christ often permitted His disciples to err in thinking, speaking, and acting, that from their error He might take occasion of teaching the rule of equity. Cyril also says: “The devil lies in wait in many ways for those who love the best life, and those whom he cannot overcome by carnal allurements he labours to cast down by desire of vain glory.” Further, the occasion of this temptation was, according to Theophilus, that they could not cure the aforesaid demoniac: they altercating about this, and one saying, “It was not through my impotence but another’s that he could not be cured”: so that from this a contention was kindled, which of them was greater. Chrysostom assigns another cause, saying that, having heard of the death of their Master, they began to think who, he being slain, should preside over them. Others give other causes: namely that the nine Apostles saw three led apart into the mountain, and suffered something human; and again because they saw Peter honoured by Christ before the rest in many things. Whence they also often incurred this temptation. For first they thought of it, as is said here. Second, they disputed of it, according to that of Mark: “He asked them: What did you treat of in the way? But they held their peace, for in the way they had disputed among them, which of them should be the greatest” (Mark 9:32–33). Third, they proposed the disputed matter to Christ to be determined, according to that of Matthew: “The disciples came to Jesus, saying: Who, thinkest thou, is the greater in the kingdom of heaven?” (Matt. 18:1). And notwithstanding their rebuke and Christ’s answer and information, yet a fourth time also at the last Supper they contended on this matter, as is had below: “And there was also a strife amongst them, which of them should seem to be the greater” (Luke 22:24). — So great an imperfection of wisdom and virtues Christ permitted to be in His dearest disciples, namely the Apostles, not without the greatest dispensation and a most reasonable and most useful cause. For from this the Christian faith is chiefly confirmed, that those first preachers of it, until after the slaying of their Master, were of so great imperfection, and suddenly were made of so great perfection in all wisdom, virtue, and constancy, that it is most certain it could not have been done save divinely.

Lastly, even among the poor of Christ, among those who have renounced the world by solemn vows, among cloistered religious, this folly of ambition is found: from which, according to Gregory, innumerable faults finally arise. Which unless the religious root out utterly, let him know that he will profit little or nothing, and will never come to true perfection. Such madness, therefore, as an infinite folly and the poison of all progress, let us wholly cast away. *(p. 606)*

“But Jesus seeing” (Luke 9:47), by mental vision, *“the thoughts of their heart”*: which He saw both by the divine and uncreated intellect and by the human intellect; *“took a child and set him by him.”* That child some say was St. Martial, one of the seventy-two disciples. *“And said to them”* (Luke 9:48), wishing to heal their interior, to inform their ignorance, to implant virtues, Jesus, who by discerning their thoughts, and by proving with word and deed that He had seen them, showed that He is God: for both Solomon and Peter in the Acts say, “Thou, O Lord, only knowest the hearts of all” (3 Kings 8:39; Acts 1:24). *“Whosoever shall receive this child”*, that is, shall lodge or charitably treat this innocent child, or any poor person designated by him, *“in my name”*, that is, therefore because he is faithful and belonging to me, and for love of me, and to the honour of my name (as the Apostle teaches: “All whatsoever you do in word or in work, all things do ye in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God and the Father by him” [Col. 3:17]), *“receiveth me”*, because it is so grateful to me as if it were done to my person, and I reckon it done to myself: according to that of Matthew, “As long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me” (Matt. 25:40). *“And whosoever shall receive me”*, in the manner just said, or even by spiritual indwelling and obediential subjection, receiveth him the One who sent me, namely God the Father, and His gracious indwelling. The Father also reckons the honour shown to His Son as bestowed on Himself. The Son also protests: “I and the Father are one” (John 10:30). And in John He says: “If any one love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make our abode with him” (John 14:23). We receive God, therefore, when we receive His servants and poor for His sake, because then we merit charity and grace, or an increase of charity and grace: and by receiving charity and grace, or their increase, we are said to

receive God. God also reckons as done to Himself what is done out of charity to His poor little ones and ministers: nay, He judges an injury inflicted on them as done to Himself, as He declares through Zacharias: “He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of my eye” (Zach. 2:8). And in Proverbs Solomon says: “He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker” (Prov. 14:31). By these words Christ teaches that not prelacy, but humility and poverty, are to be sought.

It can also be expounded thus: *“Whosoever shall receive this child in my name”*, that is, shall receive in himself for my sake the properties and form of this innocent youth, and imitate them, *“receiveth me”*, that is, spiritually puts me on, and is truly united to me: as the Apostle says, “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 13:14). *“And whosoever shall receive me, receiveth him that sent me”*, because in him the Father abides by great grace. Besides, to be sent befits Christ according to His humanity, not only by the Father, but also by the Holy Ghost, nay by the whole most blessed Trinity, even by Himself according as He is God, as was said above. Whence in Isaias Christ says: “And now the Lord God hath sent me, and his Spirit” (Isa. 48:16).

Then Christ corroborates the aforesaid word. *“For he that is the lesser among you all”*, that is, more humble than the rest, and reputing himself the lesser or viler, or subjecting himself more profoundly to God, *“he is the greater”*, that is, more perfect, or more sublime in the gifts of grace. For God gives grace to the humble (James 4:6); and so much the greater as they humble themselves the more. For by humbling themselves and submitting themselves to the omnipotence of God, they make their minds worthy and fit for receiving the charisms of graces. Therefore Peter exhorts: “Be humbled under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in the time of visitation” (1 Pet. 5:6).

Having heard these praises of humility, John, knowing that he had rebuked a certain man, and fearing that he had not done so humbly enough, said what is subjoined. *“And John answering”* (Luke 9:49), that is, speaking suitably and correspondingly to the words of Christ, *“said: Master, (p. 607) we saw a certain man casting out devils in thy name”*, that is, by the invocation, adjuration, or expression of thy name or person. Such were those of whom it is read in the Acts, who said: “I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth” (Acts 19:13). *“And we forbade him”* to do this further, as unworthy, *“because he followeth not with us”*, that is, followeth not thee with us, either by bodily communion, or by spiritually leaving all things, or in both ways.

“And Jesus said to him: Forbid him not” (Luke 9:50), nor others like him, from such an office. *“For he that is not against you, is for you”*, that is, whoever teaches or does anything not contrary to my doctrine, inasmuch as he is such, is on our side; nor is he to be forbidden such an act, because one truth is confirmed by another. So this man also, because he casts out devils in my name, glorifies my name, and consequently can hardly speak evil of me. Whence in Mark it is read that Christ said: “There is no man that doth a miracle in my name, and can soon speak ill of me” (Mark 9:38). Moreover to cast out demons, as also miraculously to cure infirmities and to prophesy, is a gift of grace freely given: therefore common to good and evil, nor does it require dignity of life in him that does it. Therefore on that of Matthew, “Many will say to me in that day: Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name?” (Matt. 7:22), the Gloss asserts: “To work miracles, to prophesy, and to cast out demons, is sometimes not the merit of him who does these things; but the invocation of the name of Christ does it, to the condemnation of him who invokes, or for the utility of those who see or hear; and though those who do it be despised, God, whose invocation chiefly does it, is honoured.”

Further, if John thought that man was to be forbidden from the casting out of demons because he did not follow Christ bodily as the Apostles, it was erroneous, since neither did John the Baptist so follow Christ. Elsewhere, however, the Saviour says: “He that is not with me is against me” (Matt. 12:30). But this is not to be understood of bodily presence, but of spiritual consent. Hence Bede says: “In heretics and bad Catholics we ought not to detest and forbid the common sacraments in which they are with us, although they follow not the Lord with us.” Finally philosophers and Saracens say many things consonant with our faith; and the

apostle Paul takes the testimonies of certain poets in confirmation of his own sayings (Tit. 1:12; Acts 17:28). So too the testimonies of the wise Sibyls are alleged by the holy Fathers for the superabundant strengthening of the faith.

"And it came to pass, when the days of his assumption were accomplished" (Luke 9:51), that is, drew near, that is, the time of His passion, or ascension. The time of the passion is called the time of the assumption because by the passion He was to be taken from the world to the right hand of the Father, according to that of John: "Before the festival day of the pasch, Jesus knowing that his hour was come, that he should pass out of this world to the Father" (John 13:1). And below He says: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory?" (Luke 24:26). *"He steadfastly set his face"*, that is, directed it stably and firmly; nor did He turn hither and thither, but with constant and undaunted mind took the road toward Jerusalem, as is subjoined: *"to go to Jerusalem"*: because there the mystery of the passion was to be accomplished, and there the true Lamb was to be offered, where the typical lamb was immolated.

"And he sent messengers before his face" (Luke 9:52), namely James and John. *"And going, they entered into a city of the Samaritans"*, as the Master commanded them: whose name is not here expressed, but it was some city meeting him on the way, and some say that it was the metropolis of the region of Samaria, which is called Samaria, because Samaria is at times the name of a city, at times of a region; *"to prepare for him"*, namely for their Master, an entrance or lodging, and to exhort the Samaritans to receive Christ and His doctrine: as in the following chapter *(p. 608)* it is read that He sent the seventy-two disciples two and two into every city and place whither He was to come (Luke 10:1).

"And they received him not" (Luke 9:53), the Samaritans: either in that He did not enter their city, as Theophilus says; or that they neither met Him reverently, nor gave Him audience or lodging; *"because his face was of one going to Jerusalem"*, that is, by the disposition of His countenance He showed that He was proceeding toward Jerusalem. Or the Samaritans perceived this, and therefore refused to receive Him: First, as Bede asserts, because the Samaritans did not use the Jews, as is plain in John (John 4:9): as neither do the Egyptians, according to that, "It is unlawful for the Egyptians to eat with the Hebrews" (Gen. 43:32). Second, because the Samaritans detested those going to Jerusalem for the sake of prayer, saying that the due place of prayer was with them. Wherefore the Samaritan woman objected to Christ, saying: "Our fathers adored on this mountain, and you say that at Jerusalem is the place where men must adore" (John 4:20). Further, the Saviour, foreknowing all things, although He foreknew that the Samaritans would receive neither Him nor His messengers, yet sent to them, because, as far as in Him lay, He wished to allure that people to better things: as He also preached to very many of the Jews, whom He knew would be made worse by His preaching.

"And when his disciples James and John had seen this" (Luke 9:54), the guilt of the Samaritans, *"they said: Lord, wilt thou that we command"*, that is, is it pleasing to thee that by commanding we cause *"fire to come down from heaven"*, the aerial heaven, by divine power, *"and consume them"*, on account of their so great excess against Thee? According to Ambrose, they said this out of good zeal and love of justice, knowing that this was reputed unto justice to Phinees, who transfixed the fornicators (Num. 25:7–8; Ps. 105:30–31), and to Elias, who obtained fire from heaven to avenge an injury to himself, or rather to punish the sin of those deriding him (4 Kings 1:10–12). But Bede affirms that the Apostles, still rude, said this from an affection of vengeance. This also seems to have been presumption, that they, being as yet of so great imperfection, usurped the power and imitation of so perfect a man and most illustrious prophet as Elias: to whom nevertheless afterward they were in no wise inferior in wisdom, power, and perfection.

"And turning" (Luke 9:55), that is, directing His countenance to them, or turning from pious address to rigorous rebuke, *"he rebuked them, saying: You know not of what spirit you are"*; that is, you do not weigh by what spirit you are moved, namely whether by the Holy Ghost, or your own; or you do not advert to the disposition of your own soul, darkened by your own passion, and thinking you speak with good zeal what

you speak with indiscreet, or vicious, or passionate and perturbed zeal. Passions, indeed, obscure the judgment of reason, and to the angry it appears that all things are lawful to him which passion suggests. Therefore Seneca says: "To thee angry, that is, while thou art angry, I will that nothing be lawful, because while thou art angry thou thinkest all things lawful to thee." These Apostles, moreover, because they were personally sent to the Samaritans, and because they were kinsmen of Christ, admitted to His special familiarity, therefore beyond the other Apostles were zealous for Christ and so spoke.

"The Son of man came not to destroy souls" (Luke 9:56), by extinguishing bodily life, and straightway tearing souls existing in mortal sins from the body and damning them, while men sin: therefore He wills not to avenge His injury at once: whose patience and meekness His disciples ought to follow; *"but to save"*, patiently awaiting their penance, nay exhorting them to penance by Himself and His ministers. Like to this is that of John: "For God sent not his Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world may be saved by him" (John 3:17). And Paul: "Christ Jesus came into this world to save sinners" (1 Tim. 1:15). Hence Ambrose says: "Not always is vengeance to be taken on those who have sinned: because sometimes clemency profits more, for thee unto patience, and for the lapsed unto correction, as the Samaritans themselves soon after Christ's ascension believed, as is had in the Acts (Acts 8:5 ff.)." *(p. 609)*

Moreover Titus testifies: "Christ is not moved against the Samaritans, to show that perfect virtue has no zeal for vengeance, nor is there any wrath where the fulness of charity is, nor is infirmity to be shut out, but helped: far from the religious be indignation, far from the magnanimous be the desire of vengeance."

"And it came to pass, as they walked" (Luke 9:57), namely Jesus and His disciples, *"in the way, a certain man said to him."* As is proved from what is written by Matthew (Matt. 8:19 ff.), this did not happen immediately after what was immediately preceding: therefore Luke does not express the time, nor determine the way, intimating that he does not keep the order of the history. *"I will follow thee whithersoever thou shalt go"*, that is, I will cleave to thee in all things, in prosperity and adversity. But he did not say this with sincere and simple heart, but falsely and feignedly, as is gathered from Christ's answer.

"And Jesus said to him" (Luke 9:58), beholding the secrets of hearts: *"The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests"*: which according to the letter is plain, since foxes dwell in their dens and birds breed in nests; *"but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head"*, that is, I have chosen a most poor life in this world, so that I have neither a house of my own, nor any temporal place of rest. From which reason it is gathered that this man approached Christ with a perverse intention. For he saw that Christ conferred on His disciples the power of working miracles: therefore he wished to become His disciple, at least by bodily imitation, that he too might obtain the aforesaid power from Christ, and by its use gain honours and the riches of the world; or that he might induce Christ to the cure of very many, and so require gains from them, as Giezi from Naaman the Syrian (4 Kings 5:20 ff.). With a like intention Simon Magus spoke to Peter and John: "Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I shall lay my hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost" (Acts 8:19). Finally, according to Matthew, this dissembler had been a scribe (Matt. 8:19): whence by his skill he trusted that he would gain very much. But Christ answered him the words set down, as if to say: Since I am of such poverty, why seekest thou to follow me for the gathering of riches? Or He says this with this intention: If thou wilt follow me, thou must voluntarily and freely follow my poverty, and avoid all cupidity.

It is asked how the Saviour says that He possesses nothing in this world, when yet in John He protests: "The Father loveth the Son, and he hath given all things into his hand" (John 3:35). But the Virgin Mary also, who was an only child to her parents on her father's side, received house and wealth from them. And it must be answered that to Christ according to the assumed nature, from the beginning of the incarnation, power and dominion over every creature was given by the Father, but He did not use this power as to actual possession and use of temporal things; nay He chose a most poor life: First, that by the merit of His poverty we may be enriched with the goods of grace in the present and the goods of glory in the future. Wherefore the Apostle says: "Whereas he was rich, he became poor for your sakes, that through his poverty you might be rich" (2

Cor. 8:9). Likewise, that not only by words but by deeds He might teach that the future life is to be sought: which He did chiefly by despising all temporal things most perfectly. Again, that He might preach the way of perfection by word and work, He "began to do and to teach" (Acts 1:1). Since therefore He came to teach the contempt of all mundane and transitory things, it befitted Him to abdicate all of them most fully. Hence Jeremias admiring Christ's poverty says: "Why wilt thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man turning in to lodge?" (Jer. 14:8). Lastly, the Virgin bearer of Christ, when Christ began His preaching, if she possessed anything temporal, is believed to have sold it and given to the poor. For she fulfilled the counsels of Christ no less than the Apostles who left all things (Matt. 19:27).

The words set down can also be expounded metaphorically thus: *"The foxes"*, that is, dissemblers and the crafty, *"have holes"*, that is, devised deceits and deep duplicities, *(p. 610)* in which they lurk and hide their wickedness, *"and the birds of the air"*, that is, the ambitious and arrogant, lifting themselves on high, *"have nests"*, that is, prelacies or earthly dignities, in which they finally rest in heart, cleaving to them more than to the immutable good; *"but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head"*, in such things, namely.

"But he said to another: Follow me" (Luke 9:59). This other had already begun to be a disciple of Christ, according to Matthew (Matt. 8:21): therefore Christ invites him to a perfect following of Himself, that, all things left, he might cleave to Him perfectly. *"But he said: Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father."* For he thought himself bound to this by the precept of the law, which commanded to honour parents (Exod. 20:12): nay, to bury the dead is one of the works of mercy, for which also Tobias is specially commended by the angel's mouth (Tob. 12:12). *"And Jesus said to him"* (Luke 9:60): *"Let the dead bury their dead"*: let those dead in soul by mortal sin or infidelity bury their dead by the death of nature; or, the dead, by that death by which they too are dead, that is, let such bury one another at a fitting time. *"But go thou, and preach the kingdom of God"*, that is, preach the beatitude of the heavenly kingdom. Finally, by these words Christ does not simply forbid the honouring and burial of parents, and the work of piety, but in a case, to insinuate that less virtuous works are to be omitted that more virtuous works may be done, and that spiritual and divine things are to be preferred to bodily and earthly, when necessity or charity requires nothing else. Therefore, when parents can have sustenance or burial from elsewhere, the divine, heavenly, and spiritual work is not to be omitted for their sustenance or burial, especially if the necessity of this work be great, so that by its omission or delay souls are imperilled.

"And another said to Jesus" (Luke 9:61): which other some say was a disciple of Christ, but imperfect: *"I will follow thee, Lord"*, henceforth to cleave to thee perfectly; *"but let me first take my leave of them that are at my house."* So also Eliseus, called by Elias: "Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee" (3 Kings 19:20). Moreover some say that this man wished to renounce his household or kinsmen or parents, merely bidding them farewell and taking leave of them, that they should not seek him; others say that he wished to ask their consent, and consult them on this matter.

"Jesus said to him" (Luke 9:62): *"No man putting his hand to the plough"*, that is, a penitential or better life, by which the field of the heart is tilled by the extirpation of vices, and the spiritual engrafting and fecundation of grace, and the production of good works, undertaking it, *"and looking back"*, that is, falling away from the good begun, and returning in mind to secular things, as the children of Israel returned in heart to Egypt (Exod. 14:11–12), *"is fit for the kingdom of God"*, that is, worthy of the felicity of the heavenly kingdom: for "he that shall persevere to the end, he shall be saved" (Matt. 10:22), and perseverance alone is crowned. Hence of such Peter speaks: "It had been better for them not to have known the way of justice, than after they have known it to turn back" (2 Pet. 2:21). For there has befallen them that of the true proverb: "The dog is returned to his vomit; and, The sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire" (2 Pet. 2:22). By these words, as Gorran asserts, Christ does not reprobate the act of renouncing one's household, but the danger of going to them. Christ also says this to teach how dangerous is delay in serving God; and it is especially dangerous to return to one's own, for the sake of consulting them on entering religion, unless

perchance they be spiritual. The good work begun is therefore to be continued, and what we have left for God we must not again desire, as the ambitious and vain do, who, when they have long been in the cloister, are so foolishly fired for offices, and most desire again to visit, behold, and handle the carnal things which they left for Christ. Whence Bede also says: “If a disciple about to follow the Lord is blamed because he wishes to renounce his house: what will become of those who, from no motive of utility, *(p. 611)* often visit the houses of those whom they have in the world?” Or thus: “No man,” etc., “is fit for the kingdom of God”, that is, worthy to preach it to others.

By these words, therefore, Christ rebukes as truly foolish those who, on account of an unnecessary disposition or provision of their own affairs or those of parents or other kinsmen, omit, or dangerously and detrimentally defer, entrance into religion or perfection of life. So ineffably great is the business of our salvation that all vain and frivolous things are to be spurned without delay, nor is any portion of time to be spent fruitlessly or negligently. Therefore Scripture says: “Delay not to be converted to the Lord, and defer it not from day to day. For his wrath shall come on a sudden, and in the time of vengeance he will destroy thee” (Ecclus. 5:8–9).

Tome 12: Luke 10–24

Luke 10: Seventy-Two, Good Samaritan, Martha and Mary

Article XXVI — Elucidation of the Tenth Chapter: “And after these things the Lord appointed also other seventy-two”

(p. 1) In the preceding chapter the instruction, sending forth and strengthening of the Apostles for preaching was described; now the instruction, confirmation and appointment for preaching of the lesser disciples is described. *“And after these things”* (Luke 10:1), which were recited in the preceding chapter, *“the Lord appointed”*, that is, showed forth openly those whom He had chosen inwardly, and distinguished them from the rest, and honoured them with a certain special grace of His discipleship, *“the Lord Jesus Christ”*, who, inasmuch as He is God, is the supreme and universal Lord of all by authority, nay with the Father and the Holy Ghost is one God and one Lord. According to the assumed nature also He is set over every creature, and is Lord as it were by an instrumental subservience, and by a power participated and dependent. *“Also other seventy-two”* disciples: who according to Bede prefigured the priests, as the holy Apostles the bishops. And according to the same, seventy-two are well sent, because to so many nations of the world was the Gospel to be preached; just as the twelve Apostles were ordained and sent, because they were first to preach to the twelve tribes of Israel, that is, to some out of the twelve tribes. For although ten tribes had then been taken captive, many nevertheless out of each of those tribes had not been taken, and dwelt in the land of the two tribes, and elsewhere here and there.

“And he sent them two and two.” Why He sent the disciples to preach in pairs was touched upon in the preceding chapter (Luke 9), and can now be briefly mentioned again. First, He did it to commend the social life; next, for mutual consolation and strengthening (the brother, namely, who is helped by a brother, is like a fortified city, Prov. 18:19); and for the surer attestation of the truth to be preached, because in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall stand (Deut. 19:15). Other causes are given: that there are two precepts of charity, and that animals were sent into the ark of holy Noe in pairs (Gen. 7:15); but these causes are certain adaptations. So He sent them in pairs *“before his face”*, that is, before His bodily presence of countenance, though according to the uncircumscribed majesty of His divinity He Himself is present everywhere; *“into every city and place whither he himself was to come”*, that is, to the greater as well as the lesser places which He was about to visit, that these disciples by their preachings, miracles and examples might dispose carnal and rude men to receive the doctrine of Christ. *(p. 2)*

“And he said to them” (Luke 10:2): *“The harvest indeed is great”*, that is, the multitude of men is copious, capable of grace and doctrine, if not in act or habit, yet in potency, and surely fit to be gathered into the barn of Christ, that is, within the Church of God militant, by faith and hope and the other virtues of wayfarers, and within the Church triumphant, by the reception of the light of glory and of eternal reward. Hence the Saviour says: “Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes, and see the countries, for they are white already to harvest” (John 4:35). *“But the labourers are few”*: because the Apostles and these seventy-two disciples, and the rest of the rulers, priests, preachers and prelates, foreshadowed by those Apostles and disciples, are few in comparison with the others, namely the community, especially if we speak of labourers who truly and rightly teach, and fulfil what they say, living virtuously. Hence Gregory says: “We cannot say without grave sorrow what He says, The labourers are few: because though there be those who hear good things, there are wanting those who effectually speak them. Behold, the world is full of priests; yet in the harvest of God a labourer is very rarely found, because we have indeed taken up the priestly office, but the work of the office we do not fulfil.” Therefore, according to Bede, as the harvest is great, being the whole multitude of believers, so the labourers are few, being the Apostles and their imitators.

"Pray ye therefore the lord of the harvest." A little after, Christ says to the labourers, "Behold, I send you," etc. It is clear therefore that He calls Himself the lord of the harvest. For He, inasmuch as He is God, is by right of creation the Lord of all, and especially of men, also by reason of providential governance, and by the bestowal of manifold benefits. *"That he send labourers"*, that is, pastors, preachers, prelates, worthily fulfilling all that belongs to their office, *"into his harvest"*, that is, to the people created by Him, most of all to the Church, which, as it is called the vineyard of the Lord (Isa. 5:7), so also is called the harvest of God. Now they are to be called true labourers in the Church who seek the work and the burden, who seek to profit, not those who seek ease and honour and desire to preside. But, alas! many seek more the abundance of riches and their own honour than the salvation of souls. Of whom the apostle Paul says: "Such false apostles are deceitful workmen" (2 Cor. 11:13). Let us also therefore always pray Christ with all fervour of charity, especially in this most wicked time, that He deign to appoint efficacious labourers for His harvest. For the more the progress and salvation of subjects depend on the virtuous life of superiors, the greater is the gift of God to have a virtuous prince or prelate, and the more unceasingly and ardently must God be entreated for this. Nothing so edifies the people as the virtuous conversation of him who presides. Wherefore it is written in Ecclesiasticus: "According to the judge of the people, so also are his ministers; and what manner of man the ruler of the city is, such also are they that dwell therein" (Ecclus. 10:2). Moreover, as spacious fields require many reapers, so the multitude of the Christian people demands many labourers. Subjects also, according to Gregory, are to be admonished to pray for their pastors, that they may preside worthily in word and work.

"Go" to preach (Luke 10:3); and that ye may bear the coming dangers the more equably, I forewarn you: *"Behold I send you"*, I who am powerful to defend you in adversities (hence in John He says: "In the world you shall have distress; but have confidence, I have overcome the world," John 16:33), *"as lambs among wolves"*: that is, you whom I send are by your piety and innocence and obedience like lambs; but those to whom you are sent are likened to wolves for their cruelty, persecution and hardness, namely the priests, Pharisees and Scribes. Such also were the Gentiles, to whom the disciples were sent after Christ's passion. Christ says the same in Matthew to the Apostles, save that there it is, "as sheep," here, "as lambs" (Matt. 10:16). For as lambs are the children of sheep, so the seventy-two disciples were in a manner the spiritual children of the Apostles. In this was shown the omnipotence of Christ, that by such sheep and lambs He hunted, caught, conquered and converted wolves, and turned them into lambs, so that they dwelt together peaceably, according to that of Isaias: "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb" (Isa. 11:6). *(p. 3)* But, alas, many prelates of our day, who ought to be like lambs and sheep, have been turned into ravening wolves; and not only do they clothe themselves with the wool of the sheep and nourish themselves on their milk, but they also strangle and slay their souls by negligence, or by an impious life: of whom Christ complains in John, "All others, as many as have come, are thieves and robbers" (John 10:8). These are especially they who thrust themselves into the government of souls and into ecclesiastical dignities, neither called nor made worthy by God, as Aaron was (Heb. 5:4).

"Carry neither purse, nor scrip" (Luke 10:4). He said this also to the Apostles in the preceding chapter (Luke 9:3): whence from what was said in the exposition of the beginning of that chapter, the sense of this word and the reason of this commission are plain. Gregory, however, says: "So great ought the preacher's trust in God to be, that though he provide not for himself the supplies of the present life, he may most certainly know that they will not be wanting to him; lest while his mind is occupied about temporal things, he show himself the less fit to preach eternal things to others." *"Nor shoes."* Of the understanding of this word also it was said in the treatment of the preceding chapter. For He does not forbid shoes, if the necessity of place or time or person require, but the superfluity in them. *"And salute no man by the way."* Like to this is what we read in the books of Kings that Eliseus commanded his servant Giezi, whom he sent to raise the dead child: "If any man meet thee, salute him not; and if any man salute thee, answer him not" (4 Kings 4:29).

Yet a doubt arises about this. For to salute is to wish salvation to someone or to say it; which, since it is an act of charity and piety, is not to be forbidden. But the Virgin Mary also saluted Elisabeth (Luke 1:40), and Christ saluted the religious women after the resurrection, saying, “All hail” (Matt. 28:9). And it must be answered that Christ does not absolutely forbid saluting the neighbour; but He commits to preachers placed on the way of preaching that they salute no man on the way, to intimate that they ought to carry out the act of preaching with the utmost diligence, avoiding all by-ways, obstacles and delays of preaching, and those things which bring distraction of mind from God, or forgetfulness of the things to be preached. Whence this word of Christ can be taken by way of hyperbolic speech, in which something is said by excess. Hence Gorran, citing Hilary, argued: “The cause of the sayings must be attended to, and there will be no contradiction. For to salute a wayfarer with delay, or out of curiosity, is not good, lest the preacher be hindered in his journey and in the fruit of preaching; but to salute out of friendship, or to console, is good, yet so that the better thing be not omitted.” Gregory also says: “He who preaches salvation to his hearers not from love of the eternal country, but from the ambition of rewards, that is, from desire of his own gain, as it were salutes on the road, because from occasion, not from intention, he wishes salvation to his hearers.”

“Into whatsoever house you enter, first say: Peace be to this house” (Luke 10:5), that is, to all its inhabitants. For a threefold peace we ought to wish our neighbours, namely: the peace of the heart, which is the tranquillity of a mind well ordered in God; the peace of time, which is rest from outward assault or persecution; and the peace of eternity, which is the peace of the Blessed in the fatherland, to which both of those aforesaid are ordained. Spiritual peace, inward and true, is the effect of charity, as it is written: “Much peace have they that love thy law” (Ps. 118:165). Therefore this peace is as much to be wished for and necessary to every faithful man and to every man, as charity is to be desired and necessary for salvation, without which it is impossible to be saved. Hence Christ, the lover of men and their reconciler with the Father, wills that peace be wished first, especially because in it the other goods of grace are virtually included. Besides, there is another peace not to be wished, which is a false, feigned, defiled, carnal peace, such as the children of this world have, *(p. 4)* whose reason does not fight against concupiscence, and consents to vices. Of which the Saviour says to Jerusalem: “And indeed in this thy day, the things that are to thy peace” (Luke 19:42); and again, “I came not to send peace, but the sword” (Matt. 10:34). — What Christ here commands or says or permits to the seventy-two disciples, He preaches in Matthew to the Apostles; and some of these things were written and expounded in the preceding chapter.

“And if the son of peace be there” (Luke 10:6), that is, in the house you enter, that is, some virtuous man, worthy of eternal peace, or disposed for receiving it, or eternally predestinated: and so according to predestination a son of the divine and uncreated peace, as one who is to come to the blessed enjoyment of it, *“your peace shall rest upon him”*, that is, your salutation shall obtain its effect in him: and the peace which you have invoked upon him shall be infused into him; or if he already has it, it shall be increased in him. Some, however, though they have not yet peace and grace, are nevertheless in the proximate or near disposition to it, so that either by their own prayer or that of others they easily obtain it. *“But if not”*, that is, if there be not there a son of peace, *“it shall return to you”*, that is, your charitable salutation shall not lack its due reward, but by its merit your peace shall be perfected on the way, and consummated also in the fatherland. So the Psalmist also testifies: “My prayer shall be turned into my bosom” (Ps. 34:13).

“And in the same house remain” (Luke 10:7), if there be time fitting for remaining, and no other things to be done outside it before refreshment; or, these being finished, you must return to it; *“eating and drinking such things as they have”*, if they can and will give. And this Christ says, not by way of precept, but by permission or concession; nor need this be understood of every food and drink, since at times it is more virtuous for some to abstain from wine and flesh. Whence, when He says, “Eating and drinking such things as they have,” it is not a command that all such things be taken, but rather an exhortation that what is set before them suffice, and superfluities be not sought, such as the fowls of the air, the fishes of the sea, and the beasts of the

earth. *"For the labourer is worthy of his hire"*, that is, the preacher of the word of God, or anyone serving and labouring for others in spiritual things, is worthy to receive the support of life from those to whom he dispenses spiritual goods. Wherefore the Apostle says: "The Lord ordained that they who preach the gospel should live by the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14). But this was a permission, not a command. Wherefore Paul writes that he did not use this power, but procured necessaries by his own manual labours, that he might burden or scandalize no one, and cut off from the covetous the occasion of covetousness; yet he testifies that the other Apostles did so (1 Cor. 9:12–15). Nor are these things to be understood as though bodily food and drink were the principal reward or the ultimate end of preaching or of any spiritual ministry; nor is it for the sake of food and drink, as for a condign reward, that spiritual exercises are finally to be performed. For so the temporal and bodily would be preferred to the divine and spiritual good, which would be a mortal sin; but the stipend of life is a less principal and secondary reward, intended accidentally, because, namely, without bodily nourishment this life cannot stand, and consequently preaching cannot be exercised.

"Remove not from house to house" (Luke 10:7), that is, change not lodging without reasonable cause, lest you incur the vice of levity, or scandalize others, or seek more delicate fare. This word was treated more fully in the exposition of the preceding chapter (Luke 9:4). *"And into whatsoever city you enter"* (Luke 10:8), *"and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you"*; and the same judgment holds of drink; *"and heal the sick that are therein"* (Luke 10:9), that by the working of miracles they may believe that the things you preach are true, and be led to works of piety, and be wholly converted to God. For who else would have believed the unlearned disciples of Christ, preaching supernatural, invisible and incomprehensible things, unless by miracles *(p. 5)* possible to God alone they had shown that their words were divine and confirmed from above? God indeed cannot be a confirmer of falsehood. Therefore in Mark the evangelist it is written: "But they going forth preached everywhere, the Lord working withal, and confirming the word with signs that followed" (Mark 16:20). *"And say to them: The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you"*, that is, the time of grace is now come, and not earthly goods, as in the old law, but heavenly are promised, preached and offered to you. Hence the Apostle says: "The night is passed, and the day is at hand" (Rom. 13:12); and likewise, "Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2). At that time also, when these things were preached, the time of Christ's passion was at hand, through which the gate of the heavenly kingdom was opened. Again, the kingdom of God draws near to those, or for those, who dispose themselves for the attainment of true beatitude by despising earthly and carnal things. By the kingdom of God can also be understood Christ and Holy Scripture.

"But into whatsoever city you enter, and they receive you not, going forth into the streets thereof, say" (Luke 10:10), *"Even the very dust of your city that cleaveth to us, we wipe off against you"* (Luke 10:11). The same Christ committed to the Apostles in the preceding chapter (Luke 9:5): which was there expounded, and many causes are assigned for this shaking off of the dust against those who receive not the disciples of Christ. *"Yet know this, that the kingdom of God is at hand"*: that is, although ye despise receiving us, nevertheless we announce the truth to you; and what is in us and committed to us we perform, although this tend to your greater damnation: so that you have no excuse from ignorance (John 15:22).

"I say to you, it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom" (Luke 10:12), that is, for the Sodomites, in that notable and famous day, namely the day of judgment, *"than for that city"*, that is, for its inhabitants who reject you, a lesser punishment, or more tolerable damnation. — Hereupon it can be asked: since the punishment corresponds to the guilt, if the punishment of the Sodomites shall be less than that of those who received not Christ's disciples, it seems that the sins of the Sodomites were less than these, whereas in Genesis it is written that the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked (Gen. 13:13). To this some have answered that Christ's word is to be understood not simply but in a certain respect, namely that the inhospitality and unmercifulness of the Sodomites toward others was not of such guilt, nor will be of such punishment, as that of those who rejected the disciples of Christ. Wherefore Bede says: "Although the

Sodomites were inhospitable, yet no guests such as the Apostles were found among them; and though Lot was just in sight and hearing, yet he is not reported to have taught anything there, or done signs." Finally, the holy angels found hospitality in Sodom, nay were received by Lot with adoration, prayer and reverence (Gen. 19:1). If therefore in any city not one was found receiving the disciples of Christ, in this respect it is proved worse than Sodom. About this question, and whether, absolutely speaking, the damnation of those who receive not the disciples of Christ will be greater than that of the Sodomites, I pass it by, because I have written more on it in my commentary on Matthew (Matt. 10:15).

"Woe to thee, Corozain, woe to thee, Bethsaida" (Luke 10:13), *"for if in Tyre and Sidon had been wrought the miracles that have been wrought in you, they had long ago done penance sitting in sackcloth and ashes."* When and with what feeling Christ said this is written more clearly in Matthew: namely when John the Baptist, put in chains, sent his disciples to Christ. When Christ had answered them, and they had gone away, among other things which He preached, He began to upbraid the cities wherein were done most of His miracles, because they had not done penance, and said: "Woe to thee, Corozain, woe to thee, Bethsaida," etc. (Matt. 11:20–21).

Now Corozain, Bethsaida, Capharnaum, Tiberias, are four cities of Galilee, situated on the shore of the lake of Genesareth, which is called by the Evangelists the sea of Galilee or the sea of Tiberias (John 6:1): in which cities Christ personally preached, and wrought many miracles; and perhaps the Apostles too had already preached and *(p. 6)* done signs in those same cities. Therefore the inhabitants of these cities were made liable to so much the graver punishment, as the greater the benefits bestowed on them which they despised, and after the preaching of so great a master and pastor remained in their wickednesses. And so Christ, by zeal of justice or affection of compassion, and after the manner of prophetic foretelling and threatening, upbraided the inhabitants of these cities, protesting that they were worse than the Gentiles: because if of old in Tyre and Sidon any of the Saints had wrought such miracles, exhorting them to penance, as the Saviour wrought in the cities named, the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon would have put on sackcloth, and cast ashes on their heads out of greatness of contrition, as the Ninivites did at the preaching of Jonas (Jonas 3:5–8). Now that this is true, the event itself proved: because after Christ's passion, straightway by the preaching of Christ's disciples many were converted in those cities, and afterwards all. Whence in the Acts of the Apostles the devotion of the Tyrians is described, among whom many shone with the prophetic spirit, and foretold future things to the apostle Paul (Acts 21:4).

"But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon" (Luke 10:14), that is, for the inhabitants of those cities dead in paganism, *"in the judgment than for you"*: because they sinned much less than these most ungrateful and incorrigible Jews, who transgressed both the natural and the written law, and moreover would not receive from Christ the truth of the evangelical law. For "that servant who knew the will of his lord, and did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes" (Luke 12:47), or at least who heard it told him. Whence Christ speaks of the hardened and most ungrateful Jews: "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin," namely so great; "but now they have no excuse for their sin" (John 15:22).

Next He specially reproves Capharnaum, because beyond the others it was ungrateful and wicked. *"And thou, Capharnaum, art exalted unto heaven"* (Luke 10:15). Which can be understood in two ways: First, that it be said, Exalted unto heaven, that is, exceedingly honoured, in that Christ was frequently in it, and for a time dwelt a little in it, frequently also preached, and wrought many and illustrious prodigies there, as Matthew and Mark most clearly write (Matt. 4:13; 8:5; 9:1; Mark 2:1). Second, that it be said by reason of its pride, Exalted unto heaven, by its own estimation and vanity, and because it was most proudly rebellious to Christ. This sense is more literal, because in Matthew it is read that Christ said: "And thou, Capharnaum, shalt thou be exalted up to heaven? Thou shalt go down even unto hell" (Matt. 11:23), that the punishment may be proportioned to the guilt, and the greatness of the downfall correspond to the greatness of the honour. For as a man deserves to be exalted in heaven the more, the more he humbles himself on earth, so he

deserves to be cast down in hell the more, the more he exalts himself on earth, according to that of Job: “If his pride mount up even to heaven, and his head touch the clouds, in the end he shall be destroyed like a dunghill, and they that had seen him shall say: Where is he? As a dream that fleeth away he shall not be found, he shall pass as a vision of the night” (Job 20:6–8). Therefore it is said in Ecclesiasticus: “Humble thy spirit very much, for the vengeance on the flesh of the ungodly is fire and worms” (Ecclus. 7:19).

Moreover it is to be noted how truly wonderful and incomprehensible are the judgments of the supreme and infinite wisdom (Rom. 11:33), since Christ in His own person and through His ministers, both Prophets and Apostles, preached and wrought miracles for those whom He knew would not believe, nay would be the more gravely condemned for it; but neither preached to nor showed miracles to those whom He knew would believe and be converted if He had bestowed on them preaching and miracles. Whence He spoke to Ezechiel: “Son of man, thou art not sent to a people of a profound speech and an unknown tongue; and if I had sent thee to them, they would have heard thee. But the house of Israel will not hearken to thee” (Ezech. 3:5–7). What we cannot penetrate, therefore, let us soberly admire, and reverently honour, knowing that God, sublime and blessed, is essentially wisdom itself and justice *(p. 7)* itself, wherefore his judgments also can be neither unjust nor irrational.

Then the Saviour teaches that the aforesaid threatening and penalty does not hang over those only who received Him not in His own person, by believing His words and obeying His commands, but over all who despise His disciples, vicars and prelates, by not heeding their teachings, nor obeying them in what they are subject to them. *“He that heareth you”* (Luke 10:16), preachers, pastors, prelates, receiving your words reverently and observing them, *“heareth me”*, for it is as pleasing to me as if he heard me in my own person, and because I speak through my vicars, and they represent my person. *“And he that despiseth you”*, that is, scorns to hear or to fulfil your teachings and commands, *“despiseth me”*, because it displeases me as much as if he spurned me visibly present and speaking, for the causes aforesaid. Let the incredulous and rebellious, the perverse, the hard, the obstinate, the indocile, who follow their own sense, hear, weigh and fear these things: for by not caring for their superiors, or by speaking against them, resisting them, or answering them contumaciously, they sin not moderately; and they do not slight mean persons, but Him whose dignity and excellence have no end, the Only-begotten of God, the prince of pastors, nay God the Father, as the Saviour added: *“And he that despiseth me”*, by not believing or not obeying, *“despiseth him that sent me.”* For the sender is honoured or dishonoured in his legate, the lord in his minister, the father in his son, the pastor in his vicar. The Father also and the Son, and without doubt the Holy Ghost, are substantially one (John 10:30), and inseparably and unconfusedly abide eternally and incomprehensibly in one another by circumincession, so that of the three most excellent and most honourable Persons there is one will: therefore he who offends one sins against each. Hence in John the Son protests: “He who honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father who hath sent him” (John 5:23).

Let us therefore render to our prelates and fathers due reverence and obedience, considering them not as men of whatever sort, nor as such or such persons, but as vicars of God, representing His person toward us. For even to temporal lords, not only good but also the froward, the holy apostle Peter bids servants be subject and obey with all fear (1 Pet. 2:18): how much more must spiritual fathers be obeyed? Wherefore the apostle Paul writes to the Hebrews: “Obey your prelates, and be subject to them; for they watch as being to render an account of your souls; that they may do this with joy, and not with grief. For this is not expedient for you” (Heb. 13:17). Moses also in Exodus says to the rebellious: “Your murmuring is not against us, but against the Lord” (Exod. 16:8). And the apostle Paul writes to the Thessalonians: “He that despiseth these things, despiseth not man, but God” (1 Thess. 4:8). Now if the contempt of prelates and of Christ’s vicars is so grave a crime in every Christian, how much more in religious, who have bound themselves to obedience by vow? Let them not abhor disobeying their father less than breaking the vow of continence or of poverty.

"And the seventy-two returned" (Luke 10:17) *"with joy"*, that is, the seventy-two disciples returned to Jesus, who had sent them to preach. Wherefore, the service of preaching accomplished, they returned to Him, with spiritual joy, having however some disorder mingled with it, as will be said presently; *"saying"*, giving thanks, confessing the power of Christ: *"Lord, who rulest not only men on earth but demons also, the devils also are subject to us in thy name"*, that is, by thy power, and by the invocation of thy name or of thyself, we have not only healed the sick, as thou hadst commanded us, but have also cast out demons: which we report to thee for thy praise, not as to one who knows not, but that we may honour thee who hast so honoured us.

"And he said to them: I saw Satan" (Luke 10:18), that is, the devil, the adversary of human salvation (1 Pet. 5:8), *(p. 8) "like lightning falling from heaven"*, that is, very swiftly, when he was cast out thence for his pride; or, *"like lightning"*, that is, terribly. That swiftness and terror are signified by the likeness of the flash of lightning is clear from that of Matthew: "For as lightning cometh out of the east, and appeareth even into the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matt. 24:27). According to Gregory, some pride and vainglory was in these disciples from the so great power granted them: to repress which fault Christ recalls the horrible example of the angelic ruin, as if to say: If God straightway inflicted so great a vengeance on a proud angel, consider how much pride and vainglory is to be avoided by you. Whence Peter says: "If God spared not the angels that sinned, he knoweth how to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be tormented" (2 Pet. 2:4, 9). Finally, the ruin of the devil Christ, inasmuch as He is God, saw intellectually, and chiefly brought about.

It is asked how the devil is said to have fallen from heaven, when in Isaias he is said to have said, "I will ascend into heaven" (Isa. 14:13): whereby it appears that he was not yet in heaven. And it must be answered that he was in the empyrean heaven and was created there, according to Strabo and Bede, and thence fell. As to what he said, "I will ascend into heaven," it is expounded of the spiritual heaven of the most blessed Trinity, because he aspired to the excellence of God. This is said superficially and briefly; for a full answer needs more words.

Moreover, the word adduced, uttered by Christ, can be expounded as approving the discourse of the disciples, as if He should say: It is no wonder if demons are overcome by my power, I who in the beginning saw, and by seeing effected, the expulsion of the demons from heaven. Whence it is written in the book of Job: "His prudence hath struck the proud one" (Job 26:12); and again, "In his angels he found wickedness" (Job 4:18); and likewise, "His obstetric hand brought forth the winding serpent" (Job 26:13); and in the Psalm, "Thou hast humbled the proud one, as one that is wounded" (Ps. 88:11). Through Ezechiel also Christ testifies: "Thou, a cherub stretched out and protecting, thy inner parts were filled with iniquity; and I cast thee out from the mountain of God, O cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire" (Ezech. 28:14–16).

"Behold, I have given you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions" (Luke 10:19). This can be taken in two ways. For Christ gave His disciples not only the power of treading spiritually upon the malignant spirits, figuratively designated by serpents and scorpions, so that they might cast them out, overcome them, afflict them; but also granted them the virtue of treading bodily, and without hurt, on all venomous animals: which seems to have been prefigured also in the Old Testament, as is read in Deuteronomy (Deut. 8:15). Like to this is that in the Psalm: "Thou shalt walk upon the asp and the basilisk" (Ps. 90:13). Besides, by serpents pouring forth venom from the mouth are signified both invisible and visible enemies, who openly tempt or persecute the elect of God; by scorpions, who infect by the sting of the tail, secret foes lying in wait or tempting. *"And over all the power of the enemy"*, that is, over every kind of demons, and over all their cunning and power. For although their natural power is greater than all natural power of those who dwell on earth, as appears in Job (Job 41:24), yet the supernatural power of the faithful, bestowed by grace, overcomes the might of the demons, however in various ways they seek to hurt men, and tempt them diversely, and incline them to various sins. *"And nothing shall hurt you."* Which in the disciples of Christ is established as fulfilled bodily, so that neither poisons nor poisonous creatures could bring them any harm. Whence Paul shook off the viper

into the fire (Acts 28:5), and the evangelist John drank the deadliest poison without hurt. Therefore in Mark Christ says: “And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name they shall cast out devils; they shall take up serpents; and if they shall drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them” (Mark 16:17–18). Moreover the bodily or spiritual persecution of malignant men and of demons, so far as concerns final casting down or the infliction of the damage desired, has hurt the elect disciples of Christ in nothing, because to the elect of God all things work together unto good (Rom. 8:28), and temporal tribulation leads them to the everlasting crown. Therefore it is written: “The son of iniquity shall have no power to hurt him” (Ps. 88:23). *(p. 9)*

“But yet rejoice not in this” (Luke 10:20), inordinately or immoderately, namely in the way in which you now rejoice, *“that spirits”*, namely demons, who are called spirits from the simplicity of their nature, *“are subject unto you”*, that is, are cast out by the power conferred on you. For this, like the other signs, belongs to the gifts of grace freely given, which are ordained to the utility of others, and are common to good and bad men. For, as Christ asserts, many reprobates on the day of judgment shall say: “Lord, have we not cast out devils in thy name?” (Matt. 7:22). Therefore one must not glory in this gift as in the principal and saving good, although a man ought to give thanks to God for every good divinely given him, and in some way rejoice in it, according as that good conferred is greater or less.

Finally, in what rather and chiefly one should rejoice, He subjoins: *“But rejoice in this”*, in the Lord, thanking Him, not ascribing it to your merits, *“that your names are written in heaven”*, that is, that you yourselves are already reckoned among the elect of God by predestination, and are to be eternally placed in the heavenly mansions, and are written in the book of life: which no one can foreknow with certainty of himself, save by divine revelation. Christ, however, could reveal this to His disciples: nay, He deigned to reveal it for their consolation, that they might be so much the stronger in every holy labour and affliction, as they were the more certain of the beatific retribution. Lastly, the book of life is placed metaphorically in God: as among men are wont to be written down those things which specially concern them, so the inscription of the elect in the divine mind, that is, their firm knowledge or tenacious memory in the divine intellect, is called the book of life, speaking of the life of glory, to which election finally pertains. Wherefore the book of life is nothing else than the eternal predestination by which some are eternally foreordained by God to the life of glory.

Article XXVII — Continuation of the Elucidation of this Tenth Chapter, from the place where it is said: “In that same hour He rejoiced in the Holy Ghost”

Christ, the truest lover of men, rejoiced vehemently over the manifold gift of grace conferred by Him from the Father upon the elect; nay every good prelate ought chiefly to glory in this, and to give thanks to God, that he sees his subjects virtuous, and the gracious gifts of the divine clemency abounding in them. Wherefore John says: “I have no greater grace than this, to hear that my children walk in truth” (3 John 4). And Paul, recalling the virtues of his disciples: “I give thanks to God,” he says, “for his unspeakable gift” (2 Cor. 9:15). So did Christ also, as the Evangelist says.

“In that same hour” (Luke 10:21), in which Christ said to the disciples the words immediately aforesaid, how He had given them power over all the might of the enemy, and that their names were written in heaven, *“he rejoiced in the Holy Ghost”*, that is, by the motion of the Holy Ghost, who directed, governed and moved the soul of Christ in all things. Wherefore by Isaias it was *(p. 10)* said of Him: “The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him,” etc. (Isa. 11:2). For His soul was most full of the sevenfold gift of the Holy Ghost. Now the gifts of the Holy Ghost make the created mind well and easily directable or movable by the Holy Ghost, as the moral virtues make the sensitive appetite promptly movable and governable by reason. And so Jesus, according to the assumed humanity and human will, rejoiced in the Holy Ghost, because from an affection or love proceeding from the Holy Ghost, and likewise spiritually according to the will of the Holy Ghost. — But the enemy of the most glorious and most worthy Trinity, though vile and weak, the sacrilegious Arius,

who said that the Only-begotten of God was a mere creature, and that there was not truly a rational soul in Christ, but that the Word itself united to the body of Christ was in place of a soul, is most openly refuted by this evangelical authority. For the reprobate Arius feigned also that the Holy Ghost is a mere creature, and created by the Word or Son of God: which being granted, Christ would have received from the Holy Ghost no direction or governance, nor spiritual perfection.

Besides, it is to be contemplated that the soul of Christ from the beginning of its creation saw God by vision, and was unceasingly in the joy of beatific fruition. Therefore, when it is said that in this hour He rejoiced, it is not to be understood that before He was not in interior joy; but now He specially showed outwardly certain signs of the interior joy, so that there was now a certain fuller overflow than usual of the inward gladness upon the lower sensitive powers and upon His bodily nature, whose tokens appeared outwardly: wherefore Luke most fittingly asserts, "He rejoiced." For exultation is so called as a leaping outside oneself (extra se saltatio): namely when from the abundance of inward joy the signs of gladness break forth outside.

"And he said" [Jesus], disclosing the cause of His exultation: *"I confess to thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth."* Commonly by the Saints and doctors a twofold confession is assigned, of which Scripture speaks: one is the confession of thanksgiving and praise, the other the confession of guilt. Speaking more fully, however, it must be added that Sacred Scripture speaks of a threefold laudable confession. The first is the profession of the things to be believed: of which the Apostle says, "With the heart we believe unto justice; but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:10); and the Saviour says, "Whosoever shall confess me before men," etc. (Luke 12:8). And this confession is an act of faith. The second is the confession of thanksgiving and divine praise, namely the very praising of God, or the giving of thanks rendered to Him: and this is an act of latria. Of this confession the discourse now is; of it also there is very frequent mention in the book of Psalms, as when it is said: "I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart" (Ps. 9:2; 110:1; 137:1). The third is the confession of guilt, namely the accusation and declaration of one's own guilt: and this is an act of penance. Of it James writes in his Canonical Epistle: "Confess your sins one to another" (James 5:16).

So, *"I confess to thee"*, that is, I praise thee, I thank thee, *"O Father"* mine, not by the grace of adoption, as other men, but by true, eternal and natural generation, by which thou hast immutably begotten me, in identity of nature from thy substance: according to that of the Psalm, "From the womb before the day star I begot thee" (Ps. 109:3); and again, "My heart hath uttered a good word" (Ps. 44:2); and likewise, "The Lord hath said to me: Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee" (Ps. 2:7). By this testimony again the most wicked Arius is confounded, who dared to say that the Son was neither from eternity nor consubstantial with the Father. *"Lord of heaven and earth"*, that is, of heavenly and earthly, superior and inferior things, or of all that are contained in heaven and earth: as the Psalmist says, "Thine are the heavens, and thine is the earth" (Ps. 88:12). Of all these almighty God is Lord by right of creation, and governance, and conservation, and God alone is the universal, supreme and independent Lord, as one ruling by His own authority, to whose nod all things are subject: to whom every lord beneath Himself is related as *(p. 11)* servant to lord, as instrument to artificer, as means to end. Of which it is had in Job: "Whom hath he appointed over the earth? or whom hath he set over the world which he made?" (Job 34:13). Besides, by this testimony is confounded the heresy of Manichaeus, who said that these lower and earthly things were not created by God. Whence, as Epiphanius says, the gospel edited by Marcion has: "I thank thee, O Lord of heaven": omitting the words "and earth," and the word "Father," lest it should be understood that Christ calls the Creator of heaven and earth Father. Now the heresy of Manichaeus took its origin from Marcion.

"Because thou hast hid these things", my teachings, and the mysteries of the Christian faith, and the sacraments of the evangelical law which I preach, *"from the wise and prudent"*, that is, from the proud, who deem themselves great and learned, confiding in their own sense and leaning on their own prudence: such as were many philosophers and others before the times of Christ; the Scribes and Pharisees in the time of Christ,

of whom the discourse is now rather according to the letter; many lettered men also, puffed up with their knowledge, after the time of Christ. Of whom the Apostle writes: “For see your vocation, brethren, that there are not many wise men among you; but the foolish things of the world hath God chosen, that he may confound the wise” (1 Cor. 1:26–27). And elsewhere: “Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools” (Rom. 1:22). Hence Solomon: “Be not wise in thine own conceit; and lean not upon thine own prudence” (Prov. 3:7, 5).

Moreover, God is said to have hid these things from the reprobate in the way in which He is said to harden them and to blind them: not that He is directly the cause of ignorance and sin, but because by a just judgment He permits the human mind to be darkened and hardened, by not infusing grace and virtue, as the sun by its withdrawal is said to be the cause of freezing, and the sailor by his absence the cause of shipwreck. The wise and the prudent, however, are distinguished in this, that the wise are called the learned in divine things, the prudent the skilled in human things. — Finally, up to the present God hides the uncertain and hidden things of His wisdom (Ps. 50:8), the tasting of His sweetness, the savour of the interior life, mystical theology, the experience of His familiarity, the most luminous splendours of His illustrations, the burning ardours of His inflammations (cf. 1 Pet. 2:3), from the wise and prudent who are swollen in themselves and vain of mind: but He reveals them to the humble, to those who spurn the vanities of the world, the God-fearing, the sincere, the purified in mind, and the simple, as is said in Proverbs: “His communication is with the simple” (Prov. 3:32); and in the Psalm, “The testimony of the Lord is faithful, giving wisdom to little ones” (Ps. 18:8). For such, because they are burning in the love of God, are resplendent in the gift of wisdom, and by it are made as it were the secretaries of God. Therefore the Saviour added:

“And revealed them to little ones”, that is, to the humble, who in the eyes of their own mind are little ones, while they ascribe all good to God, and grow vile and depressed in themselves, subject themselves to God and superiors, and obey: which Christ said literally of His disciples and their followers. Finally, a little one is spoken of in Scripture in three ways: First, by reason of age, as it is written of Christ through Isaias: “A little child is born to us” (Isa. 9:6). Second, by reason of imperfection of wisdom and virtues, according to that of Proverbs: “How long, ye little ones, will you love childhood, and the foolish covet those things which are hurtful to themselves?” (Prov. 1:22); and to the Hebrews: “Every one that is a partaker of milk is unskilful in the word of justice: for he is a little child” (Heb. 5:13). Third, by reason of innocence, humility and simplicity, as in this place; as the Apostle also says: “We became little ones in the midst of you” (1 Thess. 2:7). Both these senses of “little one” the Apostle touches: “Do not become children in sense, but in malice be children, and in sense be perfect” (1 Cor. 14:20).

Then Christ, approving this work of the eternal Father, and assigning the cause of the work, added: *“Yea, Father”*, that is, assuredly thou hast done so, *“for so it hath seemed good in thy sight”* (Luke 10:21), that is, in thy wisdom it was thus seen to be good, and thus it was pleasing to thy will. *(p. 12)* Whence it is plain that of divine predestination and reprobation we ought to speak with all reverence, in fear and soberness, nor presumptuously scrutinize or rashly judge the judgments of the Supreme Mind: especially since the capacity of our intellect fails of the comprehension and excellence of the divine intellect, and is wholly and infinitely overwhelmed. Therefore it is asserted in Proverbs: “As it is not good for a man to eat much honey, so he that is a searcher of majesty shall be overwhelmed by glory” (Prov. 25:27).

Therefore, that God has chosen one and adorned him with grace, and has reprobated and left another, the first and highest cause is His good pleasure, or His will: which, since it is essentially His wisdom and justice, can be neither unjust nor irrational. Hence of the fathers of the Old Testament the Psalmist confesses to God: “Their own arm did not save them; but thy right hand, and thy arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou wast pleased with them” (Ps. 43:4). And the Apostle to the Ephesians: “He hath predestinated us,” he says, “according to the purpose of his will” (Eph. 1:5); and likewise: “His grace hath superabounded in us, in all wisdom and prudence, that he might make known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good

pleasure" (Eph. 1:8–9). — Yet who does not see how pious and just and reasonable it is that the God of infinite majesty and glory should communicate the gracious gifts of His clemency rather to the humble than to the proud? For humility disposes the created mind to the reception of divine charisms, because it subjects it to its Creator; but pride makes it incapable of grace, and rebellious to its Creator. But this is rather unsearchable, why, God ordaining and cooperating, one attains more than another to the disposition that is receptive of grace, and why one rather than another is foreordained to be a vessel of mercy. Hence the holy and most free God clearly and gloriously protests in Exodus: "I will have mercy on whom I will, and I will show mercy to whom it shall please me" (Exod. 33:19).

Let us therefore be humbled under the mighty hand of God (1 Pet. 5:6), and let each of us be careful to fulfil what is written in Ecclesiasticus: "Seek not the things that are too high for thee, and search not into things above thy ability, but the things that God hath commanded thee, think on them always" (Ecclus. 3:22). Nevertheless, a reverent and moderate consideration of the wonders of God and the mysteries of the faith is lawful for those whose mind is purged and illuminated, as the Psalmist says: "Open thou my eyes, and I will consider the wondrous things of thy law" (Ps. 118:18); and again: "Thy testimonies are wonderful, O Lord; therefore my soul hath sought them" (Ps. 118:129). — Lastly, on these matters Gregory says: "In these words of Christ we receive an example of humility, that we presume not rashly to discuss the counsels on high concerning the calling of some and the rejection of others: that cannot be unjust which has pleased the Just One. In all things therefore that are outwardly disposed, the open cause of reason is the justice of a hidden will."

"All things are delivered to me by my Father" (Luke 10:22). This is expounded of Christ according to both His natures: because according to His divine nature all things have been delivered to Him by the Father, in that by eternal generation He received from the Father the whole substance of the Father, and whatever of excellence, opulence and perfection is in it, or in the Father. Wherefore in John He professes: "All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine" (John 16:15). And again, speaking to the Father: "All my things are thine, and thine are mine" (John 17:10). This delivery is by way of natural emanation, of which again the Only-begotten of God asserts: "That which my Father hath given me is greater than all" (John 10:29). Moreover, to Christ according to His humanity all things have been delivered, that is, the prelacy, presidency or dominion over the whole created being, so that all things are subject to His humanity from the beginning of the incarnation. Wherefore the Apostle says: "Thou hast subjected all things under his feet" (Heb. 2:8); and again: "For in that he hath subjected all things to him, he left nothing not subject to him." Furthermore, according to Athanasius, all things have been delivered to Christ to reform, that as all things were made by the Word, so by the Word made flesh *(p. 13)* all things might be restored. Again, all things have been delivered to Christ as man, of which in John He protests: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to myself" (John 12:32), namely all kinds of the elect, or some out of every kind of men, of whatever condition, state or degree they be. By these words, according to the first exposition, Christ shows Himself equal to the Father in power.

Next He insinuates that He is equal to the Father in wisdom. *"And no one"*, that is, none, knows with knowledge of full comprehension *"who the Son is"*, that is, the Only-begotten Himself according to His divinity, *"but the Father"*, who is of infinite perspicacity in knowing, as also is the Son: nay in the Father and the Son, and without doubt in the Holy Ghost, there is one and the same numerical intellect, and whatever is said absolutely of one of the three most honourable Persons is understood of each. Whence the exception marked by this word, "No one," is called essential, not personal, because every other essence is excepted, not every other person. *"And who the Father is"*, that is, the Father no one fully comprehends, *"but the Son"*: since as the Father is of infinite actuality and intelligibility, so the Son, as God, is of infinite intellectivity, or perspicacity and clearness in understanding. Hence John: "No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" (John 1:18). *"And to*

whom the Son will reveal him", he knows the Father, yet not by full comprehension, nor so perfectly as the Son: but the Son revealing, the faithful in this world know by a glass in a dark manner (1 Cor. 13:12), by faith, and by the gift of wisdom, and by the instruction of Holy Scripture; in the fatherland they know clearly by sight, or face to face, whence they are also said to comprehend God, comprehension being taken in an extended sense, because they behold God as He is in Himself. But properly he is said to comprehend God who knows Him as perfectly as He is knowable by His nature: which cannot befit any but an intellect of immense perfection.

Finally it is proved from what has been said that the works of the Father and the Son outside themselves are undivided: since a little before the Son affirmed that divine things are revealed by the Father; and now He asserts that He confers the knowledge of the Father on men; elsewhere again He affirms that His own knowledge is given to man by the Father, as when He speaks to Peter: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona, because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father" (Matt. 16:17). It is meanwhile to be observed that even by natural reason we can in this life know God in some way. And since natural reason has been conferred by God, that knowledge which is had of God by natural reason is sometimes called a revelation, as when the Apostle says to the Romans: "For the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; his eternal power also and divinity; so that they are inexcusable: because that which is known of God is manifest in them; for God hath manifested it unto them" (Rom. 1:19–20). Yet by natural reason no philosopher has known any divine Person according to personal property, nor the most blessed Trinity. There is another, higher revelation, by which, God revealing, we know Him by faith; and yet another: in which revelation there are various degrees, according as various kinds of contemplation are assigned. Whence, the more a man has purged his mind and advanced in divine love, the more is he divinely illuminated, and the more clearly is the eternal Father and the whole super-essential Trinity revealed to him. The highest kind of contemplation of God in this life is called mystical theology, which is the most secret and ardent converse of the mind with God: in which contemplation, the more the mind is illumined from above, the more splendidly it beholds that God is wholly incomprehensible, and at length is united to Him as to one wholly unsearchable and unknown, beholding Him by the negation of all beings in regard to Him. Therefore the divine and great Dionysius writes: "This *(p. 14)* is truly to know and to see God, to praise the super-substantial One super-substantially by the removal of all things." Hence Chrysostom says: "The philosophers, striving to inquire about God, confessed that they had found nothing else but that God is unknowable. For as one who ventures to sail the unnavigable Ocean must needs return by the same way, so they began from ignorance, and ended in ignorance."

"And turning to his disciples" (Luke 10:23), that is, directing His countenance to them, to make them attentive, and show His love to them, and set them before others as an example of imitation, *"he said: Blessed are the eyes that see the things which you see."* The Saviour says this because a little before He had given thanks to the Father that He had hidden the knowledge of the divine mysteries from the wise and prudent of this age, blinded by their own pride, and had revealed them to His humble disciples: therefore He declares their eyes blessed, especially the inner eyes, with the blessedness of hope and of merits leading to full beatitude.

So, *"Blessed are your eyes"*, O my disciples, *"which see"*, that is, understand, *"the things that you see." "For I say to you"* (Luke 10:24) *"that many prophets and kings have desired to see the things that you see"*, namely the Only-begotten of God incarnate conversing among men, also His miracles and most holy conversation. They desired also to understand what Christ's disciples understood, to whom He Himself said: "To you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God" (Luke 8:10). *"And they have not seen them"* with the bodily eye, nor understood those things distinctly. They also desired or wished, were it possible, *"to hear the things that you hear"* from my own mouth, namely the preaching of the evangelical law, which you hear, who question me as you please, and receive instruction from me myself; *"and have not heard them"* in

the way that you, namely from my mouth.

Hereupon it is asked whether these things are to be understood of bodily seeing and hearing, or rather of mental or interior seeing and hearing. The first cannot be said, because in that way the reprobate Jews and the traitor saw and heard Christ, to whom He was at last grievous to behold (Wis. 2:15). Nor does the second seem possible to be said, since the things which these disciples saw and heard, many prophets and kings knew spiritually, and heard spiritually, God teaching, or an angel speaking within, according to that of the Psalm: “Then thou spokest in a vision to thy saints” (Ps. 88:20); and likewise, “I will hear what the Lord God will speak in me” (Ps. 84:9); and Zacharias: “The angel that spoke in me” (Zach. 1:9). Finally, what Christ in the flesh showed, did and taught, the Prophets foretold. Whence in Amos it is read: “For the Lord God doth nothing without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7). And the Apostle: “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets” (Heb. 1:1). Hence of Isaias Jerome says that he followed out all the mysteries of Christ so clearly that he is to be called an evangelist rather than a prophet. But he himself saw Christ in the flesh spiritually with wonderful clearness, when he said: “A child is born to us” (Isa. 9:6). He saw also His miracles when he said: “Behold, God himself will come and will save you. Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall be free” (Isa. 35:4–6). Likewise he saw most clearly in spirit the passion of Christ, when he says: “We have seen him, and there was no sightliness; surely he hath borne our infirmities,” etc. (Isa. 53:2, 4). The same could be shown of David the king, and Daniel, and the other Prophets. Nor is there doubt that Solomon, at the time of his prophetic illumination, and the other just kings of the Old Testament who knew the future coming of Christ, desired to see and hear Him, namely Asa, Josaphat, Joatham, Ezechias, Josias. Of Abraham also the Saviour says: “He rejoiced that he might see my day: he saw it, and was glad” (John 8:56).

To this it is reasonably answered that the aforesaid are to be understood of interior seeing and hearing joined to exterior seeing and hearing. For such seeing and *(p. 15)* hearing is more connatural and more delightful to men, and it was most desirable and most delightful so to see and hear the Only-begotten of God made man. Hence in Numbers Balaam, speaking most clearly of the time of Christ and His mysteries, says among other things: “Alas! who shall live when God shall do these things?” (Num. 24:23). And in the Acts the apostle Peter: “And all the prophets, from Samuel and afterwards, have told of these days” (Acts 3:24). Two other answers to this doubt I have set down in my commentary on Matthew (Matt. 13:17). Lastly, whereas it is said here, “Many prophets and kings,” etc., in Matthew we read, “Many prophets and just men” (Matt. 13:17). For the just, according to Bede, are great kings, because they have known not to succumb by consenting to the motions of their temptations, but to preside by ruling and overcoming them. Origen too says on these words: “The Saviour says that many prophets and just men desired the aforesaid, not all, because of Abraham it is said that he saw the day of Christ and was glad: which vision not many but few attained. There were also other prophets and just men, not so great as to reach the vision of Abraham and the skill of the Apostles: and of these he says that they did not see, but desired.”

“And behold, a certain lawyer” (Luke 10:25), that is, learned in the law. The chief teachers of the Jews were called Scribes and lawyers. Whence the Apostle also says: “Bring forward Zenas the lawyer” (Tit. 3:13). *“Stood up”*, as showing reverence to Christ teaching, at whose preaching the hearers were wont to sit; or he stood up that he might be better heard by all, or to rouse the hearers to his appearance and praise. He was skilled in the law, speaking of unformed knowledge, which is not adorned with charity and virtuous conversation, by which the knowledge of the good is adorned, wherefore it is called formed. Again, he was skilled with a literal skill, not with spiritual understanding. *“Tempting him”*, that is, desiring to circumvent and deceive. For Chrysostom says: “There were certain wordy men going round the whole region of the Jews, accusing Christ, saying that He called the precepts of Moses useless, and introduced new teachings. The lawyer, therefore, wishing to seduce Christ, is present tempting Him and asking.” *“Master”*: he calls

him master to whose instruction he disdains to be subject; *"what must I do to possess eternal life?"*, that is, by what works shall I be able to merit and obtain by lot eternal beatitude? He knew therefore that felicity is obtained not by speaking only, but by persisting in virtuous works. The occasion of this sort of temptation and inquiry, according to Bede, he took from what he heard from Christ: "Rejoice in this, that your names are written in heaven" (v. 20). And he rightly said, "I may possess," because felicity is had all at once and is never lost, Boethius saying: "Eternity is the whole, simultaneous and perfect possession of interminable life"; and again, "Beatitude is a state made perfect by the aggregation of all goods."

"But that supreme Master" (Luke 10:26), infallibly beholding the most secret things of hearts, *"said to him: What is written in the law?"*, in the books of the Mosaic law, *"how readest thou?"*, as if He should say: Thou holdest not the right form in reading, because thou fulfillest not what thou readest and preachest. Some indeed read, and do not; some do, and cannot read; others read and do.

Moreover, since the lawyer wished to lay upon Christ that He did or taught something against Moses, Christ by His question showed the opposite. *"He answering, said"* (Luke 10:27): *"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart"*, that is, with the whole will, or the whole desire and affection of the will. By the heart, therefore, the will is designated, because as the heart is the first living thing and moves the other members, so the will is first vivified by charity, and moves the other powers of the soul. *"And with thy whole soul"*, that is, according to the animal and sensitive powers: that the interior and exterior senses, and the sensitive appetite, both concupiscible and irascible, be subject to reason and the divine law; and according to God, and as His love demands, and as is expedient for the progress of charity, be restrained and directed. *(p. 16)* Wherefore the Psalmist prays: "Turn away my eyes that they may not behold vanity" (Ps. 118:37). In Ecclesiasticus also it is taught: "Hedge in thy ears with thorns, and hear not a wicked tongue" (Ecclus. 28:28). We are commanded therefore to love God with these sensitive powers: not that these organic powers have the most simple God for their object, or directly and immediately attain to His love, or are subjects of the divine love; but because they are so to be ruled as is expedient for the acquiring, conserving, advancing and consummating of charity. To fulfil which it is said in Ecclesiasticus: "O Lord, Father and Ruler of my life, give me not haughtiness of my eyes, and turn away from me all evil desire; take from me the greediness of the belly, and let not the lusts of the flesh take hold of me" (Ecclus. 23:4–6). *"And with all thy strength."* Mention has already been made of the powers designated by the heart and the soul: why then does He now add, "And with all thy strength"? To which a twofold answer is made. First, that it be understood of the remaining powers, of which nothing has yet been said: because the vegetative powers also are to be ruled in their acts by reason according to God, as far as can be. For they are not wholly subject to reason, but operate naturally: yet their objects are to be applied to them according to the censure of right reason; and as to the mode, place and time of action, they are in a manner subjected to reason. Second, that what is said, "With all thy strength," be understood as to the execution and use of the powers in exterior works, so that these also be done manfully with discretion to the honour of God, as the Apostle says: "Your reasonable service" (Rom. 12:1). *"And with all thy mind"*, that is, with the whole intellect and intention, lest there be error or heresy in the intellect, or an intention repugnant to the charity of God. — Now this precept is written in Deuteronomy, where it is read: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole strength" (Deut. 6:5). Hereupon it is asked: since Moses expresses only three, with all of which God is to be loved, why are four here said to be written in the law? To which it is answered that those three said by Moses include these four, therefore these four are written there, at least virtually and implicitly. For what is said here, "With all thy strength," Moses understood by "strength." And the whole heart frequently comprehends and denotes intellect and will, as when we say: "I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart" (Ps. 9:2; 137:1). Finally, in Matthew three are set down, when it is said: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind" (Matt. 22:37). Whence there "With thy whole strength" is omitted: which is yet sufficiently insinuated by "the whole soul." For soul is called a potestative whole, because it contains several powers.

It must be known that this precept can be understood and expounded in three ways: First, as to unceasing act, that the heart, mind, soul and strength be always, actually and totally borne toward God, without mixture of contrary evil: and so this precept is not fulfilled by us wayfarers in the present life, but by the Blessed in the fatherland. Whence, according to this sense, to love God with the whole heart is to love Him with an actual love unceasingly raised toward God according to the whole power of the will, without the admixture of any inordinate affection that diminishes charity. To love God with the whole mind is to tend to God by contemplation unceasingly, always, actually, according to the utmost power, without admixture of any wandering, error and deception. To love God with the whole soul is to be ordered in God unceasingly and completely according to the other animal and sensitive powers: which will be in the Blessed, most of all after the future resurrection, when all the operations of the interior and exterior senses and of the sensitive appetite shall be most perfectly ordered in God, and shall conduce to the praise, love and contemplation of God. And to love God with all the strength is *(p. 17)* to have every exterior act most ready continually for the honour and worship and command of God: which can be wholly fulfilled only in the fatherland; and will be fulfilled not only without difficulty, but with ineffable delight. In the fatherland, therefore, this precept is fulfilled perfectly, on the way imperfectly. — Second, this precept is expounded as to the act of supererogation, so that God be loved with the whole heart and the whole mind, etc., inasmuch as for the sake of God and for love of Him all things are forsaken which are wont and able to impede the will, intellect, soul and operation or powers from the love and contemplation of God in this present life, such as riches, parents, kinsmen, offspring, and one's own will: and so this precept of charity is known to pertain to religious. — Third, it is expounded as to the act of necessity, so that we love God with heart, mind, soul and strength to the extent that we do and desire nothing contrary to the divine charity.

"And thy neighbour as thyself", that is, truly, orderly and spiritually, wishing for him the goods of grace in the present and the gifts of glory in the future; also, "As thyself," that is, for the sake of God, and for eternal felicity, namely because God has commanded it, and because thy neighbour is made to His image, and because God is the first cause and reason of all lovableness and pure love, since He Himself is the first, fontal and infinite goodness. Again, "As thyself," that is, perseveringly to the end, and not condescending to him in vices, as thou wouldst not wish to be condescended to in them, if thou truly and spiritually lovest thyself. It is not however necessary to love the neighbour as intensely as oneself, since "as" denotes likeness, not equality. This precept is taken from what is written in Leviticus: "Thou shalt love thy friend as thyself" (Lev. 19:18); where the Septuagint are said to have translated, "Thy neighbour." By neighbour, moreover, is understood every man capable of grace and glory. The damned, however, are not to be loved by charity, because they are capable neither of grace nor of glory. Every man who is a wayfarer, however much he be an adversary, we are bound to love by charity as ourselves. Basil says: "Who knows not that man is a gentle and sociable animal, not solitary and wild? For nothing is so proper to our nature as to communicate with one another, and mutually to need one another, and to love one's kin."

Of those things, therefore, whose seeds the Lord has first given us, He afterward requires the fruits also. *"And he said to him"* (Luke 10:28), namely to the lawyer, the Lord Jesus: *"Thou hast answered right"*, because what thou allegest is truly written. *"This do"*, that is, fulfil these two precepts of charity, *"and thou shalt live"* with the life of grace in exile, and the life of glory in the kingdom. And so the question was solved in which he asked, "What shall I do to possess eternal life?" By this answer of Christ Origen shows the heretical perversity of Valentinus and Marcion and Basilides.

"*But he, willing to justify himself*" (Luke 10:29), that is, to show himself just, and to display his eminence, although in Ecclesiasticus it is written: "Be not justified before God" (Ecclus. 7:5); and Job also says: "What is man, that he should be without spot, and he that is born of a woman that he should appear just?" (Job 15:14). *"Said"*: *"And who is my neighbour?"* This again he asked to catch Christ in His answer. For he noticed, as appears, how Christ taught that even enemies are to be loved: which this man thought to be

against the law of Moses, because very many of the Jews understood by neighbour only a Jew, and counted the rest strangers. Hence he asked, "Who is my neighbour?" that if Christ should say, Any man of this present life, he might prove Him an adversary of the law; but if He should say, Any Jew whatever, he would prove himself just by saying, I love every Jew. But, as Solomon says, "In vain is the net laid before the eyes of them that have wings" (Prov. 1:17). Whence Christ, most wise, so answers that He shuts in the snare-setter by his own reply, proposing a parable. *(p. 18)*

"And Jesus answering" (Luke 10:30), that is, looking upward, or casting his eyes widely and on high round about, to insinuate that He was about to speak of a great matter, and compassionating the calamity of the whole human race, *"said: A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers."* The superficially literal sense has no difficulty. And what is here said as if in a parable may have been a thing done: for, as Basil says, Jerusalem is set on a summit, but Jericho below, and between those cities was a desert in which robbers were wont to kill certain persons.

Now, according to the spiritual understanding, by this man is understood our first parent Adam, or the human race, or any man who after baptismal innocence and justice has fallen into iniquities. Such a one, therefore, *"went down"*, that is, by sinning has fallen spiritually downward, *"from Jerusalem"*, that is, the earthly paradise, in which Adam really was; or from the heavenly Jerusalem, or the kingdom of heaven, in which by hope and merit every just wayfarer is, since the Apostle also says, "Our conversation is in heaven" (Phil. 3:20); or from interior tranquillity, and the contemplation of mental peace. For since Jerusalem is interpreted "vision of peace," by it these three are signified, namely: the earthly paradise, which is a place of quiet, in which there was a vision of supernal peace, though not so clear as in the fatherland: nay the vision or contemplation which was in Adam before sin, and which is now in paradise in Elias, stands in a middle manner between the contemplation of the fatherland and the common contemplation of the devout in this exile. Likewise, by Jerusalem is figured the heavenly kingdom, in which is the beatific vision of the eternal peace which surpasseth all understanding (Phil. 4:7). The mental tranquillity itself also of the soul on the way, pacified in God and sweetly established, is denoted by Jerusalem. Moreover, as we were all in Adam and fell, so all of us were in him in the earthly paradise, and in him were expelled and slipped away thence. By Jericho, however, are understood this unstable world, or the mortality and defect of the present life. For Jericho is interpreted "moon," by which in Scripture defect, instability, folly and mortality are expressed, on account of the moon's continual variation, waxing and waning. Whence it is written in Ecclesiasticus: "A fool is changed as the moon" (Ecclus. 27:12). And as the moon fails from the sun in splendour, so the state of this mortal life from the state of paradise and immortality.

So this man by sinning *"fell among robbers"*, that is, into the hosts of demons, who unceasingly seek to slay the spiritual life of souls. For "by the envy of the devil, death entered into the world" (Wis. 2:24); and the devil "was a murderer from the beginning," as Christ asserts in John (John 8:44). *"Who also stripped him"*, that is, spiritually denuded him of the gifts of grace and virtues: for when by temptations they lead a man to mortal sin, they straightway deprive him of the gifts and virtues, which are the garments and ornaments of the soul; and Adam himself they stripped of original justice, and of the manifold adornment of virtues, of which the Church says in Isaias, speaking of the heavenly Bridegroom: "He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, and with the robe of justice he hath covered me" (Isa. 61:10). With these garments our souls were clothed in Baptism: which by sinning we lost, but by Penance and the other sacraments we are able to recover them. Of which garments also Christ speaks in the Apocalypse: "They who have not defiled their garments shall walk with me in white" (Apoc. 3:4). *"And having wounded him, went away"*, that is, when they had wounded the man manifoldly in his soul, they ceased for a time from hurting him; or, "went away," hiding their snares. Specially, however, the human race incurred four wounds of the soul from original sin, namely malice, that is, proneness to evil in the will, ignorance in the intellect, infirmity in the irascible power, concupiscence in the concupiscible. *"Leaving him half dead"*: because although by mortal

sin the life of grace and charity be wholly taken away, there remains yet in man free will, by which he can *(p. 19)* rise again during this life, or an aptitude for doing penance, so that radically, or potentially, the spiritual life remains in the soul. Again, though sins infect the gifts of nature, they do not wholly destroy them; whence, the life of grace failing, the life of nature remains.

"And it chanced that a certain priest went down the same way, and seeing him, passed by" (Luke 10:31). By this priest is understood Aaron, or the choir of the priests of the law: who went down the same way, because through original sin he came into the world; and, having known the wounding or destitution of the human race, or of Adam, by which he was deprived of the glory of beatitude, *"passed by"*, because he could not liberate and save: as the Apostle copiously proves in the epistle to the Hebrews; and to the Galatians says, "If justice be by the law, then Christ died in vain" (Gal. 2:21). *"In like manner also a Levite"* (Luke 10:32), *"when he was near the place and saw him"*, namely the half-dead man, *"passed by."* By the Levite is expressed Moses, brother of Aaron, a Levite, or the choir of the ministers of the temple or of the Prophets: who, living in this world, and understanding that the human race was wounded, could not save it, nay passed by, and dying went down to the limbo of hell.

"But a certain Samaritan, being on his journey" (Luke 10:33). By the Samaritan, on account of the interpretation of the name, Christ designates Himself, for Samaritan is interpreted "keeper": which befits Christ, according to that of the Psalm: "Behold, he shall neither slumber nor sleep that keepeth Israel" (Ps. 120:4); and again, "The Lord is the keeper of little ones" (Ps. 114:6). To whom it is said in Job: "What shall I do to thee, O keeper of men?" (Job 7:20). Christ therefore made a journey in this world, according to that of John: "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). Baruch also: "Afterwards he was seen upon earth, and conversed with men" (Bar. 3:38). *"Came near him"*: that is, most clemently joined Himself to the human race, and visited it as a physician the sick, as He says to the Father in the Psalm: "Burnt offering and sin offering thou didst not require; then said I, Behold I come" (Ps. 39:7–8). And by Zacharias: "Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Sion; for behold I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee" (Zach. 2:10). *"And seeing him"* with the bodily and intellectual eye, *"he was moved with compassion"*, according to that of Lamentations: "The mercies of the Lord, that we are not consumed" (Lam. 3:22). Nay, the more Christ loved us, the more He grieved with our miseries, both penal and culpable. Which we ought always to ponder, as Isaias says: "I will remember the tender mercies of the Lord, for all that the Lord hath bestowed upon us, according to his mercy" (Isa. 63:7).

"And going to him" (Luke 10:34), that is, applying Himself medicinally and proportionately to the human race, as the Apostle says: "Christ emptied himself, taking the form of a servant" (Phil. 2:7); and appearing "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. 8:3). He ought in all things to be made like unto his brethren (Heb. 2:17), who according to His divinity is infinitely distant from men, not by place, but by excess of perfection and unlikeness. *"Bound up his wounds"*, that is, by the infusion of charity and grace, and of the other strong habits, namely virtues and gifts, He drew back, restrained and healed the wounded powers of the soul from sins, most of all in Baptism. Wherefore in the Acts Peter says: "Be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). Moreover Christ by His saving passion bound up and healed these wounds, inasmuch as His passion was satisfactory for the sins of the whole world, and meritorious of grace for us all. Therefore it is written in Isaias: "Surely he hath borne our infirmities, and carried our sorrows" (Isa. 53:4); and Peter says: "Who his own self bore our sins in his body upon the tree" (1 Pet. 2:24). But the whole preaching, conversation and miraculous working of Christ was also a remedy for our vices. *"Pouring in oil"*, that is, the unction and consolation of the Holy Ghost, and pious instruction, *"and wine"*, that is, strengthening and fervent exhortation to good, or just rebuke for sins. For to Peter also it was said: "Go behind me, Satan" (Mark 8:33). Hence through Isaias Christ testifies of the Father: "He hath sent me to preach to the meek, to give them a crown for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning" (Isa. 61:1, 3). And the Spouse confesses in the Canticles: "The

king brought me into the cellar of wine" (Cant. 2:4). *(p. 20)*

Finally, as Christ is said first to have poured in oil and afterwards wine, so prelates and all exhorters should first piously and charitably correct or instruct offenders, then, if need be, mingle the rigour of justice. Hence the Apostle writes to the Galatians: "Brethren, and if a man be overtaken in any fault, you who are spiritual instruct such a one in the spirit of meekness" (Gal. 6:1). Bernard also says: "Always to punish is of cruelty; always to spare, of pusillanimity; neither this nor that, of equity." There is need therefore of discretion, that it may be known when this and when that is to be done, and how both are to be tempered.

Besides, various detestable and most wretched effects of sin are assigned, which are touched upon in the words of Christ just adduced. First, by sin we are disinherited from the heavenly kingdom, which is the land of the living: which is noted when it is said, "Went down from Jerusalem." Second, by sin we are made captives under manifold defect, and unstable in mind, and exiles: which is noted when He says, "To Jericho." Third, by sin we are subjected to the servitude of sin and of the devil, for Peter the apostle also testifies: "By whom a man is overcome, of the same also he is the slave" (2 Pet. 2:19). Whence Paul exhorts: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body" (Rom. 6:12). This is noted when it is said, "Fell among robbers." Fourth, by sin we are despoiled of the gratuitous gifts: therefore He says, "Stripped him." Fifth, by sin we are wounded in natural things: whence it is said, "Having wounded him." Sixth, by sin our preceding meritorious works are mortified, and we are deprived of reward: hence it is said, "Leaving him half dead."

"And setting him upon his own beast", that is, joining us to His body, as the members are joined to the head, and expiating our crimes in His body, according to that of Isaias: "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6). So by the beast of Christ is explained His most worthy body: which is rightly called a beast, not for bestial vileness, but for obediential subjection and most ready servitude, wherein in all things it most promptly obeyed and served the soul of Christ. Hence also the obedient man says to God: "I am become as a beast before thee" (Ps. 72:23). *"Brought him to an inn"*, that is, incorporated him in His Church. The Church is indeed the fold of Christ, in which He refreshes His faithful with manifold spiritual pasture: of which fold He says in John, "There shall be one fold and one shepherd" (John 10:16); in which also we are refreshed with the body and blood of Christ. Besides, He says rather "inn" than "house," that we may attend to the stenches and miseries of the present life, and lament in this world as in exile, hastening unceasingly to the fatherland, as the Apostle says to the Hebrews: "For we have not here a lasting city, but we seek one that is to come" (Heb. 13:14). *"And took care of him."* For Christ, so long as He conversed in this world, most diligently interceded for the salvation of the human race. And in the time that He preached, did He not, as the fittest physician of souls, in various ways strive to save men, by preaching, by working miracles, by sending His disciples to preach and to perform miracles, by distributing various charisms of graces? For although, as the Wise Man has it, God hath care of all, yet most of all of rational creatures (Wis. 6:8; 12:13).

"And the next day" (Luke 10:35), that is, in the time following His passion, namely after the resurrection. For in the Scriptures "day" is very often put for time, chiefly in the Prophets, as when Isaias says: "In that day shall the bud of the Lord be in magnificence and glory" (Isa. 4:2); and Joel: "In that day," he says, "the mountains shall drop down sweetness" (Joel 3:18). *"He took out two pence"*, that is, the knowledge of the New and Old Testament, *"and gave to the host"*, that is, to the choir of the Apostles, or the primitive Church, *(p. 21)* into which after the resurrection, especially on the day of Pentecost, He infused the knowledge of all the Scriptures by the infusion of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:4), as He promised the Apostles when the passion was at hand, saying: "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will teach you all truth" (John 16:13). But also during the forty days in which after the resurrection until the ascension He appeared successively to the disciples, He taught and declared to them the mysteries of the evangelical law (Acts 1:3).

"And said: Take care of him." For He commanded the Apostles to instruct the whole human race solicitously. Whence in Matthew He says to them: "Going, teach ye all nations" (Matt. 28:19). To Peter also before the ascension He specially said: "Feed my sheep" (John 21:17). With all diligence indeed prelates of

the Church ought to preside virtuously by word and deed over the flocks committed to them. Hence in Proverbs Solomon says: “Be diligent to know the countenance of thy cattle, and look well to thy flocks” (Prov. 27:23). For the nobler the rational soul is than every irrational creature, so much the more diligently is it to be guarded, taught and perfected. *“And whatsoever thou shalt supererogate”*, that is, shalt do beyond what is due, or add of thine own industry and labour, cooperating with my grace, and sweating most faithfully for the conversion of others. But would that pastors and preachers already discharged their debt! nay, alas! they receive large stipends, and do not instruct the people, or do not worthily nourish them with an exemplary life and doctrine. To whom through Ezechiel God cries shame: “You ate the milk, and you clothed yourselves with the wool; but my flock you did not feed” (Ezech. 34:3). Against which it is said most wholesomely in Ecclesiasticus to every ruler of others: “Have they made thee ruler? Be not lifted up; be among them as one of them; have care of them, and so sit down” (Ecclus. 32:1). *“I, at my return”*, whether to the general judgment, descending bodily according to the assumed nature; or to the particular judgment, which is made at the deaths of individuals, where Christ returns, not by change of place but by visiting through retribution. Whence He says: “Watch ye, therefore, because you know not at what hour your Lord will come” (Matt. 24:42); and likewise: “Blessed is that servant whom, when his lord shall come and knock, he shall find watching” (cf. Matt. 24:46; Luke 12:37). *“Will repay thee”*, that is, I will give condign reward. Hence in the Apocalypse He says: “Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to render to every man according to his works” (Apoc. 22:12).

Then Christ asks the lawyer, not as ignorant, but wishing to instruct him: *“Which of these three”* (Luke 10:36), namely the priest, the Levite, or the Samaritan, *“in thy opinion was neighbour to him that fell among the robbers?” “But he said”* (Luke 10:37): *“He that shewed mercy to him”*, that is, he who thus succoured him as has been said. For he more than the other two deserved to be called neighbour by reason of so great a benefit. Moreover it is to be observed that a man is called neighbour to another in many ways: First, by reason of kinship, as in the Psalm, “My friends and my neighbours” (Ps. 37:12). Second, by reason of the same religion, as all Christians. Third, by reason of piety and benefit: and so now especially is one called neighbour. And thus Ambrose asserts: “Not kinship makes a neighbour, but mercy.” Fourth, by conformity of nature. So all men are called neighbours to one another, according to that: “Every beast loveth its like; so also every man him that is nearest to himself” (Ecclus. 13:19). *“And Jesus said to him: Go”*, advancing spiritually, and truly understanding the law of Moses, *“and do thou in like manner”*, that is, not in words but in truth and in charitable and pious work, show thyself a neighbour, not to Jews only but to every needy wayfarer, if it happen that anyone meet thee who needs thy help.

Finally Augustine, in the first book On Christian Doctrine, affirms: “From this we understand that he is our neighbour to whom the office of piety is to be shown, if he need it, and him also from whom the office of piety or pious benefit is to be bestowed on us. For the name of neighbour is a relative, nor can anyone be neighbour save to a neighbour. But no one is excepted to whom the benefit of piety is to be denied, Christ saying: Do good to them that hate you *(p. 22)* (Matt. 5:44). Whence it is manifest that in this precept by which we are commanded to love our neighbour, even the holy angels are contained, from whom such great offices of mercy are bestowed on us; for our Lord Jesus Christ Himself also willed to be called our neighbour, signifying that He succoured the half-dead man lying on the way.”

Article XXVIII — Explanation of the Remaining Part of this Tenth Chapter, namely: “Jesus entered into a certain town”

Whatever Christ did in the body is full of mysteries, and instructive of our conversation. And since Christ came to teach the institutes of both the active and the contemplative life, now a certain deed of His is described, in which in brief words He shows the distinction of both lives. Luke, however, in this place does not observe the order of the history.

"Now it came to pass, as they went" (Luke 10:38), Jesus and His disciples, from place to place, for the instruction of very many, *"that he entered into a certain town."* Concerning which Bede says: "The name of this town Luke here passes over, but John expresses it, calling it Bethany. For thus he says: 'And there was a certain man sick, Lazarus of Bethania, of the town of Mary and Martha' (John 11:1). From which it appears that Bethany itself, which was a village, is called a town. Whence also below it is read that two of the disciples were going to a town called Emmaus (Luke 24:13): for which Mark writes that they were going into the country (Mark 16:12). Finally, what the Saviour says in Matthew to two disciples, 'Go ye into the town that is over against you' (Matt. 21:2), is wont to be expounded of the city Jerusalem itself." A town, however, is properly a small fortress. Now in Bethany there was the fortress of Mary and Martha and Lazarus, which perhaps is sometimes, speaking comparatively, called a town: and as the whole frequently takes its name from a part, so perhaps the village Bethany, by reason of the fortress or town contained in it, is called a town.

"And a certain woman named Martha": whom some think to have been the one whom Christ cured of the issue of blood: the opposite of which has been sufficiently proved above (Luke 8:43). *"Received him into her house."* For she was in a special manner the hostess of Christ: wherefore, as is had in her legend, after the ascension of Christ she was wont to invoke Christ under the name of host. So with great reverence and fervour of charity she received Christ into her house, which was a town or fortress. For she was noble and wealthy; and as is written in John, "Jesus loved Martha, and her sister Mary, and Lazarus" (John 11:5).

"And she had a sister called Mary" (Luke 10:39), namely Magdalen, of whom it is said in Mark: "Jesus rising early the first day of the week, appeared first to Mary Magdalen, out of whom he had cast seven devils" (Mark 16:9). *"Who, sitting also at the Lord's feet, heard his word."* In these words her humility and diligence are insinuated, for she humbly placed herself at the feet of Christ and was most eagerly intent upon His preaching. The more humbly she sat and the more diligently she attended, the more spiritual profit she drew, and took the streams of doctrine from the fountain of wisdom. For Christ is the fountain of wisdom, according to that of Ecclesiasticus: "The fountain of wisdom is the word of God on high" (Ecclus. 1:5). God also giveth grace to the humble (James 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5).

Besides, as Basil says, "Every operation and speech of the Saviour is a rule *(p. 23)* of virtue and piety. For to this end He put on our body, that we might imitate His conversation as far as we can." By His example, therefore, He taught the disciples, and all preachers, and those fit for the exhortation of others, how they ought to behave in the houses of those who give them hospitality, namely that when received they should not straightway lie back and rest, but fill their hosts with holy exhortations. Whence they are to be received reverently and charitably: first, because their hosts will be edified by wholesome teachings; second, because they will obtain the reward of charity.

"But Martha was busy" (Luke 10:40), that is, was doing enough, and was occupied, or laboured, *"about much serving"*, that is, about the preparation and supply of the bodily refreshment daily necessary. Who stood still, ceasing a little from the service and running about, that she might reverently address Christ, and await His answer, *"and said: Lord, hast thou no care that my sister hath left me alone to serve?"* This seemed unreasonable to Martha, because it appeared to her that, on account of the honourableness of Christ and the multitude of the other guests, Mary should justly have helped. So she asked, "Lord, hast thou no care?" not as reproving Christ for not having said to Mary, Help thy sister, but as wondering at this. Therefore she added: *"Speak to her therefore, that she help me"*: because, literally, there was much to be done in feeding so many guests. And when Martha says that she alone serves, it is not to be understood that no woman helped her: for she had one handmaid or more helping, as I suppose; but she asserts that she alone serves, by exclusion of her sister, to whom that ministry equally belonged, according to Martha's opinion.

"And the Lord answering, said to her" (Luke 10:41), the Lord Jesus Christ, who for answering wisely needed no deliberation, inquiry or study, since He was full of wisdom, nay was Wisdom itself and the only Word of God the Father (1 Cor. 1:24; John 1:1): *"Martha, Martha."* He names her twice for her more

diligent provoking to attention, and likewise as a sign of His love for her, whom He chose as hostess of Himself and His disciples. *"Thou art careful, and art troubled about many things"*, that is, about administering these temporal things, and about bodily food, and about refreshing bodies: which occupation, although it was good and an act of prudence and mercy and liberality, proceeding from charity as commanding it, nevertheless frequently diminished, interrupted and impeded the stability and peace of mind in God. For a mind intent on many things cannot attend to each as perfectly as to one, because virtue united is stronger than dispersed.

"But one thing is necessary" (Luke 10:42). This one thing which is said to be necessary before others can be called the felicity of the fatherland itself, or almighty God, the object and giver of this beatitude, or the contemplation or love of God in this life, or peace of mind in God, or the union of the heart with Him, or to serve God duly and provide for one's own salvation. Although for obtaining salvation many things are necessary, namely faith, hope, charity, the sacraments, the fulfilment of the precepts, yet "one thing" is called necessary by antonomasia, because it is necessary beyond the rest, either by necessity of the end, and for its own sake and simply, whereas the others are so by reference to the end, and for the attainment of it. *"Mary hath chosen the best part"*, namely to be free for God (according to that of the Psalm: "But it is good for me to adhere to my God," Ps. 72:28), to love God, to lead a contemplative life with a quiet mind, and to seek and have the immutable Good Himself, of which it is written in Lamentations: "The Lord is my portion, said my soul: therefore will I wait for him" (Lam. 3:24). This most worthy part Mary chose, despising earthly things, and leaving bodily occupations as less good and impeding a greater good. *"Which shall not be taken away from her"*: since this part begins in this life, and is continued and perpetuated in the fatherland; and is perfected in it also, because the contemplation of the way, by faith, is a certain *(p. 24)* beginning of the contemplation of the Blessed by sight. Wherefore the Apostle says: "Now I know in part; but then I shall know even as I am known" (1 Cor. 13:12); and, "We see now through a glass in a dark manner; but then face to face."

Christ therefore does not reprehend Martha for her devout and charitable service, but prefers the part of Mary, because the exercises of the contemplative life are more illustrious than the exercises of the active life. Yet in this Martha seems in some way reproved, that she wished to draw her sister away from the spiritual act of the contemplative life to be occupied with bodily things, when it was not necessary, and because she thought Mary had behaved negligently in not giving help in the bodily service.

Finally, on that, "Thou art careful and art troubled about many things," Cyril and Basil say: "When some have received others in hospitality, let them not be anxious about much service, preparing diverse and delicate dishes, nor demand what is not at hand and exceeds necessity. For everywhere in any matter what is superfluous is a burden: it begets weariness for the hosts; and to the guests it seems that they are a cause of labour to others."

But since the literal sense is plain enough, the mystical understanding is to be touched upon. According to which, by Bethany, which is interpreted "house of obedience," is designated a heart having a good conscience, because it has obeyed the divine precepts: therefore Christ willingly enters it by increase of grace, as something dear and familiar to Himself. Martha, again, signifies the soul given to the exercises of the active life: which receives Christ into her house, that is, into the secrets of her conscience; whose sister Mary, that is, any soul beloved to it as a sister, devoted to the contemplative life, sits at the feet of Jesus, that is, humbly subjects herself to Him, and weighs His humility and imitates His footsteps, according to Lamentations: "He shall sit solitary and hold his peace, because he hath lifted himself above himself" (Lam. 3:28); and *"heareth his word"*, saying with the Psalmist: "I will hear what the Lord God will speak in me" (Ps. 84:9). For the soul by resting becomes prudent, and receives and attends to divine inspiration. Wherefore it is had in Ecclesiasticus: "He that is lessened in action shall receive wisdom" (Ecclus. 38:25). Besides, in such quiet she hears the divine words with the ear of the mind, by obeying those things which she reads or

meditates.

"But Martha was busy about much serving." This befits those who are occupied with works of mercy and the other exterior bodily acts of the virtues. And as Martha complained to Christ, saying, "Lord, hast thou no care that my sister hath left me alone to serve?", so at times devout persons who are compelled to attend to the works of the active life, and desire the contemplative life more, complain to Christ or His prelates that they, beyond the rest like them in state, degree or profession, are forced to serve in exterior things. And as St. Bernard says: "Blessed is the congregation where Martha so complains of Mary." But, alas! now many, like the faithless sons of Israel loathing the heavenly bread (Num. 21:5), aspire also to the Egyptian, that is, worldly consolations, to whom the refection of the contemplative life has no savour. As Christ instructed Martha not to call Mary away from the exercises of contemplation to exterior things, so prelates are to be instructed not to ask, without necessity or evident utility, that anyone be drawn away from the acts of the contemplative life.

On this evangelical passage many things could be adduced about the contemplative and active life and their distinction, and which is the more worthy to be investigated: on which I have composed a special treatise. And now it can be briefly touched that, speaking absolutely, the contemplative life is more worthy than the active, if in the active life only that is weighed which belongs to the active life. On which Aristotle, in the tenth book of the Ethics, adduces eight beautiful and subtle reasons. The first is, that the contemplative life befits man according to his most worthy power, namely the speculative intellect, and as to more worthy objects, because it is concerned with divine things; but the active life befits man according to the practical intellect, and is occupied about exterior and sensible objects. *(p. 25)* The second is, that the contemplative life by its nature is more continuous. The third, that it is more delightful with pure delight. The fourth, that it is more self-sufficient in itself. The fifth, that it is more sought for its own sake; nay, the active is ordained to it. The sixth, that it consists in leisure and quiet; the active, in labour and motion. The seventh, that it is more divine. The eighth, that it befits man through that whereby he is separated from beasts; but the active befits him also according to the lower powers of the soul. Nevertheless the active life is preferred to the contemplative in a certain respect, namely in a case, for the common good, and the necessity and utility of the present life. — Besides, apart from the reasons aforesaid there are others why the contemplative life is more worthy. One of which the Saviour touches: namely, that the contemplative life is not taken from a man by death, as the active is. The contemplative also approaches nearer to the beatitude of the fatherland, and is more supernatural, than the active life.

It is however to be observed that the works of the active life are of two kinds. Some are wholly bodily, as the exterior works of mercy, which are also called corporal: concerning which it is certain that the contemplative life is to be preferred to them. Other works of the active life are such as, if they are to be done fittingly, require beforehand a certain perfection of the contemplative life, as to preach, to preside in spiritual matters, to interpret the Scriptures, to pour forth public prayers for others, etc.: concerning which some opine that they are to be preferred to the contemplative life, because they seem to include the perfection of both lives. Whence Augustine also in the nineteenth book of the City of God distinguishes a threefold life, namely the leisured, that is the contemplative, the busy, that is the active, and that tempered of both. To prelates, however, and the teachers of others it belongs to pursue and have the exercises of both lives in due order.

Finally, this gospel is read on the Assumption of the most blessed Virgin: First, because that festivity has no other special gospel. Second, because the perfection of both lives shone in her: since she served the humanity of her Son bodily, and contemplated His divinity spiritually more lucidly than the rest. Third, because the mystical or allegorical exposition of this gospel befits her chiefly. For that most invincible Virgin, the strongest of women, was the town which Christ entered when He descended from heaven and was incarnate in her womb, taking from her most pure blood a human body. As a town ought to be situated on high, enclosed by a wall, surrounded by a moat, raised by a tower, furnished with arms and provisions, and

fortified with waters, so the blessed Virgin Mary was by eminence of life placed on high, nay set in the highest state, namely in the state of the maternity of God, so that she was and is co-parent with God the Father, having the same Son with Him. She was also enclosed by a wall, that is, adorned with most firm virginal chastity, likewise deepened by humility as by a moat, and raised by the fervour of charity as by a tower, fortified by all virtues as by arms, filled with spiritual nourishments and the streams of graces. This glorious Virgin Mary is called Martha, inasmuch as she possessed the perfection of the active life: and so Martha received Christ into her house, because into her womb. Nor is there doubt that she sat much more humbly at the feet of her Son while He preached, and heard His preaching more affectionately and diligently than Mary Magdalen: whence she also most perfectly chose the best part.

Lastly, according to Augustine, that Martha received Christ into her house designates the Church, which now receives the Lord into her heart. Mary, however, who sat at the Lord's feet hearing his word, *(p. 26)* designates the same Church, but in the future, where, ceasing from the work and ministry of the needy, she shall enjoy wisdom alone. — Let us also strive, therefore, to follow the perfections of these venerable women; and let each of us endeavour to walk worthily, according to the exigency of the vocation wherewith he is called, as the Apostle admonishes (1 Cor. 7:20; Eph. 4:1).

Luke 11: Lord's Prayer, Persevering Prayer, Beelzebub, Sign of Jonas, Woes on the Pharisees

Article XXIX — Elucidation of the Eleventh Chapter: "And it came to pass, as he was in a certain place praying"

(p. 26) The Saviour at the beginning of this chapter teaches the form and the instancy of prayer, and also gives confidence of obtaining. So Luke, beginning historically, says: *"And it came to pass, as he was in a certain place praying, that when he ceased, one of his disciples said to him"* (Luke 11:1). In what place or time this happened, this Evangelist does not determine. Now, as is had in Matthew, while Jesus on the mount before His disciples was preaching, delivering the evangelical law, He taught among other things the manner of praying, and was the first to institute and bring forth the Lord's Prayer that follows (Matt. 6:5 ff.): whence it appears that Luke in this place does not observe the historical order.

And a difficulty arises, how the things which are read here agree with those written in Matthew. For there it is not read that Christ prayed before the institution of this prayer, nor that He taught this prayer on occasion of a disciple's address, but as if of His own motion He inserted it into His sermon. But in answering this, it is certain and safe to say that it frequently happens that what one Evangelist has omitted another supplies: as in this chapter Luke recites many things uttered by Christ about prayer, of which Matthew did not write. Perhaps also the Saviour taught the same prayer twice, on different occasions, and for different persons, when one was present who was absent at the other time. So Christ prayed as man, for our instruction and on account of our need, because He prayed for us: although He often prayed for Himself also, namely for the glorification of His body and for the accidental reward, according to that of John: "Father, glorify thy Son" (John 17:1).

Besides, from the fact that the disciple of Christ did not ask the form of praying from Christ until after He had ceased to pray, we are taught not to interrupt the prayer and psalmody, or the discharge of the Hours, of the servants of God. Which because some do too easily, they sin gravely, not weighing that those who pray and sing psalms are speaking with God Most High. Wherefore, especially for reverence to God, they are not easily to be drawn away from converse with Him, since scarcely anyone dares, without necessity, to call away a man speaking with an earthly king, for reverence of the king.

"Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." John, namely the Baptist, taught his disciples. But how John taught his disciples to pray, and where, and what form of praying he set before them, canonical

Scripture does not teach. Moreover, although many prayers are read in the Old Testament, the disciple of Christ nevertheless asked of Him some singular and chief form of prayer, as of one in whom he beheld so excellent a sanctity, weighing that from a more fervent and devout heart a more efficacious prayer proceeds, since prayer is the interpreter and messenger of desire. Whence good sons and disciples are wont to ask a form of prayer from their most devout fathers, that they may learn and be accustomed to invoke the Most High with the same spirit and fervour of devotion wherewith their fathers do it. So great also is the dignity, utility and necessity of prayer, that we ought rightly to seek instruction about the manner of praying. *(p. 27)*

"And he said to them: When you pray" (Luke 11:2), that is, intend to pray, or begin, or are engaged in prayer, *"say"*, among other things, with most special devotion. One of the disciples asked, but Christ directs the answer to all the disciples who were present, because that one asked for the instruction of all.

"Father, hallowed be thy name." Luke, studying brevity, has omitted some words in the description of this prayer, because he knew that they were sufficiently described by Matthew, or because they are virtually included under the words here set down, or because they do not belong to the substance of the petitions here touched: as what Matthew relates, "Who art in heaven," does not pertain to the essence of the first petition (Matt. 6:9); and two petitions touched by Matthew, and omitted by Luke, are comprehended in the petitions here set down, as will appear (Matt. 6:10, 13).

So Christ exhorts that prayer be begun thus: *"Father."* For he who entreats God ought to do it with full confidence and chief love, as the apostle James says: "Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering" (James 1:6). But by the name of father both of these are chiefly conceived, inflamed and increased: for a son trusts above all in the goodness of his father, and loves him most of all. That we may therefore pray to God with all confidence and fervent love, Christ taught to begin thus: "Father." By which name we also seek the benevolence of God. But let us beware lest we be found unworthy to call God Most High Father. For if we cleave to created, vain and vile things more than to Him, if by transgressing the divine precepts we dishonour Him, if we seek and love the creature more than the Creator, we are altogether unworthy to call Him Father; nor does He reckon us among His elect sons, but condemns us as degenerate and rebellious, as impious and ungrateful. Hence through Malachias He testifies: "The son honoureth the father, and the servant his master. If then I be a father, where is my honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear?" (Mal. 1:6).

Besides, it is to be observed that "father" is said in Scripture in many ways: First, by eternal generation, as in the Psalm: "From the womb before the day star I begot thee" (Ps. 109:3). So Paul to the Corinthians says: "Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 1:3). And thus in the divine things "father" is taken personally, and is said to befit the Person of the Father alone. And although in this way it can be taken in the Lord's Prayer, yet more fittingly it is taken in it in other ways, as will be said. Nevertheless, because in the office of the Mass the prayers are commonly directed to the person of the Father, when the Lord's Prayer is pronounced in this office, the name of father is taken personally. Second, "father" is said by redemption, according to that of Isaias the prophet: "Thou, O Lord, art our father and our redeemer, from everlasting is thy name" (Isa. 63:16). And so again "father" is said personally, speaking of redemption not only as effectively spoken, but also as ministerially exhibited, according as the mode of redemption was exhibited through the passion of the Son: and so the name of father befits the Son alone. Third, "father" is said by predestination, as when the Apostle says to the Ephesians: "Grace to you and peace from God our Father, who hath predestinated us unto the adoption of children through Jesus Christ" (Eph. 1:2, 5). Fourth, "father" is said by creation, according to that of Deuteronomy: "Is not he thy father, that hath possessed thee, and made thee, and created thee?" (Deut. 32:6). "Made" as to the body, "created" as to the soul, and "possessed" as to both. Fifth, he is called father by sacramental regeneration, as Peter speaks in his first Canonical Epistle: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath regenerated us unto a lively hope" (1 Pet. 1:3). Sixth, he is called father by instruction in the faith, according to that of John: "But as many as received him, he gave them power to be made the sons of God" (John 1:12). Seventh, by the

adoption of grace, the Apostle saying: “You have received the spirit of adoption of sons” (Rom. 8:15). *(p. 28)* Eighth, by the collation of glory, according to that of Paul to the Galatians: “Therefore now he is not a servant, but a son: and if a son, an heir also through God” (Gal. 4:7). All these modes agree at once to the three most worthy and eternal Persons, since the works of the most blessed Trinity are undivided. In these modes also “father” is taken in the Lord’s Prayer, by understanding by father the whole super-essential and uncircumscribed Trinity, the one true, most simple God, to whom with all humility, reverence and thanksgiving we ought confidently and ardently to speak and make supplication.

“Hallowed be thy name”, that is, thou thyself, O almighty and immense Father, be honoured by all, and thy holiness be made known to all, and thou be served by all unceasingly in holiness and justice (Luke 1:74–75). This is what we ought first and chiefly to desire, namely the glorification, or honour and glory, of God in all things: otherwise we are not His good sons, nor truly faithful, as in John Christ says to the perverse Jews: “How can you believe, who receive glory one from another; and the glory which is from God alone you do not seek?” (John 5:44). Finally, as virtuous men sanctify God while by living holily they show God, whom they serve, to be holy, and faithfully attest His holiness; so the vicious, by conversing unjustly and basely, are said to defile the name of God, because they so live as if God approved injustice and were not holy; and they also afford to others, as far as in them lies, the boldness and example of dishonouring God. Hence through the Prophets God reproaches the faithless sons of Israel: “You have defiled,” He says, “my holy name” (Jer. 34:16); and again, “I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the Gentiles” (Ezech. 36:23). Therefore, while we pray, “Hallowed be thy name,” let us pray for the whole world for this same thing, most heartily desiring that the holiness of the true God be made known to all men, and He be worthily honoured by all. Nay, the more a common good is more divine than a private one, the more divine and meritorious it is to pray for many, especially for all, than for oneself alone or a few.

“Thy kingdom come.” The kingdom of God is the Church militant and triumphant: therefore this is expounded of both kingdoms. First, “Thy kingdom come”: that is, let the Church militant increase in number and merit, and be diffused everywhere, and do thou alone reign in it by faith and manifold grace, that is, in the hearts of all and each of the faithful, the adversaries of thy honour and of our salvation, especially the demons, being cast out thence. Second, “Thy kingdom come”: that is, let the Church triumphant be fulfilled, and let us be led straightway to the heavenly Jerusalem, let us merit to come to the kingdom of heaven.

Under these two petitions is included the third, expressed by Matthew, in which it is said: “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matt. 6:10), that is, as thou art obeyed in all things by the heavenly citizens, so also by the earth-born, as far as possible, be thou obeyed in all things.

“Give us this day our daily bread” (Luke 11:3). This is expounded of manifold bread. First, of the sacramental bread, that is, of the body and blood of Christ in the Sacrament of the altar, as the Saviour says: “My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed” (John 6:56); and again, “I am the living bread which came down from heaven” (John 6:51). This bread refreshes the soul, and spiritually fattens it, if one receive it worthily. — Second, it is expounded of spiritual bread, namely of the habits and acts of the virtues, of interior consolation, of mental strengthening, of the savour of divine things: of which Scripture says, “With the bread of life and understanding she shall feed him, and give him the water of wholesome wisdom to drink” (Ecclus. 15:3). Of the bread of obedience also the Saviour says in John: “My meat is to do the will of him that sent me” (John 4:34). Likewise of the bread of penance the Psalmist says: “Thou shalt feed us with the bread of tears” (Ps. 79:6); and, “My tears have been my bread day and night” (Ps. 41:4). Of the refection of spiritual consolations and delights and divine tastes, *(p. 29)* the heavenly Bridegroom says in the Canticles: “Eat, O friends, and drink, and be inebriated, my dearly beloved” (Cant. 5:1). Let us therefore pray daily to be nourished with these foods divinely, lest our spirit be weakened and succumb to vices. — Third, it is expounded of bodily nourishment, so that the sense is: Give us our daily bread, that is, the necessaries of life which we need daily. By which words avarice is excluded, which gathers far off and beyond necessity,

and immoderate solicitude for the morrow (Matt. 6:34). On which Theophilus says: “From the fact that Christ commanded to seek daily nourishment, it seems that He allows His faithful to have nothing, but rather to cultivate honourable poverty. For it is not of those who have bread, but of the penury of the oppressed, to seek daily bread for today.” Wherefore Chrysostom says: “The necessaries of life are to be asked of God, not diversities of foods and perfumed wines and other things which delight the throat, but burden the belly and disturb the mind; but the bread is to be asked which can sustain the substance of the body, and that which suffices for us daily only, that we think not of the morrow” (Matt. 6:34).

“And forgive us our sins” (Luke 11:4), by wholly taking away the guilt, and by relaxing the punishments which by sinning we have merited, either in part or totally. Now mortal sins are forgiven together, so that one is not forgiven without another, as to guilt; but so much the more of the punishment is forgiven us, the greater in us is the shame and intimate sorrow for sins, inasmuch as they are against justice and offensive to God, and the greater the fervour of charity in us toward God and neighbour, and the more efficacious the works of satisfaction we perform. Besides, without venial sins we neither lead this life, nor can we long lead it, because though we can avoid each one, we cannot avoid them all. But against these many remedies have been provided and given us from above, one of which, according to Augustine, is this Lord’s Prayer.

Then a certain reason is touched which obtains the effect of this petition, namely pardon. *“For we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us”*, that is, we piously pardon all who injure us, remitting at least the fault or injury: although at times the due penalty or penal and satisfactory amendment can be exacted out of charity, according to the form of law and the order of justice, especially for the common good, and lest sinners, by the facility of pardon, become more prone to injure and to vices. Therefore he who forgives not another cannot with a good face say this clause; nay how impiously he acts is laid open in Ecclesiasticus, where it is read: “Man to man reserveth anger, and doth he seek remedy of God? He hath no mercy on a man like himself, and doth he entreat for his own sins? Who shall obtain pardon for his sins?” (Ecclus. 28:3–5). Therefore, as we desire and pray that when we sin God may not justly be angry with us nor take vengeance, but piously compassionate and pardon our blindness and frailty, so let us also compassionate and pardon the frailty and blindness of those who injure us, praying at the same time for them, that we may be the children of our heavenly Father, who is kind and merciful upon the good and the evil (Matt. 5:44–45). This pertains chiefly to prelates and spiritual fathers and religious, who are bound to outshine others in the charity and piety of all, whose inner parts ought to be converted, or to be already converted, into the very affection of goodness and charity: although out of charity and equity they must often inflict just punishment on sinners, that by it they may be rescued from future punishments, and attain greater grace, and especially that God may in some way be satisfied. — Lastly, on this Chrysostom writes: “Observing these things, we ought to give thanks to our debtors. For they become to us, if we are wise, the cause of the greatest indulgence; and by showing few things or forgiving little, we shall find very much. For we also owe much and great debts to the Lord, of which if He would exact the least part from us, we should already have perished.” *(p. 30)*

“And lead us not into temptation”, that is, suffer us not to be tempted by the enemies of our salvation beyond our strength, that is, to be drawn to unlawful consent, to be overcome by temptations; but give grace to resist and to prevail. God is said to lead into temptation because He permits us to be tempted by adversaries. At times also God is said to tempt, not indeed by deceitful and fallacious temptation, since James says: “Let no man, when he is tempted, say that he is tempted by God; for God is not a tempter of evils, and he tempteth no man” (James 1:13), namely in the aforesaid manner. But by the temptation of probation and exercise, which is ordained to the good of the tempted, God is asserted to tempt. From the explanation of this clause it is now plain that there is virtually and sententially included in it the seventh and last petition of the Lord’s Prayer expressed by Matthew, in which it is said: “But deliver us from evil” (Matt. 6:13). Whence Augustine writes in the Enchiridion that what Matthew put last, “But deliver us from evil,” Luke did not put, that we might understand that this pertains to the preceding petition. For He said, “But deliver,” not “And deliver,” as

showing one petition. But of the many things concerning the exposition of this most illustrious prayer, which, according to Henry of Hesse, can be said even by Jews and Saracens, I pass over, because I have spoken of it on Matthew (Matt. 6:9–13). This however is to be added, that as Gorran asserts, it is one thing to be tempted, another to fall into temptation, another to be led into temptation. For the first of these denotes feeling simply, but not always consent; the second denotes feeling and consent from surprise, and beside purpose; the third denotes feeling and consent from deliberation. The first can be without sin; the second without mortal sin; the third is graver and frequently mortal.

Consequently the Saviour by a certain parabolic similitude exhorts us to confident constancy in prayer, and to unceasing and fervent frequency. *"And he said to them"* (Luke 11:5), namely to His disciples: *"Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go to him,"* etc.? The superficially literal sense of this parable is wholly plain. For by this similitude Christ intends to prove that God, most loving, does not despise prayers constantly, unceasingly and fervently continued and repeated, but hears them.

Mystically, however, by the friend is understood God on high, to whom it is said by the Wise Man: "Thou lovest all things that are, and hatest none of the things which thou hast made" (Wis. 11:25). Of whom the Apostle says: "For his exceeding charity wherewith he loved us" (Eph. 2:4). Similarly by the name of friend can be understood the Only-begotten of God incarnate, who testified of Himself: "Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). Of whom it is again read: "Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them unto the end" (John 13:1). To this friend we ought to go by devotion of mind, contemplation and love, according to that of the Psalm: "Come ye to him and be enlightened" (Ps. 33:6). Whence the Apostle exhorts the Hebrews: "Let us go therefore with confidence to the throne of his grace, that we may obtain mercy" (Heb. 4:16). We must go at midnight, as the Psalmist confesses: "At midnight I rose to give praise to thee" (Ps. 118:62). Or, "at midnight," that is, during the tribulation, adversity, ignorance and manifold ruin of sin of the present life.

"And shall say to him: Friend." At the beginning of the petition he puts first the name of friend, that from the recollection, attention or inflaming of mutual love he who is asked may be the sooner inclined to hear, since charity is the reason of obtaining. For (as Augustine testifies) love is the first gift, in which all gifts are given. *"Lend me three loaves."* These three loaves can be understood as the illumination of the intellect, the charitable inflaming of the will, and the stability of memory in divine things; or the acts of faith, hope and charity, by which God is chiefly worshipped. Likewise the three loaves are: the bread of penance, that is, the lamentation and satisfaction for sins; the bread of the Eucharist, of which Christ speaks *(p. 31)* in John, "I am the bread of life" (John 6:48); and the bread of interior contemplation. These loaves are said to be lent to us by God, because an account will be required of us for the gifts given us from above, as the Saviour says in Luke: "To whom much is given, of him much shall be required" (Luke 12:48). And Gregory asserts: "As gifts increase, the accounts of the gifts increase." *"For a friend of mine is come off his journey to me."* By this friend, according to some, is understood our mind or spirit, which, while it is distracted, delighted and wanders through earthly, vain and carnal things, departs from us, according to that in the Psalm: "My heart hath forsaken me" (Ps. 39:13). Wherefore through the prophet Jeremias it is said: "How long wilt thou be dissolved in delights, O wandering daughter?" (Jer. 31:22). But when it returns to its interior, and meditates things salutary, it is brought back from the broad way of perdition to ourselves, as Isaias testifies: "Return, ye transgressors, to the heart" (Isa. 46:8). — Besides, by him who asks for three loaves can be understood anyone who exhorts another, and by the friend coming off his journey, any neighbour who needs exhortations. And so for the exhorter or preacher three loaves are necessary, namely wisdom of mind, ordered speech of the mouth, exemplarity of conversation.

"And I have not what to set before him", that is, of myself I have nothing of virtue or grace whereby I might be able to strengthen and spiritually refresh my spirit or my neighbour, the Apostle saying: "What hast thou that thou hast not received?" (1 Cor. 4:7). And again: "Not that we are sufficient to think any thing of

ourselves, as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is from God" (2 Cor. 3:5). Let no one therefore boast, nor presume on his own strength, nor glory vainly.

"And he from within" (Luke 11:7) *"answering, should say."* Rightly he says, "from within answering." For God fills all things, and glides into our souls, and speaks to them within by secret inspiration. Wherefore the Psalmist says: "I will hear what the Lord God will speak in me" (Ps. 84:9). *"Trouble me not"*, that is, do not knock immoderately with prayers. This is to be understood not as though the glorious and unchangeable God could properly sustain trouble, or be disquieted by the prayers of men; but because He frequently speaks in the Scriptures after the manner of human affection, condescending to the weakness of our understanding, as He says through Isaias: "I am weary of bearing them; and your holocausts and festivals are become troublesome to me" (Isa. 1:14). And again Isaias says: "Is it a small thing for you to be grievous to men, that you are grievous to my God also?" (Isa. 7:13). Therefore God says, "Trouble me not," to insinuate how hardly and slowly He often hears those who pray, as holy Job speaks to God: "I cry to thee, and thou hearest me not; I stand up, and thou dost not regard me. Thou art changed to be cruel toward me, and in the hardness of thy hand thou art against me" (Job 30:20–21). To Jeremias also God says of the reprobate people of the Jews: "Therefore pray not thou for this people, nor take to thee praise and prayer for them, and oppose not me, for I will not hear thee" (Jer. 7:16).

"The door is now shut", that is, the entrance or access for obtaining from me is not now open to thee, so that thy prayers as yet have no place. Against which it is had in Ecclesiasticus: "The prayer of him that humbleth himself shall pierce the clouds" (Ecclus. 35:21). And to the most blessed centurion Cornelius it was said by the angel, as is had in the Acts: "Thy prayers are ascended for a memorial in the sight of God" (Acts 10:4). *"And my children"*, that is, the elect and blessed citizens of the heavenly kingdom, *"are with me in bed"*, that is, in the most secret rest of the heavenly palace, where, as in a bridal chamber, the Church triumphant is inalienably joined to her eternal Spouse, and immediately and happily united, beholding the Beloved face to face, and not distant from Him by the unlikeness of fault, as are wayfarers, to whom the Lord says through Isaias: "Your iniquities have divided between you and your God" (Isa. 59:2).

"I cannot rise", that is, proceed to the act of hearing, and give thee what thou askest. Finally, that almighty God says, "I cannot," designates not impossibility, but the difficulty of hearing: *(p. 32)* not indeed on the part of God, since to God nothing is difficult, as is written by Jeremias: "O Lord God, no word shall be hard for thee" (Jer. 32:17). But the difficulty is on the part of the petitioner, on account of his unworthiness and indisposition, as Isaias says to the people of Israel: "Behold, the hand of the Lord is not shortened that it cannot save, nor his ear heavy that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have divided between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he should not hear" (Isa. 59:1–2). At times also the most wise God defers and delays hearing the prayers of the good and well disposed, for reasonable causes known and pleasing to Him, as: lest the gifts of the divine charisms become cheap to the man praying by the facility of obtaining what is asked, and lest he attribute the hearing to his own merits, or exult vainly, or despise others; likewise, that by praying long he may grow the more fervent, and in due time be heard more copiously, and always guard more watchfully what he has obtained, fearing its loss. Hence Basil says: "Perhaps for this He defers, that thou mayest know what the gift is, and keep what is given in fear: for what a man acquires by many labours he strives to guard, lest when he has lost it he lose his labour." This is what Solomon says in Proverbs: "Substance gotten in haste shall be diminished; but he that gathereth little by little with the hand shall multiply" (Prov. 13:11). Augustine also affirms: "God defers to give and to hear, that thou mayest desire the more what is deferred, lest what is quickly given grow cheap." Lastly Gregory of Nyssa: "Fitly," he says, "he called 'children' those who by the arms of justice have vindicated impassibility for themselves: for when anyone, renouncing the flesh, has by reason, through the exercise of a virtuous life, confuted passion, he is insensible, as it were, like a child."

“And if he shall continue knocking” (Luke 11:8), that is, the one praying, invoking God untiringly, cast down neither by shame, nor weariness, nor despair; *“I say to you”*, who neither am deceived nor deceive, and cannot lie, *“although he will not rise and give him”* so instantly praying, that is, actually bestow help (according to that of the Psalm: “Arise, O Lord, help us,” Ps. 43:26), *“because he is his friend”*, that is, by reason of friendship; *“yet because of his importunity”*, that is, because of his unrelenting or unceasing instancy, containing something like importunity, especially in human judgment, in petitions offered to man (for a man, if he be asked instantly and long, even by one in need, soon ascribes such a prayer not to necessity but to importunity), *“he will rise and give him as many as he needeth”*, namely three, as he asked, nay more, if then he should ask for more loaves, lest being returned to bed he be disturbed again. Whence it is gathered that if superfluities in exterior things be asked, God does not grant: nay He commands superfluities to be distributed to the poor (Luke 11:41). Of the spiritual gifts of grace also God bestows so much on those who ask worthily and perseveringly as He sees necessary for them for salvation.

From these things Christ concludes His intent, as arguing from the lesser, or making a comparison: for if a man not naturally nor wholly and perfectly good, charitable and kind, is overcome by the instancy of prayers, how much more God, substantially, purely and infinitely good, loving and kind, nay essentially love, goodness and benignity, by the instancy of prayers inclines Himself to hear, and does not spurn prayers offered to Him so many times and so ardently? As Christ also teaches below, and demonstrates by example, saying: “We ought always to pray and not to faint. There was a judge in a certain city, who feared not God, nor regarded man. And there was a certain widow in that city, and she came to him, saying, Avenge me of my adversary. And he would not for a long time. But afterwards he said within himself: Although I fear not God, nor regard man, yet because this widow is troublesome to me, I will avenge her” (Luke 18:1–5). Hence Christ now subjoins and counsels:

“And I say to you” (Luke 11:9): *“Ask”* the things necessary for the body and the charisms of grace and the gifts of glory, *“and it shall be given you”*, the effect of your petition, by God, provided you ask wholesomely and *(p. 33)* instantly: which also is chiefly to be understood of prayers poured forth for oneself, because the devout are not always heard for others, on account of the incapacity of those others. Hence Christ also at the time of the passion said instantly: “If you ask the Father any thing in my name, he will give it you” (John 16:23). *“Seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you.”* The same sentence Christ frequently resumes under other words, that the utility of this command may be denoted, and what the Saviour says may be the more strongly imprinted in our minds, and so provoke us to most instant prayer. Yet these words can by a certain appropriation be explained diversely, thus: Ask, with cordial affection; seek, by vocal prayer; knock, by laudable conversation. And likewise: Ask, by beginning good things; seek, by pursuing them; knock, by persevering to the end. Or, Ask by faith, seek by hope, knock by charity. For by fervently loving and desiring divine things we, as it were, knock unceasingly at the door of supernal clemency. Hence the Psalmist says: “Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord. Seek ye the Lord, and be strengthened; seek his face evermore” (Ps. 104:3–4). And in the book of Wisdom it is had: “Seek him in simplicity of heart; for he is found by them that tempt him not” (Wis. 1:1–2).

“For every one that asketh” (Luke 11:10), receives from God what he asks, according to the sense aforesaid; *“and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened”*, that is, access to God shall be open to him, and he shall enter into eternal beatitude: provided he pray as one ought to pray, by praying in the name of Jesus Christ, that is, wholesomely for those things which pertain to salvation, and perseveringly and piously, and also for himself.

Consequently Christ, arguing from the greater, shows with what confidence God is to be invoked. *“And which of you, if he ask his father”* carnal *“bread, will he give him a stone”* (Luke 11:11), namely to his carnal son? Not at all. *“Or a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?” “Or if he shall ask an egg, will he reach him a scorpion?”* (Luke 11:12). Nowise. From these similitudes Christ concludes: *“If you then, being*

evil” (Luke 11:13), frail and mortal men, that is, in many ways defective and prone to sins, and daily culpable in many things, at least venial sins, *“know how to give good gifts to your children”*, that is, exterior goods truly necessary to the body, which you give to your carnal children; *“how much more will your Father from heaven”*, that is, the heavenly Father, namely the Trinity, God: who is called father in various modes, as has been said; *“give the good Spirit”*, that is, the Holy Ghost, essentially good, and pure and immense goodness (of whom the Psalmist says: “Thy good spirit shall lead me into the right land,” Ps. 142:10), *“to them that ask him”*, in the due manner of praying? For prayer, as Damascene asserts, is the petition of fitting things from God. The Holy Ghost is said to be given to those into whom His gifts pertaining to grace that makes gracious are infused, the Apostle saying: “The charity of God is poured forth in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost, who is given to us” (Rom. 5:5). If therefore a carnal father bestows bodily goods on his carnal children, much more does almighty God, creator of spirits and spiritual father of rational souls, distribute spiritual goods to His children crying unceasingly to Him, especially since He infinitely exceeds all in all goodness, love, piety and opulence.

Besides, the words of St. Basil, writing here, are to be noted: “If anyone out of torpor give himself to vain desires, or acquiesce in concupiscences, and become a betrayer of himself into the hands of his enemies: him God neither helps nor hears, since by sin he has made himself alien from God. It becomes a man, therefore, to offer to God whatever concerns him, and also to cry to God to help him. But divine assistance is to be implored not remissly, nor with the mind wandering hither and thither, because such a one will not only not obtain what he asks, nay he will rather irritate the Lord. For if anyone standing before a prince keeps his eye, both outward and inward, fixed and guarded, lest perhaps he be punished, how much more ought one to stand attentive and trembling before God? *(p. 34)* But if, weakened in mind by sin, thou canst not fixedly pray, restrain thyself as much as thou canst, that standing before God thou mayest direct thy intellect to Him; and God pardons, because not from negligence but from frailty thou canst not stand as thou oughtest. If thou thus compel thyself, depart not till thou receive. Moreover, thou sometimes askest and receivest not, because thou hast asked amiss, or faithlessly or lightly, or things not expedient for salvation, or thou hast desisted too soon.”

Lastly, by the words adduced Christ ineffably consoles every faithful soul, affording most certain confidence of divine hearing. Therefore, certain of the truth of the promise of the only-begotten Son of God, and of the goodness, charity and munificence of the eternal Father, let us have an unshaken hope toward God and a filial affection toward Him, and let us cast far away all diffidence, hesitation, pusillanimity, fulfilling that of the Apostle: “Pray without ceasing” (1 Thess. 5:17).

Article XXX — Continuation of the Exposition of this Eleventh Chapter, from the place where it is said: “And it was dumb”

The whole evangelical series, as it is full of supernatural teachings and assertions, so also of descriptions of supernatural works, that the one may be confirmed by the other. Whence now also, after the teachings of Christ adduced, a certain work of His is narrated. *“And he was casting out a devil, and the same was dumb”* (Luke 11:14), that is, making the man dumb. For a demon is called deaf or dumb, not formally but effectively, because he hinders the organs of man from the use of the senses of hearing and tongue. Hence it is subjoined: *“And when he had cast out the devil, the dumb spoke.”* For the cause being removed, the effect is removed. Therefore, the demon who caused the dumbness being cast out, the man recovered the former faculty of the tongue. *“And the multitudes wondered”* at so great a miracle so imperially wrought. Now this sign is recited more fully by Matthew, where it is read: “Then was offered to him,” namely to Christ, “one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb, and he healed him, so that he spoke and saw” (Matt. 12:22). On which Jerome says: “Three signs were wrought in the same at once, for the possessed was healed, and the same blind and dumb man received sight and hearing.”

"But some of them said" (Luke 11:15). These, according to Matthew, were Pharisees (Matt. 12:24), full of envy against Christ because He surpassed them in sanctity, fame, eloquence, wisdom and miracles, whereas they were most covetous of human praise and glory. Whose madness many follow even to the present, to whom that of Chrysostom applies: "As beetles are nourished on dung, so the envious on the misfortunes of others." *"He casteth out devils by Beelzebub the prince of devils"*, that is, by the power, help or invocation of Beelzebub, the prince of the demons, he expels demons from the possessed. As if they should say: He does this not by divine power, nor by any sanctity of his life; but being most wicked, he has familiarity and a pact with the prince of the demons, who has commanded the lower demons to go out at the bidding of Jesus, that thereby men may be deceived, thinking that Jesus is the Son of God. Therefore, according to these most impious Pharisees, this casting out of demons was the obedience of the same demons to their prince, and a feigned compulsion. *(p. 35)* Now, as is had in the book of Kings, Beelzebub was the god of Accaron, so that the Accaronites worshipped that idol (4 Kings 1:2): in which the Jews said that the prince of the demons dwelt, and so by the name of that idol they called the prince of the demons.

"And others, tempting" (Luke 11:16), that is, wishing to try whether Christ cast out demons by divine power, *"asked of him a sign from heaven"*, that is, some heavenly and great miracle possible to God alone, namely that he should do such a miracle or procure that it be done divinely, as at the invocation, or rather command, of Josue the sun and moon stood still in heaven immovable for the space of one day (Josue 10:12–13); and so they might know with certainty that Jesus works by divine power. Finally, it was customary with the Jews to seek signs, as is plain from the Old and New Testament. Wherefore the Apostle says: "The Jews require signs" (1 Cor. 1:22). And in John the Saviour says: "Unless you see signs and wonders, you believe not" (John 4:48).

"But he, seeing" (Luke 11:17), that is, beholding intellectually, *"their thoughts, said to them."* According to Bede, He answered them not to what they said, but to what they thought, that so at least they might be compelled to believe the power of Him who knows the secrets of hearts. But how is this true, since the Evangelist has already said that some of them said, "By Beelzebub the prince of devils," etc., and others sought a sign from Jesus? To which it seems to be answered that the Pharisees secretly and privately conferred the aforesaid words among themselves and decreed to seek a sign. Whence Chrysostom says: "Since the suspicion of the Pharisees was unreasonable, for fear of the multitude they dared not divulge it." Besides, to know the secrets of hearts, and to behold with certainty the thoughts of others, namely of each one's several thoughts, is proper to God; nor can man do this, unless God give and reveal. On this Gorran writes: "A man can know some thoughts of another: for the knowing of which Plato is read to have composed a book; but the several thoughts of each one God alone knows."

After this Christ touches the first reason by which He reproves the words of those saying, "By Beelzebub," etc. *"Every kingdom divided against itself"*, that is, against itself, so that one part of the kingdom fights against another, *"shall be brought to desolation"*, that is, will be continually weakened and soon perish, while the intestine strife and discord lasts: since as by concord small things grow, so by discord the greatest things fall to pieces. According to Jerome also, virtue united is stronger than dispersed. Hence it is written through Osee: "Their heart is divided: now shall they perish" (Osee 10:2). *"And house upon house shall fall"*, that is, the inhabitants of one house will rush upon the inhabitants of the other, or mutually destroy their buildings, or, the inhabitants being slain, the buildings will fail by age.

"And if Satan also be divided against himself" (Luke 11:18), that is, if one of them fight and plot against another, so that I by the succour of the prince of the demons expel demons, *"how shall his kingdom stand?"* that is, the kingdom of the prince of demons, since he himself acts against his own kingdom, expelling from men the demons subject to him? as if He should say: It will not endure long: whereas yet it will last as long as the elect men in this world are to be proved by it: which will be until the end of the world. But if the Jews and the reprobate judaizing affirm that at the voice of Christ the prince of the demons expelled the demons,

not for the dissipation of his own kingdom but for its strengthening, namely that men thinking Christ to cast out demons by divine help might be entangled in greater errors by holding Jesus to be the Son of God: this is easily refuted, since all that Christ taught by word and deed is chiefly contrary to the devil. For to what does all the teaching of Christ tend, but to the total extirpation of private love, and the most sincere integrity of divine love, to the cordial contempt of oneself, and the most diligent veneration of God, to the profoundest humility, to unshaken patience, to the beneficence and love even of all enemies, *(p. 36)* to full confidence in God, to the extirpation of idolatry, to the continual, pure and fervent adhesion of the mind to God? By all which it is most certain that the kingdom of the devil is chiefly weakened and dissipated. Christ therefore could not have a league with the prince of the demons: and this to true and devout Christians is most certain, not by faith only, but experimentally also, and through innumerable miracles possible to almighty God alone, they have so proved it. Whereby the vain and sacrilegious figments devised by Porphyry against the Christian faith are utterly destroyed.

Then Christ introduces another reason to the same purpose. *"And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils"* (Luke 11:19), as has been expounded, *"by whom do your children"*, that is, the Apostles and my other disciples, sprung of your race; or, "Your children," that is, your exorcists, *"cast them out?"* that is, by what power do they expel demons from the possessed? Above it is written how the Apostles and disciples of Christ cast out demons (Luke 10:17). Moreover among the Jews there were some exorcists who by exorcisms or adjurations edited by Solomon expelled demons. *"Therefore they shall be your judges"*, that is, because you ascribe the expulsions of demons made by them not to the devil but to God: those made by me you ascribe to the prince of the demons. Hence these your children shall be your judges in the day of judgment, not by power but by comparison, according to Jerome: because by comparison with them these most perverse Pharisees will appear the more damnable, since those children attribute the expulsions of demons to God, these to the devil. Besides, if by children the Apostles be understood, it is certain that they will be judges of the unbelieving Jews in the day of judgment by assessorial dignity, as Christ foretold them: "You who have followed me, shall sit on seats judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19:28).

"But if" (Luke 11:20), for *"since"*, *"in the finger of God I cast out devils."* In Matthew it is read: "If I by the Spirit of God cast out devils" (Matt. 12:28). Whence it is plain that in this place by the finger of God is understood the Holy Ghost, so that the sense is: If in the finger of God, that is, by the power and operation of the Holy Ghost, I cast out devils, *"then is the kingdom of God come upon you"*, that is, the heavenly kingdom or eternal beatitude is by me laid open to you, while I conquer and weaken the kingdom of the devil, and prepare for you the entrance to the heavenly kingdom. For the expulsion of one contrary is the introduction of the other. Hence in the Canonical Epistle of John it is written: "For this purpose the Son of God appeared, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8). Or, "The kingdom of God is come upon you," that is, the reigning power and dominion of the Creator, who by me, man, and by my humanity, works in you the expulsion of demons: so that I am the Christ promised to you in the law and the prophets, as one to reign among you. Of whom Jeremias foretold: "A king shall reign, and shall be wise" (Jer. 23:5). The angel also foretold to the glorious Virgin of Christ: "He shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:32–33).

So the Holy Ghost is called the finger of God, that is, of the Father and the Son: who, as they are one true God and one Creator of all, so are one principle and one spirator of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost, then, is called the finger of God: First, because as things are pointed out by the finger, so by the Holy Ghost divine things are shown to men, according to what Christ says: "When he, the Spirit of truth, shall come, he will teach you all truth" (John 16:13). Second, because as by the finger a thing is felt, or how it tastes is experienced, so by the Holy Ghost man experiences the divine sweetness. Third, because as by the finger man chiefly executes his works, so by the gifts of the Holy Ghost every elect man works the works meritorious of eternal life. Augustine, however, in the book On the Questions of the Gospel writes that the

Holy Ghost is called the finger of God on account of the partition of the gifts which are furnished by Him. For to one, as the Apostle says, by the Spirit is given the word of wisdom; to another the grace of healing; to another the working of miracles, etc. And a little after the *(p. 37)* Apostle adds: "But all these things one and the same Spirit worketh, dividing to every one according as he will" (1 Cor. 12:8–11). In none of our members, moreover, does partition appear more than in our fingers. Again, as the Son of God is called the hand and arm of the Father, because the Father works all things through the Son, so the Holy Ghost is called the finger of God, because by Him the truth is indicated.

Lastly it is to be weighed that the Son of God here asserts that He is less than the Holy Ghost as to His humanity, since by the power of the Holy Ghost His humanity works miracles. By which the falsity of the impious Arius is declared, who said that the Holy Ghost is a mere creature and the minister of the Son and created by the Son, whereas in Christ he put no true rational soul, but only the Word and flesh: which being so, Christ would have received no virtue from the Holy Ghost.

Next the Saviour by another reason and similitude proves that He is contrary to the demon, not leagued with him. *"When a strong man armed"* (Luke 11:21), etc. This similitude or parable, so far as concerns the literal understanding taken superficially, is most plain, but it is to be expounded mystically; so that the sense is: When a strong man armed, that is, the devil, strong with natural strength, for as he is of a sublime nature, so also of great power: wherefore it is had in Job: "There is no power upon earth that can be compared with him" (Job 41:24). He is also said to be armed, with manifold craft, long experience, natural industry and knowledge (for natural things have remained in the demons, according to Dionysius in the fourth chapter of the Divine Names), and with manifold wickedness, or the array of vices and malignant spirits subservient to him. *"Keepeth his court"*, that is, the conventicle of the impious, or the world seated in wickedness (1 John 5:19), lest men do penance, be converted, be saved. For so before the coming of Christ the devil kept impious men, lest they be withdrawn from him, since then in almost the whole world idolatry and the other vices prevailed. *"Those things are in peace which he possesseth"*, that is, he possesses such according to his will: for, as the Apostle says, they are held captive by him at his will (2 Tim. 2:26); and those who are so subject to the devil have a carnal and false peace, and unhappily and damnably agree with the demon: which peace Christ came to destroy, as He says: "I came not to send peace upon earth" (Matt. 10:34). There is therefore a true peace, which is tranquillity of mind in God and concord in good things; but a false peace is concord in evils, as when the spirit or reason acquiesces in carnal desires: of which peace the Psalmist says: "Because I was zealous against the wicked, seeing the prosperity of sinners" (Ps. 72:3). But Isaias testifies of true and spiritual peace: "There is no peace to the wicked" (Isa. 48:22).

"But if a stronger than he" (Luke 11:22), that is, Christ, more powerful than the devil. For Christ, according to His divine nature, is infinitely more powerful than the devil and the whole universe; according to His humanity also He was and is stronger than the devil, by the created power supernaturally given to His humanity. *"Come upon him."* For Christ comes from above, according to that of John: "He that cometh from heaven is above all" (John 3:31). *"And overcome him."* Christ indeed overcame the devil in all things, namely: in temptation, manfully refuting it; in the passion, most patiently enduring it; in His descent to hell, despoiling hell. Hence the Psalmist says of Christ: "Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle" (Ps. 23:8). Of Him also it is had in the Apocalypse: "Behold the lion of the tribe of Juda hath prevailed" (Apoc. 5:5).

"He will take away all his armour", that is, his crafty deceits and the machinations of temptations full of fraud by which he deceives men, He will check, detect, and cause to be overcome by the elect, as above He said to the disciples: "Behold, I have given you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy" (Luke 10:19). *"Wherein he trusted."* For the devil trusts in his aforesaid cunning. Which many men follow, namely *(p. 38)* dissemblers and the crafty, who provoke the wrath of God: who in Isaias say: "We have made lies our hope, and by falsehood we are protected" (Isa. 28:15). Of whom again it

is asserted: “They trust in nothing, and speak vanities” (Isa. 59:4). *“And will distribute his spoils.”* The spoils of the devil are sinners, whom by tempting he deceived and as it were withdrew from the Creator and subjected to his own dominion. These Christ by His grace redeemed and took from the demons, and distributed them to the custody of the angels, and assigned them also to ecclesiastical offices. For “leading captivity captive, he gave gifts to men, and he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and other some evangelists, and other some pastors and doctors” (Eph. 4:8, 11). Finally, the diverse nations of the world captivated by the demon Christ distributed to the Apostles to be converted, saying: “Going into the whole world, preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15). Whence when the passion was at hand He foretold: “Now shall the prince of this world be cast out” (John 12:31). In Isaias also it was foretold of the calling of Christ: “Call his name, Make speed to take away the spoils, make haste to take away the prey” (Isa. 8:3).

“He that is not with me” (Luke 11:23), that is, who consents not to me, nor agrees, nor cooperates, *“is against me”*, that is, contrary to me, and does works contrary to my works; *“and he that gathereth not with me”*, that is, does not bring men back to God the Creator, nor unite them in virtues, as he can and is bound, namely by praying, teaching, or conversing exemplarily, *“scattereth”*, that is, turns away from God, and entangles himself and others, as far as in him lies, in errors. By this Christ insinuates that there is no communion or covenant between Him and the devil, since He is humble and kind, and brings back and gathers those scattered by vices and errors to the unity of faith, hope and charity, and the unanimous worship of God. But the devil, proud and malignant, always strives to turn men away from the aforesaid unity, to scatter them from the worship of the true God, to disperse them by idolatries and the other sins. Hence the Apostle says: “What concord hath Christ with Belial? or what fellowship hath light with darkness?” (2 Cor. 6:14–15). And in John it is read: “Jesus should die for the nation, and not only for the nation, but to gather together in one the children of God that were dispersed” (John 11:51–52).

Next the Saviour shows that the Jewish people, incredulous to Him, is inhabited by demons. *“When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man”* (Luke 11:24), etc. In Matthew, where these words are written, it is read that Christ straightway subjoined, “So shall it be also to this wicked generation” (Matt. 12:45). Whence it is plain that these things are chiefly said of the Jewish people, so that by the name of man that people is signified, as frequently in the Old Testament the discourse concerns that whole people as if one man. So, “When the unclean spirit,” that is, the devil: who by reason of his simple nature is called a spirit, and on account of the abundance of his guilt is called unclean; *“is gone out of a man”*, that is, was expelled from the people of the Jews, when the law was given them by God on Mount Sinai; *“he walketh through dry places”*, that is, through the hearts and assemblies of the Gentiles, lacking the water of wholesome wisdom, *“seeking rest”*, otherwise “a place,” that is, a dwelling in them to deceive them, as Peter says: “Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour” (1 Pet. 5:8). *“And not finding”*, that is, not finding among the Gentiles a fixed and perpetual dwelling, because they were converted by Christ’s Apostles, *“he saith: I will return into my house whence I came out”*, that is, to the Synagogue or the people of the Jews, from which I went out at the time that it worthily served God. But when it refused to receive Christ, the demon entered that people again.

“And when he is come” (Luke 11:25), the devil, to the Synagogue, *“he findeth it swept with a besom”*, that is, outwardly and superficially adorned with certain ceremonial observances and the traditions of the Pharisees, and apparent sanctity: all which at the time of the evangelical law are reprobated. Wherefore Christ in the Gospel chiefly rebukes the Scribes and Pharisees for hypocrisy (Matt. 23). *“Then he goeth”* (Luke 11:26), the devil, perceiving an entrance open to him *(p. 39)* to the Jews, *“and taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself”*, that is, a multitude and abundance of tempters and vices. By the number seven, indeed, universality is expressed, as Christ is said to have cast out of Mary Magdalen seven devils (Mark 16:9; Luke 8:2), that is, all mortal sins. *“And entering in they dwell there.”* Now we see how unceasingly the hearts of the unbelieving Jews have been inhabited by demons, because, as the Apostle says,

the wrath of God is come upon them to the end (1 Thess. 2:16). Of whom John in the Apocalypse protests: "They say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan" (Apoc. 2:9). *"And the last state of that man is made worse than the first."* For as this captivity of the Jews is as it were incomparably greater than every captivity which they suffered under the law, so now their sins are heavier, and they suffer these hard things for more enormous transgressions, namely for the persecution and slaying of Christ, and because to the present day they daily blaspheme Christ, according to Jerome.

Besides, these things are morally explained of any man who relapses, from whom, from the time of his Baptism or Penance, the demon has been expelled. And then he goes through dry places, that is, the hearts of the good, dried from the flow of concupiscence, and made arid by abstinences, he sets about to tempt and strives to overcome them: in which he finds no place, while they manfully resist him. Then he returns to the former: whom if he find not truly purged within, but only adorned without, and not true sanctity, but vainly desiring the apparent beauty of virtues; then he goes and takes seven spirits more wicked than himself, according to the sense aforesaid, who entering dwell in the relapsing man, so that his later sins become worse than his former vices. For repeated wounds are more dangerous, both in body and in soul.

"And it came to pass, as he spoke these things" (Luke 11:27), that is, so wisely, promptly, evidently and strongly Christ upbraided His adversaries, *"a certain woman from the crowd, lifting up her voice"*, that is, devoutly and freely raising it, *"said to him."* Some have said that this woman was the handmaid of St. Martha, who, admiring the wisdom and constancy of Christ, spoke: *"Blessed is the womb that bore thee, and the paps that gave thee suck"*, that is, so great is thy dignity, sanctity and perfection, O Christ, that I cannot sufficiently commend thee; but I rightly also call blessed her who deserved to bear thee, whose members I protest to be beatified by thy contact and the service rendered to thee. For who can worthily praise the most inviolate and chaste womb of that most sacrosanct Virgin, in which the Only-begotten of God, the God of immense majesty, chose to be incarnate, to become man, to abide so many months, to grow and be nourished, whose paps He sucked after His birth? Is not that admirable and most excellent Virgin to be believed to have been inestimably dignified and deified by union, communion, contact and service with this Son? Besides, because to be the mother of Christ is a unique and most singular gift, Christ puts forward a universal praise to which all of us can attain. *"But he said"* (Luke 11:28): *"Yea rather"*, that is, assuredly it is so as thou hast said; nor is this alone so, but also *"blessed are they who hear the word of God, and keep it"*, that is, who attend to the words of God with the ear of the mind, or even willingly hear them bodily, that they may know and fulfil them, retaining them in memory and applying them to work, are already blessed in hope, and at length shall be blessed in reality, obtaining eternal felicity in the fatherland, provided they praiseworthily persevere to the end. Hence in John Christ asserts: "He that is of God heareth the words of God" (John 8:47). For the word of God is the life and food of the soul, because "not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God" (Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4). Finally, by these words Christ preferred His spiritual conception to the bodily conception, so that even to the glorious Virgin it would not have profited unto salvation to be the carnal mother of the Son of God, unless she had been truly devout and had conceived Christ spiritually in her mind. Therefore, according to *(p. 40)* Augustine, she was more blessed in conceiving Christ by faith or mind than by her womb. Whence let us also not presume concerning the sanctity of others, however nearly related, that it profits us, unless we take care to follow their virtues.

"And the crowds running together to Jesus" (Luke 11:29), to hear the words of his wisdom, and to behold the signs of his power, *"he began to say: This generation is a wicked generation."* Above in this chapter it was said that some said Christ casts out devils by the prince of devils (Luke 11:15): to whom Christ has answered thus far, save that the words of the woman praising Christ were interposed. Others, however, sought from the Saviour a sign from heaven (Luke 11:16): to whom He now speaks and answers, saying: *"This generation"*, that is, this people demanding a sign, *"is wicked"*, because with crafty intention, not from

desire of profiting, it seeks a sign. Now in Matthew it is read that those who sought a sign were Scribes and Pharisees (Matt. 12:38). The Scribes were the doctors and clerics of the Jews, the Pharisees their religious, as Bede maintains: and yet Christ here publicly reproves their sins before the laity, as Gorran also notes here.

"It seeketh a sign." For they sought some great sign from Christ, by which they might know with certainty that He is the Christ, as has been expounded. *"And a sign shall not be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet."* It is certain that Christ after the utterance of these words did many most illustrious miracles before the Jews, by Himself and by His disciples, the Holy Ghost being sent, showing Himself to be the Christ: how then does He now say, "A sign shall not be given it, but the sign of Jonas"? And it must be answered that the sense is: A sign shall not be given it, that is, I will not on this occasion give it a sign by which it may know me to be the Christ, except the sign of Jonas, that is, save that mystical and typical thing which befell the prophet Jonas as a figure of Christ. For these perverse Scribes and Pharisees had already seen or perceived many illustrious miracles of Christ; and faithlessly, maliciously and irreverently they sought a sign: therefore they did not deserve to be heard by Christ.

Next Christ expresses the sign or mystical deed of Jonas the prophet, which is more fully contained in the book of Jonas, who is the fifth in number of the twelve minor Prophets. *"For as Jonas was a sign to the Ninivites"* (Luke 11:30), *"so shall the Son of man also be to this generation."* Jonas was a sign to the Ninivites by foretelling them their overthrow, namely unless being converted they did penance: so Christ by living voice foretold to the Scribes and Pharisees their eternal damnation, unless they believed His words and truly did penance. Matthew, however, recites this prefiguration more clearly, saying: "For as Jonas was in the whale's belly three days and three nights, so shall the Son of man be in the heart of the earth," that is, in the sepulchre, "three days and three nights" (Matt. 12:40): putting, namely, a part for the whole.

Moreover Christ declares the greatness of the guilt and punishment of the Scribes and Pharisees. *"The queen of the south"* (Luke 11:31), that is, the queen of Saba: who is called queen of the south because that region of Saba was in the southern part, in respect of Judea; *"shall rise up"*, that is, shall be raised again and appear, *"in the judgment"*, that is, on the day of the last and general judgment, *"with the men of this generation."* For good and bad shall rise again together. And Bede says here: "The queen of the south is not doubted to have been elect." *"And shall condemn them"*, not by judiciary power, but by comparison of a better work, according to the Gloss: since from the good deed of that queen these will appear damnable, nay more damnable. Hence it is subjoined: *"because she came from the ends of the earth"*, that is, from places very remote, *"to hear the wisdom of Solomon"*, as is plain in the books of Kings: for she came with a great train and with many spices (3 Kings 10:1–2). *"And behold more than Solomon here"*, that is, I am wiser than Solomon, who, according as I am God, am substantially infinite wisdom, and according to the assumed nature also am wiser than every created mind, *(p. 41)* even the angelic and Seraphic: and yet I am despised and reprobated by you, and called possessed by a devil.

"The men of Ninive" (Luke 11:32), *"who dwelt in Ninive, a great city, of three days' journey,"* as is written in Jonas (Jonas 3:3), *"shall rise in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it"*, in the manner expounded of the queen of the south, *"because they did penance at the preaching of Jonas."* For when Jonas preached in Ninive, "Yet forty days, and Ninive shall be destroyed," the king and the people of Ninive took up great penance, clothing themselves in sackcloth and fasting, and calling mightily on God, as is written of Jonas (Jonas 3:4–8). *"And behold more than Jonas here."* For he was a prophet, but Christ is king and Lord of the Prophets; he a creature, this One the Creator and God: and yet at the preaching of Jonas, preaching a few days in Ninive (forty, according to Gorran), and doing no miracle there, the Ninivites were converted; but to Christ preaching much longer and working many and great miracles, the Scribes and Pharisees refused to believe, nor were they converted, save a very few.

Then Christ demonstrates that on account of the inconvertibility of those Jews He ought not to have ceased from the communication or preaching of His wisdom: for one reason why such great wisdom was given to

His soul was that by His wisdom He might announce the word of God to evil and good, and illuminate all as far as in Him lay, according to that foretold by Isaias of Christ, the Father speaking to the Son: “I have given thee to be a covenant of the people, to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou mightest open the eyes of the blind, and bring forth the prisoner out of prison” (Isa. 42:6–7). So Christ, declaring His purpose by a similitude, says: *“No man lighteth a candle”* (Luke 11:33), *“and putteth it in a hidden place, nor under a bushel, but upon a candlestick, that they who come in may see the light.”* This, in exterior things at least, is wont to be so observed: by which Christ intends that God the Trinity did not infuse so great wisdom into His soul in order wholly to hide it, but that at a fitting time He might by it illuminate others, preaching publicly.

So the candle is the humanity of Christ, most brilliantly illumined with the light of wisdom: which God would not put in a hidden place, that is, would not have it lie hid under the shadow of the law, but be manifested by the splendour of grace and the preaching of the evangelical truth; nor under a bushel, that is, would not confine it under the clime of the Jews, but by it illuminate the whole world. Hence through Isaias the Father says to Christ: “It is a small thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to convert the dregs of Israel: behold I have given thee to be the light of the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation even to the farthest part of the earth” (Isa. 49:6). God therefore placed this candle upon a candlestick, that is, the citadel of the elect Synagogue, namely of the primitive Church: nay He set Christ over the whole Church, according to what He says in the Psalm: “But I am appointed king by him over Sion his holy mountain, preaching his commandment” (Ps. 2:6). Of which candlestick, shining with the sevenfold gift of the Holy Spirit, is expounded that of Zacharias: “And I saw, and behold a candlestick all of gold” (Zach. 4:2), that is, the Church adorned with divine love, “and his lamp,” namely Christ illuminating it, “upon the top of it; and seven lamps,” that is, the universality of the doctors, “thereon.” Hence in the Apocalypse the seven Churches of Asia are designated by seven golden candlesticks (Apoc. 1:12, 20). For as there is one universal Church and many particular Churches, so one candlestick and many candlesticks are spoken of. Therefore, upon the candlestick, that is, the Church, Christ is placed, that all who enter the ecclesiastical house may behold the light of Christ, that is, may be illumined and ruled by the evangelical doctrine. Now that it befits Christ according to His humanity to be a candle is plain from what is had in the Apocalypse: “The Lord God Almighty shall illuminate it,” namely the holy city of God, Jerusalem, “and the Lamb is the lamp thereof” (Apoc. 21:23). From which also is taken that of Proverbs: “Her lamp shall not be put out in the night,” namely of the valiant woman (Prov. 31:18): *(p. 42)* by which the Church is there figured, whom John in the Apocalypse calls the bride and wife of the Lamb (Apoc. 19:7).

From the things adduced Christ turns Himself to our instruction. *“The lamp of thy body is thy eye”* (Luke 11:34). This is verified to the letter of the material eye, by the likeness of the eye to a lamp. For as in a lamp the light is contained, suffusing the whole lamp with its clearness, so in the bodily organ of the eye is contained the visive light, by which the whole body is directed in its motions and acts. But Christ, as is shown from the following words, does not speak principally of the bodily eye; but by the word first uttered He intimates that as the bodily eye is the lamp of our sensible body, so our interior eye, namely the intellect or its intention, is the eye of our soul, and of our works, which mystically are called the body. For the soul is a potestative whole, having and containing several powers in itself, as the body contains many members: so also the totality or heap of works is tropologically called the body.

“If thy eye be single”, that is, if the intellect or its intention be without error and obliquity, that is, without the stain and spot of duplicity or simulation or hypocrisy, *“thy whole body will be lightsome”*, that is, the whole soul shall be rightly directed by the intellect, and shall grow bright with the light of its wisdom; the heap of works also shall be truly virtuous, because intention impresses the species on the work, according to Ambrose. Finally, as Gorran writes here, intention is spoken of in two ways: in one way, the motion of the mind ordering the work to an end; in another way, the very end intended, to which the mind orders its works. Speaking therefore of intention in the first way, by the intention itself works are judged, whether good or

evil: for that motion of the mind so ordering is never good unless the order be right; nor is the order right unless the extremes be fittingly ordered. But speaking of intention in the second way, not all works are judged by intention, but those which are of themselves good or indifferent. Some, however, are of themselves vicious and evil, which in this way do not obtain goodness from a good intention or a good end: as if anyone should commit adultery in order, relieved of the molestation of concupiscence, to be more quietly free for spiritual things. Hence others say that the end or intention is twofold, namely of the agent, and of the thing or work. The end of the agent is that which the agent sets before himself, though the means be not proportioned to such an end: therefore the goodness of such an end does not always suffice for the moral goodness of the operation. The other end, namely the end of the thing or work, is called the end proportionate and congruous to the works or means ordained to the end: therefore from such an end the operation is called good and evil.

"But if it be evil", that is, if thy intention or intelligence or reason be perverse, *"thy body also will be darksome"*, that is, the heap or collection of thy works proceeding from such an intention will be vicious, and the whole soul will be filled with the darkness of vices and ignorances: for if a perverse intention precede, a vicious work follows, though it appear good outwardly, as if anyone give alms from an intention of human praise. Therefore, according to Augustine, care must first be taken that the intention of the mind be right, and that the intellect be not obscured by sins and passions, and so err in judging. For the intellect has to direct the will itself, which is asserted to be of itself blind, and all the other powers of the soul in their acts.

"Take heed therefore" (Luke 11:35), that is, beware: according as caution is a part of prudence, to which it belongs to avoid dangers. Whence the Apostle admonishes: "See therefore, brethren, how you walk circumspectly" (Eph. 5:15). *"That the light which is in thee be not darkness"*, that is, that thy reason or intention be not perverse, or in the ways aforesaid obscured or made oblique: which is done if we do not order our works to the due end, namely to the glory and honour of God and eternal beatitude, but to carnal delights, *(p. 43)* bodily riches, or the temporal honours of this life, or something contrary to God. Hence the Apostle exhorts: "All whatsoever you do in word or in work, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God and the Father by him" (Col. 3:17).

"If then thy whole body be lightsome" (Luke 11:36), that is, if the universality or whole heap of thy works be virtuous, so that both the intention and the action proceeding from it be good, *"having no part of darkness"*, that is, having no mortal sin mixed with it. For the parts of darkness, that is, the species of vices, are pride, avarice, luxury, etc. *"The whole shall be lightsome"*, that is, then thy whole work will be truly and simply meritorious and pleasing to God. For by one mortal sin all meritorious works are mortified; but if no mortal sin be present, the charity of God and grace render works shining before God. Hence in Ecclesiastes it is had: "He that shall offend in one, shall lose many good things" (Eccles. 9:18). *"And as a bright lamp"*, that is, a shining lamp, *"shall enlighten thee"*, that is, shall illustriously adorn thee, so that thy soul shall be beautiful and resplendent before God by these goods. For as the virtues, and the gifts and grace of the Holy Ghost, are certain lights illuminating the mind, so also virtuous acts are illuminations of the mind, and by them the soul is disposed to ampler illumination; as vicious works, both interior and exterior, are obscurations of the soul, and one of them leads to another obscuration. Hence in Proverbs it is asserted: "The path of the just, as a shining light, goeth forward and increaseth even to perfect day. The way of the wicked is darksome: they know not where they fall" (Prov. 4:18–19). Let us therefore strive to adorn ourselves unceasingly with pure thoughts, holy affections, useful discourses, and virtuous works.

Article XXXI — Elucidation of the Remaining Part of this Eleventh Chapter, from the place where it is said: "And as he was speaking, a certain Pharisee prayed him that he would dine with him"

Next is described the just and sapiential rebuke of the Pharisees and Scribes by Christ. *"And as he was speaking"* (Luke 11:37). Luke does not say, "As he was speaking these things," as of what immediately preceded, because what he here narrates did not happen immediately after the utterance of those things, as is plain from what is written in Matthew. For there it is had: "As he was yet speaking to the multitudes," namely the things immediately preceding, "behold his mother and his brethren stood without, seeking to speak to him" (Matt. 12:46). When He had answered to this, He was asked by a Pharisee, as is now said. *"A certain Pharisee prayed him that he would dine with him."* This Pharisee is said to have done it from vainglory and from hypocrisy. Christ, however, who came to heal and form sinners (1 Tim. 1:15), assented to the asker. For it is subjoined: *"And going in, he sat down to eat."*

"And the Pharisee, began to say, thinking within himself" (Luke 11:38), that is, Christ sitting down or approaching to the table, the Pharisee, deeming Christ to have acted against good manners, said or thought within himself *"why he was not baptized before dinner"*, that is, why Christ had not washed his hands before coming to table. For this was against the custom of the Jews, according to that of Mark: "The Pharisees and all the Jews eat not without often washing their hands" (Mark 7:3). To this custom Christ was not subject, *(p. 44)* nor on this occasion observed it, that on such an occasion He might come to the most wholesome rebuke and instruction of the Pharisees. For the same cause also the disciples of Christ are read to have been rebuked by the Scribes and Pharisees in Matthew, where it is had: "Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the ancients? For they wash not their hands when they eat bread" (Matt. 15:2).

"And the Lord said to him" (Luke 11:39). Not to the vocal but to the mental words of the Pharisee Christ answered, showing Himself the inspector of hearts, of whom Solomon speaks in Proverbs: "He that is the inspector of the heart, he understandeth; and nothing shall deceive the keeper of thy soul" (Prov. 24:12). *"Now you Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter"*, that is, you cleanse by washing the outer vessels from which you drink and eat; *"but your inside"*, that is, your mind or soul, *"is full of rapine"*, that is, of sin and love of rapine, *"and iniquity"* committed directly against God, so that you are full of vices against God and neighbour. Behold what zeal of justice there was in Christ, who spared not the man inviting Him from so sharp a rebuke. For nothing could turn Him from equity.

"Foolish ones" (Luke 11:40). How does Christ, who began to do and to teach (Acts 1:1), call these Pharisees fools, when He Himself says, "Whosoever shall say to his brother, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire" (Matt. 5:22)? And it must be answered that since the words of the mouth are expressive of the interior conception and affection of the heart, fault and virtue are judged to be in words from the quality of the disposition, or conception, or affection of the heart: therefore to say "Fool" from contempt and elation, with a mind to upbraid, is forbidden by Christ; but not if it be said from charity, with a mind to correct, especially by a superior and judge, whose office it is to reprove another justly and charitably. So Paul also writes to the Galatians: "O senseless Galatians" (Gal. 3:1). And Christ after the resurrection said to the disciples: "O foolish and slow of heart to believe" (Luke 24:25). Christ, moreover, was the judge, prince and Lord of all the Scribes and Pharisees, as the true and supreme king of Israel. *"Did not he that made that which is without"*, that is, the human body which you wish to cleanse by washing, and the other corporal things, *"make that which is within also"*, namely the soul, which you do not purge from vices, *"by creation"*? Whence it is plain that the God of both natures requires cleanness, as the Apostle admonishes: "Let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting sanctification in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1). Nay, the more the soul is more excellent than the body, the more is interior purity to be studied.

Besides, by this authority of Christ is most clearly refuted the heresy of the sacrilegious Manichaeus, who posits two principles of things, and asserts that the human body was made by the devil, but the soul by the God of light. Which is against natural philosophy also, since Aristotle asserts of the supreme God: "From this being to all things is derived being and living, to some more clearly, to others more obscurely." Which Plato

and the Platonists most subtly proved, especially Proclus the Platonist in his Theological Elements, in which he proves that even first matter itself arose of itself from the good.

Next Christ, the most wise physician of souls, after rigorous rebuke adds benign instruction, applying, as it were, after the wine of austerity the oil of piety, and after showing the wound applying the medicine. *"But yet"* (Luke 11:41), *"that which remaineth"*, that is, what is left as remedy to those defiled with so much wickedness, *"give alms."* Or, "That which remaineth," that is, of those things which are superfluous to you, namely beyond what is necessary to your food and clothing and household, *"give alms." "And behold, all things are clean unto you"*, that is, by the virtue of alms you shall be made pure from all sins. As Augustine, however, recites in the books of the City of God, some, on occasion of these words, said that those who exercise works of mercy cannot be damned for ever. Whose error is easily refuted. For Christ speaks of the bestowal of alms, inasmuch as it is an act of mercy belonging to charity infused, *(p. 45)* so that the bestowal of alms is a virtuous work commanded by charity, and proceeding elicitively from the virtue called mercy; and so to give alms is meritorious of eternal life. Nor does Christ say this as though the sole bestowal of alms were purgative from vices; but because among the remedies against sins it is a certain chief one, and by a certain appropriation pardon is merited from above, since it is fitting that God should do to us as we do to our neighbours. Wherefore Christ says: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy" (Matt. 5:7). Hence Daniel counselled king Nabuchodonosor: "Redeem thou thy sins with alms, and thy iniquities with works of mercy to the poor" (Dan. 4:24). Whence in Tobias the holy angel of God Raphael protests: "Alms deliver from death, and the same is that which purgeth sins, and maketh to find life everlasting" (Tob. 12:9). Solomon also: "By mercy and faith sins are purged away" (Prov. 15:27; 16:6).

Lastly, Christ, as the wisdom of the Father, spoke discreetly, "That which remaineth," that is, from the superfluity of your necessity, "give alms": because alms are not so to be done, according to Bede, that thou consume thyself with want. Chrysostom also says that alms are more excellent than fasting, although fasting is more laborious.

"But woe to you Pharisees" (Luke 11:42), that is, eternal damnation hangs over you, unless you do worthy penance, *"because you tithe mint and rue and every herb"*, that is, you give or exact tithes of these small and vile things down to the least, making great account of the observances of the least things, and none or little of the observances of the chief: as Christ consequently declares. Now as herbs are for food, so rue and mint are for medicine: for rue sharpens the sight, mint refreshes and strengthens the smell. *"And pass over judgment"*, that is, you omit true discretion, neither doing right judgment to neighbours and subjects, nor keeping the judicial precepts of God; nor do you judge yourselves wholesomely by rightly discussing, considering, confessing, accusing and chastising your own sins; *"and the charity of God"*, so that you neither truly love God, nor bestow on your neighbours the charity of God, that is, true and spiritual charity infused and commanded by God; but are full of carnal love. Finally Christ most aptly joined judgment to charity, because judgment without charity is turned into cruelty; charity without judgment into remissness; but charity with judgment into equity: so that piety is mingled with justice.

"These things you ought to have done", that is, to keep the charity of God and judgment is necessary in the first place and principally. For charity is the highest virtue and the life of the soul: without which no virtue profits unto salvation, nor perfectly obtains the nature of virtue; nor is any action without charity meritorious. Hence in Micheas it is had: "I will shew thee, O man, what is good: to do judgment" (Mich. 6:8). *"And not to leave those undone"*, that is, those lesser things, such as the tithing of mint and rue and herbs, not to omit, but to fulfil them, according to that of Proverbs: "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and give him of the first of all thy fruits" (Prov. 3:9). For although this tithing pertained to the ceremonial precepts, nevertheless Christ asserted that it ought not to have been omitted, because when He spoke these things the Gospel had not yet been publicly divulged everywhere, and therefore the ceremonials of the law were still to be observed.

Besides, it is to be observed that in the law there was a threefold tithing. One was owed or commanded, which was given to the Levites from all fruits (Num. 18:21). Another was partly spontaneous and partly owed, as the offerings which were made at the Feast of Tabernacles, the Pasch and Pentecost (Deut. 12:5–6): for it was lawful for the Jews at pleasure then to offer more or less; and as to this the offering was called spontaneous, and since they were bound to offer something, it was called in a manner owed. The third was wholly spontaneous, which was given freely.

On these matters Chrysostom says: "Justice, mercy and faith God commanded for His own glory, but tithes for the sake of the priests: who were solicitous about their own gain, but were negligent of the glory of God and the salvation of men. So now too all are solicitous about their own honour; but about the honour of God few or none. *(p. 46)* Their own portions they vigilantly defend, the service of the Church they do not attend to: therefore woe to them." — So even to the present many who seem religious follow the Pharisees: for they care little for interior purity, interior devotion, the sincere love of God and neighbours, and the other things chiefly to be observed; but about certain exterior ceremonial observances, or points of small weight, and the appearances of devotions, they are not moderately solicitous: who, according to the doctrine of Christ, should strive to keep the more principal and necessary things and those nearer to salvation first and more principally, then the others in order. Nay all good and wholesomely instituted things are to be observed, since Solomon says: "He that feareth God neglecteth nothing" (Eccles. 7:19). In Ecclesiasticus also it is read: "He that contemneth small things shall fall by little and little" (Ecclus. 19:1). For, as Augustine testifies, as he who is pressed down by rocks is drowned, so also he who is overwhelmed by sand.

Further the Saviour reprehends the pride and ambition of the Pharisees. *"Woe to you Pharisees"* (Luke 11:43), *"who love"*, that is, desire with vain affection, *"the first seats in the synagogues"*, that is, the dignities and higher places there, whereas in Ecclesiasticus it is written: "Seek not the pre-eminence of a chair of honour" (Ecclus. 7:4). And Christ does not say, Woe to you that have the first seats; but, "Who love them": since to accept these when enjoined is of charity; but to seek them is of ambition. *"And salutations in the marketplace"*, where causes are treated.

Then He accuses them of feigned sanctity and hypocrisy. *"Woe to you"* (Luke 11:44), *"who are as sepulchres that appear not"*, that is, how they are disposed within, *"and men that walk over them know not"* what is within. So also you Pharisees, being hypocrites, full of cunning, while outwardly you appear virtuous, within you are full of the filth of vices, and by the appearance of a superinduced sanctity you deceive men. Whence in Matthew this comparison is more clearly written, Christ saying: "Woe to you, for you are like to whited sepulchres, which outwardly appear to men beautiful, but within are full of dead men's bones and of all filthiness: so you also outwardly indeed appear to men just, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity" (Matt. 23:27–28). O how many now are found like those wretched Pharisees! who, being hypocrites, desire to please men more than almighty God, incomparable and immense: and so they lose their labours, and by works good in their kind, whereby they would merit eternal beatitude if they did them from charity to the honour of God, they merit the fires of hell. Let us therefore wholly cast away so vile a crime, since in Job also Scripture confesses: "The praise of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment" (Job 20:5). Nay how detestable the vile company of hypocrites is, and how enormous a crime hypocrisy is, is plain from what is read in Job: "Will God hear his cry when distress shall come upon him? or can he be delighted in the Almighty?" (Job 27:9–10).

Finally, according to Chrysostom, the bodies of the just are temples of God, as the Apostle writes to the Corinthians: "Your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost" (1 Cor. 6:19). But the bodies of sinners are called sepulchres, because in them are souls spiritually dead. Again, according to Chrysostom: "A sepulchre, so long as it is closed, seems beautiful; but if it be opened, it appears horrible. So dissemblers, so long as they are not known, are reputed laudable; but when they are known, they are known as blameworthy. Sepulchre is said as if semi-beautiful (semipulcrum). Such are hypocrites, outwardly bright, inwardly foul: not therefore

like the children of the Church, who says in the Canticles, 'I am black but beautiful' (Cant. 1:4): black indeed outwardly, but beautiful inwardly. These on the contrary are foul within, and wish to appear *(p. 47)* beautiful and good without. Against whom Chrysostom says: O hypocrite, if it is good to be good, why wilt thou not be what thou wishest to appear? Either be what thou appearest, or appear what thou art. What is a sophism in rational philosophy is hypocrisy in moral."

"Then one of the lawyers answering, saith to him" (Luke 11:45): *"Master, in saying these things thou reproachest us also"*, that is, thou derogatest from our honour and state. This the lawyer said specially because Christ among other things accused the Pharisees that they loved the first seats in the synagogues. Now among the Jews there were seats of doctors, and of judges, and of pontiffs. The seat of doctors befitted the lawyers, who were the scribes and doctors and clerics of the Jews. The Pharisees, however, were their religious. Now, as Cyril says, the rebuke which transfers the meek to the better is wont to be intolerable to proud men. And behold how wretched a conscience, which, on hearing the word of God, thinks that insult is done to itself, and, when the vices of the impious are recalled, either suspects or is indignant that it is touched. For the wicked, conscious to themselves of their own vices, suppose that all is said of themselves, and reckon the correction of the fault an insult to the person. To whom that of Proverbs is to be pondered: "Sudden destruction shall come upon him that with a stiff neck despiseth him that reproveth" (Prov. 29:1).

"But he said" (Luke 11:46), Christ indeed, who flatters no one: *"Woe to you lawyers also"*, that is, a like damnation with the Pharisees hangs over you, *"because you load men with burdens which they cannot bear"*, that is, you impose heavy things on the common people to be done, namely the ceremonials of the law, and the various institutes of your elders. Of this scarce-bearable burden of ceremonial observances the apostle Peter testifies in the Acts: "Why tempt you God to put a yoke upon the necks of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?" (Acts 15:10). For the law of Moses, as to the ceremonials, could scarcely be observed, especially as to the literal sense. *"And you yourselves touch not the packs with one of your fingers"*, that is, you do not care, even a little, to observe and fulfil in deed what you teach others. Such are now very many, who preach strong things and scarcely keep the least: perfect in words, most depraved in deeds. But some priests also, who in absolving burden the confessed with indiscreet penance, are noted by these words.

Moreover He accuses the Scribes of simulated devotion. *"Woe to you"* (Luke 11:47), *"who build the monuments of the prophets."* They are not reprehended for this, that they had built venerable and beautiful monuments for the Prophets slain for justice' sake, but because they did this with vain intention, and because they were in an evil state, following in their deeds the crimes of their impious fathers, which they detested in lying words. *"And your fathers killed them"*, namely the Prophets, to wit Jeremias, Isaias, etc. *"Truly"* (Luke 11:48), that is, certainly, *"you bear witness"*, that is, you are witnesses against yourselves, not in words but in deeds, *"that you consent to the doings of your fathers"*, that is, that you are conformed, by malicious effects, to your carnal fathers, *"for they indeed killed them"*, namely the Prophets, by flesh and by the example of impiety going before; *"and you build their sepulchres"*, namely of the Prophets, curiously and preciously, to catch the favour of the crowd, that you may seem just and detesting the crimes of your fathers with which they persecuted the holy Prophets: and yet with equal, nay far greater, impiety you persecute me and my disciples, with which your fathers persecuted the prophets. Whence it is plain that (in the manner expounded) you consent to your fathers, by persecuting me because I announce the truth to you and justly rebuke you, as they persecuted the Prophets because they scorned to suffer their just rebukes. So also now there are some who are worshippers of the Saints past and despisers of the present. As Chrysostom writes, some build the monasteries, monuments and basilicas of the martyrs, *(p. 48)* and yet do violence. But the martyrs and the other Saints do not rejoice when they are honoured with moneys for which the poor weep. What justice is this, to reward the dead and despoil the living? Wherefore it is asserted in Ecclesiasticus: "He that offereth sacrifice of the goods of the poor is as one that sacrificeth the son in the presence of his father"

(Ecclus. 34:24).

"For this cause also the wisdom of God said" (Luke 11:49), that is, I Christ, who am the power and the wisdom of God the Father (1 Cor. 1:24), from eternity decreed to say, and now say, what I also foretold by the Prophets, namely: *"I will send to them"*, that is, to you Scribes and Pharisees and the other Jews, *"prophets and apostles."* For the Apostles were prophets, and before the sending of the Apostles Christ sent John the Baptist, a prophet, and more than a prophet (Luke 7:26); but the more ancient Prophets also were sent, not only to those who were in their own times, but also to their posterity, that is, for the instruction of those present and following. *"And some of them they will kill and persecute"*, that is, some of them they will slay and harass. For they slew James the Less; and James the Greater also they procured to be slain by Herod, or were glad of it (Acts 12:2). All the Apostles too they are read to have persecuted manifoldly in the Acts of the Apostles.

"That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation" (Luke 11:50). What is said, "Of this generation," can be referred to the word "be required"; likewise to this clause, "Which was shed." And what He says, "That," etc., marks concomitance, not direct causality: for the impious did not slay the Prophets in order that the blood of the Prophets should be required of them, but on that slaying this requiring followed, as the Psalmist says: "To thee only have I sinned, that thou mayest be justified" (Ps. 50:6). So the sense is: That the blood of all the Prophets who have been slain from the beginning of the world may be required of this generation, that is, the guilt of the shedding of their blood may be imputed to the generation of the wicked. For as all the elect and good are one body and one city of Christ, and are named one generation, of which the Psalm confesses, "This is the generation of them that seek the Lord" (Ps. 23:6); so all the wicked and reprobate are one body and one city of the devil, whence also they are named one generation, and so perish by common damnation, and are alike in punishments. The punishment also of one can redound to another; yet not every single evil done by the impious is required of every single impious one; nor will every reprobate be punished for the sins of any reprobate whatever, according to Chrysostom, but every one shall bear his own burden, as the Apostle says (Gal. 6:5). Nevertheless all the blood of the Prophets aforesaid will be required of the wicked generation, that is, of it or of some part of it.

"From the blood of Abel" (Luke 11:51): who is numbered among the Prophets, not because he prophesied by word, but because by deed, namely by his death, he prefigured the passion of Christ, or the persecution of any just man: who, according to Bede, first suffered martyrdom, slain by Cain his brother for justice' sake (Gen. 4:8). *"Unto the blood of Zacharias, who was slain"*, that is, put to death, *"between the altar and the temple"*, that is, the sanctuary: in which, according to the Gloss, there were two altars: one of incense, which was within; the other of holocausts, which was without, namely in the court before the face of the temple: between which altar and the temple this Zacharias is said to have been slain.

Who this Zacharias was, Jerome inquires, and he rejects the opinion of those who say that he was Zacharias, one of the twelve minor Prophets. He likewise refutes the opinion of those who say that he was the father of John the Baptist, whom some affirmed to have been slain by the Jews because he asserted that Christ was already born. Which Jerome protests to be apocryphal, affirming that this Zacharias was a priest and pontiff, the son of Joiada the priest and pontiff, stoned in the temple by order of king Joas, as is read in the book of Paralipomenon (2 Par. 24:20–21). Joiada his father, however, was, as some say, *(p. 49)* a man of two names, so that by another name he was called Barachias. Besides, Gregory of Nyssa relates how some said that this Zacharias was the father of John the Baptist, and was therefore slain by the Jews in the aforesaid place, because he said that Mary, the Mother of Christ, was a virgin, not willing to sequester her in the temple from the place of virgins. The Greek expositor, however, recites that some hand down another cause of the slaying of this Zacharias, namely because Elisabeth, when the slaughter of the innocent children by Herod was imminent, fled with the infant John into the desert. Hence Herod's satellites, not finding Elisabeth and John,

turned their anger against Zacharias, and slew him as he was then ministering in the temple.

"Yea, I say to you, it shall be required of this generation": that is, all that blood of the just, as has been expounded. Christ repeats this in confirmation of His sentence.

Lastly, Christ accuses the Scribes of the abuse of the key of knowledge, or of the false exposition of the Scriptures. *"Woe to you lawyers"* (Luke 11:52), *"for you have taken away"*, that is, have borne and had, *"the key of knowledge"*, that is, the doctorate or authority of expounding, or the exposition of the Scripture of the Old Testament; *"you yourselves have not entered in"*, that is, you have not known the true and spiritual understanding of the law and the Prophets, nor been willing to learn from me, but have followed the letter, which killeth: as the Apostle says that a veil is laid upon their heart in the reading of the law and the Prophets (2 Cor. 3:6, 14–15); *"and those that were entering in"*, that is, who desired truly to understand the Scriptures, *"you have hindered"* from the true understanding of the Scriptures, by interpreting them perversely. Others expound thus: Woe to you lawyers, because you have taken away, that is, removed from yourselves and from many others, the key of knowledge, that is, the faith concerning Christ, by which the understanding of the Scripture is entered, Isaias saying according to the Septuagint: "Unless you believe, you shall not understand" (Isa. 7:9). These, however, scorned to believe in Christ present, and dared to turn others away from Him. The impiety of these Scribes some most depraved follow, who, having knowledge of the Scriptures, do not live according to them, nor enter the heavenly kingdom; nay rather they strive to hinder the simple and devout from entering the heavenly kingdom, that is, from praiseworthy conversation.

Finally, as Augustine writes in the book On the Harmony of the Evangelists, the things which Luke here recites as said by Christ while He was yet journeying toward Jerusalem, Matthew relates as said after Christ came into Jerusalem. "Whence to me," says Augustine, "they seem to be like discourses, of which Matthew described one, Luke the other."

Now how truly Christ reprehended the Pharisees and Scribes they themselves presently showed by the effect, as is subjoined. *"And when he was saying these things to them"* (Luke 11:53), *"the Pharisees and lawyers began violently to urge him"*, that is, to oppose themselves to Christ, *"and to oppress his mouth"*, that is, to reprobate and calumniate His words, *"about many things, lying in wait for him"* (Luke 11:54), that is, seeking from the various words and deeds of Christ to elicit something to object to Him, *"and seeking to catch something from his mouth, that they might accuse him"* to the chief priests, or to Pilate, or to Herod, or to the community, as derogating from God or from the emperor. It is plain therefore that those who seem to themselves more excellent than others, whether in life, as the Pharisees, or in knowledge, as the Scribes, are frequently more difficult to correct, and are the more indignant and murmur against the reprover. On this account they are truly to be reckoned fools, and in them is verified that of Ecclesiasticus: "As an arrow that sticketh in the thigh of a dog, so is a word in the heart of a fool" (Ecclus. 19:12): the word, namely, of correction, which pricks them like an arrow; and as a dog that is shot bites the arrow, crying out and barking, so these turn over the word of correction in their mind and murmur, not weighing what is written in Proverbs: "He that rejecteth correction despiseth his own soul; but he that yieldeth to reproof is the possessor of a heart" (Prov. 15:32). And the apostle James, in his Canonical Epistle, protests that if we have bitter zeal, and there are contentions among us, we lack true wisdom. "For this is not *(p. 50)* wisdom descending from above, but earthly, sensual, devilish. But the wisdom that is from above first indeed is chaste, then peaceable, modest, easy to be persuaded, consenting to the good, full of mercy and good fruits" (James 3:15–17).

Luke 12

Article XXXII — Elucidation of the Twelfth Chapter: "And when great multitudes stood about him, so that they trod one upon another"

(p. 50) At the end of the preceding chapter it was said how the Scribes and Pharisees began manifoldly to lay snares for Christ, in order to turn the people away from Him; but the opposite befell them on this occasion, because so evident was the truth of Christ's wisdom and preachings against the wicked, and so illustrious His power in the working of miracles, that the crowd flocked to Him eagerly, as the glorious Evangelist now recites. *"And when great multitudes stood about"* (Luke 12:1) Christ, so that He was in the midst of them, repelling none, and giving to prelates an example to stand in the midst of their flock, not inclining to one person rather than another out of inordinate affection, but without respect of persons (James 2:1) bearing themselves charitably toward all, *"so that they trod one upon another"*: whereby it is plain that with the greatest eagerness they ran together to Jesus from every side, and each one desired to be nearer to Him, as was said above: "All the multitude sought to touch him, for virtue went out from him and healed all" (Luke 6:19). *"He began to say to his disciples,"* as to those more peculiarly dear and more capable, whose instruction belonged to Him specially. Nevertheless what He said to His disciples He referred also to the instruction of others, as He testifies elsewhere: "What I say to you, I say to all" (Mark 13:37).

"Beware," that is, take diligent heed and flee, *"of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy,"* that is, avoid especially hypocrisy itself, reigning in the Pharisees. For although there are some vices graver than hypocrisy, yet hypocrisy itself vehemently blinds the mind. Here also He teaches specially that hypocrisy is to be avoided, because in the preceding chapter it was said how the Pharisees began to lay snares for Christ under the appearance of sanctity (Luke 11:53–54). Finally, Christ calls hypocrisy the leaven of the Pharisees, because as leaven alters and corrupts the mass of which bread is made, if it be added immoderately, according to the word of Paul, "A little leaven corrupteth the whole lump" (1 Cor. 5:6), so hypocrisy alters and corrupts the intentions, affections and works of hearts. For nothing so alters morals as hypocrisy, according to Theophilus. Besides, Christ in the Gospel teaches that we must beware of a twofold leaven of the Pharisees, namely of the leaven of perverse doctrine, as is had in Matthew (Matt. 16:12), and of the leaven of hypocrisy, as in this place. At times, however, leaven is taken in a good sense, so that faith or charity is signified by it: since as leaven moderately taken gives bread a good savour, so faith or charity directs and informs every meritorious work, as Christ says in Matthew: "The kingdom of heaven is like to leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened" (Matt. 13:33).

Consequently Christ adds a most efficacious reason why hypocrisy is to be avoided. *"For there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed"* (Luke 12:2), that is, no vicious work can be coloured or covered with so great simulation that its depravity shall not be laid open in due time, because on the day of judgment it will be displayed by Christ to all; *"nor hidden, that shall not be known,"* that is, no interior action or passion of the soul can in the present life be so hidden from men that it shall not be made manifest by Christ the judge at the hour of judgment: for the thoughts and affections of the heart will then be opened, especially if they have not been blotted out by penance; also whatever iniquitous actions. For on the day of judgment, as the Apostle says, "the Lord will illuminate the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts" (1 Cor. 4:5). Second, it is expounded thus: "Nothing covered," that is, obscurely and mystically said, "that shall not be revealed," that is, shall not become clear by my illumining it: according to that of Daniel: "He revealeth deep and hidden things, and knoweth what is in darkness" (Dan. 2:22). Moreover, according to Origen, Christ said this because however much one may try to hide the good deeds of others by calumnies, good cannot by nature lie hid. As if Christ should say to the disciples and to all truly faithful: Although some already call you seducers and impious, time nevertheless will lay all open, and will convict their calumny, and will declare your justice. *(p. 51)*

"For whatsoever things you have spoken in darkness," (Luke 12:3), that is, obscurely or in adversities, *"shall be spoken in the light,"* that is, shall be clearly made known to all; *"and that which you have spoken in the ear,"* that is, with subdued voice, *"in the chambers,"* that is, in any place however secret, *"shall be preached on the housetops,"* that is, as evidently as if it were preached upon the roofs. And Christ speaks

according to the custom of Palestine, where He said these things, where the roofs are flat, so that men stand upon them to speak. Finally, these words are verified in many ways. For it is plain that on the day of judgment the virtues of the good and the vices of the impious will be laid open. Again, what the Apostles did and preached in adversities, and in prisons, or narrow places, in the primitive Church, the faith meanwhile growing strong, has been everywhere preached publicly, and is now solemnly read in the churches.

But because the Saviour on account of His justice bore various persecutions, He exhorts the disciples and all Christians not to fear bodily death inordinately, nor, from fear of it, to desert justice. *"And I say to you, my friends,"* (Luke 12:4). Whence it is clear that the following words are spoken especially to the perfect and virtuous, who with the Apostle can say: "Who then shall separate us from the charity of Christ?" (Rom. 8:35). Nevertheless in some way they pertain to every Christian soul, so that they are of necessity to salvation. *"Be not afraid of them who kill the body,"* that is, fear not inordinately, namely with worldly or carnal fear, tyrants and persecutors, who can kill you bodily, *"and after that,"* that is, after the killing of the body, *"have no more that they can do,"* that is, can no further hurt or afflict, since they cannot molest the soul separated from the body, being insensible, and the lifeless body also can feel nothing. Whence it is plain how great was the madness of the faithless, who attempted to inflict dishonours on the dead bodies of the martyrs.

Besides, it is to be observed that fear is manifold, namely: natural, whereby one naturally dreads the evils of punishment, namely torments and death. Of this Christ does not speak: nay He Himself at the time of His passion voluntarily and dispensatively assumed that fear, according to Mark: "He began to fear and to be heavy" (Mark 14:33). For this fear, so far as it is natural, is neither unlawful nor culpable; but needs the moderation of reason, lest it become immoderate and unlawful, like the other passions of the sensitive appetite. Another is carnal fear, whereby one immoderately fears for his own skin, so that he chooses rather to fall into guilt than to suffer pains or the death of the body: which the Psalmist asks to be taken from him, saying: "Deliver my soul from the fear of the enemy" (Ps. 63:2): deliver, I say, not that I be not slain, but that I fear not carnally him that slays. Another is worldly fear, whereby one immoderately fears *(p. 52)* the loss of things, infamy, and the like. And of these vicious fears Christ speaks.

But as every Christian is bound to love God above all things with his whole heart, so he is bound to cleave to God so strongly and lovingly that he would rather be slain, and suffer any losses, than deny the faith, not observe the precepts, or sin mortally: and as to this, the present teaching of Christ has the force of a precept. Hence Chrysostom says: "The fear of death, namely the inordinate, works all evils, and the contempt of death works all goods. If for nothing we shall die after a little while, why do we not also die a little before with glory in the cause of God, that what is to be necessary may be made voluntary? If you have borrowed an ox, a horse or an ass, you work with it instantly, and say, Perhaps it will be taken from me tomorrow: why do you not do the same with the body? If therefore, for fear of those who kill the body, it is impious to be silent about the truth: how is it not greater impiety, for the sake of a wretched belly and the hope of vain honour, to be silent about the truth, and to make the glory of bread and honour better than the glory of God and truth?" Let us therefore ever dread to fall into the evils of guilt, that is, to sin, according to that of Proverbs: "Blessed is the man that is always fearful" (Prov. 28:14). But the evils of punishment in this life let us not fear immoderately; nay let us bear adversities with joy. Wherefore it is had in Isaias: "Fear ye not the reproach of men, and be not afraid of their blasphemies" (Isa. 51:7).

Consequently the Saviour teaches a wholesome and ordered fear. *"But I will show you whom you shall fear"* (Luke 12:5), that is, I will teach. *"Fear ye him who, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell,"* that is, to condemn body and soul eternally: who is the more to be feared, the more intolerable it is to suffer eternal fires and most bitter torments than to bear the brief and momentary death of the body. Wherefore it is commanded through Isaias: "Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself, let him be your fear, and let him be your dread" (Isa. 8:13). And holy Job protests: "I always feared God as waves swelling over me" (Job 31:23).

"Yea, I say to you, fear him." As if He should say: This almighty God is incomparably more to be feared than all others; nay He alone is held to be feared, since others are not to be feared except for Him, in Him, and according to Him. Wherefore Ecclesiasticus asserts: "He that feareth the Lord shall tremble at nothing" (Ecclus. 34:16). But there are many base and vicious who revere men more than God, whereas in Proverbs Scripture says: "He that feareth man shall quickly fall" (Prov. 29:25).

Besides, the fear of God is threefold. The first is called servile, whereby one fears God, not from love of justice, but from regard to punishment: which fear belongs to the imperfect, nay to the impious also, since they lack charity and grace, to which it adheres; yet it disposes to good, and prepares for the virtues, inasmuch as it draws back from sins. The second is initial fear, whereby one fears God partly out of love of the good and just, partly from fear of punishment: this fear belongs to those who are advancing. The third is filial fear, chaste and holy, whereby God is feared solely out of love of goodness and zeal for equity: and this fear is the flight from the evil of guilt, or detestation of the offence and dishonouring of God, belonging to the perfect and friends of God, who fear God lest they offend Him, lest they be separated from Him, lest they dishonour Him in anything. Of this fear Christ now speaks chiefly, although His words can be understood also of initial fear. As perfect charity casteth out servile fear (1 John 4:18), so it produces and has conjoined with it filial fear, whereby we ought always to fear God as a most faithful and kindly father. Of the eminence of this fear Sacred Scripture speaks in many ways: as when it is written in Ecclesiasticus: "There is nothing sweeter than to fear the Lord" (Ecclus. 23:37); and, "The fear of the Lord is above all things" (Ecclus. 25:14); and in the Psalm: "Fear the Lord, all ye his saints; for there is no want to them that fear him" (Ps. 33:10). In Ecclesiastes also: "Fear God and keep his commandments: for this is all man" (Eccles. 12:13). *(p. 53)*

Furthermore the Son of God teaches us to cast away inordinate fear, and gladly to suffer death for God, from the consideration of the divine providence, which leaves no evil unavenged, nor any good unrewarded. *"Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings,"* (Luke 12:6), that is, for a price of the lightest weight, consisting of two pence, namely a small and vile price, *"and not one of them is forgotten before God?"* that is, every sparrow is unchangeably known to God, and lies under His providence. Nor does it matter that the Apostle Paul says, "Doth God take care for oxen?" (1 Cor. 9:9). For he speaks of special care or providence, namely of doctrine and discipline, by which He governs rational creatures; but here the discourse is of general providence, by which God disposes and rules all things, according to that of Wisdom: "There is no other God but thou, who hast care of all" (Wis. 12:13). *"Yea the very hairs of your head are all numbered"* (Luke 12:7), that is, perfectly and distinctly known to God. *"Fear not therefore: better are you than many sparrows,"* that is, of more weight of dignity and price. Therefore if sparrows and hairs thus fall under the divine providence, much more man: wherefore he ought to commit himself to God, nor for fear of adversities depart from the Creator and His law, being certain of the providence of God ordering all things. If therefore a sparrow, whose price is a most vile coin, begins, flows on and ends under the governance of the divine providence, since it is a creature of God: how much more man, whose price is the blood of Christ, and who was created to the image of God (Gen. 1:27)? Hence it is written: "Nothing upon earth is done without a cause" (Job 5:6).

According to Origen, the five sparrows designate the spiritual senses of the just: which senses perceive lofty things and things above man, beholding God, hearing the divine voice, tasting the bread of life, smelling the odour of the ointments of Christ, touching the living Word; who, sold for two farthings, that is, held cheap by those who judge the things that are of the spirit to be foolishness, are not given into oblivion before God. Besides, by hairs, according to Gregory, are mystically designated the most minute thoughts, because God so considers our ways and numbers our steps (Job 14:16), that not even the most minute thoughts and the slenderest words, which with us have become worthless by use, remain undiscussed by His judgment. Thoughts, affections and speeches, however small, of which an account is to be rendered, are therefore not to

be neglected. Hence “the wise man feareth in all things” (Ecclus. 18:27). And holy Job says to God: “Thou hast sealed up my sins as it were in a bag” (Job 14:17). Lastly, on this place Athanasius says: “I ask of the Arians: if God, as though disdaining to make other things, made only the Son, but made the rest subject to the Son: how does He use providence even about things so small, namely a hair and a sparrow? For of those things whose providence He exercises, He is by His Word the creator.”

Next the Saviour shows that we must not depart from Him through any fear, from the view of the retribution of good and evil. *“And I say to you”* (Luke 12:8): *“Whosoever shall confess me before men,”* that is, in time of persecution shall not omit to confess me before any tyrants and faithless men, from fear, shame, or the like cause, but shall constantly and faithfully express his faith in words, testifying that I am the only Son of God, true God and man, and the other things which pertain to the Christian faith; *“the Son of man also will confess him before the angels of God,”* that is, I the Son of the Virgin, in the sight of the holy angels, will protest that he belongs to me by faith and act, and was worthily called by me, Christ, a Christian: for which I will grant him eternal beatitude, according to that of the Apocalypse: “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life” (Apoc. 2:10). Hence the Apostle says to the Romans: “With the heart we believe unto justice; but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Rom. 10:10). This confession is an act of faith, namely a protestation of the things to be believed. — How this confession is necessary to salvation, Thomas teaches in the Second of the Second, question 3, saying: “Confession of faith, since it is something affirmative, falls only under an affirmative precept. Now affirmative precepts bind always, but not for always: nay they bind only for place and time, and according to the other circumstances required for the act of virtue.” Therefore to confess the faith or Christ before unbelievers is then only necessary for salvation when by the omission of this act the honour of God or the utility of neighbours would be withdrawn. But if the faith seemed to be imperilled, then everyone is bound to confess the faith publicly. But if from the confession of the faith greater sedition would arise, or the derision of unbelievers, and no utility to neighbours, then it would not be laudable to confess the faith, lest what is holy be given to dogs (Matt. 7:6). *(p. 54)*

Lastly, besides the aforesaid laudable confession, which is an act of faith, there is yet a twofold virtuous confession: one of which is an act of latria, namely the praise of God, of which it is said in the Psalm: “Let all thy works, O Lord, praise thee” (Ps. 144:10); the other is an act of penance, and is the accusation of one’s own guilt, of which the apostle James says: “Confess your sins one to another” (James 5:16).

We ought therefore to confess Christ with mind and mouth, nay with deed also, before all. But some with unformed faith and empty mouth confess Christ the Lord before the faithful, but deny Him in works, according to that: “They profess that they know God; but in their works they deny him” (Tit. 1:16). By deeds indeed (according to the Gloss) he denies Christ who obeys not His commands. *“But he that shall deny me before men”* (Luke 12:9), that is, shall deny the Christian faith, or me, before persecutors through some fear in words; or by deeds, by sinning mortally, shall have denied me, *“shall be denied before the angels of God,”* that is, I the judge of all will protest, both in his particular judgment and in the general judgment of all, that he does not belong to me by predestination and merit. This is to be understood of the final denial of Christ, of which a man repents not before death, not of the denial which is blotted out by contrition: for thus Peter denied.

“And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but to him that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven” (Luke 12:10). This place, according to Augustine, is so difficult that scarcely anything more difficult is found in the whole canonical Scripture. Finally, that its difficulty may appear, we must note what the other Evangelists write. In Matthew it is written: “Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven men, but the blasphemy of the Spirit shall not be forgiven. And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but he that shall speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in the world to

come" (Matt. 12:31–32). In Mark it is written: "All sins shall be forgiven the sons of men, and the blasphemies wherewith they shall blaspheme; but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, shall never have forgiveness, but shall be guilty of an everlasting sin" (Mark 3:28–29). From these words therefore the word of Luke now to be expounded is not explained, but rather its difficulty is increased. For the express words of the Evangelists are not so to be understood as though certain mortal sins, of which a man has not repented in this life, are forgiven after this life, so that the pain of hell is at some time ended; nor again so to be understood as though any sin however grave were, absolutely speaking, irremissible to wayfarers, because this whole life is a way to the future life, and at whatever hour the sinner shall groan worthily from the heart, God pardons.

This therefore is the sense: *"Every one that speaks a word against the Son of man,"* that is, shall blaspheme the human works of Christ from the consideration of the natural imperfection of His humanity, as the Jews did, saying of Christ: "Behold a man that is a glutton and a wine drinker, a friend of publicans and sinners" (Matt. 11:19); *"it shall be forgiven him,"* that is, it has in itself a cause of remissibility, because it has in some way something of excusableness, on account of the natural defectiveness of created nature. Or thus: *"Every one that speaks a word against the Son of man," (p. 55)* that is, who shall have sinned through ignorance, which is opposed to wisdom, which is appropriated to the Son of God; *"it shall be forgiven him,"* that is, his aforesaid sin has remissibility, and will be quite easily forgiven the penitent, for ignorance partly excuses, if it be not affected. Wherefore Paul says to Timothy: "Therefore I obtained the mercy of God, because I did it ignorantly" (1 Tim. 1:13). And a little after, in this chapter, the Saviour says: "The servant who knew not the will of his lord, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes" (Luke 12:48). *"But to him that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost,"* that is, from certain malice or from contempt of those things which hinder sin, shall have proceeded into sin, *"it shall not be forgiven."* For one sinning thus is said to sin against the Holy Ghost, because malice is contrary to goodness, which is appropriated to the Holy Ghost. Properly, however, according to Thomas, sin is said to be against the Holy Ghost because it is from contempt of those things which hinder sins, such as fear of divine justice and hope of divine mercy.

Finally, according to Augustine, there are six sins against the Holy Ghost, which are also properly called species of the sin against the Holy Ghost, namely: presumption, despair, impenitence, obstinacy, impugning of known truth, and envy of a brother's grace: the distinction of which is taken from those things, or from contempt of those things, by which man is drawn back from the choice of sin. Of these some are on the part of the divine judgment, some on the part of the gifts of God, some on the part of sin. For man is turned away from sin by considering the judgment of God, in which are comprehended mercy and justice: and from the consideration of mercy arises hope; from the consideration of justice, fear. When therefore the sinner takes hope from himself, by distrusting the mercy of God, it is called despair; but when he casts away fear, it is called presumption, while he presumes either to obtain glory without merits, or pardon without penance. The gifts of God by which we are drawn back from sin are two, namely: the knowledge of truth: against which is the impugning of known truth, when a man impugns the known truth of faith that he may sin the more freely. The other is the help of interior grace: against which is envy of a brother's grace, when a man envies not only the person of his neighbour but the grace of God in him. On the part also of sin there are two things by which man ought to be drawn back from sin. The first is the inordinateness or turpitude of sin: and against this is impenitence, not as it signifies permanence in sin until the end, because thus it is a common circumstance of guilt; but as it signifies the purpose of not repenting. The other is the smallness and brevity of the good which is desired in sin: and this is removed by obstinacy, whereby one strengthens in himself the purpose of adhering to sins. This is the distinction of the sins against the Holy Ghost, according to Thomas in the Second of the Second, question 14, where he writes beautifully on this matter: many things of which, studying brevity, I omit.

Richard of St. Victor says at length: “Some sins of men pertain specially to their own corruption, as drunkenness and fornication; some to injury of the neighbour, as murders and thefts; some to contumely of God, as blasphemy: but some fall into this through compulsion and infirmity, and these sin against the Father; others through deception, who sin against the Son; others from malignity alone, and these sin against the Holy Ghost.” This kind is most wicked, in which malice has grown to the highest, when one delights and glories in reproaches of God. Hence according to the Gloss, it is blasphemy of the Holy Ghost when one understands the magnificent works of God, and, being unable to deny the power, stimulated by envy, calumniates, ascribing to the devil what is done by the power of the Holy Ghost.

Lastly, if it be asked how the sin against the Holy Ghost is asserted to be irremissible, when of no wayfarer is there to be despair if he will repent: *(p. 56)* it must be said that as to that species of this sin which is named final impenitence, it is altogether irremissible, because neither in the present world nor in the future is it forgiven; but as to its other species it is called irremissible, not because it cannot be forgiven, but because it is forgiven with difficulty: not on the part of God, whose mercy is immense and power infinite, but on the part of men, who rarely and with difficulty repent of such a sin. Finally, as some say, irremissible is said in three ways, namely negatively, privatively, contrarily. Negatively, what is in no way remissible, as the sin of the demons and of all the damned. Privatively, what has not aptitude to be forgiven: thus every mortal sin is irremissible. Contrarily, what has a disposition contrary to remissibility: and thus the sins against the Holy Ghost are held to be irremissible, because they exclude and spurn those things by which the remission of guilts is made, namely mercy and divine grace. — This also is to be known, that by every sin the whole most blessed Trinity is equally offended; but some sins are said to be against the Father, some against the Son, some against the Holy Ghost, by appropriation, for the cause aforesaid.

But because Christ has so horribly threatened those who deny Him, He consequently gives confidence and promises help to His faithful. *“And when they shall bring you”* (Luke 12:11), namely tyrants and the faithless, *“into the synagogues,”* that is, to their public assemblies, to strike fear into you by their multitude, *“and to magistrates,”* that is, the princes of the Synagogue, as the Jews brought Christ and the Apostles, *“and powers,”* that is, to secular governors; *“be not solicitous,”* that is, fearful or anxious, *“how or what you shall answer”*: so neither be perplexed about the manner of answering, nor about the finding of a reply; *“or what you shall say,”* in defence of the faith and confutation of adversaries. *“For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the very hour,”* (Luke 12:12), when you shall be brought before the enemies of the faith, *“what you must say,”* that is, He will inspire you with ready, wise and constant answers: because this battle is not yours but God’s; and it is supernatural, in which human weakness most of all needs divine help. How most true this promise of Christ has been, and how innumerably and most copiously fulfilled, appears most abundantly in the legends of the Saints, and in the men and women martyred for Christ it has been fulfilled most fully and gloriously: as in the most blessed Apostles, and in St. Lawrence, Vincent, and innumerable others, who were even naturally rude and unlettered. Most splendidly, however, it is plain that it was fulfilled in holy maidens and women, as in the most sacred Catherine, Agatha, Agnes, etc., in whom was most evident the work of almighty Divinity, in that they answered so promptly and wisely, and remained so undaunted and constant.

Furthermore Christ teaches that avarice is to be avoided. *“And one of the multitude said to him,”* (Luke 12:13), namely to Christ: *“Master, speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me,”* that is, make a just division of our hereditary goods between himself and me. *“But he said to him: Man, who hath appointed me judge or divider over you,”* (Luke 12:14), that is, of temporal goods between you and your brother? Christ reproves this man, because He saw into his heart. For although such a division may lawfully be asked, yet the Saviour, looking into the mind of this man, knew that he asked it from avarice, as is clear from the following words. Again, He rebukes him because he asked this division at an unseasonable time, interrupting the preaching of Christ, who was treating of spiritual and divine things, by the proposing of this earthly cause, and mixing a cause of temporal things with the treatment of divine. Again, He rebukes him

because he asked of Christ what did not belong to Christ Himself, namely to discuss causes of temporal things, and thereby to omit divine things at least for a time, *(p. 57)* whereas Christ came in the highest poverty on this account, that He might teach earthly things to be forsaken for heavenly. Hence Ambrose says: "He who has the judgment of the living and the dead deigns not to be judge of suits or arbiter of estates. For the Saviour came to determine and discern in spiritual things, not in temporal." By which example He really taught and fulfilled what Paul afterwards wrote to Timothy: "No man being a soldier to God entangleth himself with secular businesses" (2 Tim. 2:4). Nor would Christ interrupt spiritual things for the sake of temporal. Which the holy Apostles followed, saying that of the Acts: "It is not reasonable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables" (Acts 6:2). The contrary of which many priests and canons now do, who for earthly occupations, even such as are not necessary to them, omit preachings, and Masses, and divers prayers. Wherefore from these words and deed of Christ prelates ought to take an example, not to frequent secular judgments, nay to delegate judgments of temporal things to others, as the Apostle writes to the Corinthians: "If then you have secular judgments, set them to judge who are the most despised in the Church" (1 Cor. 6:4).

Finally Christ in saying, "Man," takes the name of man as it sounds toward vice, namely toward earthliness and carnality, as also when the Apostle says: "For whereas there is among you envying and contention, are you not carnal, and walk according to man?" (1 Cor. 3:3). And again: "If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (Gal. 1:10).

"And he said to them," (Luke 12:15), namely to all who were present: because avarice, which He wished to forbid, is a common vice of clerics and laymen, of old and young, according to that of Isaias: "They all love bribes, they run after rewards" (Isa. 1:23). Jeremias also: "From the least of them even to the greatest, all are given to covetousness" (Jer. 6:13). More, however, does this vice usually reign in the old. *"Take heed,"* by intellectual consideration, *"and beware,"* by the fulfilling of my doctrine, *"of all covetousness,"* avoiding it in mind and deed: because the more one is inordinately affected toward temporal things, the more vehemently is he distanced from divine love and the most high Creator, and is pressed downward in heart, and blinded among the lowest things. — Now avarice is the immoderate love of temporal riches. Since therefore corporal and earthly things are ordered to spiritual as to an end, they can be loved, desired and sought only so far as they are necessary to man for living in the service of God, and for following the judgment of reason. Wherefore the Apostle says: "Having food and wherewith to be covered, with these let us be content" (1 Tim. 6:8). Moreover how detestable avarice is the Apostle shows: "The desire of money is the root of all evils" (1 Tim. 6:10). And again he names avarice "a serving of idols" (Eph. 5:5). Therefore in Ecclesiasticus it is written: "There is not a more wicked thing than a covetous man; nothing is more wicked than to love money: for such a one setteth even his own soul to sale" (Ecclus. 10:9–10). Therefore we must beware of all avarice, both of movable and immovable goods, small and great, since the small disposes to the great: and avarice is to be avoided in acquiring, in keeping, and in giving out. — *"For a man's life doth not consist in the abundance of things which he possesseth."* The order of the words is this: Beware of all covetousness, because a man's life consists not in the abundance, that is, not in the opulence, of any one of the things which he possesses, namely temporal things. For opulence of temporal things does not make a man live longer: nay frequently it is the occasion why the rich man dies sooner, in that, abusing his riches, he bears himself in surfeiting, and loses the life of grace, and, as divine justice requires, is the sooner taken from this life for his sins. Hence Seneca testifies: "Do you ask what is the measure of riches? First, to have what nature requires; second, what is enough. To none can a secure life befall who thinks too much about providing for it."

Besides, because in moral teachings particular sayings avail more than general ones, and particular examples move the hearts of hearers more than common admonitions, the Saviour therefore, setting an example, introduces a similitude: *(p. 58)* which nevertheless could have been a fact done, nay frequently it so happens.

"And he spoke a similitude to them, saying" (Luke 12:16). Such a doubling in speaking is frequent in the Old Testament, as when in the books of Kings the Lord says to Heli: "I have plainly spoken" (1 Kings 2:30). *"The land of a certain rich man"*—rich in temporal things, but poor in spiritual—*"brought forth plenty of fruits,"* that is, produced abundant fruits. By the hidden and just judgment of God, indeed, the wicked and reprobate prosper in this world, according to that of the Psalm: "But my feet were almost moved, because I was zealous against the wicked, seeing the prosperity of sinners" (Ps. 72:2–3). Nevertheless God, naturally infinitely good and kind, bestows these temporal things on the wicked, that, so far as in Him lies, by His munificence He may draw them to imitation of Himself, to thanksgiving, to liberality, that they may be merciful to the needy, as the heavenly Father is merciful to them (Luke 6:36), and may be liberal in giving, not tenacious in storing up, and so be inflamed to the love of the supreme benefactor, and render Him perpetual thanksgiving. But, alas! many wholly ungrateful for the benefits of God do the contrary, and the more they have or acquire, the more covetous they are made: in whom, like the dropsical, thirst grows from drink, according to Gregory. Of whom this rich man was one. For it is added:

"And he thought within himself, saying: What shall I do?" (Luke 12:17). By which word is expressed his anxious solicitude in temporal things. For the possession of riches begets penal solicitude and manifold fear. Wherefore Augustine asserts: "The rich covetous man fears every man: for he sees a rich man and thinks him a robber; he sees a poor man, and suspects a thief." *"Because,"* that is, from this that, *"I have not where to bestow my fruits."* He said this according to his blindness born of avarice. For if his mind had been enlightened, he would surely have known where he could most wholesomely gather his fruits. Therefore Rabanus says: "He lies; for the barns are ready: the bellies of the hungry poor." But this rich man knew not how to think except of temporal gathering, not of heavenly, whose barns are the poor.

"And he said: This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and will build greater; and into them will I gather all things that are grown to me," (Luke 12:18), in the present year, *"and my goods,"* had and remaining from former years. This is the counsel of earthly wisdom, of which the Apostle says: "The prudence of the flesh is death" (Rom. 8:6). Against which counsel the counsel of eternal wisdom is had in Matthew: "Lay not up to yourselves treasures on earth" (Matt. 6:19). Finally this covetous man and all the wicked, because they prefer and set before the highest and unchangeable good, namely the most glorious Creator and His spiritual gifts and graces, these earthly, carnal and perishable things; therefore call and reckon such things their goods rather than the spiritual and divine: whereas the goods of man, according as he is man, are spiritual and interior goods, not carnal and earthly, as Ambrose says: "They are not the goods of man which he cannot carry with him." Gregory also testifies: "The earthly possession is not man's, but the heavenly." Valerius relates of a certain philosopher who, having escaped a conflagration, said: "I have lost nothing; my goods are with me: for I carry them in my mind, not on my shoulders." Corporal things therefore are not goods of man, except so far as they are necessary to him and ministering helps to spiritual goods: therefore they can be desired and possessed only so far as they are necessary and useful for obtaining spiritual things. Wherefore the Apostle says: "Having food and wherewith to be covered, with these let us be content" (1 Tim. 6:8).

"And I will say to my soul," (Luke 12:19), that is, to myself. For the soul is the principal part of man: therefore it is put for the whole man. And some say that matter is not of the essence of material and natural things. *"Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years,"* that is, copious riches, on which for many years thou canst live sumptuously. *(p. 59)* This is one blindness of the covetous, that they promise themselves a long life in this world, or suppose that it remains: and so they speak as though to live long, though of the morrow they are uncertain. Against which incautious way of speaking St. James writes in his Canonical epistle: "Behold, now you that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and there we will spend a year, and will traffic, and make our gain: whereas you know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is a vapour which appeareth for a little while, and afterwards shall vanish away. For that you should say: If the Lord will, and, If we shall live, we will do this or that. But now you rejoice in your

arrogancies" (James 4:13–16).

Besides, St. Basil says: "If you confess that temporal things have come to you from God, is God unjust, distributing things unequally to us? Why do you abound, and that other beg, unless that you may obtain the merits of good dispensation, and he be adorned with the prize of patience? But are you not a despoiler, who reckon as your own what you have received to dispense? The bread you hold is the hungry man's; the tunic you keep in your chest is the naked man's; the shoe that rots by you is the barefoot man's; the silver you possess buried is the needy man's. Wherefore you wrong as many poor as you were able to give to." The same things St. Ambrose writes, which are greatly to be pondered by all the rich, most of all by clerics, who have many or fat benefices, and out of the patrimony of the Crucified and the goods of the poor lay up treasures, prepare sumptuous meals and diverse dishes, and also precious and very many garments. How great impiety this is, how great sacrilege, how incomprehensible damnation, is proved from the aforesaid words of St. Basil, and more clearly from the sayings of the holy fathers Jerome and Bernard.

"Take thy rest"—from labour—*"and be at leisure"*: whereas yet idleness gives vices. So also of the reprobate the Psalmist says: "They are not in the labour of men" (Ps. 72:5). Yet it was first said to man after sin: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread" (Gen. 3:19). *"Eat, drink, make good cheer."* Behold those who know not spiritual delights, who delight not in God, who exult not in spiritual exercises, place in carnal things and pleasures their highest solace and last end, like the beasts, nay incomparably worse and baser. Four vices accompanying riches are touched here, namely: idleness, in "Take thy rest"; gluttony, in "Eat"; drunkenness, in "Drink"; and the celebration of revelling, in "Make good cheer." Lastly, as the gluttonous prefer to fill their belly so far that it harms not only the salvation of the soul but the health of the body; so the covetous prefer their grain to rot in barns rather than give it to the poor.

"But God said to him," (Luke 12:20). For while the rich covetous man speaks to himself in secret, his utterances in heaven are examined, judged and reproved. *"Thou fool."* A fool most truly is every sinner abiding in mortal vices: First, because he consents not to eternal wisdom nor obeys, but rather by disobedience opposes it, while he transgresses the divine precepts. Second, because he lacks that wisdom which is a gift of the Holy Ghost, and is filled with folly and the vice of childishness: and he is like a boy who prefers apples and pears to gold and gems, because so he himself prefers transitory and carnal things to spiritual and eternal. Third, because he ceaselessly wounds, hates, nay exposes to the perils of eternal damnation his own soul. For what are sins but wounds of the soul? And "he that loveth iniquity hateth his own soul" (Ps. 10:6), because he wills what is most hurtful to his own soul. Fourth, because he subjects himself and consents to his most atrocious enemies, namely demons, and gladdens them by his impious life, but gives no assent to angelic inspiration. Fifth, because daily he could so advance in spiritual things, and increase his eternal happiness: and yet conversely, every spiritual progress being neglected, daily he makes himself poorer in spiritual things, and farther from true beatitude. Does not he who does these things, and so *(p. 60)* behave, act from the height of madness, nay of infinite folly?

"This night do they require thy soul of thee," that is, to go forth from thy body the most harsh exactors will demand, namely the demons, whom thou hast served and to whom by sinning thou hast sold thy soul, while for the delight offered by them thou hast bound and subjected thyself to their dominion: wherefore God, just and holy, gives them leave to require thy soul bound to them, and to drag it with them into hell. Finally, of this word Gregory writes in the Morals on Job: "On the same night was he taken away who for a long time had been looking forward, so that he who had gathered temporal things for a long time should by no means see one following day." He says, however, "They require": for perhaps certain terrible powers sent for this purpose were demanding it: since if in migrating from city to city we need a guide, much more does the soul released from the body and passing over to the future life need guidance. And on this account the soul many times refuses and withdraws into the deep, when it ought to go out of the body. For the conscience of sins always goads us, but chiefly when we are to be drawn to the terrible judgment of God. For then the whole

heap of crimes is renewed, and set before the eyes, strikes the mind. And as prisoners are always sorrowful, but then especially when they must be presented to the judge; so also the soul, most of all at the very time of the impending departure, is tormented and grieves for sin, and much more when it has been torn out. Rightly, moreover, is the soul of the impious said to be torn out by night, because it is caught in the obscurity of its vices, and has cast away the light of wholesome consideration, by which it ought to have foreseen and prepared the hour of its death. Lastly, according to the Gloss, for God to speak to a vicious man is to restrain his depraved operations by the sudden strictness of equity.

"And whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" that is, to whom shall thy riches remain? Nay, very often it happens that the damnation and punishment of the deceased are increased on account of the iniquity of those who abuse his riches, in that he prepared and left them matter for sinning. Their sins therefore redound upon him. Hence of the vain man, deprived of the illumination of true wisdom, the Psalmist says: "He storeth up, and knoweth not for whom he shall gather these things" (Ps. 38:7). In Ecclesiasticus also it is written: "There is another that is enriched by living sparingly, and this is the portion of his reward, in that he saith: I have found me rest, and now I will eat of my goods alone; and he knoweth not what time shall pass, and death approach, and that he must leave all to others, and die" (Ecclus. 11:18–20).

"So is he that layeth up treasure for himself" (Luke 12:21), that is, he is like the aforesaid covetous and foolish rich man in guilt before God, and shall be equal in punishment, who covetously gathers temporal things for himself, and does not distribute them to the needy, *"and is not rich towards God,"* that is, lacks infused charity of God, and the other spiritual gifts of the Holy Ghost and virtues. For the true riches of man are virtues and merits of sanctity: through which God becomes his possession, and he has eternal beatitude laid up and prepared for him, so that he can say that of the Lamentations: "The Lord is my portion, said my soul: therefore will I wait for him" (Lam. 3:24); and that: "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance" (Ps. 15:5). Hence Bede testifies: "He who would be rich towards God, let him not lay up treasure," namely for private utility, "but distribute to the poor what he possesses." Ambrose also says: "These temporal things are not ours, which we cannot carry away with us. Virtue alone is the companion of the dead, mercy alone follows us, which merits for the dead eternal tabernacles." Of this peril of the rich the Psalmist says: "All the foolish of heart were troubled; they have slept their sleep, and all the men of riches have found nothing in their hands" (Ps. 75:6).

Article XXXIII — Continuation of the Elucidation of this Twelfth Chapter, from the place where it is said: "And he said to his disciples"

(p. 61) After Christ has taught that immoderate affection for temporal things is to be avoided, He now teaches that even inordinate solicitude about necessaries is to be utterly uprooted: for solicitude about necessaries frequently induces solicitude about superfluities. *"And he said to his disciples"* (Luke 12:22). For He instructs them specially in this matter, and invites them to contempt of the world, because they were to be the preachers of this evangelical perfection and law, and the masters of the whole world: therefore it behoved them first to fulfil these things perfectly, as it is written of Christ: "Jesus began to do and to teach" (Acts 1:1). For to the preacher who acts not the Apostle says: "Thou who teachest another, teachest not thyself?" (Rom. 2:21). *"Therefore,"* that is, because it so befell the covetous rich man as I have said, *"I say to you."* Happy is he whom the losses of others make wary. *"Be not solicitous for your life,"* that is, for yourselves, or your person: putting the part for the whole, as was said in the preceding article. Or, "your life," that is, your animal life, or the soul properly so called, which needs food, drink and clothing, not in so far as it is an intellectual and spiritual essence, but in so far as it is the form of the body, preserving it in bodily life, which is not preserved without food and coverings. The soul also is placed in the body that, as long as it remains in it, it may exercise itself in virtues: which it cannot fulfil unless its body be sustained by food and necessaries, and itself also supply such things to it: and so it needs them. *"What you shall eat; nor for your*

body, what you shall put on," that is, be solicitous neither about food nor about clothing. Wherefore it is to be known that there is a solicitude begetting a certain disquietude in the soul, and arising from a certain diffidence, or including immoderation, whereby one is anxiously occupied about something, as though there were no providence of God: and of this Christ now speaks chiefly. Of which also the Apostle says to the Philippians: "Be nothing solicitous" (Phil. 4:6); and in Proverbs Solomon says: "The expectation of the solicitous shall perish" (Prov. 11:7, Vulg.). Another is the solicitude of prudence: and to be so solicitous in an ordered way about exterior things, ordering them to spiritual, Christ permits; nay for those on whom it is incumbent by office this very thing is meritorious. Of this solicitude the Saviour said to Martha: "Martha, Martha, thou art careful, and art troubled about many things" (Luke 10:41). Of which the Apostle says: "Which also I was careful to do" (Gal. 2:10), namely to gather alms for the holy poor who were in Jerusalem. The third is spiritual solicitude, which is diligence of heart about divine charisms, and about pleasing God: which is highly to be praised. Of which in Micheas it is had: "I will show thee, O man, what is good: namely to walk solicitous with thy God" (Mich. 6:8). And in Deuteronomy: "Keep thyself and thy soul carefully" (Deut. 4:9). Besides, although Christ forbids solicitude, He does not forbid labour, since it is written: "Because thou shalt eat the labours of thy hands, thou art blessed, and it shall be well with thee" (Ps. 127:2). And the Apostle said: "If any man will not work, neither let him eat" (2 Thess. 3:10).

Next our Lawgiver gives the reason why the aforesaid solicitude is to be avoided, by which freedom of mind in God, and quiet devotion, and steady progress in spiritual things are chiefly hindered. *"The life is more than the meat"* (Luke 12:23), that is, of greater dignity, since it is immortal, a vital form, and a rational *(p. 62)* image of its Creator; *"and the body is more than the raiment,"* that is, more worthy. For the body is the animated instrument or organ, conjoined, immediate and proper to the soul. He therefore who without our solicitude gave us body and soul will provide food and clothing, without the aforesaid solicitude, for those who hope in Him.

Next He brings in another reason, in which, as above, He argues as from the greater. *"Consider the ravens, for they sow not, neither do they reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn, and God feedeth them"* (Luke 12:24), because by divine providence they find and procure what is necessary for sustenance. *"How much more are you better than they?"* that is, of greater value or dignity than those irrational creatures, since you are of an intellectual nature? If therefore God provides necessaries for them, He will much rather provide for you also, if you be hoping in Him, immoderate solicitude being despised. Yet discreet provision is not reproved, because even the birds seek what is necessary. Moreover, according to Theophilus, special mention is made of ravens, because God feeds the young of ravens by special providence. For ravens give birth but do not nourish their young: to which young, in a wonderful way, food carried by a certain breath from the air comes to the mouth, which they receive gaping. Some also affirm that the raven, seeing its young grow white with feathers, forsakes it as not its own; but the young is fed with heavenly dew or with certain little worms flying about its mouth. It is plain therefore that the providence of God reaches even to the irrational, nay to the lowest of all things, and includes the universe. Whence in the book of Job it is had: "Who provideth for the raven his food, when his young ones cry to God, wandering about, because they have no meat?" (Job 38:41). And likewise in the Psalm: "Who giveth to beasts their food, and to the young ravens that call upon him" (Ps. 146:9); and again: "All expect of thee that thou give them food in season" (Ps. 103:27).

Furthermore He adduces a third argument. *"And which of you by taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?"* (Luke 12:25), as if He said: It is certain that none of you can increase the natural stature of his body by thought alone, nor by nutrition alone, but by divine provision the body receives its measure of increase. *"If then you be not able to do so much as the least thing"* (Luke 12:26), that is, if you cannot do what is in itself very small, and most easy to God, namely to add something of increase to stature by thinking, willing or commanding, or to add the briefest moment of an hour to life; *"why are you solicitous for the rest,"* namely for the necessaries of the body? as if He said: Leave such care to the Creator. Finally, as the greatest

works of the soul are the operations of the intellective powers, because they are ruled by knowledge and choice; its great works are the operations of the sensitive powers, because they are ruled by knowledge; but its least are the operations of the vegetative powers, because they are ruled by natural necessity: so the greatest works of God are the works of glory; the great are the works of grace; the least are the works of nature.

Moreover the Saviour proves the same by the consideration of inanimate things, for which God provides necessaries; therefore He will provide also for men obedient to Him without their immoderate solicitude. *"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow"* (Luke 12:27), without the labour of human cultivation; *"they labour not"* that they may acquire full increase, *"neither do they spin"* that they may be adorned. *"But I say to you, not even Solomon in all his glory,"* that is, in his illustrious and famous state, *"was arrayed as one of these,"* lilies of the field, that is, was not so beautifully adorned with any garments as the lily is adorned with its colour and the other things with which it is decked on the surface. For although art imitates nature, it cannot equal it. Nor is it wonderful if God clothes more beautifully than one man can clothe another. Fitting also is the mention of Solomon, because he abounded greatly in riches and delights and wisdom for devising beauties (3 Kings 10:23).

"And if the grass" (Luke 12:28), "if" for "since," *"which is today in the field."* Some understand by grass *(p. 63)* the lily of the field, according as grass is called any such germ of the earth. Others by grass understand herb or hay. Whence in Genesis, where our translation has, "Let the earth bring forth the green herb" (Gen. 1:11), another has, "Let the earth bring forth grass." *"And tomorrow,"* that is, a little after, or in the future. So in the Old Testament "tomorrow" is frequently taken: as when in Deuteronomy Moses says: "If thy son shall ask thee tomorrow" (Deut. 6:20). In Genesis also Jacob testifies: "My justice shall answer for me tomorrow" (Gen. 30:33). *"Is cast into the oven,"* namely when it has been dried and is apt matter for fire. *"God doth so clothe,"* that is, with colour and other things so beautifully. *"How much more you?"* that is, much more will He provide for you in the matter of clothing, if you trust in Him, *"O ye of little faith,"* that is, of modest faith, because you are so prone to distrust divine provision: which is plain from this, that you provide for yourselves temporal things so solicitously and superfluously. Hence Peter: "Casting all your care upon him, for he hath care of you" (1 Peter 5:7). And Paul to the Hebrews: "Let your manners be without covetousness, contented with such things as you have" (Heb. 13:5). For God said: "I will not leave thee, neither will I forsake thee" (Jos. 1:5). So that we may say confidently: "The Lord is my helper: I will not fear what man shall do to me" (Ps. 117:6). And the Psalmist confesses: "The Lord is solicitous for me" (Ps. 39:18); and again, "Cast thy care upon the Lord, and he shall nourish thee" (Ps. 54:23). O how many who seem religious act against this teaching of Christ, not ceasing to be solicitous about increasing temporal things, in food and clothing to satisfy not only necessity but pleasure and curiosity, and so to heap up earthly things as though there were no life after this life!

Therefore from the aforesaid providence for the irrational, and adornment of inanimate things, it is clearly shown that the providence of God reaches to all things. Hence in the fifth book of the City of God Augustine asserts: "God has left neither the entrails of the small and contemptible animal, nor the little feather of a bird, nor the little flower of the herb, nor the leaf of the tree, without the harmony of their parts, and as it were a certain peace." Hugh also, in the book of the Three Days, discourses: "It is a true and evident argument of divine wisdom that every kind begets like to itself, and that in so many things one likeness propagated does not vary the form of the first origin. Each has its own species, and each preserves the likeness of its kind. Look at the leaf, how it is distinguished round about with serrated teeth, how within it is interwoven this way and that with ribs drawn out. Count one, count another. Everything that is of one kind you will find of one likeness: as many teeth in one as in another; as many ribs in one as in another; such colour and form in one as in another."

Moreover from the subtle contemplation of these things certain illustrious philosophers observed and wrote that the providence of the sublime and blessed God reaches to the lower and lowest things. Wherefore in the tenth book of the City of God Augustine asserts: “Plotinus the Platonist, disputing of providence, proves from the beauty of flowers and leaves that it reaches from the supreme God, whose is intelligible and ineffable beauty, even to these earthly and lowest things: all which, as though cast away and most swiftly perishing, he affirms could not have the most becoming numbers of their forms unless they were formed from that place where the intelligible and unchangeable form, holding all things exemplarily at once, abides.” Hence also Bede: “What purple of kings,” he says, “what painting of weavers, can be compared with flowers in beauty?”

Lastly, if the glorious and happy God has impressed so much beauty upon things so vile, as is plain in the feathers of the peacock: how surpassingly excellent, incomparable and immense is His beauty in Himself, and how most delightful to behold? Therefore that we may be disposed to behold it, now by faith and the gift of wisdom, hereafter by sight, let us cleanse the mind from every stain of sin. For “blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God” (Matt. 5:8), whose beauty *(p. 64)* to behold is the true and full felicity of every created mind.

Finally, that the aforesaid teachings of Christ may cling to us the more, He resumes them. *“And seek not you what you shall eat, or what you shall drink”* (Luke 12:29). Some say this refers to the exterior act, that we avoid not only interior immoderate solicitude, but also the importunate acts flowing from it, with which some are agitated about the aforesaid corporal things. Or, according to the Gloss, what is here said is rather to be referred to the quality of foods than to their substance. Besides, in food and drink we sin in six ways: first, by desiring too ardently; second, by preparing curiously and sumptuously; third, by eating before the fit time; fourth, by taking superfluously; fifth, by eating without discipline; sixth, by seeking carnal delight in them.

“And be not lifted up on high,” that is, be not proud and ambitious: as the Apostle admonishes, “Be not high-minded,” that is, reckon not thyself great, “but fear” (Rom. 11:20). This Christ, the master of all perfection, added most fittingly. For as carnal and worldly pride is wont to follow temporal and exterior opulence, so from interior riches, that is, advances in virtues, spiritual pride is wont to arise. Christ admonishes therefore that whether we abound in temporal or in spiritual things we be in no wise vainly lifted up, but give thanks to God in all things most humbly. Hence the Apostle writes to Timothy: “Charge the rich of this world not to be high-minded, nor to trust in the uncertainty of riches, but in the living God, who giveth us abundantly all things” (1 Tim. 6:17). Moreover, how detestable and contrary and rebellious to God pride is, is plain from this that in Job the proud man is reproached: “Why doth thy heart elevate thee, and why dost thou stare with thine eyes as if thou wert thinking great things? Why doth thy spirit swell against God?” (Job 15:12–13).

Then Christ touches a twofold reason why temporal things are not to be sought solicitously. The first is: *“For all these things”* (Luke 12:30), namely riches and the rest pertaining to the present life, *“do the nations of the world seek”* solicitously, that is, secular men, lovers of the world rather than of God, who weigh the present more than the future world; but the devout and elect who are sons of God seek the Father’s eternal kingdom. From this most wise word of Christ let each one weigh whether he belongs to the nations of the world or to the sons of God. Surely, if he thinks, seeks and desires carnal and earthly and present things more than spiritual, heavenly and future, he is certainly of the number of the nations of the world.

Then a second reason to the same is subjoined: *“But your Father knoweth that you have need of these things,”* that is, God the Creator, the heavenly Father, who most piously deigns to be called the father of men, most certainly knows how much and in what way you need corporal things: therefore trust in Him filially and immovably, for He deigned therefore to be called our Father, that He might provoke us to full confidence and perfect love. For what father is there who, if he have it, supplies not necessaries to his son turned to him? But God, since He is wise, knows all things; and since almighty, can do all things; and since a

father, piously wills: therefore He is supremely fit to provide; and He who created nature knows its indigence. Therefore Augustine says: “The heavenly physician knows what He is about to give us for consolation, and what to withdraw for exercise.” There is no fear therefore that He will not provide for us, since not even a man withdraws necessaries from his beast of burden; but men by sinning frequently deserve to fail by hunger.

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God” (Luke 12:31), that is, the heavenly country, eternal felicity; love the heavenly kingdom, desire it, and strive to attain it by good works. In Matthew it is had: “Seek ye first,” that is, first and principally, “the kingdom of God” (Matt. 6:33). For the very beatitude of the heavenly kingdom is our last end, to which we ought to order all other things. The end also is first in intention, according to the philosophers. Therefore *(p. 65)* before we undertake exterior and manual works, we ought first to seek the heavenly kingdom, by praying to God, meditating on divine things, raising the mind to God, hearing Mass, or doing similar good things: and so we ought to refer our other works to this principal good. But man cannot fulfil this so long as he lies in mortal sin. Hence conscience is to be examined daily; and if a man be conscious to himself of mortal sin, let him at once grieve from the heart, ask pardon, and firmly and integrally purpose to confess, avoid, satisfy and amend. *“And all these things shall be added unto you,”* that is, the things necessary to bodily life shall be divinely granted, as less principal. Nevertheless man must do what belongs to his state, and what is in him, lest he be as it were tempting God.

Behold, by the words and teachings set forth Christ teaches us to have most certain faith in the providence of God, and to possess full confidence in God, as in a most faithful father and the infallible provider of all. Wherefore the Psalmist says: “I have been young, and now am old; and I have not seen the just forsaken, nor his seed seeking bread” (Ps. 36:25).

But because superfluous solicitude proceeds from inordinate fear, Christ teaches that such fear is to be avoided, and gives confidence in seeking the kingdom of heaven. *“Fear not”* (Luke 12:32), with carnal or worldly fear. Of the species of fear, however, it was said in the thirty-second article. *“Little flock,”* that is, you the disciples and the other elect, who are little, because humble in your own eyes, and little reputed by others, and few in number in respect of the reprobate. “For many are called, but few chosen” (Matt. 20:16). *“For it hath pleased your Father,”* that is, God the Creator who predestined you, *“to give you a kingdom,”* the kingdom of heaven, after the present life in reality and full possession, but now in hope and a certain foretaste. And this has pleased Him from eternity, to give you these goods at the very time pre-ordained, so that not your merits, but His will, love and clemency, are the reason of your predestination and grace, or the complacency by which it pleased Him to give you the kingdom of heaven, and the gifts of grace by which you may merit to obtain it. Hence Christ says in John to the disciples: “You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you” (John 15:16). And elsewhere: “I confess to thee, O Father, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones: yea, Father, for so it hath seemed good in thy sight” (Matt. 11:25–26). The Apostle also to the Ephesians confesses: “God predestinated us unto the adoption of children through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will” (Eph. 1:5). And the Psalmist: “Their own arm saved them not,” namely our fathers; “but thy right hand, because thou wast pleased with them” (Ps. 43:4).

“Sell what you possess, and give alms” (Luke 12:33). This is a counsel of perfection, and a work of supererogation, if it be so understood that all things sold be given to the poor, so that the seller reserve nothing of his own to himself. But if beyond this he also thereafter lives by his own labours and bestows alms, as Paul testifies he did (Acts 20:34–35), it will be a work most perfect. But if it be so understood that of the things sold part be given to the poor and part remain to the seller for the necessaries of life, it will be a counsel, but not perfect.

“Make to yourselves bags which grow not old,” that is, gather not money in this world, and put it in corruptible purses or repositories for private and inordinate advantage; but collect it in the kingdom of

heaven, by giving it now to the needy, that there you may find the reward. As St. Lawrence said to Decius: "The wealth of the Church which you require, the hands of the poor have carried into heavenly treasures." Hence it is added: *"a treasure in heaven which faileth not"*: because these bags are the heavenly treasure never failing, that is, copious merits and interior riches by intention laid up in heaven, by which the heavenly kingdom is reached; *"where no thief approacheth, nor moth corrupteth"*: because in heaven there is no violence, no injury, no corruption, no iniquity *(p. 66)* that can take away merits or rewards.

But this must be diligently fulfilled: *"For where your treasure is"* (Luke 12:34), that is, the thing chiefly loved by you, and gathered or possessed, *"there will your heart be also,"* that is, the thought and affection of your soul will dwell and rest. Whence according to Augustine: "The soul is rather where it loves than where it animates." If therefore one lays up his treasure on earth, he plunges his soul, which is the image of God, in earthly things; which is an enormous sin. But if he applies his study about God and eternal beatitude, and fixes his desire, his heart is already in God, and he has his conversation in heaven (Phil. 3:20). Hence Jerome says: "The glutton has his heart in his belly, the wanton in sports, the lewd in lust, the covetous in money."

Moreover Christ exhorts us to have our life prepared for this bodily death, and worthy of eternal glory. *"Let your loins be girt"* (Luke 12:35), that is, be ready and active for carrying out the works of God, for walking in the way of the Lord, for restraining the concupiscence and pleasure of the flesh, which is vigorous in the loins. Finally, man's loins are twofold, namely: carnal, from which proceed concupiscences of the flesh and unchaste works. Of which loins it is written in Job: "His strength is in his loins" (Job 40:11). These loins are restrained and girt by the rigour of discipline and temperance: which is necessary to every Christian for salvation, as the Apostle says: "And they that are Christ's have crucified their flesh with the vices and concupiscences" (Gal. 5:24). This is to abstain from carnal desires which war against the soul (1 Peter 2:11). Whence again the Apostle says: "If you live according to the flesh, you shall die; but if by the spirit you mortify the deeds of the flesh, you shall live" (Rom. 8:13). Moreover, other loins are spiritual, namely intellect and affect, from which the abundance of spiritual thoughts and desires arises: wherefore they are to be girt with a spiritual girdle, namely assiduous custody of the heart and continual meditation on divine Scripture, lest from them the offspring of useless thoughts and desires flow forth, according to that in the Psalm: "But his will is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he shall meditate day and night" (Ps. 1:2). Hence the Apostle exhorts the Ephesians: "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth" (Eph. 6:14).

"And lamps burning in your hands." By lamps are understood the discretion of reason in acting, and the instruction of others by word or deed. Let them therefore be lamps burning: that is, let discretion direct and inflame works, according to that of the Apostle to the Romans: "Your reasonable," that is, discreet, "service" (Rom. 12:1); and let man's reason enlighten and kindle his neighbours, by teaching and living exemplarily, as the Saviour says in Matthew: "So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16). Whence according to Gregory: "We gird our loins when we straiten the lust of the flesh; we also hold burning lamps in our hands when we show examples of virtues to our neighbours." Therefore lamps ought to be not only shining by knowledge of truth, but burning by fervour of charity, because knowledge of truth without love of goodness is unformed. Again, by lamps can be understood the divine utterances and precepts, by which our souls are illumined, according to that of Proverbs: "The commandment is a lamp, and the law a light" (Prov. 6:23); and in the Psalm: "Thy word is a lamp to my feet" (Ps. 118:105). But these lamps become burning when they are considered and observed out of charity.

"And you yourselves like to men who wait for their lord, when he shall return from the wedding" (Luke 12:36), *"that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open to him immediately"*: that is, as good servants await the return of their lord from the wedding with diligence and patience, not daring meanwhile to behave ill, nor to wander hither and thither, but keeping the house and always ready to open the door to the returning

lord; so also do you with all diligence and patience await my coming to you, whereby I am to come to you, both in your particular judgment, namely at the hour of death, and in the general judgment, when in human form I shall descend to judge the living and the dead. *(p. 67)* In the particular judgment, however, Christ comes by the effect of His equity, rendering what the soul has merited in its body. Christ is also said to come from the wedding, because in heaven He has united to Himself the triumphant Church by a most full union, as a spouse wholly undefiled, unceasingly and intimately conjoined to Himself. Of which wedding it is written in the Apocalypse: "Blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb" (Apoc. 19:9). From which Christ is also said to return, not that He leaves it, or that it is at some time ended, but because He is said to come bodily or spiritually from the place of that most pure delight. Let us therefore await Christ the judge, that when He shall have come to us at the hour of death, or in the last judgment, and shall have knocked, that is, exacted the debt of death, or touched us by lethal sickness, we may open to Him immediately, that is, be prepared for death, and receive Christ the judge securely and joyfully, or at least promptly and obediently. Such was Paul who said: "I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ" (Phil. 1:23); and the Psalmist, who cries: "Woe is me, that my sojourning is prolonged!" (Ps. 119:5). Hence in James it is had: "Be patient until the coming of the Lord; strengthen your hearts, because the coming of the Lord is at hand: behold the judge standeth before the door" (James 5:7–9).

"Blessed are those servants," (Luke 12:37), now in hope and by virtuous merits, likewise the handmaids also, *"whom, when the Lord Jesus Christ shall come"* (in the particular or universal judgment, as was said), *"he shall find watching,"* that is, diligent in the divine service, not slothful or drowsy, but having the eyes of the mind open to the contemplation of the supernal light, by considering divine things, as the Apostle says to the Ephesians: "That the Father of glory may give unto you the spirit of wisdom in the knowledge of him, the eyes of your heart enlightened" (Eph. 1:17–18). Besides, as bodily light set before the eyes drives away drowsiness, so the illumination of the divine light, penetrating and clarifying the mind, removes from it negligence and sloth.

"Amen I say to you, that he will gird himself," that is, Christ the judge will dispose Himself to give them the worthy reward of eternal felicity, according to the capacity, proportion or merit of each: that as they girded themselves for His service, so He may gird Himself for their glorification or reward, when they shall have been presented to His judgment; *"and make them sit down to meat,"* that is, fully rest, and with the holy angels at the table of eternal felicity be refreshed, that is, be filled and satiated with the beatific enjoyment of the Divinity: as the Psalmist says, "They shall be inebriated with the plenty of thy house, and thou shalt make them drink of the torrent of thy pleasure" (Ps. 35:9); and again, "I shall be satisfied when thy glory shall appear" (Ps. 16:15). Whence below Christ says: "I dispose to you a kingdom, that you may eat and drink at my table" (Luke 22:29–30). Hence the divine Dionysius writes in his epistle to Titus: "By sitting down to meat we mean rest from many labours, and life without hurt, and divine conversation in light, in the region of the living, fulfilled with all holy affection, copious donation of all gifts, whereby joy is filled." *"And passing,"* that is, most joyfully visiting the hearts of each, and spiritually going among all, converting them, or rather holding the converted in Himself; or, "passing," that is, according to His humanity returning from the place of the general judgment to the heavens; *"will minister unto them,"* that is, will promptly and most copiously, lovingly and most joyfully supply all things pertaining to their beatitude. For this is the ministration of support, not of servitude, the ministration of charity, not of subjection: which is the ministration of the sufficiency of benefits, as a father ministers expenses to his sons. For the holy and happy angels also are said to minister to us, most poor, full of sin and misery, although according to Bernard they are our lords and princes.

But since God knows our proneness to vices, and our most unstable fragility, *(p. 68)* He is therefore long-suffering toward us, and does not avenge at once, but always while this life lasts is ready to receive our repentance and conversion. Therefore it is added: *"And if he shall come in the second watch"* (Luke 12:38),

that is, if Christ shall visit a man to judge him in the time of his youth, *"and if he shall come in the third watch,"* that is, shall have permitted him to live longer, and visit him to judge him in the time of old age, *"and find them so,"* that is, find the man prepared for death; *"blessed are those servants,"* who shall have been found by Christ so prepared and watching in good works, because they shall be gloriously crowned by Him. According to Gregory therefore, the first watch is the earliest time of our life, namely childhood; the second watch is youth or adolescence; the third is old age; the fourth is that age which is called decrepit. He therefore who lived ill in childhood, let him repent and amend in youth. But if in youth also he has conversed viciously, at least in old age let him come to his senses from his malices. Of the first watch, however, no mention is made here, because in that age men are not so apt for the arduous things of virtues; similarly neither in decrepit age: whence no mention is made of it either, for the penance which is made in it God accepts less, and because rarely is that penance true which is so late, as Augustine asserts. Nevertheless in Mark Christ touches all these ages, saying: "Watch ye therefore, for you know not when the lord of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning" (Mark 13:35). The discourse, however, is of the ages of human life, or the parts of a man's life, metaphorically, after the likeness of the parts of the night. There are four watches of the night: the first is called conticinium, the second intempestum, the third gallicinium, the fourth antelucanum. For so watchmen on the walls of cities and in camps have been accustomed to divide the night, that they may succeed one another in watching.

Then the Saviour, by a similitude found in exterior things, admonishes that what He has said be fulfilled; and says: *"Now this know ye,"* (Luke 12:39), *"that if the householder did know at what hour the thief would come, he would surely watch, and would not suffer his house to be broken open."* Literally this is so: that man loves his corporal goods so much that he would prepare himself by watching against the coming of the thief if he knew when the thief would come. Much more therefore ought man to guard his soul, and the spiritual goods conferred on him by God, and to prepare and arm himself, by diligent observance of the divine precepts, against the spiritual thief, that is, against the devil, who unceasingly strives to break through, or hurt and stain, the house of the mind, that is, the conscience; or against death, lest it corrupt the very body before the soul has prepared itself to meet Christ and to receive His judgment. Moreover, Theophilus by the thief understands the coming of Christ to judge, because like a thief He will come unexpectedly, according to that of the Apostle: "The day of the Lord shall so come as a thief in the night" (1 Thess. 5:2). Let us therefore unceasingly guard our mind against the worst and most cunning thief, namely the devil, lest he despoil us of every charism of graces: because if he leads us to consent to his temptation, he will at once deprive us of all virtue and grace. Therefore Paul exhorts us: "Give not place to the devil" (Eph. 4:27). And James: "Resist the devil, and he will fly from you" (James 4:7). Peter also: "Be sober and watch: because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour: whom resist ye, strong in faith" (1 Peter 5:8–9).

Next Christ applies this example to the purpose. *"Be you then also ready"* (Luke 12:40), that is, strive always and unceasingly to be and live in charity and grace, and let not mortal sin cling to you: nay, if (which God forbid) it should occur, let it be at once removed by penance. So be ready for the coming of Christ, for death, for divine judgment, because *"at what hour you think not,"* that is, at a time uncertain to you, *"the Son of man,"* namely Christ, *"will come,"* that is, by the infliction of death, or by the exhibition of judgment, *(p. 69)* He will visit you: which can be understood both of the hour of death, or of the particular judgment of each, and of the day of the last judgment. Whence elsewhere also Christ says: "Watch ye therefore, because you know not the day nor the hour" (Matt. 25:13); and in the Acts of the Apostles, "It is not for you to know the times or moments, which the Father hath put in his own power" (Acts 1:7): which He said of the time of the final judgment. Moreover the Lord willed that both these hours should be hidden from us, that we may dispose ourselves for death and the divine judgment the more diligently and unceasingly, the less we know the determined time, knowing that the danger is truly immense if one be found and caught unprepared. Hence also in the Apocalypse Christ says to the blameworthy servant: "Have in mind in what manner thou hast

received and heard, and observe, and do penance. If then thou shalt not watch, I will come to thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know at what hour I will come to thee" (Apoc. 3:3). But that supreme philosopher Plato also in the Phaedo declared that the highest philosophy is the assiduous meditation of death. Seneca also testifies: "Since we know not the day of death, each day of our life is to be ordered as though it were the last day."

Lastly, it does not oppose the aforesaid words of Christ that some of the Saints, by a singular grace of God, foreknew the day of their death by divine revelation. For Christ speaks these things according to the common law, as Solomon in Ecclesiastes: "Man knoweth not his own end; but as fishes are taken with the hook, and as birds are caught with the snare, so men are taken in the evil time, when it shall suddenly come upon them" (Eccles. 9:12).

Article XXXIV — Exposition of the Remaining Part of this Twelfth Chapter: "And Peter said to him: Lord, dost thou speak this parable to us, or likewise to all?"

"And Peter said to him" (Luke 12:41). Concerning this Theophilus says: "Peter, to whom the Church had already been committed, as bearing the care of all, inquires whether the Lord had put forth the foregoing parable to all." *"Lord, dost thou speak this parable to us,"* thy Apostles and disciples, who observe not only thy precepts but thy counsels, *"or likewise to all,"* who are to be saved, or Christians? as if he said: Does this thy doctrine pertain to us only, or to all the faithful? But since it was very easy to consider that the parable immediately set forth looks to every one to be saved, namely that he be always prepared for death and the coming of Christ; therefore Bede and some following him affirm that Peter did not ask about this parable, but about those subtle precepts of heavenly life, of which the Saviour said above: "Sell what you possess"; "Make to yourselves bags which grow not old," etc. Nevertheless it seems more probable, according to the sequence of the text, that Peter inquired about the parable immediately preceding, especially since he was still simple and rude; and in those earlier words Christ does not seem to have set down a parable, although He spoke certain things there metaphorically. Hence also Ambrose and Theophilus expound this of the parable immediately premised, in which it was said: "But this know ye, that if the householder knew," etc. (Luke 12:39).

"And the Lord Jesus said: Who, thinkest thou, is the faithful and wise steward, whom his lord setteth over his family, to give them their measure of wheat in due season?" (Luke 12:42) *(p. 70)* as if He said: The parable just treated concerns all; but this one belongs specially to you my disciples, whom I make my dispensers, when I set you over others to rule them, and to dispense to them the teachings and sacraments of salvation. Therefore I ask: "Who, thinkest thou, is," etc.? Not as though no one were such, but intimating how difficultly and rarely such a dispenser is found, in that all seek the things that are their own (Phil. 2:21), and very few stand who are turned directly, purely and without reflection to God, seeking His honour only, not their own advantage. So: *"Who, thinkest thou, is the faithful and wise steward,"* that is, the preacher, ruler or prelate of others, who is adorned with fidelity of justice and discretion of prudence, *"whom his lord,"* almighty God, or Christ the supreme pontiff of the Church, *"setteth over his family,"* that is, the flock of the faithful, *"to give them in due season,"* that is, at the fitting time, *"their measure of wheat,"* that is, spiritual nourishment, namely the word of preaching, the example of virtue, the sacraments of salvation, according to their dignity and capacity? To the dispensers of Christ therefore, namely priests and prelates and preachers of the word of God, fidelity and prudence are chiefly necessary, that they may be faithful to Christ, by intending and seeking His honour in all things, and by faithfully dispensing divine things to the people, or effectively fulfilling their office: all of which is to be done with the due moderation of discretion. Hence the Apostle says: "Here now it is required among the dispensers, that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor. 4:2).

"Blessed is that servant" (Luke 12:43), already in hope, and by the merits whereby he is worthy of everlasting beatitude: a servant, I say, not from the servitude of servile fear (of which Christ speaks in John:

"The servant abideth not in the house for ever," John 8:35), but from the servitude of filial fear, or of obedience and observance of precepts, *"whom when his lord shall come,"* to his particular judgment, or to the general judgment, *"shall find so doing,"* that is, faithfully and prudently pursuing his office, and teaching not by words only but by virtuous works. For to the sinner God said: "Why dost thou declare my justices, and take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hast hated discipline, and hast cast my words behind thee" (Ps. 49:16–17).

"Verily I say to you, he will set him over all that he possesseth" (Luke 12:44), that is, Christ will set such a servant over some of all the goods which He possesses, because in the heavenly kingdom He will raise him very eminently and singularly; and he will be crowned not only for his own merits, but for the merits of all who shall have been converted and saved by his direction: so that for his own merits he is to obtain the golden crown, and for the winning of others, the little golden crown. Whence the Apostle writes to the Thessalonians: "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of glory? Are not you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ?" (1 Thess. 2:19). Augustine also testifies: "With God nothing is more blessed than the office of bishop, priest or deacon, if it be soldiered in the manner our Emperor commanded," that is, if it be done and fulfilled as Christ commands.

Finally, because opposites placed side by side become clearer, after speaking of the glory of the good dispenser, the punishment of the bad dispenser is subjoined. *"But if that servant shall say in his heart"* (Luke 12:45), set by the Lord over His family, that is, placed over others: *"My lord is long a-coming,"* that is, it is still a long time before I am visited by Christ, through my particular judgment at the time of my death, or on the day of the final judgment. This is a vain and foolish promise, by which, at the devil's suggestion, many deceive themselves, according to that of Ecclesiasticus: "A most wicked promise hath destroyed many" (Ecclus. 29). *"And shall begin to strike the menservants and maidservants,"* that is, subjects committed to him, especially the little ones, who are fittingly designated by menservants and maidservants. Such an unworthy pastor or dispenser strikes in three ways, namely: with injurious words, according to that of Jeremias, "Come and let us strike him with the tongue" (Jer. 18:18); *(p. 71)* by evil examples, according to that of the Apostle: "Thus sinning against the brethren, and wounding their weak conscience, you sin against Christ" (1 Cor. 8:12); and by violent hands, as is read in Matthew: "They struck his head with a reed" (Matt. 27:30). *"And to eat and drink and be drunk,"* that is, to give himself to carnality, which makes man mad. Such, according to the Apostle, serve not Christ but their own belly (Rom. 16:18). On this Bede writes: "In this servant is narrated the damnation of all evil prelates, who, the fear of God being neglected, not only themselves give themselves to luxury, but goad their subjects with injuries."

"The lord of that servant will come" (Luke 12:46), namely Christ the just judge, *"in a day that he hopeth not, and at an hour that he knoweth not,"* that wicked servant, namely on the day of death or of judgment, *"and shall separate him,"* that is, will eternally sever him from the company of the elect and from the grace of the Holy Ghost, according to that in Isaias: "Let the wicked be taken away, that he see not the glory of God" (Isa. 26:10); and in Matthew: "Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire" (Matt. 25:41). Whence through Malachias the Lord says most openly of the last day and the separation of the elect from the reprobate: "And you shall return, and shall see what difference there is between the just and the wicked, and between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. For behold, the day shall come kindled as a furnace: and all the proud, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall set them on fire; and unto you that fear my name the Sun of justice shall arise" (Mal. 3:18; 4:1–2). *"And will appoint him his portion with unbelievers,"* that is, with the incredulous shall be his retribution or damnation: nay he will be tormented more gravely than they, since the Apostle says: "But if any man have not care of his own, and especially of those of his house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Tim. 5:8). Most bitter therefore will be the damnation of impious and negligent prelates and dispensers, as is had in the book of Wisdom: "A most severe judgment shall be for them that bear rule. For to him that is little, mercy is

granted: but the mighty shall be mightily tormented. And a greater punishment is ready for the more mighty" (Wis. 6:6–9).

Consequently Christ shows that evil dispensers, nay all learned but vicious men, will bear heavier punishments by reason of their knowledge. *"And that servant"* (Luke 12:47), a servant in name, not in fact, unless perhaps by the servitude of servile fear, *"who knew the will of his lord,"* that is, the divine precepts, and what God requires of him, *"and prepared not,"* that is, did not dispose himself to act well, nor fit his mind. For man ought to do what is in him, according to that of Proverbs: "It is the part of man to prepare the soul" (Prov. 16:1). Wherefore Samuel exhorts in the books of Kings: "Prepare your hearts unto the Lord" (1 Kings 7:3). *"And did not according to his will,"* by obeying the command of God, *"shall be beaten with many stripes,"* that is, will be punished with more and graver punishments, because he has sinned more gravely and more manifoldly. Therefore it is written: "To him therefore who knoweth to do good, and doth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17). Peter also: "It had been better for them not to have known the way of justice, than after they had known it to turn back" (2 Peter 2:21). For to them has happened that of the true proverb: "The dog is returned to his vomit; and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire" (2 Peter 2:22). Hence Gregory says: "Where the gift of greater knowledge is, there the transgressor is subject to greater guilt." And Cyril speaks here: "A man of keen mind who inclines to base things commits an inexcusable sin; but a rustic man will more reasonably obtain pardon."

"But he that knew not" (Luke 12:48), *"and did things worthy of stripes,"* that is, sins for which torments are due, *"shall be beaten with few stripes,"* that is, will be subject to lesser punishments. Nevertheless he will be punished eternally, if he departed in mortal sin. Wherefore it is to be known that everyone who sins is in some way ignorant and erring: since he lacks actual and practical knowledge approving the good, and there is in him an error of choice. Therefore in Proverbs it is had: "Every way of a man seemeth right to himself" (Prov. 21:2). For evil, as such, is not desired, since the good is the object of appetite. Whence St. Dionysius confessed that no one acting looks to evil. For he desires and does evil as an apparent good. Moreover it is to be noted that ignorance is twofold, namely of fact and of law. *(p. 72)* Ignorance of fact is twofold: for sometimes due diligence is applied: and then ignorance excuses from the whole, as is plain of Jacob's intercourse with Lia (Gen. 29:23). Sometimes due diligence is not applied: and then it excuses from something, not from the whole, as is plain in the homicide in which Lamech killed Cain, thinking it was a beast (Gen. 4:23). Moreover ignorance of law is twofold, namely vincible and invincible. Vincible ignorance also is twofold. One is affected, which excuses from nothing, neither from the whole nor from something: as when one will not or scorns to know the law, that he may sin more freely. Another is not affected, which excuses from something. Invincible ignorance also is twofold. One happens without fault, as when a man, giving attention to a lawful thing, becomes insane: and this excuses from the whole. Another happens from fault: whence of this ignorance some say that it excuses from something. But what Ambrose says, "You sin most gravely because you are ignorant," is to be understood not of the enormity of the guilt, but of the magnitude of the danger. For he who knows not that he sins does not grieve nor confess of such sin, at least in particular.

Next the reason is assigned why one sinning knowingly is more gravely condemned. *"And unto whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required"*: that is, the more benefits God has bestowed on anyone, namely more or greater gifts of nature or grace, of fortune or of the Church, the stricter account will He exact of him, and the greater thanksgiving and more perfect service He requires, other things being equal. But to him who knows the will of God, and knows what is to be done, and what to be avoided, more is given: therefore more will be required of him. *"And to whom they have committed much, of him they will demand the more"*: that is, as men require more of him to whom they have committed more, so also does God.

Moreover these two, namely "given" and "committed," can be referred to the same; and yet they are set down distinctly, to intimate that the goods divinely imparted to us are so given us that it is yet not lawful for

us to use them at our pleasure, but at some time an account of them will be required of us: for which cause they are as it were committed to us. Or, “given” refers to gifts conferred on man for himself; “committed,” to gifts bestowed on man for the direction of others, or to the Lord’s flock committed to someone: and it is certain that more will be required of him to whom the greater care of souls is committed, because he is to render account for all and each. To which can be applied that of Kings: “Keep this man: who if he shall slip away, thy life shall be for his life” (3 Kings 20:39). Joseph also in Genesis, in figure of Christ, says to his brethren the patriarchs, who bear the person of prelates: “You shall not see my face, unless you bring your youngest brother with you” (Gen. 43:3–5). Besides, let blind, vain and foolish men hear these things and tremble, who are lifted up and exalted by the gifts of God, who boast of subtlety of wit, excellence of knowledge, eloquence, beauty, opulence, nobility, power, dignity, rejoice vainly, and despise others, as though they had obtained these very things from themselves, not from God, and as though they were not to render account to the most strict Judge for all and each: whereas yet each one ought to be so much the more subject to God, grateful, and the more in fear of His judgment, the more gifts he has received from above. Therefore, “Blessed is the man that is always fearful” (Prov. 28:14), weighing how horrible it is to fall into the hands of the living God (Heb. 10:31). Whence the Apostle asks: “What hast thou that thou hast not received? And if thou hast received, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?” (1 Cor. 4:7).

After this the Saviour shows that His precepts, teachings or counsels set forth are to be fulfilled rather out of love of the Divinity than from fear of damnation: because it is much more perfect to omit evil and do good out of pure love of God or zeal of justice than from terror of punishment. *“I am come to cast fire on the earth”* (Luke 12:49), that is, for this I descended from highest heaven, and appeared to men by the mystery of the incarnation, *(p. 73)* that I might place the ardour of divine love in the hearts of men. *“And what will I, but that it be kindled?”* that is, actuated, and inflamed by the motion of the Holy Ghost, and break forth into virtuous work? Now the human heart, like the earth, was dark through ignorance, soft through concupiscence, and cold through malice: therefore it needed this fire of charity, inflaming against coldness, enlightening against darkness, consolidating against softness. Rightly therefore charity is called fire, because by it the stain of sin is consumed, the affection is kindled, the spirit is raised to heavenly things. By fire also can be understood the evangelical doctrine of Christ, which purges and inflames the mind from vices, as gold is purged and heated by fire. Likewise the law of the New Testament, which is the law of charity and grace, is rightly asserted to be fire, according to that of Deuteronomy: “In his right hand a fiery law” (Deut. 33:2). Whence also the Holy Ghost was sent to the Apostles in the form of fire, or fiery tongues (Acts 2:3), that they might preach the fiery law with fervent speech. Of the aforesaid fire of love the Psalmist says: “My heart waxed hot within me, and in my meditation a fire shall flame out” (Ps. 38:4). Of the fire of the divine word he confesses: “Thy word is exceedingly refined” (Ps. 118:140). Jeremias also says: “The word of the Lord was made in my heart as a burning fire” (Jer. 20:9). Let us not therefore serve God most high with a slothful and cold heart, but with a fervent and most ready heart: for the more promptly and fervently the work proceeds from the heart, the more it pleases God.

Then Christ foretells that He is to suffer the death of the cross before the human race is inflamed by the aforesaid fire of charity. For Christ by His most sacred passion merited so great grace for the human race, and from the memory of His passion the faithful hearts are chiefly kindled. *“And I have a baptism wherewith I am to be baptized”* (Luke 12:50), that is, it lies upon me and remains from divine pre-ordination that I be bathed and dipped on the cross with the baptism of blood, namely the effusion of my own blood like water, for the redemption of the whole world; *“and how am I straitened,”* that is, according to the judgment of reason I am vehemently moved toward this passion, both from divine love, by which I most ardently desire the honour of the Father to be restored, that His heavenly kingdom may be filled up, and from the love of men, by which I desire their salvation. Hence Christ in the Last Supper professed: “With desire I have desired to eat this pasch with you before I suffer” (Luke 22:15). And to Peter dissuading the passion He said: “Go behind me, Satan, because thou savourest not the things that are of God” (Mark 8:33). So, *“I am*

straitened until it be accomplished," that is, until my passion be consummated and I say, "It is consummated" (John 19:30). For Christ was ceaselessly in the interior act of love.

Finally Chrysostom sets down six kinds of baptisms. Of which the first is by word, as Christ says in John to the disciples: "Now you are clean by reason of the word which I have spoken to you" (John 15:3). The second is by water only, as was the baptism of John (Matt. 3:6). The third, by the Spirit only: of which in the Acts of the Apostles Christ says to the disciples: "John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 1:5). The fourth is by water and the Spirit, according to that of John: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). The fifth is by the fire of tribulation and penance, according to that of Isaias: "If the Lord shall wash away the filth of the daughters of Sion by the spirit of burning" (Isa. 4:4). The sixth is by martyrdom, of which the discourse is now: of which also Christ spoke to the sons of Zebedee: "Can you be baptized with the baptism wherewith I am baptized?" (Mark 10:38). Commonly, however, a threefold baptism is set down, namely of water, of the Spirit, and of blood.

Next the way of arriving at the perfection of divine love is set down. *"Think ye that I am come to give peace on earth?"* (Luke 12:51) as if He said: Think not that I came for this, to bestow on men a carnal, worldly and inordinate peace, by which they may agree in vices, and obtain earthly prosperity. *"No, I say to you,"* that is, such *(p. 74)* peace I came not to give, *"but separation,"* that is, a good and most wholesome spiritual and even bodily division, that is, that men believing in me, from love of God and desire of interior peace, may dissent from evil men, and depart from those who seek to turn them away from spiritual progress and sincerity of divine love, or strive to hinder them.

There is therefore a spiritual peace, interior and good, which is the rest of the mind in God or an ordered concord: to give which Christ chiefly came. Wherefore He commanded the disciples: "Into whatsoever house you enter, first say: Peace be to this house" (Luke 10:5): and again, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you" (John 14:27). Of the inordinate and false peace He speaks to Jerusalem: "In this thy day, the things that are to thy peace" (Luke 19:42); and the Psalmist, "Because I was zealous against the wicked, seeing the prosperity of sinners" (Ps. 72:3). But of true peace, which the Apostle to the Galatians counts among the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22), it is written in Isaias: "There is no peace to the wicked, saith the Lord" (Isa. 48:22). For that interior peace is the effect of charity, and a certain undisturbed joy of the mind in God, which is called peace of the breast: and it is the beginning and a certain foretaste of the peace of the Saints in the fatherland, which is the peace of eternity: of which it is said in the Psalm: "Who hath placed peace in thy borders" (Ps. 147:14).

"For there shall be from henceforth" (Luke 12:52), that is, hereafter, especially after the divulging of the evangelical law everywhere, *"five in one house"* remaining, *"divided,"* that is, dissenting, so that the good will not consent with the wicked. *"Three against two, and two against three,"* that is, three will be divided against two, and likewise two will be divided against three: as is consequently exemplified in the text. *"The father against the son, and the son against his father"* (Luke 12:53), so that one of them will be discordant from the other by love of justice, preferring to adhere to God, rather than to a vicious man, however near of kin: and so grace in the elect will prevail over nature, and spiritual love over carnal love. According to the same sense, *"the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother, the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."* But why are six persons now expressed, when above mention was made of five? To this Ambrose answers that although six persons are expressed, yet really they are five, because the same person is mother and mother-in-law. For she who is the mother of the son is mother-in-law of his wife. Finally this happened chiefly in the primitive Church, when in the same house some were faithful, some unfaithful; and it still often happens, so that sons and daughters enter religion against the will of their parents.

Besides, when Christ had delivered a discourse on His first and second coming, and on His passion, He rebukes the Jews, especially the unbelieving. *"And he said also to the multitudes: When you see a cloud rising from the west"* (Luke 12:54), that is, arising from the western quarter, *"presently you say: A shower is coming,"* that is, rain; that is, it will soon rain; and so it frequently happens, although not always, on account of a contrary cause sometimes intervening. For the rainy wind arises from the west, because then the heat of the sun becomes feebler, so that it raises hot vapours and does not dry up their moisture: on account of which rain is generated. *"And when you see the south wind blow"* (Luke 12:55), that is, perceive it, or feel it by touch: for sight is taken for any sense; *"you say: There will be heat,"* that is, a hot breeze; *"and it cometh to pass,"* because the south wind is hot, according to that of Job: "Are not thy garments warm, when the earth is blown upon by the south wind?" (Job 37:17). — Basil also says: "The conjectures of the stars are necessary to human life, provided one inquire not beyond measure into their indications. It happens that some things are foreknown about future rains, and more about heats and the violence of winds; and what convenience is afforded to human life by the conjecture of such things, who knows not? For it belongs to the sailor to foretell the perils of storms, to the traveller the change of the air, to the husbandman the abundance of fruits." *(p. 75)*

"You hypocrites" (Luke 12:56). As is written in Matthew (Matt. 16:1ff.), Christ said this chiefly to the Pharisees and Sadducees, who were full of hypocrisy. *"You know how to discern the face of the sky and of the earth,"* that is, the disposition of the air and the earth, to forecast by the aforesaid signs, namely that there will be a storm or heat; *"but this time how is it that you do not discern?"* that is, why do you not perceive from the oracles of the Prophets, nor discern that now is fulfilled the time of the first coming of Christ, promised to you in the Law and the Prophets? For from the things which were written in the Law and the Prophets, the Pharisees especially ought to have noticed this. For while Christ was speaking these things, the sceptre was taken away from Juda, and a foreigner ruled the Jews: whereby it was plain that it was the time of Christ's first coming, as Jacob foretold in Genesis: "The sceptre shall not be taken away from Juda, nor a ruler from his thigh, till he come that is to be sent, and he shall be the expectation of the Gentiles" (Gen. 49:10). Likewise the number of the weeks of which Daniel prophesied, and within which he foretold that Christ would come, was then completed (Dan. 9:24ff.). Christ also did the miracles which Isaias foretold He would do: "Behold, your God … he will come and will save you. Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall be free" (Isa. 35:4–6).

But lest any of the Jews should excuse themselves by ignorance of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, Christ added: *"And why even of yourselves"* (Luke 12:57), that is, why from your natural reason, *"do you not judge that which is just,"* that is, do not conclude that I am the Christ, since by so many miracles I demonstrate that I am the Christ? For when I protest in words that I am the Christ, if it were not so, I should be a most wicked blasphemer, nor could I work miracles properly so called, possible to God alone, since God is not a witness of falsehood, nor works miracles through the impious for the confirmation of lies. Hence in John Christ confesses: "If I had not done among them the works that no other man hath done, they would not have sin" (John 15:24). Nay Jesus, from the manner of working miracles, namely working them so authoritatively and imperially and instantly, proved Himself to be Christ the Son of God. Origen also says: "Unless it were naturally implanted in us to judge what is just, the Saviour would never have said this word."

Besides, Christ exhorts to a most cautious avoidance of the dangers of eternal damnation. *"And when thou goest with thy adversary to the prince"* (Luke 12:58), etc. Gregory and Bede understand by this adversary the words of Sacred Scripture, or the divine discourse, which is contrary to our carnal desires. Augustine, however, sometimes understands by this adversary the remorseful conscience. Origen understands by this adversary the devil.

According to the first acceptation therefore this is the sense: *"When thou goest with thy adversary,"* that is, with the divine discourse, *"to the prince,"* that is, to Christ the ruler of all. For now, by having in us the words of God, we draw near to the tribunal of Christ, hastening to death. *"On the way, endeavour,"* that is, strive, *"to be delivered from him,"* that is, from his accusation: that is, acquiesce and be obedient to the divine discourse, lest by its allegation in the divine judgment thou be found guilty and damnable: as Christ says in John: "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48); *"lest perhaps he draw thee to the judge,"* that is, lest the transgression of the divine discourse, or its pronouncement, be the cause that even against thy will thou be compelled to appear before Christ the judge: as the Apostle says: "For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ" (Rom. 14:10). He says, however, "perhaps," on account of freedom of choice, by which man can avoid evil. *"And the judge deliver thee to the exactor,"* that is, the devil, who demands that punishment be inflicted on thee for thy guilt, and takes thee to himself to be punished. *"And the exactor cast thee into prison,"* the infernal prison: of which it is foretold in Isaias: "They shall be shut up in prison" (Isa. 24:22). *"I say to thee,"* (Luke 12:59), not only by threatening, but by most certainly foretelling, *"thou shalt not go out thence,"* that is, thou shalt not be delivered from the punishments of hell *(p. 76)* although at the hour of judgment it may happen locally to go out for a short time, or meanwhile by divine dispensation; *"till thou pay the very last mite,"* that is, till thou hast borne the punishments due for the least faults: which will never be fulfilled, because that debt will never be fully paid, in that eternal punishment is due directly to mortal sin; but to venial sins eternal punishment is not due, in so far as they are venial, but by reason of the adjunct, that is, the mortal sin annexed to them. Finally, "till," although frequently taken inclusively, is here taken exclusively, as when it is said: "This man did not depart from his error till he died." So also it is taken in the Scriptures, when it is said: "Our eyes are unto the Lord our God, until he have mercy on us" (Ps. 122:2); and, "He knew her not," namely Joseph the Christ-bearing Virgin, "till she brought forth" (Matt. 1:25).

Second, it is expounded thus: *"When thou goest with thy adversary,"* that is, the murmuring conscience, *"to the prince"* Christ, *"endeavour to be delivered from him,"* that is, purge thyself from the remorse of conscience, by amending what conscience reproves; *"lest he draw thee to the judge,"* that is, lest from its remorse and testimony against thee thou be found damnable. The rest is to be expounded as has been said.

Third, thus: *"When thou goest with thy adversary,"* that is, the devil, *"to the prince"* Christ: because during this life, in which thou art a wayfarer, tending to another life and to the divine examination, the tempter forsakes thee not, but walks with thee lying in wait; *"endeavour to be delivered from him,"* that is, shake thyself free from his temptations, and resist manfully, *"lest he draw thee to the judge,"* that is, have power and right over thee, so that he can violently drag thee to the divine tribunal, *"and the judge deliver thee to the exactor,"* the devil. By the exactor also can be understood a good angel, demanding that justice be done against the wicked, who casts into prison permissively or effectively. Whence in Matthew Christ says of the holy angels: "At the end of the world the angels shall go out, and shall separate the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire" (Matt. 13:49–50). Lastly Origen here says that every man has two angels, namely a bad one, who exhorts to vices, and a good one, who persuades to good and the best. From the bad angel we are delivered by having virtues; and if we are without sin, we can securely answer him: I owe thee nothing.

Luke 13

Article XXXV — Exposition of the Thirteenth Chapter: "And there were present at that very time some who told him of the Galileans"

(p. 76) In the preceding chapter the Saviour made long mention of the punishments of sinners: therefore on this occasion some of the bystanders told Him of the slaughter of certain men who had behaved wickedly, as though alluding to the saying of Christ. *"And there were present some"* (Luke 13:1), that is, were bodily

present with Christ at the very time when He delivered the discourse written in the preceding chapter, *"telling him,"* namely Christ, as though that they might discover whether He knew not all things, or might craftily sound out what He thought of the matter proposed, *"of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices,"* that is, whom Pilate slew while they were sacrificing, so that their blood and the blood of the victims which they were slaying, or their very sacrifices, touched or were joined to one another. Moreover, according to Cyril, these Galileans followed the doctrine of Judas the *(p. 77)* Galilean, of whom it is had in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 5:37): who taught that none besides God ought to be called lord, nor ought the Jews to pay tribute to the emperor, nor ought the Jews to offer sacrifices for the emperor and the Roman people. Hence Pilate, enraged against them, killed them.

"And Jesus answering," (Luke 13:2), said to them who told Him these things: *"Think you that these Galileans,"* thus slain by Pilate, *"were sinners above all the men of Galilee,"* that is, involved in graver crimes, *"because they suffered such things,"* in that they were slain before the rest? For this might appear so to someone, because punishment is due and proportioned to guilt. Whence those who are more gravely punished seem to have sinned more enormously. But in this life it does not always so happen, because human judgments are imperfect, nor do the judges of this world judge of all things. But in the divine judgment, supremely perfect and including all things, it is always so, that to greater guilt it inflicts greater punishment according to the order of justice, after this life, when in this life no correction has preceded. Hence it is added:

"No, I say to you" (Luke 13:3), that is, the aforesaid slain were not worse than all the other Galileans, although they were wicked and worthy of this death; *"but unless you shall do penance,"* that is, have the sorrow of true contrition for your sins, *"you shall all likewise perish,"* that is, shall be eternally condemned, as they were caught and destroyed in their sacrilegious sacrifices. Or He says, "you shall likewise perish," because the Jews themselves, since they did not repent of the killing of Christ, were afterwards for the most part slain by the Romans, notwithstanding that then they had offered very many sacrifices to God in Jerusalem for their deliverance.

"As those eighteen, upon whom the tower fell in Siloe" (Luke 13:4), and slew them. Siloe is a fountain in Jerusalem, according to that of Isaias: "Forasmuch as this people hath cast away the waters of Siloe that go with silence" (Isa. 8:6). And in John Christ says to the man born blind: "Go, wash in the pool of Siloe" (John 9:7). Near this fountain some of the Jerusalemites built a tower, which, falling suddenly, crushed eighteen of them. *"Think you that they also were debtors,"* that is, transgressors, and deserving the punishment of such a death (for the sinner is a debtor of punishment, that he may pay it; and punishment is due to him that it may be inflicted on him, unless he amend), *"above all the men that dwell in Jerusalem,"* that is, those others being excepted, so that these did not deserve to suffer like or greater things?

"No, I say to you" (Luke 13:5), that is, they alone were not worthy of that punishment of death. For God avenges the sins of some in the present, to show His justice and providence, and that others may be terrified and amend their life, or that by vengeance in the present life they may be rescued from graver future punishments, or lest by living longer here they sin more gravely and prepare harsher torments for themselves. But the sins of others, although greater, He does not avenge in the present, showing in them His long-suffering, patience and piety, and that being tolerated long most piously they may at last be converted to the heart: which if they neglect to do, afterwards they will be more justly condemned and more gravely punished eternally. In which, as in many others, it appears how incomprehensible are the judgments of the sublime God (Rom. 11:33): which it is not lawful rashly to search into, or to wish to comprehend, because "he that is a searcher of majesty shall be overwhelmed by glory" (Prov. 25:27). *"But if you do not penance"* before the soul's departure from the body, *"you shall all likewise perish."* For God suffers not sin to go unavenged. Therefore it is read in Ecclesiasticus: "If we do not penance, we shall fall into the hands of God, and not into the hands of men" (Ecclus. 2:22). — Lastly it is plain from these things that what seem to

happen by chance, and what is done by human judgments in the punishment of offenders, is done by the nod and governance of divine providence.

Then the Saviour by a parabolic example foretells the ruin of the Synagogue. *"He spoke also this similitude"* (Luke 13:6), wishing to humble the Jews, who always were prone to think themselves just and to prefer themselves to others. *"A certain man had a fig tree* (p. 78) *planted in his vineyard."* By the fig tree is understood the Synagogue, which had once been very pleasing to God, familiar and dear, full of good and sweet fruits, as the fig has the primacy among fruits. Whence in Deuteronomy Moses says to the Synagogue: "The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be his peculiar people of all peoples that are upon the earth" (Deut. 7:6). This tree Christ had, who according to His divinity is eternal, and the creator of that people. Whence Jude the apostle writes: "Jesus, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt," etc. (Jude 5). This fig tree therefore Christ had planted in His vineyard, that is, in the people of the Jews: so that now by the fig tree is understood the Jewish people dwelling in Judea, of whose overthrow, accomplished by the Romans, Christ is now speaking; but by the vineyard, the whole people of Israel, dispersed and dwelling through the various regions of the world, at the time when Christ said this. That the people of Israel is called God's vineyard is most certain. For it is written in Isaias: "The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel" (Isa. 5:7); and in Osee: "Israel is a luxuriant vine" (Osee 10:1); and in the Psalm: "Thou hast brought a vineyard out of Egypt" (Ps. 79:9).

"And he came"—the Son of God, by the assumption of human nature, and conversing among the Jews, according to that of Baruch: "Afterwards he was seen upon earth, and conversed with men" (Bar. 3:38)—*"seeking fruit thereon,"* that is, virtuous works in it, *"and found none"*: not that at the time of Christ's coming none of the Jews were virtuous, but because very few, so that in respect of others they seemed as none. Wherefore in John it is had of Christ: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11).

"And he said to the dresser of the vineyard," (Luke 13:7), that is, to the company and order of the Apostles and the other disciples, who after the ascension of Christ for a time preached to this people of the Jews alone. Of this multitude "the heart and soul was one" (Acts 4:32): therefore it is called in the singular a dresser. For by the word of preaching and the virtue of an exemplary life, and by various miracles, and loving prayers, they strove to purge the Synagogue from sins, to dig it up unto penance, to make it fruitful with virtues, to gather it into the barn of God, which is the Church.

"Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree," that is, I have waited long enough for the amendment of this people, because in three distinct times, namely before the Babylonian captivity, and again after the return of the Jews from Babylon, and now the third time, in my coming, I have sought works of virtue in this people; *"and I find none,"* that is, have not found to this day: not because at no time the Synagogue behaved well, since in the book of Judges it is written how the children of Israel in the time of Josue, and of the ancients who lived long after him, served the Lord (Judges 2:7), similarly in the time of David, and in some other times, as is proved from the books of Kings and Paralipomenon; but because, comparatively speaking, those who served the Lord were few, and the times in which this happened were short, as is shown from the course of the book of Judges and of Kings. Wherefore God protests through Jeremias of Jerusalem: "This city hath been to me a provocation of my anger and indignation, from the day that they built it" (Jer. 32:31). Christ is said to seek and not to find, not that He is ignorant of the unfruitfulness of the wicked, but to show His diligence and providence toward us, and to declare human sloth, and to prove Himself solicitous for our salvation, and the examiner of our whole life, according to that of the Psalm: "The Lord hath looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there be any that understand and seek God" (Ps. 13:2).

"Cut it down therefore": that is, foretell that it is to be destroyed and condemned, because it received not Christ: as it was foretold through Daniel: "The people with their leader that shall come shall destroy the city

and the sanctuary" (Dan. 9:26); and in the Psalm: "Let their habitation be made desolate" (Ps. 68:26). After this manner of speaking the Lord speaks through Jeremias: "Cast them out from my sight" (Jer. 15:1), that is, foretell that they are to be cast out. *"Why* (p. 79) *doth it also take up the ground?"* that is, why does it idly linger on the land of promise, which is the choicest of all lands? For he occupies the land uselessly and unworthily who adorns not the place of his abode with good works. And as such a one is unworthy of the bread by which he is fed, so is he unworthy of the land by which he is sustained.

"But he answering, said to him" (Luke 13:8), that is, the aforesaid dresser of this vineyard, namely the choir of the Apostles and of the primitive Church gathered in Jerusalem, answering, said to Him, namely Christ: *"Lord, let it alone this year also,"* that is, mercifully defer this vengeance, until the time of my preaching in Judea be completed: which lasted about forty-two years; *"until I dig about it,"* that is, by praying, teaching, living exemplarily, and working miracles, I open the mind of this people to receive thy faith and grace, or strive to do this, *"and dung it,"* that is, by the memory of its vices, I bring it to humility and compunction. For sins are dung, of which the sorrowful remembrance and heartfelt lamentation fattens and makes fruitful the field of the mind, as manure the earth. *"And if happily it bear fruit"* (Luke 13:9), supply, "well and good," and it shall not be cut down: and this is a truncated manner of speech, as is the custom of those who speak from vehement sorrow. Therefore the choir of the Apostles so speaks, since it knew the Synagogue for the greatest part not to be converted: wherefore it was most heartily sad, as the Apostle confesses to the Romans: "I have great sadness and continual sorrow in my heart for my brethren, who are Israelites" (Rom. 9:2–3). *"And if not,"* that is, if it be not converted, *"then after that thou shalt cut it down,"* that is, after those forty-two years thou wilt deliver it into the hands of the Romans, as to the death of the body, and as to souls to the demons to be eternally punished: as we know has befallen. — From the premises (as some say) it is plain that by the prayers and merits of the Apostles and the primitive Church the cutting down of the Jews was delayed for so many years, within which many thousands of them were converted.

Besides, since the Synagogue was a figure of the Church, it is easy to apply this parable to the Church, or to any religious order, which frequently comes to notable lapse, especially when persecution by tyrants ceases, so that Christ willed in part to strike it and root it out: as, alas! He already did long ago in the Holy Land, which on account of the crimes of Christians He delivered to dogs to possess. But the dresser of the Church, namely the choir of good pastors and preachers, has met Him with prayers, and often obtained pardon, that God in this year, that is, the time of grace, spare and defer vengeance. — Lastly some understand by the fig tree the human race, which sinned in the law of nature, in the written law, and in the evangelical law.

Next is splendidly described a miracle of Christ confirming His doctrine. *"And he was teaching in their synagogue"* (Luke 13:10), namely of the Jews, *"on the sabbath,"* that is, on a certain sabbath day: nay on sabbaths He taught more frequently, because that day was solemn to the Jews; and then they flocked more copiously to the synagogue, that is, to the house deputed to prayer and teaching or reading. And in each of the cities of the Jews there was commonly such a house: nay even in cities where they dwelt under the dominion of the Gentiles they had synagogues, as is easy to prove from the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 13:14ff.). At times, however, synagogue designates the assembly of the Jews.

"And behold a woman was there" (Luke 13:11), *"who had a spirit of infirmity,"* that is, infirmity inflicted on her by a diabolical spirit, God permitting: either for her sins, as an evil spirit vexed Saul (1 Kings 16:14); or for the greater exercise, progress and glory of this woman, as was the infirmity of holy Job, struck by the demon (Job 2:7); or that from so miraculous a healing of this woman the power of Christ might appear and God be glorified, as is said of the man born blind in John, that he was born blind, that the works of God might be made manifest in him (John 9:3); *"eighteen years"*: and so the infirmity was the more inveterate in her, and by its nature the harder to cure, according to Ovid, *(p. 80)*

"Medicine is prepared too late, When by long delays the evils have grown strong";

although to the omnipotence of Christ nothing was difficult. *"And she was bowed together,"* that is, bent down and curved toward the earth in face and body like the brutes, contrary to the natural figure and posture of man: to whom it belongs to have the head erect, since it befits him to seek heavenly things and to transcend earthly, by the regard and love of things above; *"neither could she look upwards at all,"* being so contracted.

"Whom when Jesus saw" (Luke 13:12), with bodily sight, nay rather with the affection of mercy, *"he called her unto him."* He could indeed have cured her though bodily distant from Him, but He called her to Him that the miracle might be plain to all, to the honour of God and the edification of men. *"And said to her: Woman, thou art delivered from thy infirmity,"* that is, at my command this thy indisposition is put to flight and ceases in an instant, because to say is for me to do, and it belongs to immense power to act in an instant, since nothing can resist it. For Christ, according as He is God, is omnipotent, and immense in all perfection, sanctity and glory. *"And he laid his hands upon her"* (Luke 13:13): not that without such a touch He could not heal her; but to intimate that His body was the instrument of His divinity, full of power; and likewise to show His benevolence, charity and humility toward the poor and infirm. *"And immediately she was made straight,"* and restored to her natural posture. In which it is plain how imperially Christ worked miracles. And as He cured this woman without being asked, but Peter's mother-in-law when asked (Luke 4:38–39): so at times He bestows gifts of grace before He is invoked, as is plain in the conversion of Paul (Acts 9:3ff.); at times He wills to be invoked. *"And glorified God,"* that is, this woman gave thanks to God, and acknowledged His power, confessed and exalted it in heart, word and work, for so gracious a cure of herself. And although perhaps she did not yet then know that he who so called, touched and healed her was God, yet she was not in doubt that he had cured her by supernatural and divine power: therefore she gave thanks especially to God, and doubtless also to Christ as to a holy man.

According to the spiritual understanding, by the bowed woman can be understood any soul or person entangled in carnal vices, whom, God justly permitting, the devil has long bound within with the bonds of sins, according to that of Proverbs: "His own iniquities catch the wicked, and he is held with the cords of his own sins" (Prov. 5:22). Such a soul therefore, bound by the devil, is made so weak and spiritually infirm that it in nowise resists the enemies of its salvation, but succumbs in almost every temptation, and daily very frequently is wounded, by transgressing the divine precepts and falling into mortal sins. Thus, immersed with its whole affection in earthly things, it cannot look upward, by sincerely contemplating God, beholding His judgments, and weighing what pertains to its salvation: as in Daniel it is read of the lustful elders, that they turned away their eyes that they might not look unto heaven, nor remember just judgments (Dan. 13:9). Such a soul Christ at times most mercifully beholds, anticipates, and by internal inspiration, by angelic direction, by human exhortation, or in another way, calls to Himself, namely to mental conversion and worthy penance; and soon after infuses into it confidence of the remission of its sins. He lays His hand also upon it, that is, bestows on it His help, so that suddenly it is raised to meditation and love of divine things: and so, knowing in how great perils, errors and sins it was, it gives thanks to God with its whole heart; and serves Him the more fervently, the greater mercy it has obtained from Him.

Finally Christ in the bodily cure of this woman effected five things, which He does spiritually in the spiritual cure of the impious. *(p. 81)* For He saw that woman, called her, healed her, touched her, and raised her. Likewise, about to cure a sinner spiritually, first He sees him with the eyes of His clemency, as He saw Matthew sitting at the custom house (Matt. 9:9). Second, He calls by internal inspiration, according to that of Job: "Thou shalt call me, and I will answer thee" (Job 14:15); also in the Apocalypse, "Behold, I stand at the gate and knock" (Apoc. 3:20). Third, He heals by the remission of sins, as He says through Isaias: "I am he that blot out thy iniquities" (Isa. 43:25). Whence through Jeremias it is asked: "Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed" (Jer. 17:14). And in the Psalm: "Who forgiveth all thy iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases" (Ps. 102:3). Fourth, He touches by the infusion of virtues, and by the stirring up of the mind to satisfaction, or

any good works, according to that of Kings: “There went with Saul part of the army, whose hearts God had touched” (1 Kings 10:26). Fifth, He raises to heavenly things by the contemplation of eternal things and fervent love, as it is written in Isaias: “The Lord waketh in the morning, in the morning he waketh my ear, that I may hear him as a master” (Isa. 50:4).

“And the ruler of the synagogue answering” (Luke 13:14). He answered, however, not to anyone’s question, since he is not read to have been asked, but thought or pretended that he spoke fittingly to the miraculous work of Christ. Moreover, “ruler of the synagogue” is the name of an office, not of a person, because it designates the prince of the synagogue. *“Being angry that Jesus had healed on the sabbath,”* the man, that is, this woman. In which are plain his indiscretion, ignorance and false justice, nay also envy: indiscretion, because he had zeal for the law, but not according to knowledge (Rom. 10:2); ignorance, because he understood not the precept concerning the observance of the sabbath; false justice, because he was indignant at Christ (for true justice has compassion, false disdain, according to Gregory); envy, because, as Chrysostom says, he was not indignant on account of the violation of the sabbath, but on account of the glorification of Christ. Hence below he is called a hypocrite, because he feigned himself troubled about the violation of the sabbath, when he was tormented with envy. *“Said to the multitude: There are six days wherein you ought to work”*—that is, it is lawful and expedient—as God in six days made all things, but on the seventh day rested (Gen. 1; 2:2), in memory of which He commanded the seventh day or sabbath to be celebrated. *“In these therefore come, and be healed,”* you who are infirm, *“and not on the sabbath day,”* lest you transgress the divine precept.

Thereupon the Saviour rebukes the ruler of the synagogue, showing that he acted more against the sabbath than Himself, and that he understood not the precept concerning the observance of the sabbath, because God did not forbid all works to be done on the sabbath, otherwise it would not have been lawful on the sabbath to eat, drink, speak, cut up victuals, pour out drink. Servile works therefore were unlawful on that day, not works of charity, piety and necessity. Hence Ambrose says: “God rested on the seventh day from the works of the world, not from all operation, since His operation is everlasting and continual, as the Son says: ‘My Father worketh until now, and I work’ (John 5:17): that after the likeness of God our secular works, not religious ones, should cease.”

“And the Lord answering him, said” (Luke 13:15). The ruler of the synagogue dared not rebuke Christ directly, but by addressing the people he as it were indirectly rebuked Him. But Christ, not enduring the injury to God, nor bearing the deception of the people, most openly rebukes the ruler of the synagogue and his abettors: *“Hypocrite,”* who feignest thyself just, whereas thou art full of vices, *“doth not every one of you on the sabbath day loose his ox or his ass from the manger, and lead them to water?”* with his own hand or through a servant? as if He said: Nay, you do this, though this is a more manual work than to cure the infirm by a word, or to touch with the hand. *“And ought not this daughter of Abraham”* (Luke 13:16), both by propagation of flesh and by imitation of faith and virtues, *“whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years,”* that is, bound with the chain of infirmity, *“be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?”* as if He said: Assuredly it was expedient, both because *(p. 82)* man is nobler than a beast of burden, and because the need of this woman was greater than that of beasts of burden on the sabbath, and because this binding was more miserable.

“And when he said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed” (Luke 13:17): because He most clearly convicted them, and showed them worthy of derision. *“And all the people,”* that is, the common and simple folk: for the adversaries were the Scribes and Pharisees, desirous of human glory, therefore they could not bear the honouring of Christ; *“rejoiced for all the things that were gloriously done by him,”* that is, in the most illustrious miracles of Christ, which He did most powerfully and most promptly: so that their sum surpassed number, according to the words of John the Evangelist: “Many other things Jesus did: which, if they were written every one, the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain the books that should be

written" (John 21:25). It is indeed natural to the human mind to delight in things so supernatural and unusual, because by nature it desires to know and to advance in knowing: whence new things please.

Finally Christ convicted His adversaries in various ways: First, by working miracles, as when He said: "Which is easier to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee, or to say, Arise and walk?" (Luke 5:23). Second, by alleging Scriptures, as when He alleged that from the Psalm, "Out of the mouth of infants and sucklings thou hast perfected praise because of thy enemies" (Matt. 21:16); also, "The stone which the builders rejected," etc. (Matt. 21:42). Third, by proposing parables, as when He said to the Pharisee: "A certain creditor had two debtors," etc. (Luke 7:41). Fourth, by the efficacy of testimonies, as when He said to the Jews: "You sent to John," etc. (John 5:33). Fifth, by the subtlety of questions, as when He asked the Jews: "Whose image and inscription is this?" (Matt. 22:20); and also: "The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or from men?" (Mark 11:30). Sixth, by exhibition of examples, as in this place.

Lastly, because the Jews frequently reproved Christ for transgression of the sabbath, therefore He excuses Himself in many ways and convinces them: First, from the dignity of man, as when He says in Mark: "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath" (Mark 2:27). Second, from His own majesty, as when He says in Matthew: "The Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath" (Matt. 12:8). Third, from the authority of the law, when He says: "If a man receive circumcision on the sabbath day, that the law of Moses may not be broken," etc. (John 7:23). Fourth, from the operation of priests, since the priests violated the sabbath, and yet thought themselves not guilty, as He alleges in Matthew (Matt. 12:5). Fifth, from their cupidity and perversity, since they preferred the care of cattle to the healing of men. Sixth, from the quality of the work, since to loose a man from the bond of Satan is a work of charity. And these two ways are touched in the present place.

Moreover, the unbelievers having been confuted, there follows the instruction of believers, who were glorying in the works of Christ. *"Jesus therefore said to the multitudes"* (Luke 13:18): *"To what is the kingdom of God like? And whereunto shall I resemble it?"* First He asks, and resumes the question in other words, to make His hearers attentive, and to declare the excellence of the matter proposed. Then He answers: *"It is like to a grain of mustard seed,"* etc. (Luke 13:19).

The kingdom of God or kingdom of heaven is taken in many ways in the Scriptures: first, for the Church militant; second, for the Church triumphant; third, for eternal felicity, or the reward of the Blessed; fourth, for their heavenly dwelling, namely the empyrean heaven; fifth, for the active rule of God; sixth, for the business which is transacted in the Church militant; seventh, for the state of the Church militant; eighth, for the virtue and grace of the Church militant, by which it is led to the Church triumphant; ninth, for sacred Scripture; tenth, for the Lord Saviour Himself, according to Jerome. Here therefore the kingdom of God can be taken in the first, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth ways. For when Christ said this, the primitive Church militant, namely the people believing in Him, was small, like a grain of mustard seed. Whence above He called it a little flock (Luke 12:32). Again, the business of preaching, *(p. 83)* which was then being transacted by Christ among this people, was transacted in a narrow place, and was in a small corner of the earth, in comparison with the globe of lands. Besides, the state of this Church, and its virtue and grace, were then modest, especially speaking extensively, because as yet few believed; and the Apostles themselves were then still rude, and very imperfect. Similarly the divine Scripture was not then yet multiplied through the world, as afterwards by the preaching of the Apostles. But Christ Himself also was then still small in the hearts of the Jews, because He was little esteemed by them. Whence John the Baptist foretold: "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30).

Therefore, *"It is like to a grain of mustard seed, which is very small, which a man took and cast into his garden; and it grew and became a great tree, and the birds of the air lodged in the branches thereof."* In like manner God cast the primitive Church militant into His garden, that is, into the temple of Jerusalem, which was the place of divine worship and the dwelling of God, in which the Apostles, having received the Holy

Ghost, after the ascension of Christ first began to preach the evangelical law. Daily also they were with one accord in the temple and in the porch of Solomon, as is had in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2:46; 5:12). Then the Church grew wonderfully every day, as into a great tree, because it was diffused through the whole world, and was full of good fruits: so that the birds of the air, that is, contemplative men, and spiritual teachers, and prelates, rested in its branches, that is, under the protection and shade, the teachings and grace of the Apostles, who were as the branches of the Church, extended hither and thither through the regions of the world. Or the branches of the Church are its spiritual and secular power.

As has been said of the growth of the Church, so also of the growth of the evangelical preaching and ecclesiastical state, and likewise of the virtue and grace of the primitive Church, is it to be said: because all these were first in Jerusalem and Judea, as in a narrow place; then were diffused through the four quarters of the world. And these were planted in the garden of God, that is, in the Church itself or the heart of believers. Whence the Spouse in the Canticles says: “Let my beloved come into his garden” (Cant. 5:1). Moreover, Sacred Scripture, first known and conceded to few, was communicated to the whole world by the preaching of Christ’s disciples: in whose branches, that is, various expositions, the aforesaid birds of the air rest, giving themselves to divine things. Lastly, Christ, first modestly esteemed among the Jews, nay held cheap, reprobated and crucified, became known to the whole world by the preaching and signs of the Apostles; and in the hearts of the elect so grew that He was acknowledged, honoured and adored as true God, and so in His branches, that is, powers, defences and graces, the faithful have rested. Whence in Daniel Christ is designated by the stone cut out of the mountain without hands: which stone became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth (Dan. 2:34–35). But the Father also sent Christ into His garden, that is, into the Church, and first to the Synagogue.

“And again he said: Whereunto shall I esteem the kingdom of God to be like?” (Luke 13:20). Of which it has now been said. *“It is like to leaven”* (Luke 13:21), *“which a woman took and hid,”* that is, mixed, *“in three measures of meal,”* that is, in three measures of meal sprinkled with water. A measure (*satum*), according to Bede, is a measure after the custom of the province of Palestine, containing a modius and a half. *“Until the whole was leavened,”* that is, until the whole mass received power from the leaven, so as to be apt matter for bread. In like manner Sacred Scripture, or Christ, or His faith and charity, or the evangelical preaching, as a virtuous and most excellent leaven; by a woman, that is, by uncreated Wisdom as by the principal cause, and by the apostolic company as by a secondary instrumental cause, or by the ministry of the undefiled flesh of Christ; was mixed with the congregation of the faithful, or infused into the heart of believers; as into three measures, on account of the mystery of the most high Trinity, or on account of *(p. 84)* the three states of the servants of God, namely beginners, proficients and perfect, or on account of the state of the married, the continent, and virgins; *“until the whole was leavened,”* that is, until the whole mystical body of Christ, which is the whole Church of the elect faithful, should be incorporated in Christ, and formed by His faith, charity and grace, and be instructed by sacred Scripture, and receive from Christ so great virtue that the Apostle says of it: “We, being many, are one bread, one body” (1 Cor. 10:17). Leaven therefore in this place is taken in a good sense. Elsewhere, however, it is taken in an evil sense, as when the Apostle says: “A little leaven corrupteth the whole lump” (1 Cor. 5:6); and when in Osee it is read: “The city rested a little from the mixing, until the whole was leavened” (Osee 7:4).

Article XXXVI — Continuation of the Exposition of this Thirteenth Chapter, from the place where it is said: “And he went through the cities and towns, teaching”

Since Christ has now spoken figuratively of the multiplication of the evangelical preaching and faith, He consequently verifies His words by deed. *“And he went through cities and towns”* (Luke 13:22), *“teaching,”* with His disciples, through the cities and towns of Galilee and Judea, teaching both townsmen and villagers, being no respecter of persons, but leading all, small and great, learned and unlearned, so far as in Him lay, to salvation; *“and making his journey to Jerusalem,”* that is, drawing near to the place of His passion, and

desiring to deliver the human race, as He had already testified: “I have a baptism wherewith I am to be baptized, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished?” (Luke 12:50).

“And a certain man said to him: Lord, are they few that are saved?” (Luke 13:23). He asked this because he heard Christ preaching very much about the heavenly kingdom, and delivering arduous teachings for acquiring salvation. *“But he said to them.”* One asked, but Christ directs the answer to all who were present, because the solution of the question concerned all: and perhaps this one asked at the instinct of the others. *“Strive”* (Luke 13:24), that is, with strife and combat against demons and sins, against the world and one’s own flesh, and unbridled own will, *“to enter,”* that is, to journey to eternal beatitude by interior and exterior acts of virtue, *“by the narrow gate,”* that is, by the penitential life, by unceasing custody of the heart, by a God-fearing conversation; or by Christ, following His footsteps, who says: “I am the door” (John 10:9); and also: “I am the way,” etc. (John 14:6). Moreover, to follow Christ and to enter through Him is to bear adversities with equanimity, to repay good for evil, to love enemies, to prefer to die rather than forsake the way of virtue and equity. Hence Paul testifies: “All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Tim. 3:12); and John: “He that saith he abideth in Christ, ought himself also to walk, even as he walked” (1 John 2:6). This is the narrow gate, of which Christ speaks more openly in Matthew: “Enter ye in at the narrow gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there are who enter in thereat. How narrow is the gate, and strait is the way that leadeth to life: and few there are that find it!” (Matt. 7:13–14).

But it seems to be at odds with these things that in Matthew the Saviour says: “My yoke is sweet and my burden light” (Matt. 11:30). And it is to be answered that the same way is narrow, laborious, hard or bitter *(p. 85)* to the imperfect and beginners; but to proficients it grows sweet, and to the perfect, namely ardent lovers, it is light, sweet and pleasant: because they have tasted how sweet God is (1 Peter 2:3), and how great is the delight to be at leisure for God with a tranquil mind, to be occupied with virtues; and they have their passions reformed, and easily overcome vices. Finally, if they are often bodily afflicted by bearing adversities, yet in mind they are consoled and rejoice in the Lord, as James admonishes at the beginning of his epistle: “My brethren, count it all joy when you shall fall into divers temptations” (James 1:2). For every virtue, the more perfectly it is in anyone, the greater delight it has joined to its operation. Hence in Proverbs Wisdom says: “I will lead thee by the paths of equity, which when thou shalt have entered, thy steps shall not be straitened” (Prov. 4:11–12). Whence Jerome: “Virtues are hard to the beginner, soft to the proficient, sweet to him who has arrived.” And Augustine: “The paths of equity, while they are begun, seem narrow and strait; but when they receive progress, they seem spacious and broad.”

Nevertheless, although to the perfect or those proficient strongly it is sweet and pleasant to be at leisure for psalms and prayers, to attend to contemplation, and to cling to the other spiritual exercises; yet difficulty and labour befall them in restraining the heart from all wandering, in avoiding venial sins, in deploring and chastising daily defects, and in manifold affliction or compassion, by which on account of the sins of others and the ruin of the ecclesiastical state they are affected with intimate sorrow. For Paul also testified: “We were pressed out of measure above our strength, so that we were weary even of life” (2 Cor. 1:8). And Abbot Agathon said: “There is no labour like praying to God,” namely on account of the difficulty of avoiding all wandering of mind, to be avoided especially in time of prayer. At times also spiritual consolation, alacrity of heart, the joy of confidence, are dispensatively withdrawn from good men by God for a time: and then the things are hard to them which before were done with gladness.

Lastly, if anyone wishes to know more clearly what it is to say, Narrow is the way of salvation, let him note that of the Apostle: “And they that are Christ’s have crucified their flesh with the vices and concupiscences” (Gal. 5:24); and again: “With fear and trembling work out your salvation” (Phil. 2:12). But, alas! there are now many Christians in name only, who, casting away the precept and teaching of Christ, strive how they may abound in riches, and (what is most dangerous) how, having obtained many benefices, they may lead a

sumptuous and carnal life, how they may attain to ecclesiastical dignities, to prelacies, to superiority, that they may be honoured.

Therefore, *"Strive to enter by the narrow gate: for many, I say to you, shall seek to enter the heavenly kingdom, and shall not be able,"* because they sought not efficaciously, nor desired fervently, but slothfully and negligently, or too late, like the foolish virgins (Matt. 25:11). There are therefore very many who have unformed faith and servile fear, who frequently abhor the pains of hell, think they are to die, dread the divine judgment, and desire eternal beatitude; but by carnal love, and worldly vanity or ambition, and a certain womanish softness, are drawn back from the way of salvation, from good purpose or beginning; and the difficulty of walking by the narrow way also deters them, and they take no confidence in the Lord, therefore the wretched perish miserably and irreparably.

"But when the master of the house shall be gone in" (Luke 13:25), that is, when Christ, prince and Lord of all the faithful, the final judgment being completed, shall have entered with all the elect the heavenly paradise or empyrean heaven, changing place according to the nature assumed, who according to His divinity subsists uncircumscribed and unchangeable, *"and shall have shut the door,"* that is, the entrance of the heavenly kingdom, so that there shall be no place of penance and prayers, because the way, that is, the present life, will then be ended: during which the time of meriting and demeriting lasts, and which ending, the time of this kind *(p. 86)* is ended; *"and you shall begin to stand without,"* that is, to be segregated from the place and reward of the elect, with whom in this life you were bodily mixed, *"and knock at the door,"* that is, ask entrance, or beseech Christ who is the door (John 10:9), *"saying: Lord, open to us,"* the gate of glory, and hear us. *"And he answering shall say to you"* by word of mouth or by deed: *"I know you not whence you are,"* by approbation, that is, that you are of the number of the elect, of the lot of the just, I do not acknowledge. For there is a twofold knowledge, namely of approbation, and of simple understanding or vision. Of the first knowledge therefore the discourse is now: according to which God knows only the just, and the things that are of virtue and grace. So also of a truthful man it is said that he knows not how to lie. But speaking of the knowledge of simple vision, God knows good and evil, according to that of Job: "He knoweth the vanity of men, and seeing iniquity, doth he not consider?" (Job 11:11). And again: "He knoweth both him that is deceived and him that deceiveth" (Job 12:16).

"Then you shall begin to say" (Luke 13:26), that is, you will desire to say, or will say in heart; or, if you could, you would say: *"We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets."* This is first expounded of the Jews of that time, among whom Christ conversed bodily: who in His presence, and with Him, often took food and drink; and in whose ways, synagogues and places He preached. It can also be expounded commonly of the Jews, who according to the law, at certain times, ate in the temple of their victims and oblations: in whose streets and synagogues Christ through teachers of the Old Testament is said to have taught. Spiritually, however, it is expounded of Christians who unworthily partake of the body and blood of Christ: on account of which they incur greater damnation. In whose streets, ways and churches Christ also daily teaches through His ministers: nay even in the streets of their souls, that is, in the broad capacity of their intellect, by internal inspiration and angelic direction, He teaches and speaks spiritually; but they refuse to heed and obey.

"And he shall say to you: I know you not whence you are" (Luke 13:27), as has been expounded. Whence to the Jews once elected God says through the prophet Amos: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth" (Amos 3:2). *"Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity,"* that is, who have been found in mortal sins, and have not repented finally. This is what Christ says to them in Matthew: "Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire" (Matt. 25:41). Therefore the Psalmist says: "Neither shall the wicked dwell near thee, nor shall the unjust abide before thy eyes" (Ps. 5:5–6); and conversely he sings of the elect: "But yet the just shall give glory to thy name, and the upright shall dwell with thy countenance" (Ps. 139:14).

"There," namely in hell, *"shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth"* (Luke 13:28). The weeping there will be from the diverse kinds of infernal torments: for "fire and brimstone and storms of winds shall be the portion of their cup" (Ps. 10:7), that is, are part of the punishment of the damned. The gnashing there will be specially from most vehement cold, according to that of Job: "Let him pass from the snow waters to excessive heat" (Job 24:19). From indignation also, impatience and fury the gnashing can be in them, according to that of the Psalmist: "The sinner shall see and shall be angry, he shall gnash with his teeth and pine away" (Ps. 111:10). For as, according to the divine Dionysius in the Divine Names, there are in demons wanton phantasms, mad fury and irrational concupiscence; so also can it be said of all the damned. Whence they are said unceasingly to blaspheme the blessed God. — Besides, it is asked whether that weeping of the damned after the resurrection will be bodily. To which the doctors answer that weeping is twofold, namely: spiritual, which is intense interior sorrow, which it is certain is in hell. Another is bodily weeping, in which two things are considered. The first is the flowing of tears: which will not be in the damned, since, the motion of the heavens ceasing, generation and corruption will cease; and likewise, since that damnation is to last eternally, the flowing of tears would also be *(p. 87)* infinite. The second, which is considered in bodily weeping, is the disturbance and clouding of the eyes and head: which will be in them.

"When you shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets" who spoke with the Holy Ghost dwelling in them, not only by grace freely given, such as is the grace of prophecy, but also by grace making pleasing, *"in the kingdom of God,"* resting. — Concerning which it is asked how the reprobate will then see the elect in the kingdom of God, since according to Gregory, after the day of judgment, the damned will no more see the elect in the heavenly kingdom. And it is to be answered that the reprobate, for the increase of their calamity, will see the elect, the sentence being passed, ascend into the heavens, and so, that ascension having been made, they will see, that is, will most certainly know, that they are in the heavenly kingdom. — Finally Christ specially names these three Patriarchs, on account of their pre-eminent sanctity, and because God in the Old Testament specially called Himself their God, according to that of Exodus: "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob: this is my name for ever" (Exod. 3:6, 15). Likewise, because to these specially the promise was made, nay the same promise concerning Christ and the Saviour was made through Himself. For the Lord said to Abraham in Genesis: "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 22:18), that is in Christ, as the Apostle expounds to the Galatians (Gal. 3:16). Moreover to Isaac the Lord said: "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 26:4). To Jacob also God said: "In thee and in thy seed all the tribes of the earth shall be blessed" (Gen. 28:14). Whence what some say, that the promise was made only to Abraham and to David, is to be soundly understood.

"And you yourselves thrust out," you will see this by experience, that is, shut out from the kingdom and the college of the elect: according to that of Matthew: "Cast ye out the unprofitable servant into the exterior darkness" (Matt. 25:30); and in the Apocalypse: "Without are dogs, and sorcerers, and unchaste, and murderers, and servers of idols, and every one that loveth and maketh a lie" (Apoc. 22:15).

"And there shall come from the east and the west, and the north and the south" (Luke 13:29), that is, not only from Judea, but from the four quarters or parts of the earth, *"and shall sit down,"* that is, shall be happily refreshed and rest, *"in the kingdom of God"*: because already from all parts of the world, not only Jews, but innumerable Gentiles, have been converted to Christ by faith and grace: who as they now rest in the kingdom of the Church militant, that is, in the Church herself as pilgrim and wayfaring, so after the final judgment will eternally and most blessedly rest in the Church triumphant. Hence in Matthew Christ speaks of Himself: "He shall send his angels with a trumpet and a great voice, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds" (Matt. 24:31); and they shall sit down in the kingdom of God. To which can be applied what the great prophet Isaias foretold: "Behold, these shall come from afar, and behold, these from the north and from the sea, and these from the south country" (Isa. 49:12).

Morally, by the east is designated the rising of birth; by the west, the setting or perishing of death; by the north, which is a most hard wind, the hardness of adversity; by the south, which is a most warm wind, the favour and mildness of prosperity. Spiritually therefore those come from the east who are converted by the consideration of their origin, pondering that of Job: “Man born of a woman, living for a short time, is filled with many miseries” (Job 14:1). From the west come those who are converted by the memory of death, fear of judgment, dread of hell, pondering that of the Apostle: “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Heb. 10:31). From the north come those who, by pressing necessity, or adversity admonishing, are pricked with compunction and return to salvation: of whom the Saviour says: “Compel them to come in” (Luke 14:23). Of whom Isaias asserts: “Lord, in distress they have sought thee, in the tribulation of murmuring thy instruction was with them” (Isa. 26:16). In whom is fulfilled what the Lord says through Osee: “Behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and I will stop it up with a wall; and she shall seek her lovers, and shall not find them, and she shall say: I will go and return to my first husband, because it was better with me then than now” (Osee 2:6–7). From the south come those who, with prosperity smiling on them, nevertheless adhere to God, giving thanks to God in such things, and fearing the more to offend, as blessed Peter exhorts: “Give thanks to God, who hath called you into his wonderful light” (1 Peter 2:9). Hence moreover it is plain that, morally speaking, from the east come the noble, from the west the ignoble, from the south the rich, from the north the poor: and of all these some shall be saved. To which that of Ezechiel is fitted: “Come, spirit, from the four winds, and blow upon these slain, and let them live again” (Ezech. 37:9). *(p. 88)*

“And behold, they are last that shall be first” (Luke 13:30), that is, the Jews, who were admonished to the faith of Christ before the Gentiles, on account of their incredulity have been made extreme and last, that is, are to be postponed to the converted Gentiles; *“and they are first that shall be last,”* that is, the converted Gentiles have preceded the unbelieving Jews, who had been called before the Gentiles. At times also it happens that the first, that is, more perfect in grace and virtues, become last, that is, worse, because they gradually grow lukewarm, as in the Apocalypse God upbraids a certain one: “I have against thee that thou hast left thy first charity” (Apoc. 2:4). Augustine also: “I have seen,” he says, “the cedars of Libanus fall.” Therefore the Apostle admonishes: “He that thinketh himself to stand, let him take heed lest he fall” (1 Cor. 10:12). They also become first who were last, when vicious men by repenting grow into men of virtue: in whom is fulfilled that of the Apostle: “Where sin abounded, grace did more abound” (Rom. 5:20). Lastly, the first, that is, the great and illustrious in this world, are in the future world, when they are damned, last; and those who here are reputed last, that is, vile and despised, in the future become first, when the humble are exalted in heavenly things: for as Paul confesses: “The foolish things of the world hath God chosen, that he may confound the wise; and the weak things of the world hath God chosen, that he may confound the strong” (1 Cor. 1:27).

“The same day” (Luke 13:31), on which Christ spoke the words immediately before, *“there came some of the Pharisees, saying to him: Depart and get thee hence,”* namely out of the territory of Herod’s power, *“for Herod hath a mind to kill thee.”* Which is to be understood of Herod Antipas, son of Herod of Ascalon, who killed the infants (Matt. 2:16). Moreover, according to Cyril, these Pharisees spoke this from evil zeal, as provoked against Christ on account of His words in which He preferred the Gentiles to the Jews. Some others suppose that perhaps some of them said this from good zeal. Why Herod sought to kill Christ, some opine that it was because, hearing that so many thousands followed Christ, he suspected lest perhaps sedition against his kingdom might be stirred up by Christ as by a Galilean. Or perhaps they feigned it, that they might terrify Christ and put Him to flight.

“And he said to them: Go and tell that fox” (Luke 13:32), that is, crafty and deceitful Herod. The fox, according to Bede, is an animal full of fraud, lurking in holes to lie in wait, stinking in smell, and never going by a straight path. So an iniquitous prince is a beast by bestial life, deceitful by craftiness, lurking in holes,

that is, hiding his depravity by simulation and duplicity, and lying in wait by contrived subtlety, stinking by evil repute, going crookedly by unjust conversation. In like manner God through Isaias named Achaz a fox. *"Behold I cast out devils, and do cures,"* that is, heal the languishing, *"today and tomorrow,"* that is, now and at the opportune time, so long as I continue here in the body. For "tomorrow" in the Scriptures is taken for a near time, as in Genesis Jacob says: "My justice shall answer for me tomorrow" (Gen. 30:33). *"And the third day I am consummated,"* that is, immediately after the aforesaid time I shall be slain, and the things which the Prophets foretold of me shall be fulfilled.

"Nevertheless I must" (Luke 13:33), that is, it is expedient for the salvation of men, and it becomes me, or even by conditioned necessity it is necessary, that the divine pre-ordination and the prophecies concerning my passion be fulfilled in me, *"today and tomorrow and the day following,"* that is, for a time somewhat already running and soon to be ended, as has been expounded, *"walk,"* that is, *(p. 89)* converse in this world, and perform divine works, or journey toward Jerusalem, *"because it cannot be,"* that is, it has not capacity or congruity, *"that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem."* This seems to be said by way of hyperbolical speech. For not all the Prophets who were slain were slain in Jerusalem, since Jeremias is read to have been slain in Egypt, and Ezechiel in Chaldea, and Amos in the land of the ten tribes. But Christ said this because commonly in Jerusalem such things happened; and there the blood of the innocent was frequently and copiously shed, because there wicked kings, impious pontiffs, malicious Scribes and Pharisees dwelt, who despised to be rebuked and instructed by the Prophets. Jerusalem, however, is taken in this place not only for the space comprised within the walls, but for the city together with its appendages and adjacencies, since it is certain that Christ was crucified outside the walls of Jerusalem, according to that of the Apostle Paul: "Jesus, that he might sanctify the people by his own blood, suffered without the gate" (Heb. 13:12).

"Jerusalem, Jerusalem" (Luke 13:34), that is, O people of that city: and the repetition of the name is a sign of compassion, or of seriousness, and of arousing to diligent attention; *"that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent to thee,"* that is, hast often perpetrated these crimes, and wilt soon do the like again. For they stoned Zacharias the son of Joiada (2 Par. 24:21), they sawed Isaias asunder. *"How often would I"* (as if He said, Many a time I would) *"gather thy children,"* that is, those pertaining to thee, namely the whole people of the Jews, of which Jerusalem was the metropolis: whom Christ according to His divinity long before His incarnation willed, through Moses and the other Saints of the Old Testament, namely through judges and Prophets and Patriarchs, spiritually to gather under His gracious defence, under the devout worship of one God, under faith and charity; *"as a bird doth her brood under her wings,"* as a bird defends and keeps her young ones placed in the nest under her own wings, lest they be snatched away by rapacious birds, *"and thou wouldst not,"* be so gathered, because thou wast rebellious to God and His Saints? Finally, if at times that people consented to good things, this was rare, and for the greater part of the people and time they were perverse. Christ also, before He uttered these words, was often in Jerusalem, and did certain miracles there, and taught: by all which He wished to convert that people. Nor is there doubt that He also prayed frequently for them. — Concerning this it is asked: Since the divine will is omnipotent, which none can resist, how, if God wills to gather, convert and save men, can it otherwise happen? To which Damascene answers that the antecedent will of God is not always fulfilled, because it is not an absolute and full will, but the consequent will of God is always fulfilled. Of this I have often written more clearly elsewhere.

"Behold your house shall be left to you desolate" (Luke 13:35), that is, to your confusion, and the vengeance of your guilts, your house, that is, temple, or city, or nation, desolate. Which was done when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem, and slew, sold and dispersed very many of the Jews, as has been frequently said and proved from the Scriptures of the Old Testament. For Daniel said: "The people with their leader that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary" (Dan. 9:26); and the Psalmist: "Let their habitation be made desolate" (Ps. 68:26). *"And I say to you, that you shall not see me till the time come when you shall say: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."* Some say this was fulfilled on Palm Sunday, when the

boys cried out with the multitudes: “Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh,” etc. (Matt. 21:9). Nevertheless, according to the order of narration of the most blessed Evangelist Matthew, Christ uttered these words after the execution of that deed, nay after Palm Sunday (Matt. 23:39). Similarly according to the narration of blessed Luke, Christ said these things when He was on the way toward Jerusalem, before Palm Sunday; and as is proved from the Gospel of St. John, Christ after these words was often in Jerusalem. Therefore this is expounded of His second *(p. 90)* coming, that the sense may be: I say to you unbelieving and ungrateful, *“you shall not see me,”* that is, in your blindness you shall be left to the just judgment of God, on account of your malices, so that you shall not acknowledge me to be Christ the Son of God, *“till the time come when you shall say,”* that is, until the day of judgment, when bodily you shall see and know that Christ is He whom you pierced (Zach. 12:10), and then unwillingly you shall say, or confess, “Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord”: because in the name of Jesus Christ every knee is bowed, of those in heaven, on earth, and under the earth (Phil. 2:10). Moreover, according to Theophilus, Christ in saying, “You shall not see me,” does not signify the hour in which He said this, but the time of the cross: as if He said, After you have crucified me, you shall see me no more until I come again to judge all things. Lastly, in the Scriptures some things are said by anticipation; and Christ could have preached the same words more than once.

Luke 14

Article XXXVII — Elucidation of the Fourteenth Chapter: “And it came to pass, when Jesus went into the house of one of the chief of the Pharisees”

(p. 90) Christ, who came into this world to convert sinners, strove by various ways to draw them to salvation. Whence He also deigned to eat with them, that by the most perfect honesty of His manners, and by most wise converse, and by other ways, He might allure them to better things, as is set forth at the beginning of this chapter. *“And it came to pass, when the Lord Jesus went into the house of one of the chief of the Pharisees on the sabbath day, to eat bread,”* perhaps invited to dinner (Luke 14:1). By bread, however, in the Scriptures is understood any food, as by water any drink: as is plain from this that in the books of Kings Eliseus says to the king of Israel concerning the Syrians: “Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink” (4 Kings 6:22). And immediately there it is subjoined: “And a great provision of meats was set before them, and they ate and drank” (4 Kings 6:23). *“And they watched him,”* how in word or deed they might reprehend Him, especially whether He would do anything against the festivity of the sabbath. For Christ, as Bernard says, suffered watchers in His deeds, contradictors in His words, mockers in His torments. Of which watchers Christ says in the Psalm: “They that watched my soul have taken counsel together” (Ps. 70:10).

“And behold, there was a certain man before him that had the dropsy” (Luke 14:2). By divine ordination that dropsical man came, that in his cure the power of Christ might shine forth, and thereby the error of the Pharisees be confuted. Moreover from ὕδωρ, which is water, dropsy (hydropisis) is named: which is a watery disease, born of a fault of the bladder, with swelling inflation and foul breath. It is also proper to the dropsical that the more he drinks, the more he thirsts. Therefore by him are designated the covetous and the voluptuous, in whom the more they expose themselves to delights and attend to acquiring things, the more their affection is inflamed toward venereal and temporal things. Finally seven properties of the dropsical are set down, by which the seven mortal sins are denoted. The first is the swelling of the body and members, by which pride is signified, according to that of Job: “Why doth thy spirit swell against God?” (Job 15:13). The second is the expression of the spirits, by which envy is signified, which suppresses the praiseworthy deeds of others lest they be made known. The third is the burning of thirst, which designates avarice. The fourth is indigestion of humours, *(p. 91)* which signifies anger. The fifth is sluggishness or slowness of the feet, by which accidie is noted. The sixth is inflation of the genitals, by which lust is signified…

“And Jesus answering” (Luke 14:3), not to words spoken aloud, but to their insidious thoughts, which He beheld, *“spoke to the lawyers,”* that is, the Scribes and doctors of the Jews, *“and Pharisees.”* For these

chiefly envied the fame of Christ, and watched Him, desiring to blacken the fame of Christ, since they were most greedy of human praise. *"Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?"* supernaturally and miraculously, from bodily infirmity? He asks not as one ignorant of this, but to correct their error. For so to heal is a divine and charitable work, in no way hindering from the leisure of God, but vehemently kindling to the contemplation of the divine power, to the love and praise of divine piety, both him who is healed and all who are present or hear, unless they be wholly perverse and envious. *"But they held their peace"* (Luke 14:4): because they knew the subtlety and prudence of Christ, therefore they feared to be convinced and refuted whatever they answered. *"But he, taking him,"* Jesus Himself, the most powerful and most pious physician of souls and bodies, took the dropsical man; whom He took with His hand out of humility, not that He could not cure him without bodily contact; *"healed him,"* imperially and suddenly, *"and sent him away,"* to go off freely, that the truth of His healing might appear.

"And answering them" (Luke 14:5), that is, answering the thoughts of the lawyers and Pharisees, who on seeing this sign began to think and judge that Christ had broken the sabbath: therefore against this He said to them: *"Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fall into a pit, and will not immediately draw him out on the sabbath day?"* as if He said: If it is lawful to succour beasts of burden with great labour on the sabbath day, why is it not rather lawful to bestow the help of health on a sick man on this day, especially when this is done without labour, nay most easily? — Finally, to those perverse and blinded lawyers and Pharisees many even of the prelates and those having care of souls are now in the Church like: for if they see anything adverse befall their cattle, they quickly run to help; but if they see their neighbours or subjects spiritually hurt and slain, that is, sinning mortally or notably, they are silent, dissemble, care not, nor grieve. Whence it is plain that they have not true charity of God and neighbour: for the more excellent the soul is than the body and every beast of burden, the more is it to be grieved over the hurt or vices of souls and the more to be succoured, than one should be saddened over hurts of bodies or cattle. *"And they could not answer him to these things"* (Luke 14:6). For they saw that they were convicted, and could not by any solution escape the force of the argument.

Thus, the mouths of the envious having been stopped, and the bodily dropsy cured in one, Christ turned Himself to the cure of the spiritual dropsy, that is, of pride and ambition, in all such as were then present there. *"And he spoke a parable also to them that were invited"* (Luke 14:7), that is, a discourse signifying something mystically: because by these corporal things He intimated spiritual teachings; *"marking,"* that is, considering or giving to understand, *"how they chose the first seats at the table,"* that is, each of them aspired to the more eminent places at tables, from eagerness for honour, and perhaps also on account of the more sumptuous dishes which are wont to be set before those who sit higher; *"saying to them: When thou art invited to a wedding"* (Luke 14:8), *"sit not down in the first place,"* that is, do not vainly thrust thyself in to sit in the higher or first place, *"lest perhaps one more honourable than thou be invited,"* etc. The superficially literal sense has no difficulty; but the Master of humility by this example and this reasonable persuasion intends to form us, that always, so far as in us lies, we make little of ourselves, and exalt not ourselves beyond our own measure, nay rather even esteem ourselves viler than inferiors. Finally, when by Christ's ministers, that is, preachers and prelates, we have been invited to the wedding, that is, the union of the mind with God, in this way by faith and grace *(p. 92)* and the gifts of the Holy Ghost, in the fatherland by the beatific vision (since this wedding is begun here, and in the future continued eternally), we ought not to sit down in the first place, that is, to prefer ourselves to others, nor to presume on our merits, lest when Christ the judge of all shall come to judge, He confound and cast us down. With this moral teaching of the Saviour agrees what Solomon says in Proverbs: "Appear not glorious before the king, and stand not in the place of great men; for it is better that it be said to thee, Come up hither, than that thou shouldst be humbled before the prince" (Prov. 25:6–7). *"But when thou art invited, go"* (Luke 14:10), to the table of many or to a wedding, *"sit down in the lowest place,"* that is, choose the humbler place, so far as in thee lies, especially if thy state or order permit; *"that when he who invited thee cometh, he may say to thee,"* not rebuking harshly,

but gently enjoining (for a hint suffices with the discreet): *"Friend, go up higher."* And so by humility honour is acquired. Hence it is added: *"Then shalt thou have glory before them that sit at table with thee,"* according to that of Job: "He that shall be humbled shall be in glory" (Job 22:29). Basil, however, says: "To occupy the last place at banquets, according to Christ's command, is fitting; but again to place oneself in it contentiously is blameworthy, as destructive of order and causative of tumult, and a contention moved over it will make us equal to those who strive over primacy. Wherefore, as Christ here teaches, it is expedient to commit the order of seating to him who makes the feast. For so we shall bear with one another in patience, pursuing all things honestly and according to order" (1 Cor. 14:40).

"Because every one that exalteth himself" (Luke 14:11), by pride, *"shall be humbled,"* with penal humiliation in the future, the more confusedly and penally by Christ the judge of all, the more he has now exalted himself, unless by true penance he have humbled himself in this life, by confessing, bewailing and amending his pride. *"And he that humbleth himself,"* that is, has embraced true humility, by weighing his own littleness and defectiveness (blaming himself), and casting himself down or prostrating himself before God, and continually imploring His mercy, *"shall be exalted,"* in this life by the sublime gifts of the grace of God, and in the future by the lofty gifts of His glory. For "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble" (James 4:6). Hence Moses says: "The soul that shall do anything through pride, because he hath been rebellious against the Lord, shall perish out of his people: for he hath despised the word of the Lord" (Num. 15:30–31). In Ecclesiasticus also it is had: "Pride is hateful before God and men" (Ecclus. 10:7). "Be not exalted in doing thy work. The greater thou art, humble thyself in all things, and thou shalt find grace before God and men" (Ecclus. 3:19–20). Whence, as discretion or prudence is called the chariot of the virtues, because in every virtuous act it directs man, making him keep measure, that his service may be reasonable and discreet (Rom. 12:1): so humility is the vehicle of the virtues, promoting virtuous acts to the special complacency of God; and the more one has founded his life in deeper, steadier and more perfect humility, the more and the more quickly will he advance in every grace and virtue, and the sooner will he come to perfection. For why do we advance so little? why are we so prone to anger and impatience? unless because we lack sincere and full humility. Lastly, humility itself is to be guarded most diligently from every folly of vanity, lest anyone glory vainly in his very humility, or be lifted up, or complacent in himself, or judge others as proud and despise them.

"And he said to him also that had invited him" (Luke 14:12), namely the prince of the Pharisees, to whom for the bodily refection He renders a spiritual and better one, instructing him unto virtues: *"When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends,"* that is, those between whom and thee there is worldly and political friendship, *"nor thy brethren, nor thy kinsmen,"* that is, blood relatives or in-laws, *"nor thy neighbours who are rich."* What He says, "rich," I think is to be referred to all the aforesaid, namely to friends, to brethren, to kinsmen. For if these *(p. 93)* were poor, they would meritoriously be invited; nay, other things being equal, they would rather be invited than others: not principally, nor only because they are friends and brethren and kinsmen, but because poor and needy, and chiefly out of regard and love of Christ, to the glory of God: who so requires that not only love, but the order of charity be kept, which demands that those nearer be loved more, not only with natural but also spiritual love, other things being equal. Wherefore in the Canticles the Spouse testifies: "He hath ordered charity in me" (Cant. 2:4). And Paul the Apostle: "But if any man have not care of his own, and especially of those of his house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Tim. 5:8). Of this Augustine in the book On Christian Doctrine, and Thomas in the Second of the Second, treat more fully.

Next the Saviour gives the cause why such are not to be invited in the aforesaid manner. *"Lest perhaps they also invite thee again,"* as is the custom of carnal men, *"and a recompense be made to thee,"* a bodily one in this life, so that with God thou have no reward. Bede, however, says here: "That brethren and friends and rich people celebrate banquets for one another, Christ forbids not as a sin; but as the other commerces of human

necessity, He shows that they avail nothing for deserving the rewards of the heavenly life." Like to which is what He says elsewhere: "If you do good to them who do good to you, what thank have you?" (Luke 6:33). Hence Gorran testifies: "Friends and brethren and kinsmen and neighbours either are poor, and then they are meritoriously invited: or are rich, and then they are either called for the sake of making mutual charity, and so it is meritorious; or on account of wantonness or other evil cause, namely for those immoderate carnal solaces, and then it is demeritorious; or on account of a certain liberality and natural friendship, and so it is as it were indifferent."

"But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind" (Luke 14:13): who, if they cannot go, are to be led or carried; *"and thou shalt be blessed"* (Luke 14:14), that is, for so great piety proceeding from charity thou shalt attain eternal beatitude, *"because they have not wherewith to make thee recompense,"* in this life by a bodily benefit. In spiritual things, however, they can and ought to repay, by praying faithfully for their benefactors. *"For recompense shall be made thee,"* that is, full reward shall be rendered thee by God, namely the double stole, or the everlasting glorification of body and soul, if meanwhile thou hast not obtained the beatitude of the soul, *"at the resurrection of the just,"* that is, on the last day, in that thou shalt rise among the elect. Whence that final resurrection, although it will be of the good and the evil, yet is specially said to be of the just, because to them it will be unto glory, to the reprobate unto misery.

Moreover, morally, when we make a dinner, that is, when we come to prayers or celebrations that we may be spiritually refreshed, and communicate of the Lord's table, let us pray not only for friends and parents and kinsmen, and for the rich, that is, for the just who abound in the charisms of the Holy Ghost, but also for enemies and sinners, who are truly and unhappily poor. But in this many fail, because for enemies they pray rarely or lukewarmly, for friends and kinsmen frequently: which is as it were to send the leavings of one's table to a prince.

Besides, invitations and banquets proceed from diverse causes: First, from natural love, as is plain of the sons of Job (Job 1:4). Yet if natural love be formed by spiritual love and elevated to God, then this will be meritorious: as of the sons of Job it seems to be believed, because Gregory says they were just. Second, from piety, as Tobias did (Tob. 2:1). Third, from reverence, as Matthew did to Christ (Luke 5:29): and so to make a banquet for religious and just men from reverence, inasmuch as they are by antonomasia the servants of God, is very meritorious. Fourth, from liberality, as in Tobias it is read of Raguel. Fifth, from approved custom, as in weddings. And these two, if they are done from charity, are meritorious. Sixth, from ostentation, as is read in Esther of Assuerus (Esther 1:3). Seventh, from gluttony, as is plain in the books of Kings of Nabal *(p. 94)* (1 Kings 25:36). Eighth, from ambition, as canons do when an election is impending, and so did Adonias (3 Kings 1:9). Ninth, from malignity and simulation, as Absalom (2 Kings 15:11).

Lastly Chrysostom says: "Let us not confer benefits on others under this hope, that they may repay us: for this is a cold intention, and such friendship will quickly vanish. But if thou callest a poor man, thou shalt have God, who never forgets, as thy debtor. For the lesser the brother is, the more does Christ come and visit through him. For he who receives a great man often does it for vain glory; but also utility is more often sought, that by him one may be promoted. But thou sayest: The poor man is unclean and sordid. Wash him, and make him sit with thee at table. If he has dirty clothes, offer him clean raiment. Christ comes through him, and thou speakest frivolous things?" Gregory of Nyssa also exhorts: "Neglect not those who lie low, as though worthy of no honour. Consider what they are, and thou shalt find their preciousness: that is, they have put on the image of the Saviour, they are heirs of the good things to come, and key-bearers of the heavenly kingdom, fit accusers and excusers, not speaking, but looked upon by the Judge." Therefore, as Chrysostom says, it befits that they be placed reverently in the upper chamber. But if this please not, at least below, where are the servants and ministers, receive Christ: let the poor man at least be thy domestic; and if thou sit not down with him, send him dishes from thy table. Mystically, according to Origen, he who shuns vain glory

calls to the spiritual banquet the poor, that is, the unskilled, to enrich them; the weak, that is, those having a wounded conscience, to heal them; the lame, that is, those declining from reason, that they may make straight paths; the blind, that is, those who lack the contemplation of virtue, that they may see the true light.

"When one of them that sat at table with him had heard these things" (Luke 14:15), namely what Christ said of the beatific retribution to be bestowed at the final resurrection, being touched with desire of that retribution, *"he said to him,"* namely Christ, as though alluding to His words: "*Blessed is he,"* already in hope and in eternal predestination, *"that shall eat bread,"* that is, shall be spiritually refreshed by the clear and fruitive vision of the Divinity, which is the bread, strength and refreshment of all the elect in the fatherland, namely *"in the kingdom of God,"* which is the triumphant Church, or the place and dwelling of the beatific vision. Besides, some say that this man was of the opinion of the Sadducees, who think the future life to be carnal, and that they would eat bodily food. But this is not well said. For the Sadducees wholly denied the future resurrection, saying the soul is mortal, and that there is neither angel nor spirit, as is had in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 23:8).

Next the Saviour by a parable teaches how many are hindered by diverse obstacles from the blessed resurrection. *"But he said to him: A certain man made a great supper, and invited many"* (Luke 14:16). By this man is understood Christ, who made a supper, that is, prepared for His elect the beatific refection of eternal glory, of which the Apostle says: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Cor. 2:9). To this supper Christ called many, saying: "Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 4:17). Whence He says in the Psalm: "I have declared and I have spoken: they are multiplied above number" (Ps. 39:6). *"And he sent his servant"* (Luke 14:17), that is, the choir or order of the Apostles and of all preachers. For often in the Scriptures discourse is made of a whole people or multitude as of one person, as in Exodus God says to Pharao: "I have said to thee: Let my son go" (Exod. 4:23), that is the people of the Hebrews. "*At the hour of supper,"* that is, in this last age of the world, at whose end this supper is to be fully shown to all the elect: and meanwhile from the time of the passion or the descent of Christ into hell it began to be given, since Christ by the price of His blood opened the gate of the heavenly kingdom. Of this hour it is written: "Little children, it is the last hour" (1 John 2:18). Moreover this blessed refection is called supper rather than dinner, because *(p. 95)* no other refection will succeed it, and eternal rest is joined to it, as nocturnal rest is joined to supper. Of which supper it is written in the Apocalypse: "Blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb" (Apoc. 19:9). *"To say to them that were invited,"* that is, to exhort men to deserve the rewards of the heavenly kingdom, *"that they should come,"* that is, by loving God and neighbours, and living justly and in fear, they should strive unceasingly to draw near to the fatherland of the Blessed: for it is by loving and acting justly, not by bodily passing over, that one comes and draws near to the heavenly kingdom. *"For now all things are ready,"* that is, the supernal joys are prepared for men by the merit of Christ's passion, provided the virtue, grace or merit of Christ's passion be applied to them by the sacraments of the Church, and they themselves put not an obstacle to their salvation. Therefore Gregory says: "All things are ready, since, Christ immolated, the entrance of the heavenly kingdom lies open."

"And they began all at once to make excuse" (Luke 14:18), from the execution of virtuous works, and from the attainment of the supernal kingdom: who loved earthly and sensible things rather than spiritual and divine, therefore excused themselves, if not by word, yet by deed.

"The first said to him: I have bought a farm, and I must needs go out and see it: I pray thee, hold me excused." By this first invited man, who from occupation about the farm which he bought neglected to serve and obey God, is designated the plurality of the proud and ambitious: who so occupy themselves about acquiring or possessing honour, principality and excellence in this world that they neglect to fulfil the divine precepts, nor aspire to the eternal honours of supreme beatitude, but prefer temporal and present things to eternal and future: blinded by their own pride, which ineffably and damnably darkens the mind, so that they

have not formed and living faith, as the Saviour says to such: “How can you believe, who receive glory one from another, and the glory which is from God alone you do not seek?” (John 5:44). For pride and ambition hinder the mind from submitting itself to its Creator: therefore it cannot receive the influx of His grace. Moreover, by what he says, “I pray thee hold me excused,” it is given to understand that the proud, like other vicious men, but the proud most of all, excuse themselves in their sins. For as the accusation of oneself is the effect and sign or companion of humility, so excuse of one’s own vices is the effect, sign and companion of pride. Wherefore the Psalmist prays God: “Incline not my heart to evil words, to make excuses in sins” (Ps. 140:4). Whence to one so excusing himself the Lord says through Jeremias: “Behold, I will enter into judgment with thee, because thou hast said: I have not sinned” (Jer. 2:35). Lastly, according to Gregory, what he says, “I pray thee, hold me excused,” is as much as if he said: Pray for me, because I cannot be converted. And so humility sounds in the voice, when he says, “I pray thee”; but pride in the action, when he scorns to come.

“And another said: I have bought five yoke of oxen” (Luke 14:19), that is, five pairs of oxen, *“and I go to try them; I pray thee, hold me excused.”* By this second is understood the multitude of covetous men: who are so intent on gathering and keeping earthly riches that they forget spiritual and heavenly goods; and so they are affected about their money and possessions as though they would never lose them, and as though there were no life after this life, and as though the body were nobler than the soul. So great, finally, is the gravity of this sin that the Apostle names avarice a serving of idols (Eph. 5:5). And again: “The desire of money,” he says, “is the root of all evils” (1 Tim. 6:10). For as the idolater worships his idols and false gods more than the true God, so the covetous man desires, loves and worships earthly wealth more than God most high. Therefore the wise man testifies: “There is nothing more wicked than to love money” (Ecclus. 10:10); and again, “The covetous man setteth even his own soul to sale” (ibid.). For since temporal goods are to be ordered finally to spiritual goods, we ought not to love and gather *(p. 96)* or retain temporal things more than is necessary or useful to us for obtaining spiritual. Wherefore the Apostle says: “Having food and wherewith to be covered, with these let us be content: for they that will become rich fall into temptation and into the snare of the devil” (1 Tim. 6:8–9). Besides, according to Gregory, since the bodily senses cannot comprehend interior things, but know only exterior, this second, who bought five yoke of oxen, that is, received from God the five exterior senses, as one to render an account for them, rightly signifies the curious, who while they seek to discuss the life of others, omit to look at their own defects.

“And another said: I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come” (Luke 14:20). By this are designated the lustful. For although matrimony is good and lawful, and instituted by divine providence for propagating offspring, many nevertheless thereby seek not the fecundity of children but the baseness of pleasure. Therefore by a just and lawful thing an impious thing is not incongruously designated, as Gregory says. And because carnal pleasure binds and occupies most strongly, and plunges man in the lowest things: therefore this third did not say, “I pray thee, hold me excused”; but speaks simply, “I cannot come.” For carnal pleasure itself begets accidie and disgust of divine things, and makes a man powerless for the works of virtue. Wherefore in Osee it is had: “Fornication, and wine, and drunkenness take away the heart” (Osee 4:11). So Christ in this parable denotes that through pride, avarice and lust men are chiefly hindered from their salvation. Therefore John asserts: “All that is in the world is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life” (1 John 2:16).

“And the servant returning” (Luke 14:21), that is, the order of preachers returning from the act of preaching to the quiet of contemplation: because after the execution of exterior works the preacher and prelate ought to return to his interior things, to be at leisure for God, and to pour out his heart before Him (Ps. 61:9); *“told these things to his lord,”* by interior confession and address, namely to Christ. For devout and fervent preachers and prelates, kindled with zeal for the salvation of neighbours, complain to God sorrowfully and piously when they profit little or nothing: as also they rejoice exceedingly when they convert many, as the

Apostle: “I have great confidence in you, I have great glory for you: I am filled with comfort, I exceedingly abound with joy in all our tribulation” (2 Cor. 7:4). The servant is said to tell the Lord Christ, not as though He were ignorant of what was done, but that we may understand the order of the parable or history.

“Then the master of the house, being angry,” namely Christ, on account of so great ingratitude of men. Anger, however, does not befit Christ according to His divinity, as to the affections of passions, but as to likeness of work. Moreover anger by zeal, which is an appetite of vengeance according to the dictate of reason, was in Christ according to His humanity. *“Said to his servant,”* that is, commanded the order of His preachers: *“Go out”* from contemplation to the forming and conversion of others, *“quickly,”* because there is danger in delay, and without postponement provision must be made for the salvation of souls. By which word slothful and tardy preachers and prelates are rebuked, who on easy occasion omit or defer preaching. *“Into the streets and lanes of the city.”* By the city in this place is understood the Synagogue, which was at one time the city of God, as the Church now is; and the Synagogue was fortified by the law, as enclosed by a wall. By streets also are signified the greater multitudes of men; by lanes, the lesser multitudes, because not to many only, but also to few is preaching to be done. Or by streets are noted those who in prosperity were as in breadth; by lanes, those who were pressed by adversities. For a street is wider than a lane. *“And bring in hither the poor,”* that is, those lacking the grace of God and spiritual gifts, and weak for doing well. For sin wounds natural things, so that the powers *(p. 97)* of the soul become weak for acts of virtue. *“And the feeble,”* here “weak”; *“and the blind,”* that is, destitute of knowledge of the truth; *“and the lame,”* that is, not keeping the rectitude of justice, or unstable: who as it were halt to both sides, while in no virtue are they constant. Of such it is said in the Psalm: “The children of strangers have inveterated, and have halted from their paths” (Ps. 17:46). Whence also in the books of Kings Elias says to the unstable children of Israel: “How long do you halt between two sides?” (3 Kings 18:21). *“Bring in hither,”* that is, strive to lead to the heavenly kingdom, by preaching, praying, and living exemplarily. Thus, the princes of the priests and the chiefs of the Jews being unwilling to be converted to Christ, many thousands of the lesser of the same people were converted, as is described in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2:41; 4:4). For, as Gregory says, God chose those whom the world despises: and that very contempt for the most part recalls a man to himself; and some hear the voice of God the more quickly, the less they have in this world wherein to delight.

“And the servant said: Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded” (Luke 14:22), that is, we have preached to the Jews as thou didst bid, although not all were willing to be converted as thou didst command; *“and yet there is room,”* that is, there are still vacant places in the heavenly kingdom, in which the Gentiles can be received. For the number of men predestined from the Jews was not to be filled up in heaven. *“And the Lord said to the servant: Go out into the highways and hedges”* (Luke 14:23), that is, to the Gentile peoples walking by the broad ways of perdition: who lacked the divine law given to the Jews, and so were as it were rustics: wherefore they are signified by hedges. Thus it was first to be preached to the Jews, then to the Gentiles. Wherefore Paul and Barnabas say to the Jews: “To you it behoved us first to speak the word of God; but because you reject it, behold, we turn to the Gentiles. For so the Lord hath commanded us” (Acts 13:46–47). *“And compel them to come in,”* that is, as it were importunately, and by threats of eternal damnation, urge them to be converted: as the Apostle says: “Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season: reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience” (2 Tim. 4:2). Whence through Jeremias the Lord says: “Are not my words as a fire, and as a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?” (Jer. 23:29). Thus, what is said, “Compel them to come in,” is not understood of absolute and wholly complete compulsion (because so free will cannot be forced, nor does God wish to have forced service), but of some kind of inductive compulsion. *“That my house may be filled,”* that is, the number of the predestined be completed in heaven: of which the Saviour says: “In my Father’s house there are many mansions” (John 14:2). Of which also that of Baruch can be expounded: “O Israel, how great is the house of God, and how vast is the place of his possession! It is great and hath no end; it is high and immense” (Bar. 3:24–25). But if it has no end, how can it be filled? And it is to be answered that it is called immense not for interminability, but for its most broad and ineffable

capacity.

"But I say unto you" (Luke 14:24), *"that none of those men"* who were called, namely those excusing themselves, by the exterior vocation through preachers, *"shall taste of my supper,"* that is, shall experience the sweetness of eternal heavenly felicity. This also is to be noted, that God sometimes calls by interior inspiration, sometimes by external preaching, at times by benefits, at times by scourges: to designate which He says in the Canticles four times, "Return." For so the heavenly Spouse says there: "Return, return, O Sulamitess, return, return" (Cant. 6:12).

"And there went great multitudes with him" (Luke 14:25), namely with Jesus, for various causes, as has often been said. For the most sweet eloquence of His preaching, the eminence of miracles, the loveliness of His manners, drew the multitudes. *"And turning, he said to them"*: because He turned His bodily face, and also the interior regard of His piety, and the communication of His spiritual goods, to them. So also we, if we turn our heart to Him, if we strive to follow Him, if we desire His clemency, at once He bestows on us the effect of His piety, and so turns Himself to us, as He testifies through Zacharias: "Turn ye to me, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will turn to you, saith the Lord of hosts" (Zach. 1:3). *(p. 98)*

"If any man come to me" (Luke 14:26), that is, will follow me by likeness of life and due servitude, *"and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters."* All these persons are to be hated by the servants of Christ, not as to what they have from the Creator, namely as to the being of their nature or grace, but as to what they have from themselves, that is, from their own inordinate will, namely as to the guilt and impiety which they have, by which they also oppose us in the way of God, striving to draw us back from salvation, or from progress in virtues. But nature and person are to be loved. According to the aforesaid distinction, man conforms himself to God, who loves all things according to what they are by nature, grace or glory, as the Wise Man says: "Thou lovest all things that are, and hatest none of the things which thou hast made" (Wis. 11:25). Nevertheless He hates the wicked, as such, as is written in the same book: "To God the wicked and his wickedness are hateful alike" (Wis. 14:9); and in the Psalm, "Thou hatest all the workers of iniquity" (Ps. 5:7); through Jeremias also, "My soul is not towards this people" (Jer. 15:1). *"Yea, and his own life also,"* that is, himself, putting the part for the whole. In the same way indeed ought we to love and hate ourselves as our neighbours. For since to love is to will good to someone, but to hate is to will evil to someone: we ought to love ourselves and others, by desiring and praying for ourselves and others the necessaries of nature, the gifts of grace, and the rewards of everlasting glory. Moreover we ought to hate ourselves and others, that is, to abhor our own and others' impieties and will that they be not, and to wish for ourselves and others, from zeal of justice, the evils of punishment for the evils of guilt, nay also duly to chastise ourselves and those committed to us, to resist inordinate affections and carnal concupiscences. This is the good and virtuous hatred, proceeding from spiritual love, of which the Psalmist says: "I hated them with a perfect hatred" (Ps. 138:22). And so David hated himself when he besought God, saying: "Let thy hand, I beseech thee, be turned against me, and let not thy people be struck" (2 Kings 24:17; 1 Par. 21:17). *"He cannot be my disciple,"* that is, truly a Christian, as obeyer or fulfiller of my doctrine.

Besides it is asked whether this, namely to hate parents and the rest and oneself, is a counsel or a precept. And it is to be answered that in one manner and sense it is a precept, and in another manner a counsel. It is a precept, as to this, that we cast away the carnal affections of the aforesaid persons contrary to spiritual charity, and also that we avoid and hate the aforesaid persons as to this that they strive to hinder us from the fulfilment of the precepts. But it is a counsel as to this, that we hate, leave, and avoid carnal affections, and the carnally near or joined, as to this that they strive or are able to hinder us from spiritual progress tending to perfection by acts and works of supererogation: namely, that we cast away the carnal affections of the aforesaid persons, not only those which are directly contrary to divine charity, but those also which hinder the progress, ardour and perfection of charity.

"And whosoever doth not carry his cross" (Luke 14:27), that is, does not exercise works of penance, does not afflict the body by abstinence, does not compassionate his neighbours at the opportune time, *"and come after me,"* exercising such good things, not with vain intention for human praise, but to the praise and glory of God, and the edification of neighbour, as I did, as I protest in John: "I seek not my own glory, but I honour my Father" (John 8:49–50); *"cannot be my disciple."* This, speaking in general, belongs to every Christian, as the Apostle says: "And they that are Christ's have crucified their flesh with the vices and concupiscences" (Gal. 5:24). For this is nothing else than to walk by the narrow way, which alone leads to salvation (Matt. 7:14): and so this is a precept, not a counsel. *(p. 99)* It can nevertheless be expounded so as to be a counsel; and the sense will be: He who carries not his cross, that is, does not wholly mortify himself, forsaking himself and these earthly things for God, *"and comes not after me,"* that is, has not followed me by the paths of perfection, namely by voluntary poverty, perpetual chastity, and full obedience, which are the substantials of all orders, *"cannot be my disciple,"* that is, perfect imitator, hearing me and efficaciously acquiescing, not only in the precepts, but in the evangelical counsels to be observed.

Finally, that the teachings adduced are to be observed by all the faithful desiring to be saved, especially those desiring to attain in this life to the perfection of virtues, Christ consequently declares by two similitudes or parables. The first He touches, saying: *"For which of you, having a mind to build a tower"* (Luke 14:28), *"doth not first sit down and reckon the charges that are necessary, whether he have wherewithal to finish it?" "Lest, after he hath laid the foundation"* (Luke 14:29), *"and is not able to finish it, all that see it begin to mock him"* (Luke 14:30), *"saying: This man began to build, and was not able to finish."* In exterior things this is so, that a man of provident mind does not begin to build anything unless he first thinks beforehand whether he has the means of completing the structure, lest if it fall out otherwise all beholders deride him, that he acted inconsiderately, in beginning what he could not complete.

Conformably it is in spiritual things, that if any of the faithful has proposed, or in religion has made profession, that he will daily pass to the summit of humility and the eminence of the other virtues, or the perfection of life, before he attempts or begins this, he ought to weigh and premeditate whether he can continue and perfect what he desires to begin, namely whether he be disposed, apt and fit for the exercises of the life intended. But if he finds not himself sufficient and able by his own powers, he ought to confide in God, and implore His help, and avoid the hindrances of his salvation. For these are the charges necessary to him for completing what he ought or desires to undertake. Whence if he does not do these, he will fail in the progress, and the enemies of his salvation, the malignant spirits, seeing him succumb in the progress, will deride him, and rejoice at his perdition. Whence Gregory: "Everything we do we ought to forestall by the study of consideration." This is what is taught in Ecclesiasticus: "Son, do nothing without counsel, and thou shalt not repent when thou hast done" (Ecclus. 32:24). The Apostle also says: "Do nothing without prejudice," that is, previous judgment (1 Tim. 5:21). Hence providence is set down as a part of prudence, because by providence future dangers are avoided, and provision is made for necessaries.

Moreover devils, and their vessels, namely impious men who strive to draw the good back from the way of salvation, glory in the perdition or apostasy of those whom they have conquered by tempting and suggesting, according to that of Ecclesiasticus: "If thou give to thy soul her desires, she will make thee a joy to thy enemies" (Ecclus. 18:31); and in the Psalm: "They that trouble me will rejoice when I am moved; but I have trusted in thy mercy" (Ps. 12:5–6). Therefore in Ecclesiasticus the wise man prays what we also ought always to pray: "O Lord, Father and God of my life, leave me not to their counsels, and suffer me not to fall by them, and let not my enemy rejoice over me" (Ecclus. 23:1). Let us therefore not gladden our worst and most envious adversaries the devils, thirsting for nothing else but the blood of our souls, by bearing ourselves negligently and basely, by seeking worldly consolations, by omitting custody of the mind; but by custody of the tongue and all the senses and of the heart let us strive to be continually guarded.

Lastly, this parable is to be pondered most of all by religious, lest with time passing they grow lukewarm, but daily strive to be more fervent, lest that of the Apostle befit them: *(p. 100)* "Are you so foolish, that whereas you began in the spirit, you would now be made perfect by the flesh?" (Gal. 3:3). Whence in the Apocalypse Christ says to a certain one: "I have against thee that thou hast left thy first charity. Be mindful therefore from whence thou art fallen, and do penance" (Apoc. 2:4–5). Let those attend to these things who flatter themselves in cloisters on the multitude of years they have been in the order, while yet they are shown to be light and passionate. But to every Christian also these things are to be considered and feared, especially since in the way of God not to advance is to go back.

"Or what king, about to go to make war against another king" (Luke 14:31), *"doth not first sit down and think whether he be able, with ten thousand, to meet him that with twenty thousand cometh against him?" "Or else, while the other is yet afar off, sending an embassy, he desireth conditions of peace"* (Luke 14:32). The parable is plain, because a provident king about to fight against another king, if he sees the other king much more powerful, before the engagement composes peace with him if he can, nor commits himself to danger. So also for us, if we desire to prevail against the prince of this world the devil, it is necessary to weigh our own strength. But if we perceive that we cannot by our own virtue overcome the army of the demons, we ought to flee to the help of God, and cast away vain security. Moreover, with the devil to enter into peace, that he may desist from assault, is blameworthy, because with him we must in no wise agree. Whence, as in a king who sees himself inferior, to ask peace of the adversary proceeds from weakness, although in some way it is ascribed to providence; so also to agree with the devil, that is, to prefer to sin rather than to fight manfully against temptations, is caused by such weakness and imperfection of man.

Some, however, by the king against whom man goes to battle understand God: against whom they as it were presume to fight who excuse themselves, justify themselves, and contend that they are to be saved by right on their merits. Of such the Apostle says that "being ignorant of the justice of God, and seeking to establish their own, they have not submitted themselves to the justice of God" (Rom. 10:3). These therefore, returning to the heart, and perceiving that by their works they cannot be saved according to the rigour of justice unless they flee to the immense piety of God, according to that of Job: "Man cannot be justified compared with God; if he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one for a thousand" (Job 9:2–3): pondering this, *"while the other is yet afar off,"* that is, while Christ the king is yet far off, that is, defers the judgment, and bodily and visibly abiding in heaven does not yet appear, *"sending an embassy,"* that is, they pray to be reconciled to God by works of satisfaction, and strive to obtain peace with Him, as the Apostle exhorts: "We beseech you for Christ, be reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:20). Thus by weeping, abstaining, praying, offering, and doing other virtuous works, they compose with Christ the judge, and humble themselves in all things, as holy Job did, saying: "If I will justify myself, my own mouth shall condemn me; although I should have anything just, I will not answer him, but will make supplication to my judge" (Job 9:20, 15). The same did blessed David, praying: "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord" (Ps. 142:2).

"So likewise every one of you that doth not renounce all that he possesseth" (Luke 14:33), *"cannot be my disciple,"* that is, he who has not conducted himself cautiously, by casting away affections of cupidities and carnalities, and the other things that hinder progress in virtues, cannot truly, really, be called my disciple, because he acquiesces not in my doctrine, as he cannot build prudently who provides not the charges. Moreover, if what was said of hatred of parents and kinsmen and of one's own life be expounded as it is a counsel, then to renounce is here taken for entire forsaking of all possessions or properties: which belongs to religious, who with Peter the apostle can say to Christ, "Behold, we have left all things" (Matt. 19:27). But if it be expounded as it is a precept, then to renounce designates the casting away of immoderate affection and care about possessions. *(p. 101)* And so Bede takes it: "There is a difference," he says, "between renouncing all things and leaving all things: for it is of few, namely the perfect, to leave all things, that is, to put aside the cares of the world; but of all the faithful to renounce all things, that is, so to hold the things that are of the

world that yet they be not held by them in the world, but may lawfully be affected by them and use them." This is what the Psalmist exhorts: "If riches abound, set not your heart upon them" (Ps. 61:11); and the Apostle: "It remaineth that they who have wives be as if they had none; and they that use this world, as if they used it not: for the fashion of this world passeth away" (1 Cor. 7:29–31).

"Salt is good" (Luke 14:34). For it is very useful, and necessary for the seasoning of foods. *"But if the salt shall lose its savour,"* that is, have lost its vigour and incurred corruption, *"wherewith shall it be seasoned?"* that is, it will not be apt to be mixed with anything to season it. *"It is neither profitable for the land, nor for the dunghill"* (Luke 14:35): for it hinders the land from its fertility, nor is it expedient to mix it with dung or the dunghill for making the land fertile; *"but shall be cast out,"* that is, cast forth as wholly useless. By this the Saviour intimates that in like manner it behoves His disciple to renounce all things, lest through love of earthly and carnal things he vanish away, losing the being of grace and virtues, and rot, incurring vices. And so he would be good for nothing, except to be cast into the fire of hell, as Christ says in John: "If any one abide not in me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither, and they shall gather him up, and cast him into the fire" (John 15:6). — Finally, by salt is understood wisdom or discretion, which is necessary to every virtuous work, and bestows seasoning. To designate which God in Leviticus commanded: "Whatsoever sacrifice thou offerest, thou shalt season it with salt" (Lev. 2:13); and again, "In all thy oblations thou shalt offer salt" (ibid.). And in Mark Christ admonishes: "Have salt in you" (Mark 9:49), that is, discretion: that is, according to the doctrine of Paul, "Let all things be done decently and according to order among you" (1 Cor. 14:40). If therefore this salt shall have lost its savour, that is, if through indiscretion and negligence of ours we have lost the light of discretion and wisdom, wherewith shall it be seasoned? that is, what will be perfected by it? It is plain, nothing, since it is corrupt. Therefore it shall be cast out, that is, taken away, and cease to be in that in which it was.

Again, by salt is designated the prelate and preacher, or teacher of others, whose office it is to season the hearts of hearers with discretion, to instruct with wisdom, to lead to the taste of virtues and the savour of spiritual things. Hence in Matthew Christ says to the Apostles: "You are the salt of the earth" (Matt. 5:13). For salt, as Eusebius says, consists in substance of water, partaking a little of earthiness, and dries up the fluid nature or matter of corrupt bodies, and preserves dead bodies. Hence Christ rightly compares His disciples to salt, because they were to regenerate others of water and the Spirit, and were to restrain the corrupt life of men from the flux of vices. Moreover, if this salt shall have lost its savour, that is, if the preacher or prelate be corrupted in mind by some vicious affection, wherewith shall it be seasoned? that is, he will be unfit to season the hearts of others in the aforesaid manner: so that he will be useful neither for the land nor for the dunghill, that is, neither for this, that he be set over those who are sound in mind and fruitful as the earth, nor over those who like a dunghill are squalid and foul with the vices and stenches of their carnalities, according to that of Joel: "The beasts have rotted in their dung" (Joel 1:17), that is, the carnal are corrupted in the filth of gluttony and lust.

Lastly, because the foregoing utterances of Christ were obscure, parabolic and profound, He exhorts to a sagacious understanding of His sayings; or because they are most wholesome, He admonishes that they be efficaciously fulfilled. *"He that hath ears to hear, let him hear"*: that is, he that has an intellect well disposed and capable, let him hear, that is, heed, acknowledge and fulfil what I have now said. Christ therefore says this of the interior ears, and of obedient hearing also.

Luke 15

Article XXXVIII — Exposition of the Fifteenth Chapter: "Now the publicans and sinners drew near unto him to hear him"

(p. 102) Because the Saviour by words and deeds and miracles showed Himself the most excellent and most pious physician of souls, and both by threats of eternal damnation and by promises of everlasting salvation exhorted sinners to penance: therefore they flocked to Him, as the Evangelist now recites. *"Now the publicans"* (Luke 15:1), that is, those who attended to public business, namely exacting, levying or farming imposts or tributes, *"and sinners"*—and since such an office is hardly or rarely done without sin, therefore the Pharisees and Scribes reputed the publicans great and notorious sinners—*"were drawing near to him,"* both these and sinners, that is, those who were less vicious, or were thought so. These drew near to Christ bodily and spiritually, namely locally approaching Him according to His circumscribed humanity, and mentally turning or disposing themselves to His uncircumscribed deity, that is, to His charity and grace. *"To hear him,"* with the ears of mind and body. For Christ graciously anticipated, drew and converted some of such. They ran together to Him also on account of the moving and most affectionate loveliness of His incomparable eloquence, on account of the becomingness of His manners, on account of the eminence of His life and fame, on account of the brightness and abundance of the miracles, and especially because Christ showed Himself to them very charitable, sweet, compassionate and kind, as is straightway subjoined.

"And the Pharisees and the Scribes murmured," (Luke 15:2), *"saying: This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them."* As if they said, It is not seemly: since Solomon said, "Let just men be thy guests" (Ecclus. 9:22). And the Psalmist: "With the proud of eye and the insatiable of heart I would not eat" (Ps. 100:5); and likewise, "With the perverse thou wilt be perverted" (Ps. 17:27). But Christ, who could not sin, and who came into the world for this, to cure sinners within and convert them, joined Himself to sinners without danger and with immense fruit, and deigned to eat with them; nor was it forbidden by the aforesaid authorities that the just might with this intention associate with sinners, to lead them to the service of God and everlasting salvation. Christ also, at whose coming the time of grace and the law of charity began, did not break the old law, but fulfilled it, and taught all charity by word and deeds. Moreover the Pharisees, who were the religious of the Jews, and the Scribes, who were their doctors, not truly charitable and just, but great and wise in their own eyes, and falsely just, were indignant at the clemency of Christ, in which they ought to have rejoiced. For false justice has indignation, true justice compassion, according to Gregory.

Besides, Christ, accustomed to use parables, by certain parables shows the error of the Pharisees and Scribes, and that He does what belonged to His office: which was to convert sinners, to seek the lost, to quicken by grace the spiritually dead, to gather in God, by faith and charity, those dispersed by sins. Hence the first parable is subjoined.

"Which of you is a man that hath an hundred sheep: and if he shall lose one of them," etc.? (Luke 15:4). This parable was and is most apt and most plain for declaring Christ's purpose. For it intends to show nothing else by it but that, since a man possessing many sheep, if he lose one, diligently seeks it, and when found *(p. 103)* receives it joyfully, much more the Son of God, Lord of all, ought by His piety and grace to seek the human race, or the company of sinners, which He lost through its own fault and the fraud of the demon, and to receive it to penance and salvation. By this man therefore is understood Christ, who had a hundred sheep, that is, the universality of the angelic spirits and the human race. For the holy angels are sheep of God, on account of their innocence, and the beatific refection with which they are unceasingly fed by God. Likewise men are sheep of God, according to the Psalmist: "But we are his people and the sheep of his pasture" (Ps. 94:7); which is most true of good men subject to their Creator, and fed by Him through the charisms of grace and the sacraments of the Church. Of whom Christ is the shepherd, because they walk under the rod of His direction, while they conduct themselves faithfully according to the precepts of the evangelical law. Of whom He protests in John: "I am the good shepherd, and I know mine, and mine know me; and I lay down my life for my sheep" (John 10:14–15). These sheep, however, are called a hundred on account of the perfection of this number. But of these sheep one perished, because in our first parents human nature was lost. For according to the Apostle, "in one we have fallen, and in Adam we have all sinned" (Rom. 5:12), so

that we were by nature children of wrath (Eph. 2:3).

"Doth he not leave the ninety-nine in the desert, and go after that which was lost, until he find it?" This the only-begotten Son of God did, when He left the heavenly citizens, namely the angelic spirits, in heaven, which man deserted by sinning; and sent not an angel, not an ambassador, but came in His own person, human nature being assumed in unity of person; and sought the human race, for its conversion, bringing back, salvation, by praying, preaching, working miracles, dying, sending or infusing the Holy Ghost, destining the Apostles and the other disciples. Therefore the Apostle says: "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into this world to save sinners" (1 Tim. 1:15). And through Zacharias: "Sing praise and rejoice, O daughter of Sion: for behold I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord. And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people" (Zach. 2:10–11). Moreover this joining of the peoples to God is their conversion and finding, whereby they were found by Christ: to whom Peter in his first Canonical epistle says: "For you were as sheep going astray; but you are now converted to the shepherd and bishop of your souls" (1 Peter 2:25).

"And when he hath found it, lay it upon his shoulders, rejoicing" (Luke 15:5). This the Saviour did, because, having converted some of the Jews, for them and for all the elect men He bore on His own shoulders the cross to the place of punishment: by doing which He took upon Himself, bore and expiated our sins. Wherefore it is written through Isaias: "The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, every one hath turned aside into his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Surely he hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows" (Isa. 53:5–6, 4). Hence Christ confesses in the Psalm: "Then did I pay that which I took not away" (Ps. 68:5). Finally Christ did this rejoicing, because though He grieved vehemently over the bitterness of His passion, nevertheless in the superior portion of the soul He rejoiced in the fruit of the same passion.

"And coming home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying to them: Rejoice with me, because I have found my sheep that was lost" (Luke 15:6). So Christ on the day of the ascension, returning according to the human nature to the empyrean heaven (of which the Apostle says: "We have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in heaven," 2 Cor. 5:1; and Christ, "In my Father's house there are many mansions," John 14:2), thither Christ carried back the lost sheep, *(p. 104)* since, by the testimony of the Apostle and the Psalmist, "ascending on high, Christ led captivity captive" (Eph. 4:8; Ps. 67:19). Then He called together, that is, made to meet Him, His friends and neighbours, that is, the angelic spirits fully and unchangeably conformed to the divine will, knowing the divine secrets, and obeying God in all things, and dwelling with Him in that super-mundane palace, and beholding His face immediately with most exuberant everlasting joy (on account of which they are rightly called friends and neighbours and sons of God): whom He exhorts to rejoice with Him over the finding of His sheep. In which is plain the love of God for us, and how much He desires our salvation. Whence the Apostle says: "This is the will of God, your sanctification" (1 Thess. 4:3); and Nehemias, "The joy of the Lord is our strength" (2 Esd. 8:10). Through Isaias also the Lord says to the people of Israel: "O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments" (Isa. 48:18).

Finally Christ recovered this sheep most laboriously, and delivered or bought it most preciously, as the Apostle Peter says: "You were not redeemed with corruptible things, as gold or silver, but with the precious blood of the Lamb unspotted" (1 Peter 1:18–19); and Paul, "You are bought with a great price" (1 Cor. 6:20). Christ nevertheless reputes and calls this redemption a finding, as though weighing nothing of whatever He expended for it, on account of His excessive love for the human race. For which He confessed in Proverbs: "My delights were to be with the children of men" (Prov. 8:31); in the Canticles also: "If a man should give all the substance of his house for love, he shall despise it as nothing" (Cant. 8:7). And through Jeremias the Lord said: "I will rejoice over them, when I shall do them good" (Jer. 32:41).

Besides, as Gorran writes: "The sheep by its nature is an innocent animal. The other animals either bite with teeth, as the dog and wolf; or butt with horns, as the ram and bull; or strike with feet, as the horse and mule;

or tear with claws, as the lion and bear: but the sheep does none of these. Let him therefore acknowledge himself not to be a sheep of Christ who either bites with teeth, by detracting; or butts with horns, by violently oppressing others; or strikes with the foot, by being angry at neighbours; or tears with claws, by seizing the goods of others." — Lastly, according to Theophilus, the supernal powers are called sheep, because every creature in respect of God is bestial.

"I say to you, that even so there shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance, more than upon ninety-nine just who need not penance" (Luke 15:7). If this be understood generally of any penitent and of any just or innocent, it is not to be taken absolutely as it sounds, as though simply the holy angels glory more over any penitent than over any ninety-nine just. For they do not rejoice more over a sinner who after penance does not attain to great perfection, than they rejoiced over the most glorious Virgin Mary and the blessed Apostles and other Saints when they were still on earth, or than they now rejoice over them: nay not even over Paul, nor over Mary Magdalene is there greater joy in heaven than over the glorious Virgin alone. Therefore what is said of joy over a penitent sinner seems rather to be understood not simply, but as to something, and as to a certain recent and more evident manifestation of joy, by which He shows Himself to rejoice at the salvation of men: because in the conversion of a sinner there is for Christ a special, nay manifold, reason of glorying. First, because the sinner, when he is converted, is rescued from graver peril. For it is most customary that we exult specially and in a manner more over him whom we see rescued from greater peril, although, absolutely speaking, we love him not more. Second, because in the conversion of a sinner the mercy of God is chiefly declared. Third, because the fruit of the Lord's passion is most evidently commended in him. Fourth, because in the conversion of a sinner the adversaries of Christ and of our salvation, namely the devils, are specially confounded. — Finally, absolutely speaking, if we compare state with state, it is plain that the state of innocence is to be preferred to the state *(p. 105)* of penance, since innocence is a greater gift of God than penance. But if we compare the person of one state with the person of the other, they stand as exceeding and exceeded: so that some of one state are preferred to some of the other, according as they are in greater or less charity and grace. Hence, absolutely speaking, over many just and innocent, as simply better and more loved by God, there is greater joy to Christ and the supernal citizens than over any penitent sinners whatever. — Lastly, since, as the Apostle testifies, "where sin abounded, grace did more abound" (Rom. 5:20), it frequently happens that impious penitents afterwards become so much the more fervent in the divine service, and the more humble and better, the more gravely they consider they have offended, and that God has dealt more clemently with them: and so from their conversion a special cause of rejoicing arises for the angels of God.

Whence and how the greater measure of this joy is to be understood is touched more fully in Matthew, where it is had: "If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them should go astray, doth he not leave the ninety-nine in the mountains, and go to seek that which is gone astray? And if it so be that he find it, amen I say to you, he rejoiceth more for that, than for the ninety-nine that went not astray" (Matt. 18:12–13). Thus, as the master of the house rejoices more over one sheep found after being lost than over all the rest which did not go astray (not that he loves the one more than all the others, but because from its finding a certain special and new exultation is begotten in him, both because he considers that sheep more, and because on account of the preceding sorrow over its loss the opposite joy at its finding affects and is felt the more); so proportionably, over a penitent sinner the citizens of heaven rejoice more, or show signs of gladness more abundantly. For the holy angels also are reported to grieve and weep over the transgression and relapse of the men committed to them (Isa. 33:7): which, however, is rightly to be understood soundly. For there is not truly in them any penal affection, but they bear themselves after the manner of one grieving: according to which sense anger, fury and repentance are attributed to God.

Consequently by another parable the Saviour teaches that He ought not to spurn and avoid sinners, but rather mercifully admit them, and bring them back to the way of salvation. *"Or what woman having ten groats,"*

that is, ten coins of this kind, *"if she lose one groat, doth not light a candle,"* especially if she wish to seek in a dark time or in dark places, *"and sweep the house,"* that is, shifts the contents of the house from place to place, lest perhaps what is sought lie hidden under any of them, *"and seek diligently until she find it,"* especially since women are vehemently affected toward a thing when they have begun to be affected toward it? *"And when she hath found it, calleth together her friends and neighbours, saying: Rejoice with me, because I have found the groat which I had lost"* (Luke 15:8–9). Literally this is so.

Spiritually, however, by this woman is understood the eternal and uncreated Wisdom of God, which on account of her amiableness, beauty, piety and fecundity is called spouse and woman. Of whom the Wise Man protests, a chaste and pure lover: "Her I loved, and sought her out from my youth, and I desired to take her for my spouse, and I became a lover of her beauty" (Wis. 8:2). Moreover by the candle is understood the humanity of Christ, which the eternal Word in the same instant in which He assumed it lit, that is, filled with the fervour of divine charity, the splendour of all wisdom, and every virtue including no imperfection in its nature: and so Wisdom incarnate, conversing among men, *"swept the house,"* that is, manifoldly stirred up, moved, led the people of the Jews, by teaching, conversing exemplarily, working miracles; who, as Peter says in the Acts, "went about doing good" (Acts 10:38); and sought diligently the lost man, stamped with the image of the supreme King *(p. 106)* and so fitly designated by the groat. For "the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). *"Until she find it,"* that is, redeemed the human race by His passion, as He says to the Father in John: "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (John 17:4). This groat therefore having been found, that is, man so delivered, Christ on the day of the ascension called together friends and neighbours, that is, the blessed societies of heavenly citizens, perfectly conformed to the divine will, and beholding God most high clearly by immediate sight. Wherefore the angelic and blessed minds are rightly called friends and neighbours of God, because He dwells not only near them but in them, and deigns to unite them to Himself most familiarly and very lovingly. *"And said to them: Rejoice with me, because I have found the groat which I had lost."* For Christ in His ascension made the angelic spirits meet Him: who asking, "Who is this King of glory?" as the Psalmist says (Ps. 23:8); and likewise, "Who is this that cometh from Edom?" and "Why is thy apparel red?" as Isaias recites (Isa. 63:1–2); He answered: "I have trodden the winepress alone" (Isa. 63:3), that is, by the pressure of the passion I delivered the human race. And then, as Ambrose says in the Hymn, "The kingdoms of heaven rejoiced at the return of the Only-begotten." So great, however, is Christ's love for us that He confesses our salvation to be His joy.

"So I say to you, there shall be joy before the angels of God" (Luke 15:10), that is, in the heavenly kingdom the holy angels will rejoice together, and Christ will exult in their presence, *"upon one sinner doing penance"*: because of his escape, whereby he escapes the peril of eternal damnation, they rejoice with him charitably and piously, and because they see the divine predestination fulfilled, the price of the blood of Christ also bearing fruit, and the ruin of the heavenly Jerusalem repaired, and the intellectual creature of the nature which they love united to God, and the honour and worship of the Creator of all increased in it, the demons overcome, and the vices by which God is offended diminished. So also in the palace of kings joy arises when a kinsman or son of the king is rescued from the greatest adversities.

Thus Christ the Wisdom of the Father had ten groats, that is, nine orders of angels, and the human race, which as the tenth groat perished through original sin. Besides, according to Bede, Christ found the sheep and the lost groat when He restored man; and over it found there is greater joy in heaven than over ninety-nine just or angels not needing penance, since there is greater matter of divine praise in the restoration of men than in the creation or even beatification of angels. For God created the angels wonderfully, but restored man more wonderfully.

Lastly, as Christ did these things, so also every vicar of Christ, having the care of others committed to him, if it happen that anyone committed to him err by sinning, the rest being left under good custody, ought to turn himself wholly to bring him back, to hasten, to strive, seeking him, exhorting him, and if need be justly

punishing him, to recall him to the grace of Christ, as the Apostle writes to the Galatians: “My little children, of whom I am in labour again, until Christ be formed in you” (Gal. 4:19).

Furthermore, to declare the same, namely that it became Christ to invite sinners to penance and mercifully receive them when they came, Christ introduces a third parable, more evident and more beautiful than the others. *“A certain man”* (Luke 15:11), that is, God the Father, or the Only-begotten of God incarnate for us, of whom (according to the old translation) Jeremias says: “And he is a man, and who shall know him?” (Jer. 17:9); and the Psalmist: “A man is born in her, and the Highest himself hath founded her” (Ps. 86:5); *“had two sons,”* that is, two peoples, the Jewish and the Gentile. It is the custom of Scripture that a whole people is designated by the name of son or daughter, as in the Prophets the Israelite people is frequently denoted by the daughter of Sion or *(p. 107)* daughter of Jerusalem, as is plain in Sophonias and Zacharias (Soph. 3:14; Zach. 9:9). Nor only that Jewish people, but the Gentile also is so called by God, according to that of Isaias: “Come down, sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon” (Isa. 47:1). Which is done to insinuate that nature itself, in itself, is loved by the Creator with fatherly love as a daughter. At times also some whole people is called son, as the Lord says through Osee: “Israel was a child, and I loved him, and I called my son out of Egypt” (Osee 11:1). Besides, by these two sons, indeterminately, can be understood any just or innocent man, and a transgressor, because even the impious is in a way called a son of God, in so far as he was created to His image, or in Baptism spiritually regenerated.

“And the younger of them said to his father” (Luke 15:12), that is, the Gentile people: which is rightly named the younger: First, because from the beginning of the human race the worship of the true God was prior to the error, rite and worship of gentilism; nay after the flood idolatry began. Second, because the Gentiles were more childish than the Jews, more foolish and more bestial: for as Augustine asserts, “Nothing is so childish as to worship idols, and nothing more stupid than not to obey the precepts of the divine law.” Hence also of the people of the Jews God testifies: “Israel is my firstborn son” (Exod. 4:22); and through Jeremias, “Ephraim is my firstborn” (Jer. 31:9). Moreover Gorran says in this place: “Those who worshipped idols, namely the Gentiles, lost the name of divine sonship, and were called sons of men, as in Genesis: ‘The sons of God seeing the daughters of men’ (Gen. 6:2).” Yet this is not to be understood as though those who are called sons of men, who certainly preceded the flood, had venerated idols, or that idolatry preceded the flood itself. Whence what Gorran alleges of idolaters is not said to the letter, but of the posterity of Cain, who not for idolatry but for vices of the flesh are there called sons of men.

Thus the younger son said by word, or rather by deed, to his father, namely God: *“Father, give me the portion of substance that falleth to me”*, that is, the possession of the good pertaining to me, which possession is a portion of substance, that is, a part of the created good befitting me, or the partial substance belonging to me. For every created good is the substance or possession of the Creator, as in Genesis Abraham says: “I lift up my hand to the Lord God the most high, the possessor of heaven and earth” (Gen. 14:22). Of this substance something belongs specially to man, namely his body, and soul, and his natural gifts, the supernatural gifts also granted him, and the goods of fortune. The younger son asked to receive from the father the part belonging to him, because he wished to use, or rather abuse, the natural gifts and other goods conferred on him by God according to his own will, and not to be subject to the divine law, or protected by the supernatural gifts of the grace of the Saviour, as through Jeremias God says to certain ones: “Of old time thou hast broken my yoke, thou hast burst my bonds, and thou saidst, I will not serve” (Jer. 2:20). Hence the Psalmist says: “Man when he was in honour did not understand; he is compared to senseless beasts” (Ps. 48:13). This likewise says every transgressor of the divine law.

“And he divided unto them his substance,” that is, gave to each what he asked, and permitted each to do what he would, according to that of Ecclesiasticus: “God made man from the beginning, and left him in the hand of his own counsel. He hath set water and fire before thee: stretch forth thy hand to which thou wilt” (Ecclus. 15:14, 17). Hence also the Apostle confessed: “Every one hath his proper gift from God” (1 Cor. 7:7). To the

Jews also He gave the gifts of grace, and the written divine and supernatural law; but to the Gentiles the gifts of nature, whom He also left in the natural law, which few of them are read to have kept.

"And not many days after" (Luke 15:13), that is, a few days having passed, *"the younger son, gathering all together"*—that is, the goods divinely bestowed on him, ordered alike to his own advantage and viciously turned back—*"took his journey into a far country,"* from the fatherland of the Blessed, by removing himself by an impious life: which is the evil pilgrimage, by which one uses this world and the present exile for his country; *(p. 108)* he set out, not so much by bodily passing as by turning his mind improperly away from God. For as one approaches God, uncircumscribed, everywhere substantially truly present, by affection of mind, not by a step of the body, except so far as the exterior act has the character of virtue from the interior act of intellect and will; so one recedes from God by aversion of mind, not by motion of the body, except so far as the exterior act is made vicious from the interior inordinateness or guilt of the mind. *"Into a far country,"* that is, the state of sin, the dissimilarity and continuation, by which one is far distant from God, according to that of Proverbs: "The Lord is far from the wicked" (Prov. 15:29); and in the Psalm: "Salvation is far from sinners" (Ps. 118:155). This is a spiritual distance, namely dissimilarity.

"And there wasted his substance", that is, lost the gifts of sanctifying grace, consumed the goods of fortune, infected and made worse the gifts of nature, *"living riotously,"* by bodily fornication, which is mortal sin; and likewise by spiritual fornication, which is aversion of the mind from the unchangeable and immense good, and its conversion to the created, perishable and vain good. Chiefly, however, idolatry is called spiritual fornication, as in Deuteronomy God spoke to Moses: "This people will go a fornicating after strange gods" (Deut. 31:16); and in Osee, "The land by fornication shall fornicate, departing from the Lord" (Osee 1:2). Moreover, according to the divine Dionysius, chapter 4 of the Divine Names, sins, although they do not wholly corrupt or take away the gifts of nature, yet infect them, and darken reason. Wherefore Damascene asserts: "Sin is aversion from that which is according to nature, to that which is beside nature." Hence also "strange" is in one way called what is alien from the nature of a thing, as in Isaias vengeance is called the work of God, but strange to Him (Isa. 28:21): since to God in Himself and from His own nature it is proper to have mercy and spare; but to avenge belongs to Him on account of our malice.

"And after he had spent all" (Luke 15:14), that is, had either lost the gifts divinely bestowed on him, or consumed them, or infected them: for by the testimony of the Apostle, "he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body" (1 Cor. 6:18), because by immoderate lust man as it were consumes his interior things and enervates his powers; *"there came a mighty famine in that country"*: that is, among the impious and carnal there befell a great lack of spiritual goods; to the Gentiles also the charisms of graces specially failed. To vicious men also, on account of their sins, the necessaries of the body are at times withdrawn. *"And he began to be in want,"* of all things pertaining to salvation, which by sinning he had lost, namely grace and virtues: as is wont to befall the slothful, according to that of Proverbs: "How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? Thou wilt sleep a little, and slumber a little, and want shall come upon thee as a man armed" (Prov. 6:9–11).

"And he went" (Luke 15:15), removing himself more unhappily from God: from whom we are removed the more vehemently, the more gravely or frequently we sin. For sin which is not at once washed away by penance by its own weight soon draws to another, as Gregory says. *"And joined himself to one of the citizens of that country,"* that is, the devil, as is commonly expounded. For the devil continually abides and dwells in the state of sin and the dissimilarity of vices: who is called by Christ in John not only a citizen, but also prince of this world (John 12:31): where by the world are designated worldly and vicious men, chiefly the reprobate, of whom Christ again says to the Father: "I pray not for the world" (John 17:9). By this citizen can also be understood any heresiarch, or chief sinner hardened in vices. To such a citizen therefore, namely the devil, this son is now said to have joined himself: not because before he had not adhered to him, nay immediately when he turned himself away from the heavenly Father he adhered to him; but now he is said to

have joined himself, because he adhered to him more tenaciously than before, as through Isaias it is said to the most wicked: *(p. 109)* "You have said: We have entered into a league with death, and we have made a covenant with hell" (Isa. 28:15). *"And he sent him into his farm,"* that is, entangled him in worldly cupidities, and associated him with carnal men, who are the vessels and possession of the demon, *"to feed swine,"* that is, the lower demons, or foul men, subject to the devil through carnal vices, who delight in obscene and impious acts, and are fed with such things; who are as the sow that was washed, wallowing in the mire (2 Peter 2:22); to whom that of Joel is fitting: "The beasts have rotted in their dung" (Joel 1:17).

"And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him" (Luke 15:16). The interior belly of the soul is at times called the intellect, which conceives the truth, brings forth the mental word, and produces the fruit of good work. The intellect also is really the same as the memory, or the intellective memorative power, which the Philosopher calls the place of species. Of such a belly God the Father speaks to the Son in the Psalm: "From the womb before the day star I begot thee" (Ps. 109:3); and Solomon in Proverbs: "The words of the talebearer are as if they were simple, and they reach even to the inner parts of the belly" (Prov. 18:8; 26:22). In like manner the will or its affect is called the belly of the soul, because it allures, receives and keeps the things desired. Whence also Solomon says: "The belly of the wicked is insatiable" (Prov. 13:25). Moreover the husk is a kind of pulse, of sounding and empty pods, burdening the belly rather than refreshing it: by which is designated worldly prudence and curious knowledge, which fills not the belly of the intellect, and earthly substance, which satisfies not the belly of the will. For the covetous man, as the Wise Man asserts, "shall not be filled with money" (Eccles. 5:9); and the more the covetous man acquires, the more he pants after acquiring. Finally no created good can satisfy and quiet the appetite of the soul. Wherefore Augustine says: "Lord, thou hast created us for thyself, and our heart is restless until it come to thee."

"And returning to himself" (Luke 15:17), that is, turning himself to the dictate of right reason, examining himself, considering his interior things, as through Isaias is commanded: "Return, ye transgressors, to the heart" (Isa. 46:8). For man by sinning wanders basely outside himself, and transcending the limits of reason transgresses the bounds set him by God. At times, however, one is said to return to himself for the mere consideration of truth, according to that of the Acts: "Peter, coming to himself, said, Now I know in very deed" (Acts 12:11). *"He said,"* repenting from the heart, and from his affliction reflecting on himself, according to that of Isaias: "Vexation alone shall make you understand what you hear" (Isa. 28:19). *"How many hired servants"*, that is, very many serving God for eternal reward, according to the Psalmist: "I have inclined my heart to do thy justifications for ever, for the reward" (Ps. 118:112). Whence of Moses the Apostle says to the Hebrews: "He looked unto the reward" (Heb. 11:26). And in Genesis Abraham says to God: "Lord God, what wilt thou give me?" (Gen. 15:2). To whom also in Genesis the Lord says: "I am thy protector, and thy reward exceeding great" (Gen. 15:1). *"In my father's house,"* that is, in the Church militant, which is called the house of God or of the heavenly Father, as the Apostle writes: "That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God" (1 Tim. 3:15); *"abound with bread,"* that is, with manifold spiritual nourishment, namely: sacramental bread, of which the Saviour says, "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35, 48); and likewise, "My flesh is meat indeed" (John 6:56); moreover penitential bread, of which it is said in the Psalm, "Thou wilt feed us with the bread of tears" (Ps. 79:6); and, "I did eat ashes as it were bread" (Ps. 101:10). There is also the bread of good work, of which Christ says: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me" (John 4:34). There is finally the bread of contemplation, according to that of Ecclesiasticus: "She shall feed him with the bread of life and understanding" (Ecclus. 15:3). There is again the bread of holy affection, of which the ardent lover confesses: "My tears have been my bread day and night" (Ps. 41:4). With these breads they abound who in the Church serve God most diligently, as the faithful minister says: "The Lord ruleth me, and I shall want nothing: he hath set me in a place of pasture" (Ps. 22:1–2).

Thus in this place hired servants are taken in a good sense: *(p. 110)* who, although they minister to God from regard to the reward, from the love by which they spiritually love themselves in God, yet do this principally from the love of God, and to His praise and glory: to which they finally order themselves and all their merit and reward; otherwise they would merit nothing, since every meritorious work must proceed from divine charity, which is the life of the soul. At times, however, hired servants are taken in an evil sense, namely for those who minister to God from regard of private advantage, or principally for temporal things: of whom in the Gospel Christ testified, "They have received their reward" (Matt. 6:2, 5, 16). Such indeed make not God their end, but work from private love for themselves.

"And I here perish with hunger," that is, I who, since I am a son of the heavenly Father (in the manner before set forth), can serve God from pure and filial love, which is higher than to serve from love of reward, die in the soul from lack of spiritual nourishment, not having the life of grace, and daily falling into sins, which are the destruction of the soul.

This word Christ can say in the person of His members: How many hired servants, that is, prelates and doctors seeking their own advantages, on which account they are hirelings rather than shepherds, *"in my father's house,"* namely in the Church, *"abound with bread,"* that is, bodily nourishments, and knowledge of the Scriptures, and sacraments! *"And I,"* in my members, namely the needy and subjects, *"perish with hunger,"* from lack of material food or spiritual fare, that is, the word of God and good example.

"I will arise" (Luke 15:18), that is, I will desist from sin, and lift myself from earthly things to heavenly: as the Apostle exhorts, "Rise, thou that sleepest" (Eph. 5:14); and Isaias, "Shake thyself from the dust" (Isa. 52:2); *"and will go,"* by conversion of mind and true contrition, *"to my father"* in heaven, everywhere present: as the Psalmist admonishes, "Come ye to him, and be enlightened" (Ps. 33:6). Whence through Zacharias the Lord says most mercifully: "Turn ye to me, and I will turn to you" (Zach. 1:3). Hence to the Hebrews the Apostle admonishes: "Let us go therefore with confidence to the throne of his grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace" (Heb. 4:16). *"And say to him,"* accusing myself: according to what is written: "I said, I will confess against myself my injustice to the Lord" (Ps. 31:5). *"Father, I have sinned,"* against the creation and redemption, by committing evil and omitting good, *"against heaven,"* that is, before the supernal spirits, and specially against the angel the guardian of my life, whose presence I dishonoured by sinning, and by not acquiescing in his inspirations.

Besides, he who offends the Creator deserves to incur the offence of the whole creature, and that every creature rise against him, and avenge in him the injury of its Creator. For by sinning against God he in a way dishonours every creature, whose God and Creator he thus holds cheap, dishonours or spurns: as one who unjustly struck an earthly king would dishonour and offend each of his subjects. For as honour, so also the dishonouring of a king and of any ruler redounds on the subjects. Yet the creature ought incomparably more to love and venerate God its creator than subjects the earthly king. Whence for the dishonouring of God there is supreme cause to grieve. Again, heaven, earth, and the rest which have not intellect, praise, bless, glorify and honour God materially, because they show to those who consider them that God their creator is above all to be praised and honoured: therefore he who sins in a way dishonours them, because he really contradicts their material praises; and so he sins chiefly against heaven, which more than the other corporal creatures shows more clearly and magnificently how incomparably God is to be honoured. The sinner also sins against heaven because by sinning he deserves to be deprived of the heavenly dwelling. *"And before thee,"* who beholdest all things most clearly: therefore shamelessly and irreverently I conducted myself, in that, thee present and looking on, *(p. 111)* I presumed to sin. Whence it belongs to true wisdom that we continually attend to God everywhere present and looking on all things: from which sapiential consideration chaste shame and modest fear are soon begotten, by which in the presence of the divine countenance we blush to bear ourselves basely and unjustly. Hence, according to Boethius, a great necessity of probity is laid upon us, since we do all things in the sight of the Judge who sees all things.

"I am not now worthy to be called thy son" (Luke 15:19), because I have so often and so gravely dishonoured thee: which is not lawful to a son, since it is written: "Honour thy father" (Exod. 20:12). And through Malachias the most high Creator says: "A son honoureth his father: if then I be a father, where is my honour?" (Mal. 1:6). Again, I am unworthy to be called thy son, because by sinning I have manifoldly defiled thy image in me, and made myself very unlike thee; again, because by sinning I have made myself a servant of the devil and of sin (for by whom a man is overcome, of the same also is he the slave, as the apostle Peter says, 2 Peter 2:19); again, because I have put myself outside thy discipline: which is not befitting a son, as the Apostle says: "If you be without chastisement, then are you bastards, and not sons" (Heb. 12:8). *"Make me as one of thy hired servants,"* that is, to the degree, name and grace of a son I confess myself unworthy to be received: therefore I humbly pray at least to be reckoned among hired servants. So also Abigail, a most prudent woman, having learned that David wished to take her to wife, said: "Behold, let thy handmaid be a servant, to wash the feet of the servants of my lord" (1 Kings 25:41). Finally there are good hired servants, who serve God for eternal retribution: to whom it is said, "Take courage, and let not your hands be weakened; for there shall be a reward for your work" (2 Par. 15:7). But others are bad hired servants, who seem to serve God for a temporal reward. Whence in John Christ says: "The hireling, and he that is not the shepherd, seeth the wolf coming, and flieth" (John 10:12).

"And rising up" (Luke 15:20), that is, lifting himself from sins, and disposing himself from carnal to spiritual things, *"he came to his father,"* that is, by attrition, and by good works from the genus, he began in mind to return to God, and to dispose his heart for sanctifying grace and true contrition.

"And when he was yet a great way off": because not yet by infused charity, true contrition and the acquiring of virtues was he joined to God; nay he was still in his sins, until attrition was changed into contrition; *"his father saw him,"* namely God the Father, with the eye of fatherly piety and eternal predestination, concerning which he prays who says: "Look thou upon me, and have mercy on me" (Ps. 118:132). At times, however, the look of God is taken for the notice of strict and just vengeance, according to that of Habacuc: "Why lookest thou, O Lord, upon them that do unjust things?" (Hab. 1:13). *"And was moved with compassion, and running to him,"* that is, by prevenient grace mercifully cooperating with him and succouring. For when one does what is in him, preparing himself for grace, God at once helps, and infuses grace. *"Fell upon his neck,"* that is, piously and lovingly received him, not only by remitting sins, but by infusing the charisms of graces. Wherefore in Job it is had: "If he direct his heart to him, he shall draw his spirit and breath unto himself" (Job 34:14). *"And kissed him,"* that is, familiarly and intimately and sweetly united him to Himself, so that He infused into him interior peace, by which the mind rests in God without disturbance, as in the Canticles the Spouse prays: "Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth" (Cant. 1:1). This kiss is the adhesion, union or conformation of the created mind with God, because as the Apostle says: "He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit" (1 Cor. 6:17). On this Chrysostom says: "What is it that the father runs, but that, our sins hindering us, we could not come to him by our own virtue? He, piteous and powerful, descends to the weak. He kisses, however, the mouth of the son, through which the confession of the penitent, sent forth from the heart, had come forth, which the father gladly received." Gregory of Nyssa also says: "Confession appeased the father toward him, so that he went to meet him and gave kisses. If therefore we also desire that God run mercifully to us, help, and be present, *(p. 112)* let us repent heartily, and approach the Lord by humble confession." Therefore in Proverbs it is asserted: "He that hideth his sins shall not prosper; but he that shall confess and forsake them shall obtain mercy" (Prov. 28:13).

"And the son said to him" (Luke 15:21), namely to the most clement father: *"Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee,"* as has been expounded, *"I am not now worthy to be called thy son."* This he said, considering himself according to the sins he had committed, or according to what he was by guilt, as Paul said: "I am not worthy to be called an apostle" (1 Cor. 15:9). Yet considering him according to what he was made by grace and true penance, he now recovered his former honour and degree, and deserved to be called

son, especially since he was kissed by the father in sign of concord and love. Finally, the more graciously almighty God visits and enlightens the sinner man, the more profoundly he humbles himself, and the more gravely accuses himself: for the more evidently he experiences God's piety toward himself, and the more clearly contemplates His majesty and sanctity, the more lucidly he beholds his own ingratitude, perversity and depravity, the more heartily detests it, the more fully confesses it. Hence Isaias, after that sublime contemplation in which he saw the Lord sitting upon a high throne, testified: "Woe is me, because I am a man of unclean lips" (Isa. 6:5). Yet this son, having experienced so great love of God the Father toward him through that interior kiss, did not make mention of the state of a hired servant; but trusts to be reckoned among the sons of God, and proposes to adhere to and serve God on account of His pure goodness.

Ambrose, however, says: "A servant is he who, through fear of present or future punishment, restrains himself from vices; a hired servant, who ministers to God in hope and desire of the heavenly kingdom; a son, who, kindled by love of God and zeal for virtues, detests with all his study whatever is contrary to God." This, however, is to be understood of a servant by the servitude of wholly servile fear, in which there is no love of justice: of whom Christ speaks in John: "The servant abideth not in the house for ever" (John 8:35). But there is also a servant by the servitude of initial or filial fear, to whom the heavenly Judge says: "Well done, good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Matt. 25:21). Of such servants it is now subjoined:

"But the father said to his servants" (Luke 15:22), that is, to the prelates and ministers of the Church, namely the Apostles and their successors, preachers and doctors, he commanded: *"Bring forth quickly the first robe,"* that is, the garment of innocence received in Baptism, which this one lost by sinning, exhibit to him ministerially or by preaching promise to him. But sanctifying grace or formed faith can also be called the first robe. Of the acquiring of innocence, however, the Saviour says: "Unless you be converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:3). *"And put it on him,"* that is, adorn his soul with this virtue, cooperating with me in his interior clothing: of which it is had in Isaias: "He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation" (Isa. 61:10); and the Spouse in the Canticles: "I have put off my garment" (Cant. 5:3), she says. For virtues and the gifts of the Holy Ghost and virtuous works are garments and arms and ornaments of the soul. Whence in the Apocalypse Christ exhorts: "Be clothed in white garments, that the shame of thy nakedness may not appear" (Apoc. 3:18). Moreover most glorious God, who can do all things most fully by Himself, takes some to Himself and makes them co-operators, that He may the more communicate His goodness to His creatures, and that His perfection may shine the more clearly in things. Hence the Apostle says: "We are God's coadjutors; we are God's co-operators" (1 Cor. 3:9).

"And put a ring," ministerially or dispositively, that is, the seal of true faith, *"on his hand,"* that is, on his operation, that by acting well he may show that he has living faith (for faith without works is dead, as the body without the soul, James 2:17, 20, 26), nay that he may so conduct himself virtuously that whoever shall have attended to the sincerity of his conversation, as it were convinced by the very evidence of the deed, may be compelled to confess the faith true, and his *(p. 113)* law just. Moreover by the ring of spherical figure, in which no beginning or end can be assigned, is denoted the faith of the eternal Trinity: by which the soul is espoused to the heavenly Spouse, as the same Prophet says, "I will espouse thee to me in faith" (Osee 2:20). Hence the most sacred and most innocent Agnes said: "He hath pledged me with the ring of his faith."

"And shoes," that is, fortifications against those things which are corruptive of virtuous progress, *"on his feet,"* that is, on both appetites of his soul, namely the sensitive and the intellective, by which one proceeds in the way of God, when these appetites are directed by the judgment of reason: for by loving and desiring in an ordered way we chiefly go to God. And since shoes are made of the skins of dead animals, rightly by them are signified the examples of the holy fathers, by which we are fortified against sins. Of which in the Canticles it is read: "How beautiful are thy steps in shoes, O prince's daughter!" (Cant. 7:1). The Apostle

also exhorts: “Your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace” (Eph. 6:15). Finally by the feet can be understood intellect and will, since by contemplating and loving divine things we chiefly go to the fatherland. These feet are covered with shoes when they are adorned with the gift of wisdom and infused charity, by which they are lifted to higher things, lest they be defiled by thought or affection of earthly things.

“And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it” (Luke 15:23): that is, Christ, immolated for us as a calf, preach to him, propose Him for imitation, and offer Him under the species of the Sacrament to be received. Christ, however, according to the human nature is called a calf, on account of His immolation on the cross, and fatted, because adorned with the fulness of all the charisms of grace. Of such fattening Isaias speaks: “Your soul shall be delighted in fatness” (Isa. 55:2); and again, “The Lord of hosts shall make unto all peoples in this mountain,” namely in Mount Sion, “a feast of fat things” (Isa. 25:6): which is expounded of the refection of the Eucharist. *“And kill,”* that is, commemorate the passion of Christ, and announce Him slain for human salvation: according as Peter says: “Christ also died once for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might offer us to God” (1 Peter 3:18). The commemoration of this passion is chiefly made in the celebration of Masses, and the reception of the Sacrament, as the Apostle says: “For as often as you shall eat this bread and drink the chalice, you shall show the death of the Lord” (1 Cor. 11:26). *“And let us eat and make merry,”* that is, from this amendment of my son let us be spiritually refreshed and glory. For in the primitive Church the Christians daily received the sacrament of the Eucharist. So much does God desire our salvation that He protests that He glories in our penance and spiritual progress. For the Apostle also says: “This is the will of God, your sanctification” (1 Thess. 4:3). And in the Apocalypse Christ says: “Behold, I stand at the gate and knock; if any man shall open to me, I will come in to him, and will sup with him” (Apoc. 3:20). *“Because this my son was dead”* (Luke 15:24), by guilt: in which sense in the Apocalypse it is said to someone, “Thou hast a name that thou livest, and thou art dead” (Apoc. 3:1); *“and is come to life again,”* by penance, which, according to Jerome, is the second plank after shipwreck; *“was lost, and is found.”*

“And they began to be merry,” that is, to rejoice with him in his salvation and grace: which is a spiritual refection, of which the Apostle writes to the Corinthians: “The spirit of Titus was refreshed by you all” (2 Cor. 7:13); and in the Psalmist, “And let the just feast and rejoice before God” (Ps. 67:4). For those who are truly virtuous and charitable exult greatly at the amendment of others and give thanks to God: which acts are food, nay a feasting of the mind. For feasting is called a solemn refection.

“Now his elder son” (Luke 15:25), that is, the Jewish people: which is called elder, because it preceded the Gentiles in maturity and wisdom and worship of the true God; *“was in the field,”* that is, occupied with earthly promises, content with the literal sense, not rooted in heavenly things: for they thought that Christ in His first coming would reign temporally, and fill them *(p. 114)* most abundantly with all the riches of the world. *“And when he came,”* that is, when by observance of the legal rites he wished to approach God, *“and drew nigh to the house,”* that is, the Church, of which the Apostle says: “That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God” (1 Tim. 3:15). For the legal things were prefigurative of the things which are believed and done in the Church, and disposed to Christ. *“He heard music,”* that is, spiritual canticles of those converted from gentilism to the faith, *“and dancing,”* that is, the same converted Gentiles praising God with consonant voice, and in the table and temple of Christ exulting heartily and feasting; *“and he called one of the servants”* (Luke 15:26), of those converted to Christ, or some one of the Prophets, searching his predictions, *“and asked what these things meant,”* that is, what these solemnities and proclamations of Christians were. Finally in the primitive Church there were some in Jerusalem converted to Christ from the Gentiles, and many more in Galilee and Samaria and other places, at whose spiritual joy and grace the Jews, wondering, asked what such festivals were.

“And he said to him: Thy brother is come” (Luke 15:27), that is, the Gentiles, existing of the same nature with thee, from the darkness of ignorance and the region of dissimilarity, namely from the place and state of idolatry and other vices, have been converted by faith to God, by believing in Christ. This conversion of the

Gentiles the Prophets, and Isaias chiefly, foretold, as when Isaias says to God: "Behold, thou shalt call a nation which thou knewest not" (Isa. 55:5); and again, "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light" (Isa. 9:2); and the Psalmist, "Behold foreigners, and Tyre, and the people of the Ethiopians, these were there" (Ps. 86:4). Daniel the prophet also says: "All peoples, tribes and tongues shall serve him" (Dan. 7:14). This also the apostle Peter said to the Jews, who with indignation asked him why he had gone in to Cornelius, showing that God had conferred the same grace on those Gentiles as on the Jews (Acts 11:17). *"And thy father hath killed,"* that is, God, who is father of all by creation, and was specially father of the Jews by singular grace and special governance in the Old Testament, as in Deuteronomy Moses says to the people of Israel: "Is not he thy father, that hath possessed thee, and made thee, and created thee?" (Deut. 32:6). In Isaias also it is had: "And now, O Lord, thou art our father" (Isa. 64:8). For the Jews were the peculiar people of God (Deut. 7:6). *"The fatted calf,"* namely Christ, according to the exposition before set forth: whom the Father killed in the manner in which He delivered Him up, namely permissively, and also by inspiring the soul of Christ with the will to suffer for the salvation of the world, and also because by the passion of Christ He decreed to save the human race. Hence Isaias also protests: "For the wickedness of my people have I struck him" (Isa. 53:8). And in the Acts Peter asserts: "But those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled" (Acts 3:18). *"Because he hath received him safe,"* that is, hath recovered the Gentile people once lost.

But against this it can be objected. For Christ was killed before the Gentiles were converted by the merit of His passion: and so it should rather have been said, He hath received him safe, because He killed the fatted calf. But to this the answer is plain from what has been adduced. For now the Father is said to have killed this calf, in so far as through His ministers, prelates and preachers He announced that He was slain for the Gentiles. Moreover the Father permitted Christ to be killed, because He received the Gentile people safe according to eternal predestination, that is, because He pre-ordained to save them so. Or, what is said, "Because he hath received him safe," etc., gives a cause a posteriori, which is rather a sign of the effect than a cause.

"And he was angry" (Luke 15:28), *"the elder brother,"* that is, the Jews were moved to indignation at the conversion of the Gentiles and faith in Christ, as the Apostle writes of the unbelieving Jews: "They please not God, and are adversaries to all men, prohibiting us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved" (1 Thess. 2:15–16). Besides, the Jews converted to Christ murmured at the reception of the Gentiles, saying to Peter that of the Acts: *(p. 115)* "Why didst thou go in to men that had foreskin, and didst eat with them?" (Acts 11:3). *"And would not go in"* to the spiritual banquet which God the Father provides in the Church for Christians, nor would he communicate to the converted Gentiles in the faith and sacraments of Christ.

"His father therefore coming out": not by change of place, or motion made in Himself, but by a new effect, as Habacuc says to Him: "Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, for salvation with thy Christ" (Hab. 3:13). He went forth, however, from the Synagogue to the Church, justly leaving the one, and mercifully visiting the other. *"Began to entreat him,"* that is, to invite the Jews piously and paternally to Christ, by interior inspiration, angelic exhortation, apostolic preaching. Whence in the Acts Peter said to them: "And now, brethren, I know that you did it through ignorance, as did also your rulers. Be penitent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:17, 19). As also Paul says to the Gentiles: "We beseech you for Christ, be reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:20).

"But he answering, said to his father" (Luke 15:29), to whose most kindly exhortation he did not acquiesce, but resisted: *"Behold, for so many years do I serve thee,"* that is, for many years I have ministered to thee by observance of the old law, *"and I have never transgressed thy commandment."* How is this true, when that people was almost always rebellious to God, and frequently fell into idolatry? Wherefore in the Lamentations Jeremias speaks in the person of the Jews: "We have done wickedly, and have provoked thee to wrath" (Lam. 3:42). And Esdras similarly confesses: "Our iniquities are multiplied over our head, and our sins are grown

up even unto heaven" (1 Esd. 9:6). To this there is a twofold answer: the first, that this is verified not of all, but of some of the Jews, who remained in innocence, as Elias and Jeremias; the second, that this is presumption, not truth: nor is it wonderful if they lie who envy their brother, and refuse to believe. *"And thou hast never given me a kid,"* that is, so great benefits thou hast not bestowed on me in the Old Testament, as now thou bestowest on the Gentiles in the evangelical law. Or by the kid is understood Christ, who was promised to the old people, not exhibited. *"That I might make merry with my friends,"* that is, with the others ministering to thee dear to me, I might glory and be refreshed in thy benefits. This can also be referred to the feasting of eternal felicity in the fatherland, to which the Jews could not be brought before the slaying of Christ. *"But as soon as this thy son"* (Luke 15:30). He says this in contempt, because the Jews despised the Gentiles: as if he said, After this perverse and vile one, whom I scorn to call brother. Whence in the Acts Peter says: "You know how abominable it is for a man that is a Jew to keep company or to come to one of another nation" (Acts 10:28). *"Who hath devoured his substance with harlots"* (this was expounded before), *"is come, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf,"* that is, thou hast announced to him the passion of Christ, and hast exhibited to him Christ suffered, and hast communicated to him the merit of His passion.

"But he" (Luke 15:31), the most pious father, *"said to him,"* the elder and envious son: *"Son, thou art always with me."* This is said because some of the Jews, during the whole time of the Old Testament, adhered steadfastly to God. *"And all I have is thine,"* that is, the gifts of my grace in the present, and the gifts of glory in the future, are prepared to be given to thee, and what I have by nature is prepared for thee, that thou mayest partake of it by beatific fruition. Of which goods the Apostle says: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Cor. 2:9). Lastly, all things that are the Father's, that is, which belong absolutely to the Father, are the Son's and the Holy Ghost's by substantial unity and identity. Wherefore the Son says to the Father: "All my things are thine, and thine are mine" (John 17:10). *"But it was fit that we should make merry and be glad"* (Luke 15:32), *"for this thy brother was dead"* by sin. Of which death the Saviour says: "Let the dead bury their dead" (Matt. 8:22). For the life of the soul is the charity *(p. 116)* of God, which is lost by mortal sin, and mortal sin itself is held to be the death of the soul. *"And is come to life again,"* by the infusion of grace. *"He was lost,"* by deserving eternal damnation, and falling into the hand of demons, *"and is found,"* that is, brought back to the hands of his shepherd and saviour: not by chance indeed, but by divine pre-ordination, which permits none of the elect to perish, although it suffers him for a time to err. Hence the apostle Peter writes to such: "You were as sheep going astray, but you are now converted to the shepherd and bishop of your souls" (1 Peter 2:25).

Thus from this parable we are taught how incomprehensible and immense is the mercy of God toward penitents: who also frequently in those in whom sins abounded makes the charisms of graces superabound (Rom. 5:20), and makes those who for a long time lived viciously to go before those who from childhood remained in innocence. Let none therefore despair, nor let anyone presume, nor let anyone, however more fervent he seem, despise another.

Finally, the divine Dionysius most devoutly introduces the sense of this parable in the book of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, expounding the mystical reasons of the ceremonial acts which in the primitive Church the bishop or hierarch performed about those to be baptized. So he says in sentence: "Truly the best and most supremely good God, who both shows Himself lovable to those returning to Him, and goes to meet and run to those approaching, and, wholly embracing the whole, salutes, receives and as it were lifts them on His shoulders, nor accuses them of their former evils, but keeps the day as a feast, and calls together friends, that there may be the disposition of all rejoicing, and also rouses the best angels to joy."

Luke 16

Article XXXIX — Exposition of the Sixteenth Chapter: “And he said also to his disciples: There was a certain rich man”

(p. 116) In this chapter the Saviour exhorts to works of piety, especially to the giving of alms, first by a parable, secondly by a thing done (as is believed).

“And he said also to his disciples” (Luke 16:1): to whom, beyond the rest, it was given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God (Matt. 13:11; Luke 8:10), and whom, as the future teachers of the whole world, He taught in a singular manner concerning the evangelical law; to whom this parable also chiefly pertained, inasmuch as they held the figure of all prelates. *“There was a certain rich man,”* namely the Only-begotten of God, incarnate for us, of whom it is written in Baruch: “He that made the stars, this is our God; and after these things he was seen upon earth, and conversed with men” (Bar. 3:35, 38); *“who had a steward”*; he *“was rich”*: because according to the divine nature He is rich in Himself with infinite riches, since the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost have one opulence, as they have one essence: and this opulence is the Divinity itself, to be adored, in which is, or rather which is, the superfull and unbounded possession of all good and beautiful and desirable things. Whence in the book *De Causis* it is had: “The first cause is rich in itself, and rich in others.” Moreover according to the humanity assumed, Christ also is rich, and richer than all, since His humanity is set above every created being, and every creature is subject to Him. Wherefore in Matthew He said: “All power is given to me in heaven and in earth” (Matt. 28:18). The spiritual opulence also of the soul of Christ is greatest in the gifts of grace and the goods of glory. And Augustine says in the book *De Civitate Dei*: *(p. 117)* “God is rich, not in money, but in omnipotence.” Nevertheless Christ assumed temporal poverty in bodily things for our sake, that by His bodily want we might be made rich with spiritual opulence (2 Cor. 8:9). Finally, as the Wise Man says: “If riches be desired in life, what is richer than wisdom?” (Wisd. 8:5), of which it is read in Proverbs: “Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and glory” (Prov. 3:16); and again: “Wisdom also, since she is one, can do all things” (Wisd. 7:27).

“Who had a steward,” that is, a dispenser. Now although a *villicus* is properly called the ruler and keeper of a farm, here, however, he is taken for the *oeconomus*, or the procurator and dispenser of a house, who dispenses the whole substance of the house. For the *oeconomus* designates the dispenser as well of money as of fruits and of all that the father of a family possesses. *“And the same was accused,”* that is, defamed, *“unto him,”* namely to Christ the judge of all, from whom nothing can be hid. Now this accusation of the wicked before God, or Christ, is made in various ways and by manifold testimony. First, by the very infallible and all-beholding wisdom of God, who by Jeremias declares: “I am the judge and the witness” (Jer. 29:23). Secondly, by the good angels, who out of zeal for justice set before God the works of men, good and bad, as the expositors affirm on Daniel. Thirdly, by the evil angels, as in Zacharias it is plain of Satan, who was an adversary to Jesus the son of Josedec by shameless accusation (Zach. 3:1). Fourthly, by the remorse of consciences, according to that word to the Romans: “Their conscience bearing witness to them” (Rom. 2:15). Fifthly, by the evidence of works, as in Genesis the Lord says to Cain: “The voice of thy brother’s blood crieth to me from the earth” (Gen. 4:10); and again, “The cry of Sodom and Gomorrha is multiplied” (Gen. 18:20–21). Sixthly, by the complaint of neighbours and the needy. Whence in Proverbs Solomon says: “He that hideth up corn shall be cursed among the people; but a blessing upon the head of them that sell” (Prov. 11:26). *“As if he had wasted his goods,”* that is, the goods committed to him to be well bestowed and used, he had uselessly consumed and spent.

By this steward can be understood any prelate or prince of others, nay any Christian whatever. For each of these ought justly to order the gifts and benefits given him from above, body and soul, or those committed to him, to the honour and glory of God: but chiefly those who preside over others in spiritual things are bound rightly to dispose the flock committed to them and the ecclesiastical goods, edifying their subjects by word and work, and spending temporal things fruitfully and wholesomely, not superfluously or carnally. But

secular princes too ought to turn what is superfluous to them to pious uses; and every Christian is bound lawfully to use the gifts of nature and grace and fortune granted him to the honour of God. For all that we have are gifts of God, and we are rather the dispensers of them than the possessors or lords, as being about to render an account of them (Rom. 14:12). Moreover the most precious goods of God are rational souls delivered by the blood of Christ: which he wastes who by evil examples, false doctrines or negligence draws them to vice or permits them to be drawn, and does not call them back: which is so much the more wicked before God, as immortal souls are more excellent than outward things.

"And he called him" (Luke 16:2). This calling is not that by which each at the time of death is called to the divine tribunal, but that by which one in the present life is divinely admonished, by angelic or divine inspiration, by benefits and scourges, by the preachings of men and threats of eternal torments, that he may think how at his time he could render to God an account of all. *"And said to him: How do I hear this of thee?"* that is, why hast thou so behaved that thou art thus accused to me? But as Gorran writes here, in this word an example is given to prelates in four things: First, that they should not dissemble the sins of their subjects. Secondly, that they inquire into the truth of the report: for He says, "How do I hear?" Thirdly, that they betray not the accusers, *(p. 118)* because He does not say, "Such an one," or, "Such a one said this to me," but, "I hear." Fourthly, that they specify the article of which one is accused or defamed. For a man can better correct himself when it is expressed to him wherein he has offended, or excuse himself if he be innocent. For He says, "How is it?" *"Give an account of thy stewardship,"* that is, prepare to render it, and examine how thou mayest render it, and now while time of meriting remains, place thyself before God, and as if thou wert brought before His tribunal, exact of thyself an account of the dispensation entrusted to thee, and how thou hast used the benefits of God. *"For now thou canst be steward no longer,"* that is, it is near that thou shalt be taken from this life, and be no longer able to use the benefits of God for merit, because after death there is no time of meriting. Therefore, while we have time, let us do good to all men (Gal. 6:10); as Solomon also exhorts: "Whatsoever thy hand is able to do, do it earnestly: for neither work, nor reason, nor wisdom, nor knowledge shall be in hell, whither thou art hastening" (Eccles. 9:10).

"And the steward said within himself" (Luke 16:3), that is, he thought providently, and sought counsel from his own reason, what he should do in so great a peril. Thus fear leads many to better things. *"What shall I do?"* He thought rather, What shall I do? than, What shall I say? knowing that with a just and infallible Judge virtuous works avail more than fair words, as the Apostle says: "The kingdom of God is not in speech" (1 Cor. 4:20); and Christ: "Not every one that saith to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father" (Matt. 7:21). *"Because my lord taketh away from me the stewardship,"* that is, he threatens that he will presently take me from the present life, so that I shall not be able to rule and merit in his goods: therefore unless I now provide for myself, no remedy will remain to me after death. *"To dig I am not able,"* that is, I cannot exercise the hard works of penance, by abstaining, scourging myself, weeping and watching: although these works are sweet and most easy to perfect men, who by custom have their senses exercised (Heb. 5:14), and are spiritually delighted in every act of virtue. *"To beg I am ashamed,"* that is, I cannot bear adversities with equanimity, or I am ashamed to beg others to intercede for me, unless I too do some good myself, and by giving temporal things deserve that spiritual helps be repaid to me.

"I know what I will do" (Luke 16:4): because my reason, instructed by the teaching of the evangelical law, dictates to me what I ought to do, *"that when I shall be removed from the stewardship,"* that is, taken by death out of this life, so that I can no longer preside over others, nor over myself, for merit, *"they may receive me into their houses,"* those to whom I do good: that is, by the merits and suffrages of the poor and humble I may be led to the kingdom of heaven: which is the house of the poor, as the Saviour says: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:3). And He says in the plural, "Into their houses," because in the one heavenly kingdom there are diverse mansions, that is, diverse degrees of

rewards, according to the various degrees of merits, as Christ asserts: “In my Father’s house there are many mansions” (John 14:2). Men also, according to the exigency of their merits, are assumed to the orders of the angels. Into these heavenly houses adults do not enter except by the door, that is, the works of mercy, bodily or spiritual: in figure of which it is read in the books of Kings that Solomon made at the entrance of the Holy of Holies two little doors of olive-tree wood (3 Kings 6:31), by which the works of piety are expressed.

“Therefore calling together every one of his lord’s debtors” (Luke 16:5), that is, the religious and the needy, who, however just they be, are yet debtors to God: either on account of their daily sins, venial at least, for the remission of which they cry, “Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors” (Matt. 6:12); or because they are bound to serve God and give Him thanks for the gifts received, and cannot repay Him an equivalent. *“He said to the first: How much dost thou owe my lord?” “But he said: A hundred barrels of oil”* (Luke 16:6). A barrel (*cadus*) is a jar of a certain measure or quantity. Now *(p. 119)* this parable, according to this exposition, does not hold in all points: for every like is in some way unlike; otherwise it would be the same, not like. It is not necessary, therefore, that a parable or similitude should always run on four feet. Yet by the hundred barrels the sins of all human frailty can be signified, because, as James says, “In many things we all offend” (James 3:2). But he who wishes to be forgiven by God ought also gladly to forgive others. *“And he said to him: Take thy bill,”* that is, the paper in which for security the form of the contract or the debt is written down: which is called by Tobias a *chirographum* (Tob. 5:3; 9:5). *“And sit down quickly.”* For good things, and especially works of mercy, are to be done quickly. For as God loveth a cheerful giver (2 Cor. 9:7), so also a speedy one. And he who gives quickly gives twice; he knows not how to give who delays to give. Wherefore Augustine asserts: “He loses both the thing and the merit who keeps the poor man in suspense by a troublesome delay.” Hence Solomon says: “Say not to thy friend: Go, and come again, and to morrow I will give to thee, when thou canst give at present” (Prov. 3:28). *“And write fifty.”* And so he remits half.

“Then he said to another” (Luke 16:7) (*alio*, according to the ancient grammar, that is, *alteri*): *“And how much dost thou owe? Who said: A hundred quarters of wheat.”* A quarter (*corus*) is here taken for a measure. *“He said to him: Take thy bill”* (which a little before was called a *cautio*), *“and write eighty.”* Why did he remit less to this one than to the preceding? It is answered: to insinuate that more is to be given to the more needy; again, to hint that we ought to compassionate the needy more heartily than we are able to succour them. For by oil compassion is designated, but by wheat succour. And so Christ introduced this parable to this end, that we may know that as the steward who from his lord’s goods made liberality and courtesy was received into the houses of those to whom he so acted, so we also ought to communicate to others from the goods granted us; and especially the rich of this world ought liberally to succour the poor, that thereby they may deserve to be received into their house, that is, into the kingdom of heaven, as the Apostle writes to Timothy: “Charge the rich of this world not to be high-minded, nor to trust in the uncertainty of riches, but to give easily” (1 Tim. 6:17–18).

“And the lord commended the unjust steward” (Luke 16:8), that is, this wicked dispenser, who both before wasted his lord’s goods, and now committed theft from the remainder, *“for that he had done wisely”*: that is, he did not praise him for the theft and the squandering of another’s property, since praise is due to virtue, not to vice; but for a certain apparent prudence: which, however, was not true prudence, but injustice; yet something like true prudence there was in his work, for he industriously provided for himself, and shrewdly contrived. Whence his praise was not absolute praise, but relative. Much more will Christ, who suffers no loss, and is truly most pious, praise prelates and rich men if they shall have been merciful to their subjects and the needy.

“For the children of this world,” that is, the lovers of the world, who love this world as their country, desire their inheritance in earthly things, conform themselves to the world, and are intent on temporal rather than divine things: of whom John says, “They are of the world; therefore of the world they speak, and the world

heareth them" (1 John 4:5). Such belong not to God, and are frequently expressed by the name of the world. Of whom the Son of God speaks to the eternal Father: "I pray not for the world, but for them whom thou hast given me out of the world, because they are thine" (John 17:9). That we be not, therefore, of the number of the children of this world, let us obey the Apostle exhorting: "Be not conformed to this world; but be reformed in the newness of your mind" (Rom. 12:2). "*Are wiser,"* that is, more cunning and diligent in acquiring, preserving and expediting temporal things, "*than the children of light,"* that is, devout and spiritual men, "*in their generation,"* that is, in the carnal sort, that is, among their own. This is said not as though true prudence were in the wicked, since the Apostle says, "The prudence of the flesh is death" (Rom. 8:6), and Aristotle also in the *Ethics* proves that prudence is only in the virtuous: but Christ so speaks because worldly men are *(p. 120)* more solicitous and more active about earthly business, than spiritual men about divine things and about the spiritual progress of the divine charisms: whereas spiritual goods are incomparably more excellent than carnal and earthly things: on which account incomparably more labour ought to be spent for spiritual than for earthly things. Whence some also, such as holy men, have been tireless and most ardent; but such compared with the others have been, and are, very few. Christ, however, speaks according to what more commonly happens.

Of this too a reason is assigned. The first is the obscuring of our mind, or the corruption or infection of nature by sin: on account of which man is more prone to vain and evil things than to good and wholesome. The second is the subtlety of spiritual things, or the difficulty of knowing them. For sensible things are grosser and better known; but spiritual things are subtle and less known, and therefore less desired, because, as Augustine asserts, we can love things unseen, but not things unknown. But this reason has no place in perfect men, who have faith with copious reasons of the things to be believed, and the understanding of a purified mind. The third, because we are occupied about sensible things with many powers, and are moved by them, namely by the outward and inward senses, and by the twofold sensitive appetite, to wit the concupiscible and the irascible. But about intelligible and spiritual things we are occupied by the intellect and will alone.

Deservedly also the good are called children of light: First, because by charity and grace they are children of the uncreated light, of which it is had in John: "God is light, and in him there is no darkness" (1 John 1:5). Secondly, because they have a lucid, that is, virtuous and exemplary, conversation. Whence by the Apostle they are called light: "You were heretofore darkness, but now light in the Lord" (Eph. 5:8). Thirdly, because they are adorned within, subjected and ruled, by the gifts of sanctifying grace, which are certain lights. Fourthly, because they love above all things the true light, which is God. Fifthly, because they are pre-ordained to the light of glory, and sigh for, tend to, and hasten to the fatherland of eternal clarity, desiring to be heirs there.

Next the Saviour applies this parable to the purpose. "*And I say to you"* (Luke 16:9), by wholesome counsel, or command: "*Make unto you friends of the mammon of iniquity,"* that is, by giving riches and temporal things to the poor, procure for yourselves the holy friendship of the supremely holy Trinity, and of the holy angels, and of the poor. For God and all the elect love mercy, and sincerely love those who liberally and mercifully share what is theirs. *Mammon* in Syriac is the name of the devil, who tempts concerning riches to be ill acquired or ill spent or avariciously kept. Hence riches are called *mammon*: which are called the mammon of iniquity, not that in themselves they are evil or vicious, since, according to the Apostle, every creature of God is good (1 Tim. 4:4); but for many reasons they are so called: First, because they are the matter and occasion of many vices. Wherefore Valerius says: "The rich man runs at will, falls into the unlawful." And Paul testifies: "They that will become rich fall into temptation and into the snare of the devil, and into many unprofitable and hurtful desires" (1 Tim. 6:9). Secondly, because commonly they are unjustly acquired, avariciously kept, unlawfully spent. Whence to hint how rare and difficult it is for a rich man to be just, it is written in Ecclesiasticus: "Blessed is the rich man that is found without blemish, and that hath not gone after gold, nor put his trust in money nor in treasures. Who is he, and we will praise him? for he hath

done wonderful things in his life" (Ecclus. 31:8–9). Moreover riches are called "of iniquity," as of inequality, because they are possessed unequally, and are not equally retained: for what one reserves to himself beyond the necessaries of life, and does not communicate to the need of his neighbours, is reckoned the mammon of iniquity. The measure of right moderation in desiring or keeping riches the Apostle teaches, saying: "Having food and wherewith to be covered, with these let us be content" (1 Tim. 6:8). This *(p. 121)* word can also be expounded of riches obtained by a vicious affection or a wicked act: of which alms can be made, as of things acquired by the keeping of harlots, or by labour on a feast day. But of riches acquired by an unjust title, the giving of alms ought not to be made, but restitution.

"That when you shall fail" from the present life (Luke 16:9), that is, shall die: of which failing it is written, "Abraham, failing, died" (Gen. 25:8); *"they may receive you,"* the aforesaid friends, namely God and the angels and the holy poor, *"into everlasting dwellings,"* that is, the heavenly mansions: which are called eternal not *a parte ante*, but *a parte post*. Of which the Psalmist says: "How lovely are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!" (Ps. 83:2). Although each of the elect is received into some special and certain mansion of the heavenly kingdom, yet he who enters one is said to enter into tabernacles, that is, into that place or fatherland of the Blessed, where very many mansions are distinguished, and likewise into the society of the whole heavenly court. But also in the Scriptures the plural number is frequently put for the singular, and conversely. Of these tabernacles the tabernacles of the children of Israel were figures, of which in Numbers Balaam says: "How beautiful are thy tabernacles, O Jacob, and thy tents, O Israel!" (Num. 24:5). Or, "When you shall fail" of your own merits, lacking them, "they may receive you," namely the angels and the pre-elected poor, that is, they may procure for you by their suffrages the grace of repenting and finally obtaining the blessed life.

"He that is faithful in that which is least" (Luke 16:10), that is, in the use, bestowal or dispensation of temporal things and wealth, *"is faithful also in that which is greater,"* that is, in the use and dispensation of spiritual things. For he who uses temporal things in an ordered way, referring them to spiritual goods, by this very thing merits and receives the grace of bearing himself well about spiritual things: which he prefers to all temporal things, and about exercising virtuously, handling and communicating which he chiefly occupies himself. These spiritual goods, however, are preaching and sacred doctrine, the ecclesiastical sacraments, the virtues, and the gifts of the Holy Ghost: the dispensation of which belongs chiefly to prelates, doctors and preachers, as Paul says in the person of such: "Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God. Here now it is required among the dispensers that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor. 4:1–2). Nevertheless this dispensation in a certain manner regards each one, as the blessed Peter, prince of the Apostles, exhorts: "As every man hath received grace, ministering the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Peter 4:10). Hence it is evident that the avaricious, the ambitious, the unclean, are by no means good preachers or prelates, because they impiously look back to their own comforts, to temporal honours, to carnal delights. He who truly in all things seeks the honour of God and the salvation of his neighbours, and diligently fulfils the office committed to him, instructing by word and work, persevering in virtues, and bestowing on his subjects the things that are God's, such an one stands forth a worthy prelate and preacher, and is proved faithful in spiritual things, as the Apostle teaches in Timothy, saying: "Be thou an example of the faithful in word, in conversation, in charity; attend to reading, to exhortation and to doctrine; let thy progress be manifest to all" (1 Tim. 4:12–15). Finally, the least things can be called the goods of fortune, or the exterior; the great goods, the gifts of nature; the greater goods, the gifts of grace; the greatest goods, the gifts of glory.

From these the Saviour concludes: *"If then you have not been faithful in the unjust mammon"* (Luke 16:11), that is, in dispensing temporal riches (which are called unjust for the causes before stated), with the fidelity that pertains to justice, bestowing them according to what is just, or with faith, which is a theological virtue, through which for the sake of spiritual and future goods the bodily and perishable things are despised and liberally spent; *"that which is the true,"* that is, the spiritual and interior goods divinely prepared for you, and

connatural to the immortal soul, and commanded to be had, *"who will trust you with?"* that is, who will commit or bestow upon you? as if he said: *(p. 122)* You are unworthy of such goods, nay of prelacy and the dispensation of spiritual things. *"And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's"* (Luke 16:12), that is, in the possession and use of exterior and temporal things; *"that which is your own,"* that is, the gifts of everlasting glory, to which you are finally created, and which have been recovered and bought for you at the price of the blood of Christ, *"who will give you?"* No one at all. Now exterior and temporal things are said to be another's to man, as extrinsic, and not permanent with him, and altogether foreign to that which is principal in man, namely the intellective part: therefore they are not properly his goods. Whence also, emigrating from this world, we cannot carry them with us, as the Apostle says: "We brought nothing into this world; and certainly we can carry nothing out" (1 Tim. 6:7). And the Psalmist: "When he shall die, he shall take nothing away" (Ps. 48:18). The true goods of man, therefore, and the true riches, are those which cannot be taken from him against his will, which perfect him within, and befit him according to the intellective portion of the soul, and make him rich in the divine sight. Hence a certain philosopher said: "No one can take my treasure from me": understanding by the treasure his wisdom.

Moreover it is to be noted that Christ, speaking of the goods of the way, says, "Who will trust you with," that is, commit to you, because of them he will demand an account; but of the goods of the fatherland He says, "Who will give you," since the goods of the fatherland are said to be given, in that a gift is an irredeemable giving, according to the Philosopher: and of the goods of glory received no further account is to be exacted. But it can be objected that the goods of glory are a reward which falls under debt, not under gift, and so is rendered rather than given. To this Gorran answers: Since man is to receive the eternal reward on account of the merit of good works, if the reward be compared to the root of merit, namely to the grace which God freely conferred on man for meriting, then the reward is said to be given, since that by which he works and merits, namely grace, was given. But if it be compared to the meritorious works themselves, then it is said to be rendered, as wages for labour, and as reward for a condign merit: condign, I say, not by condignity of value, since the reward is an infinite good and the merit a finite good, but by condignity of covenant. For so God made a covenant with man, that if he finally labour in His vineyard, that is, in the Church, He will give him for meritorious works the penny of eternal beatitude.

Next Christ dissuades and forbids serving cupidity, nay any iniquity, because he who serves sin is not subject to God, and so loses the highest, incomputable and immense good: to avoid the loss of which man ought to shun every sin with the utmost study, and for love and attainment of which he ought untiringly to continue every good work. *"No servant can serve two masters"* (Luke 16:13), with a servitude pleasing to both: masters, I say, contrary in will, in so far as contrary, that is, in that wherein they are mutually contrary. And by these two masters are here understood Almighty God, and the devil, of whom Christ testifies: "The prince of this world cometh" (John 14:30). For he is king of all the children of pride. These we cannot serve at once, because as every good that is truly honest, virtuous and charitable pleases God, and every opposite evil displeases Him, so the devil detests every such honest thing, and loves every dishonest, base and vicious thing. Now it is the same to serve the devil, and the world, and the flesh or its concupiscences. Hence every servant of sin is a servant of the devil, and conversely; and every lover of the world, that is, of the vanities and impieties of this world, is an enemy of God. Whoever, moreover, is overcome by temptation or concupiscence, passion or vice, serves vice and the devil, as Peter says: "By whom a man is overcome, of the same also he is the slave" (2 Peter 2:19). Hence the wicked are servants of corruption. With this agrees that of James: *(p. 123)* "Know ye not that the friendship of this world is the enemy of God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of this world becomes an enemy of God" (James 4:4). That also of John: "Love not the world, nor the things which are in the world. If any man love the world, the charity of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2:15). But the Apostle too professes: "If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (Gal. 1:10).

"For either he will hate the one," namely the devil, who is not to be loved out of charity, since he is not capable of beatitude, but obstinate; yet as to the good nature which he has from the Creator, he is to be loved with natural love. For so God also loves him, according to that of Wisdom: "Thou lovest all things that are, and hatest none of the things which thou hast made" (Wisd. 11:25). *"And love the other,"* namely God: who for His own pure, perfect and immense goodness is, first, to be loved supremely and incomparably for Himself, then because He first loved us (1 John 4:10, 19), moreover for His benefits and promises.

"Or he will sustain the one," namely the devil, by conformity of affection, namely by desiring and embracing those things which please the devil, such as vicious works. The devil also, according to Gregory, is the head of all the impious: therefore they adhere to him as members to the head; and he by his pestilent suggestion infuses into them iniquitous life and the motion of vices. The Saviour also says rather "He will hold to" than "He will love," because the sinner does not love the devil, although he consents to him. *"And despise the other,"* namely God, by making small account of His precepts, by transgressing them, and by preferring vain and vile things to Him. And according to Augustine He does not say, "He will hate," but "He will despise," because (as he says) almost no one's conscience can hate God. Augustine, however, according to Gorran, retracted this word. For frequently in the Scriptures the wicked are read to hate God, since in John Christ testifies: "They have hated both me and my Father" (John 15:24). And the Psalmist speaks to God: "For lo, thy enemies have made a noise; and they that hate thee have lifted up the head" (Ps. 82:3). Yet it can be said that God is considered in two ways: First, in Himself: and so, since He is pure goodness, He cannot be hated. Secondly, in so far as He forbids and punishes those things which please perverse wills: and so the perverse hate Him.

"You cannot serve God and mammon," at the same time, that is, riches, or the demon who tempts concerning avarice and riches. For he who truly serves God keeps His commandments, and is subject to no mortal sin; but has set his end in the highest and unchangeable good, adhering mentally to Him by charity more than to any created thing. But he who serves mammon sets his end in earthly wealth, and desires and loves it more than God; and is serving and subject to avarice: which is of so great impiety that the Apostle names it the service of idols (Eph. 5:5). And in Ecclesiasticus it is written: "There is not a more wicked thing than to love money" (Ecclus. 10:9–10).

"Now the Pharisees, who were covetous, heard all these things" (Luke 16:14), that is, the aforesaid discourse of Christ against avarice, the Pharisees, who seemed more religious than the rest, who were avaricious: the perversity and carnality of which many clerics and those religious in appearance only now follow after; *"and they derided him."* For the carnal man perceiveth not the things that are of the Spirit of God, according to the Apostle (1 Cor. 2:14). Such are all hardened in vices, and wise in their own eyes (Isa. 5:21): who when they notice their vices are touched and themselves reprehended, are indignant and deride, as it is written in the prophet Amos: "They have hated him that rebuketh in the gate, and have abhorred him that speaketh perfectly" (Amos 5:10). Against whom it is asserted in Proverbs: "Sudden destruction shall come upon the man that with stiff neck despiseth the reprover" (Prov. 29:1). Finally the Pharisees therefore derided Christ teaching these things, because in the old law abundance of temporal things was promised, and because Abraham and many other virtuous men are written to have been rich in that law (Lev. 26:3–13; Deut. 28:1–14; Gen. 13:2; 24:35). But these Pharisees did not understand the words of Christ. For He did not reprobate *(p. 124)* opulence simply, but avarice, or the serving of riches themselves. Neither was the affluence of temporal things promised in the old law as the ultimate and principal reward of virtues, but as less principal and introductory. For that Israelitic people was for the greatest part of it carnal and rude: therefore by the promise of temporal things it was allured to spiritual and divine things. Lastly, the just do not serve riches, but riches serve them, since they fulfil that of the Psalmist: "If riches abound, set not your heart upon them" (Ps. 61:11).

Next Christ confutes those derisors with modest rebuke and wholesome instruction. *"You are they who justify yourselves before men"* (Luke 16:15), that is, you cloak your vices, and under the appearance of good do many evils, and by feigned justice deceive men, so that they think you just. The good things also which you seem to do, you do not for the glory of God, but for your own praise. Against whom the Saviour says in Matthew: "Take heed that you do not your justice before men, to be seen by them" (Matt. 6:1). Of whom it is read in Job: "Dissemblers and crafty men provoke the wrath of God" (Job 36:13). *"But God knoweth your hearts,"* that is, He infallibly beholds your hidden iniquities: as He testifies by Jeremias, "Shall a man be hid in secret places, and I not see him?" (Jer. 23:24). Whence also in the books of Kings it is had: "Man seeth those things that appear, but the Lord beholdeth the heart" (1 Kings 16:7). This is the knowledge of reprobation, of which by the prophet Amos God speaks: "I know your manifold crimes" (Amos 5:12). *"For that which is high to men,"* that is, which is reputed great by men, as feigned justice, opulence of things, exterior ornament, pomp and worldly prosperity, *"is an abomination before God,"* that is, in the supersapiential judgment of the divine mind is reputed vain and detestable, because it hinders from true beatitude, or recedes from the sincerity of equity and truth. Therefore the judgments of God are one thing, the judgments of men another. Wherefore in the books of Kings He declares: "I judge not according to the look of man" (1 Kings 16:7). By Isaias also He says: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts: neither are your ways my ways: for as the heavens are exalted above the earth, so are my ways exalted above your ways, and my thoughts above your thoughts" (Isa. 55:8–9).

Finally, what has been said of vices can also be understood of vicious men, because it frequently happens that those who in their own or other men's reputation are great, prudent or virtuous, are before God vile and vicious, as the Lord speaks by Osee of certain ones: "They became abominable, as those things which they loved" (Osee 9:10). In Proverbs also uncreated Wisdom asserts: "Arrogance, and pride, and the wicked way, and the mouth with a double tongue, I detest" (Prov. 8:13). But feigned equity is not equity, but a double iniquity. But what the Saviour now says, "That which is high to men," seems to be understood chiefly of carnal and worldly men, not of men truly wise and divine. For spiritual, wise and divine men judge truly and deiformly, and in judging conform themselves to God: because by the gifts of the Holy Ghost, with which they are full, they are directed by Him in judging; nor do they follow passions and vanities, but have a sincere intellect and a purged affection. Whence the things that please God please them also, and the things that displease God displease them. On which account of the just man the Psalmist says: "In his sight the malignant is brought to nothing" (Ps. 14:4). In the book of Job also one says in the person of the just: "I have seen the wicked with a strong root, and I cursed his beauty" (Job 5:3). Yet they can often be deceived in judging, so long as they subsist in this life. So let us walk sincerely before God the all-purest, avoiding all vanity and subtlety, nor let us affect to please men vainly: "For God hath scattered the bones of them that please men; they have been confounded, because God hath despised them" (Ps. 52:6). Behold, what can be said more horrible, since Solomon says, "Consider the works of God, that no man can correct whom he hath *(p. 125)* despised" (Eccles. 7:14)?

Next Christ briefly touches why the Pharisees ought not to defend themselves against His teachings, in which He preferred poverty to opulence, and dissuaded affluence of temporal things. *"The law and the prophets were until John"* (Luke 16:16), that is, those legal and prophetic promises, by which abundance of temporal things was promised to the worshippers of God, lasted until the preaching of John the Baptist. *"From that time the kingdom of God is preached,"* that is, from the time when John began to preach, heavenly goods began to be openly promised, and eternal life to be taught, and evangelical perfection to be preached, which by love of spiritual and heavenly goods leads to contempt of temporal ones. Hence Matthew writes: "John the Baptist came preaching in the desert of Judea, and saying: Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3:1–2). The time, moreover, of the preaching of John and of Christ and His disciples is reputed one and the same, because John's preaching was dispositive to Christ, and preceded Christ's preaching by a short time, who more openly than John taught poverty, and preached the beatitude of the heavenly kingdom,

and His disciples at His bidding. Whence in the book *De Ecclesiasticis Dogmatibus* it is said: “It is good to give away one’s means with the possession to the poor; it is better, with the intention of following Christ, to give all together, and, freed from solicitude, to be in want with Christ.”

Lastly, for the cause above touched, John is called as it were the horizon or middle of the old and evangelical law, and likewise the end of the law and the beginning of evangelical truth. Yet it rather befits Christ to be the end of the law, because He fulfilled the law and made it cease, and the figures of legal things and the predictions of the Prophets were fulfilled in Him. Wherefore it is written: “Christ is the end of the law” (Rom. 10:4); and in John, “Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ” (John 1:17). Hence some say that Christ was the end of the law from without; John, however, the end from within, because he too was bound to the observance of the law.

“And every one useth violence towards it,” that is, whoever strives to obtain the kingdom of heaven and merits it, it is necessary that by a good violence he conquer himself, subduing his body to the spirit, and his own will to the will and commandments of God: which is difficult, especially in the beginning of conversion. For the passions are strong, and to continue the way of justice to the end is not moderately laborious (wherefore the Psalmist says: “For the sake of the words of thy lips I have kept hard ways,” Ps. 16:4), although to those perfect and fervent in charity the yoke of God is sweet and His burden light (Matt. 11:30): who say, “I have run the way of thy commandments, when thou didst enlarge my heart” (Ps. 118:32); and likewise, “I have been delighted in the way of thy testimonies, as in all riches” (Ps. 118:14). So every one tending to that kingdom does violence to himself. Hence in Matthew Christ says more clearly: “The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent bear it away” (Matt. 11:12). Moreover, according to Gregory, some seize the kingdom of heaven by the abjection of all things, others buy it by the giving of alms, others steal it by hidden sanctity, others are as it were compelled to acquire it by temporal adversity. So let us not be overcome by our own vices, nor subject to passions, but efficaciously resist evil customs, fulfilling that of the Apostle, “Labour as a good soldier of Christ” (2 Tim. 2:3): that there may be fulfilled in us what the Saviour promises in the Apocalypse: “To him that overcometh I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of my God” (Apoc. 2:7).

Next Christ shows that He did not bring forward the things before adduced in order to derogate in anything from the truth of the law, since He also testifies in Matthew: “I am not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil” (Matt. 5:17). *“And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away”* (Luke 16:17), that is, to be annihilated, as far as concerns the absolute omnipotence of God, which can do this very thing by the mere withdrawal of His most free conservation, according to that of the Machabees: “We trust in the almighty God, who at a beck can utterly destroy both them that come against us and the whole world” *(p. 126)* (2 Mach. 8:18); *“than for one tittle of the law to fall,”* that is, for the least little portion of the law, a command or word, to be destitute of truth, to be deprived of the effect of fulfilment, to be made void or annulled. For that Mosaic law, since it was supernatural and divine, rested on uncreated truth: therefore, as it is impossible that God be not truthful, so impossible is it that His law be empty. But whatever is contained in it is verified and observed in due place and time, either literally, as is plain of the moral precepts, or spiritually, as is established of the ceremonial precepts. This is what Christ says in Matthew: “Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall not pass of the law” (Matt. 5:18). Therefore Isaias writes: “The word of our God shall stand for ever” (Isa. 40:8).

Moreover, that these things are so Christ next manifests, as by way of example. *“Every one that putteth away his wife”* (Luke 16:18), lawfully joined to him, so that true matrimony was contracted between them, *“and marrieth another, committeth adultery”* while the first is yet living, because with the other he does not contract true matrimony, since the matrimonial bond is indissoluble. Whence what the Saviour adds in Matthew, “Excepting the cause of fornication” (Matt. 5:32), is to be understood of dismissal as to bed, because so it is lawful to leave her on account of fornication, not as to the bond, which is dissolved only by death. *“And he that marrieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery,”* by knowing her,

since she is not truly his lawful wife, her former husband living. So Christ, by showing the conjugal bond to be indissoluble, perfected the law, did not dissolve it. For the law of Moses admitted repudiation, not as free from fault and lawful, but to avoid a greater evil, because the Jews were prone to wife-murder (Deut. 24:1; Matt. 19:8). Whence in Malachias, after the Lord said, "When thou shalt hate her, put her away," He added, "And iniquity shall cover his garment" (Mal. 2:16). — Morally, according to Gorran, he who puts away his spiritual wife, namely his parish, and takes another, as being richer, because it is richer, commits adultery, because he seeks not spiritual fruit, but temporal gain.

Above, Christ exhorted by a parable to the detestation of avarice and the giving of alms; here He does the same by recounting a thing done. *"There was a certain rich man"* (Luke 16:19), rich in exterior things, poor in soul, because lacking virtues. It is not said here that it is a parable: therefore expositors commonly say that it is a thing done; and some think that this man was Nabal, of whom it is had in the books of Kings (1 Kings 25:2 ff.). *"And he was clothed in purple,"* which is a garment of royal adornment and dress, of red colour, with which he was clothed outwardly for vain ostentation; *"and fine linen."* Byssus is a garment, or a kind of most white and most soft linen, which grows only in Egypt. With byssus, therefore, he was clothed inwardly next the flesh, because of its softness.

Now, about the use or luxury of garments, many things are justly reprehended. The first is costliness, or sumptuousness of price. For it is unworthy that a vile body and putrid carcass be adorned with immoderately costly garments, from which very many of Christ's poor could be refreshed and clothed. The second is the multiplicity of changes of raiment, according to the variety of days, seasons or feasts. Against which Jerome says: "He is convicted of seizing what is another's who is proved to keep superfluities for himself." Whence to many, and especially to clerics, it can now be said: "Your garments are moth-eaten" (James 5:2). The third is curiosity, which regards the study of exterior adornment. For many study more the adornment of garments, to please men, than of virtues, to please God. Against which blessed Augustine speaks: "Do not affect to please by garments, but by morals." In Ecclesiasticus also it is said: "Glory not in apparel at any time, and be not lifted up in the day of thy honour" (Ecclus. 11:4). And Gregory writes: "Let no one think that in luxury and study of garments there is no sin; otherwise Christ would not have praised John *(p. 127)* for the roughness of his raiment" (Matt. 11:8). The fourth is indecency in regard to person, state or order, because it does not become a cleric to be clad as an actor or a soldier. On which account by Sophonias the Lord threatens: "I will visit upon all that are clothed with strange apparel" (Soph. 1:8). But, alas, canons now walk about clad like soldiers. The fifth is ostentation, whereby many then clothe themselves more preciously when they think they are to be seen by many. Finally, superfluous cultivation of garments, in men as in women, is greatly damnable, because it provokes to lust: on account of which many sin mortally in the use of garments. But against the diabolical and most senseless vanity of the slashing and cutting of garments the Lord says by Joel: "Rend your hearts, and not your garments" (Joel 2:13).

"And feasted sumptuously every day": that is, delicately, riotously, superfluously, pompously, exceeding in the manifold variety of meats and drinks, in exquisite preparation, in costly or precious consumption, and in the curious and splendid adornment of vessels; and in these he was assiduous, turning gluttony into a habit, from which luxury, sloth, and various other sins follow. To this carnality those now chiefly are subject who are sustained from the patrimony of the Crucified, whereas they are bound to special moderation. To such James says: "You have feasted upon earth; and in riots you have nourished your hearts" (James 5:5). Against which the Apostle exhorts: "Make not provision for the flesh in its concupiscences" (Rom. 13:14). And again to the Romans: "We are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh: for if you live according to the flesh, you shall die; but if by the spirit you mortify the deeds of the flesh, you shall live" (Rom. 8:12–13). And Christ says below: "Take heed to yourselves, lest perhaps your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life" (Luke 21:34). O how many exceed enormously in these things! whose nature having been satisfied by the taking of one dish or two, a third course is now brought in, and the

appetite is anew unhappily provoked to gluttony and voracity. Such render themselves unworthy of divine illumination, and shorten their own life, and deprive themselves of health, since Solomon testifies: “He that loveth wine and fat meats shall not be wise” (Prov. 21:17). Nature also is content with few things, and is overwhelmed and burdened by superfluity.

“And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus” (Luke 16:20). Christ expressed the proper name not of the rich man, but of the needy and sick one: because this poor man He knew by approbation, and had him written in the book of life, or of eternal predestination; but the rich man He did not know by approbation, as He also says to the reprobate, “I know you not” (Matt. 25:12). Hence to Moses He says: “Thou hast found grace before me, and thee I know by name” (Exod. 33:12). Behold how the judgments of God are one thing, those of the world another, and how the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God (1 Cor. 3:19). Certainly with this unclean world, that is, secular and carnal men, the names of the opulent are more famous and known than those of the needy; but with God it is the converse. Moreover, from the fact that Christ designates the poor man by a certain name, it is conjectured that this is a thing done, according to Ambrose.

“Who lay at his gate.” In which it is plain that he was infirm and weak; and the rich man could not excuse himself by ignorance, since going in and out he looked upon him. *“Full of sores,”* like another Job: and so he was the more miserable, and it was the more impious not to succour him. *“Desiring to be filled with the crumbs”* (Luke 16:21), that is, the fragments, *“that fell from the rich man’s table, and no one did give him.”* By which it is established that he asked the least things, and that not only that rich man but also his servants were hard and most unmerciful, who denied so small things to a sick, needy and famished man. For cruel and unmerciful lords are wont to have a household like themselves, according to what is read in Ecclesiasticus: “According to the judge of the people, so also are his ministers” (Ecclus. 10:2). Solomon also declares: “A prince that gladly heareth lying words hath all his ministers wicked” (Prov. 29:12). *“Moreover the dogs also came, and licked his sores.”* And so *(p. 128)* the dogs were kinder to this poor man than the rich man. For the dogs, by natural instinct, healed with their tongues the wounds of the poor man whom the rich man despised against natural right. The rich man was also more beneficent to his dogs than to the poor man. And alas, how many such there are today, who scarcely deign to look upon the poor, or are burdened at the sight of them! Let them heed that of James: “Judgment without mercy to him that hath not done mercy” (James 2:13).

“And it came to pass that the beggar died” (Luke 16:22), that is, not casually, but by God so disposing, it befell this poor man to die. For God appoints to each a certain time of living. *“And was carried by the angels,”* that is, his soul was honourably conducted by the holy angels, *“into Abraham’s bosom,”* that is, to that secret rest of the Saints in the limbo of the fathers, which is designated by the bosom of Abraham. For by the bosom rest is expressed: which is called Abraham’s bosom, not that it is his alone, or that he first descended into that limbo, but because he is specially called the father of believers and of many nations, according to that of the apostle Paul: “They who are of faith, are the children of Abraham” (Gal. 3:7). For Abraham is praised chiefly for the greatness of his faith. On which account the Apostle says that against hope he believed in hope, and was not weakened in faith, but believed most fully (Rom. 4:18–20). Hence Augustine says: “By Abraham’s bosom I understand the remote and secret seat of rest, where Abraham was: which is called his, not that it is his only, but because he is there placed the father of many nations, to whom he is set over as a prince for the imitation of faith.” Yet, according to Peter of Ravenna, it is called Abraham’s bosom on account of the office of hospitality, in which Abraham was excellent, so that even now he would think himself blessed as it were not, if in the supernal glory he should cease from his office of hospitality. Besides, it is to be observed that because Abraham has now been translated from the limbo of hell to the heavenly kingdom, now by Abraham’s bosom is signified the rest of the Saints in the fatherland. Whence St. Martin said: “Abraham’s bosom will receive me.” Behold how wholesome it is in this world to be in want, to be sick, to be despised, provided it be borne patiently for God. For patience hath a perfect work (James 1:4). And indeed for the carrying of Lazarus’s soul one angel had sufficed, but as Chrysostom says,

many angels came, to make a choir of joy, and to console and honour the poor man's soul more abundantly. Deservedly indeed were angelic services shown to this needy man, to whom human ones were denied.

"And the rich man also died," by the death of nature, by which the soul is separated from the body, and by the death of guilt, by which it is separated from God, and likewise by the death of gehenna, by which it is separated from the supreme good; *"and he was buried in hell"*: that is, his soul was placed in the depth of infernal torments, and below the earth as in a tomb was laid, shut up and relegated, as in Ezechiel the sepulchres of the kings of Egypt and Assur are said to stand in hell round about them (Ezech. 32:22–26). There the parishioners of the devil are buried. For as he is called a parishioner of God who has been dipped in His Baptism, and pays Him first-fruits and tithes, and gladly hears His Hours and Masses, on which account dying he is worthy to be buried in His cemetery; so he is judged a parishioner of the devil who is dipped in the waters of carnal concupiscences, and offers to the devil the first-fruits or beginnings of his works, doing what is pleasing to him, and consumes temporal goods viciously, and attends to worldly songs, scurrilous, detractory and wicked words as to the devil's Hours: therefore dying he is buried in the infernal cemetery, with the burial of an ass, that is, without honour (Jer. 22:19). Deservedly then the Psalmist says: "The death of the wicked is very evil" (Ps. 33:22); and again: "They are laid in hell like sheep; death shall feed upon them" (Ps. 48:15).

"And lifting up his eyes" (Luke 16:23), the interior ones, that is, considering higher things; and because only the rich man's soul was there, he neither had nor lifted bodily eyes; *"when he was in torments,"* of loss and of sense, namely in the lack *(p. 129)* of the beatific fruition of God, and in the sensible punishments of Tartarus. For there is in those eternally condemned a very manifold grief, namely from the horrible vision of demons, from the fear of greater penal evil to come, from remorse of conscience, from certain knowledge of their irrecoverable damnation, and from despair of all salvation. Nor are they so much afflicted by the Tartarean fire as they are punished in mind, from the fact that they know they will never be freed, as Albert says. *"He saw Abraham afar off,"* that is, he considered him to be in a place set high above himself: because the aforesaid places, namely the limbo of the fathers and the hell of the damned, were distant from each other not only by dissimilarity but also by local distance. So vexation gave understanding to this condemned man (Isa. 28:19). Wherefore Gregory says: "The eyes which guilt here closed, punishment there opened." For in this life, blinded in mind by impious delights, he did not consider the punishments of the wicked and the joys of the Blessed. *"And Lazarus in his bosom,"* that is, in the participation of the rest and sure expectation of heavenly beatitude in which Abraham was.

Wherefore Gregory writes that the damned until the day of judgment look upon, or see, the Saints above them in glory, but not after the day of judgment. How this is to be understood, Lyra says he submits to the judgment of his betters, and adds: That the damned see the glory of the Blessed until the day of judgment, as the words of Gregory seem to sound, there is not from this place a sufficient argument, because the Saviour here narrates a thing done before His passion, when Abraham was not yet in glory. But Gorran in some way elucidates Gregory's words, saying: To see the rest or glory of the Blessed happens in two ways: first in general, so that the damned think the Saints to be in rest and glory, but in what kind they do not see; secondly in particular, so that they see what the glory of the elect is. In the first way the reprobate until the judgment perceive the rest of the Blessed, but in the second way they do not see. Yet they do not rejoice at such a vision, but are saddened, as much from envy of another's felicity as from the lack of that rest. But after the day of judgment their consideration will be more reflected upon their own punishments, so that they will not think of the glory of the Saints. But against these words it could be objected, that in the reprobate the pain of loss will remain for ever, which arises from the consideration of felicity lost: therefore even after the judgment the wicked will think of the heavenly felicity, which they will know they have lost and the elect have obtained. Nevertheless I think it sufficiently probable that as much as their pain will then be increased, so much will their consideration of the glory of the Blessed be diminished. But about these matters many

difficulties could be raised, which I think are rather to be passed over, lest I bring in uncertain things for certain.

"And he cried" (Luke 16:24): according to that of Isaias, "You shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for grief of spirit" (Isa. 65:14). This cry, however, was spiritual and interior, namely a vehement affection, though unworthy. *"And said: Father Abraham."* He calls him father whose virtues he neglected to imitate: on which account he was unworthy to call him father, although he had taken carnal origin from him. Whence in John Christ says to the Jews: "If you be the sons of Abraham, do the works of Abraham; you are of your father the devil" (John 8:39, 44). So if this rich man had been pious and liberal and hospitable toward the poor, he would rightly have called Abraham father. *"Have mercy on me."* Since the damned are obstinate in vices, and never repent, how do they ask and desire to be had mercy on? It must be said that they do not repent of their sins in so far as they are offensive to God, base and unjust, but as they are the cause to them of so great punishment. But this damned rich man also asked to be had mercy on, as to mitigation of punishment, not as to removal of guilt. For he adds:

"And send Lazarus," that is, direct him to me, *"that he may dip the tip of his finger in water,"* that is, that he may bestow on me something, at least some small measure of relief. Christ, however, in this place expresses spiritual things metaphorically by corporeal, that *(p. 130)* the community of men, which does not grasp spiritual things in their simplicity, may the better understand. *"And cool my tongue"*: in which, since he sinned the more, as well by the delights of taste in meats and drinks as by the vain words that abound in surfeiting, therefore he the more prays for relief of pain in the tongue. For by what things one sins more gravely, by these and in these he is the more punished (Wisd. 11:17). *"For I am tormented in this flame."* How incorporeal spirits are afflicted by corporeal fire, the doctors describe on the fourth book of the Sentences. The common answer is that that fire, in so far as it is an instrument of divine justice, afflicts the condemned spirits, as the water of Baptism acts upon the soul, in so far as it is an instrument of divine mercy.

"And Abraham said to him" (Luke 16:25). According to Augustine, what place does in bodies, order does in spiritual things. Therefore the speech of souls and angels to one another is to be understood as made by spiritual conversion toward one another. *"Son,"* by propagation of flesh, not by imitation of virtues, *"remember that thou didst receive good things in thy lifetime,"* temporal goods, riches, delights and honours, in thy life spent upon earth: in which if thou didst anything of the kind of good works, thou hast got thy reward beyond what was condign. For God leaves no good unrewarded. *"And Lazarus in like manner evil things,"* that is, penal evils: poverty, infirmities, hunger, reproaches he suffered copiously, by which his daily faults were as it were purged by fire. Hence Gregory says: "If we see anything reprehensible in the poor, we ought not to despise them, because perhaps those whom infirmity of morals wounds, poverty's medicine cures. But rich men, even if they appear good, are wholly to be feared lest perhaps for the good things they do they receive retribution from God in the present." For as Boethius says, although the judgments of God are hidden, while in this world hard things befall the elect and prosperous things the reprobate, yet they are more hidden when prosperous things befall the elect and hard things the reprobate. It is better, therefore, to glory in adversities than in prosperities, as James says: "My brethren, count it all joy when you shall fall into divers temptations" (James 1:2).

"*But now he is comforted"* here, in sure expectation of eternal felicity, "*and thou art tormented"* with perpetual torment. As that which delights here is momentary, but that which torments there is eternal; so also momentary is that which here now, in the life of penance and temporal adversities, torments, but eternal that which in the future retribution delights. Let us choose therefore with Moses rather to be afflicted now, in the penitential life, with the people of God, that is, the elect, than to have the pleasure of temporal sin (Heb. 11:25): because, as the Apostle says, "The sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come, that shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18); and again, "That which is at present momentary and light of our tribulation worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor. 4:17).

"And besides all this" (Luke 16:26), that is, among those things which regard the matter of this affair of which he speaks, *"between us and you there is fixed a great chaos,"* that is, a great distance of merits and states and places, between us the elect already confirmed in good, and you the reprobate and damned obstinate unchangeably in evil, *"fixed,"* that is, immovably established by the rigour of divine justice, which after this life gives no place of penance, according to the common law; *"so that they who would pass from hence to you cannot,"* that is, cannot come to you and help you. For the Blessed and the Saints are so conformed after this life to divine justice, that they neither can nor will succour the damned, speaking of the deliberative and practical will: although with the natural will they would wish to succour them, especially their kinsmen and those once dearest, if it were possible. This "cannot" does not conflict with their beatitude, as neither does the inability to sin. — But it can be asked whether the Blessed can descend into hell, even with their bodies resumed and glorified. *(p. 131)* And it appears that they can, because, as Augustine and Anselm testify, wherever the spirit will be, the body will at once be, by the dowry of agility. For local distance will not be able to impede the motion of glorified bodies. And it must be answered that the Blessed will never descend, nor will they wish or desire to descend into hell to remain there, or to snatch anyone thence. If, however, there were a reasonable cause for their descending thither, they would not be hindered.

"Nor from thence come hither," that is, those who are damned cannot ascend to the place and society of the Saints, because they do not repent; but remain immovably in that aversion and perverse affection in which they departed from the body, according to that of Ecclesiastes: "If the tree fall to the south or to the north, in what place soever it shall fall, there shall it be" (Eccles. 11:3). Hence, according to Damascene, what the fall is to the angels, death is to men. Gregory, however, says that there is no doubt that the damned would wish to ascend to the place and company of the Blessed, if it were possible.

But against this it can be argued, because according to this the damned would not remain in their aversion from God, nor in their perverse affection by which they finally turned to carnal and perishable things. Besides, they so hate God that they do not desire to be united to Him or to be with Him. Thomas also alleges Augustine saying that the damned do not desire true felicity, but detest every honest good. Moreover, St. Bridget in her *Revelations* describes how a certain perverse soul, presented at the tribunal of Christ, said: "Although I could be saved, I would not, lest thou have consolation or joy from me." To which the devil who stood by alluded, and asserted: "Such is my will also." — To these it is briefly answered, that as the damned in this life preferred to enjoy perishable and vain goods rather than the true and unchangeable good, so perpetually after death such perverse will remains in them, and they would rather basely be delighted than sincerely contemplate God. None the less so great is their affliction that they would prefer to be with the Blessed in heaven rather than to be so tormented in hell, in so far as to be in heaven and in glory would be to them an escape from so great misery and their own advantage: they do not, however, desire to be in heaven, or with God and the Saints, in so far as this would redound to the honour and glory of God. And so by these it is easy to reconcile the things alleged.

Moreover to the foregoing it can be objected, that certain of the Saints are read to have freed from hell some who died in mortal sins; the damned also at times appear to the living. And it must be answered that no one damned by definitive and absolute sentence can be freed or go out from hell as one not to return into it; but by divine dispensation he can go out for a time: nay on the day of judgment all will come out, soon to fall more unhappily into the former pit.

"And he said: Then, father, I beseech thee" (Luke 16:27), *"that thou wouldst send him,"* namely Lazarus, *"to my father's house, for I have five brethren"* (Luke 16:28); *"that he may testify,"* that is, may tell them firmly and with testimony the things that pertain to salvation and what has befallen me; *"lest they also come into this place of torments,"* namely into hell, which, according to blessed Job, is "a land dark and covered with the mist of death, a land of misery and darkness, where the shadow of death, and no order, but everlasting horror dwelleth" (Job 10:21–22). Heaven, however, is the place of joys, and this world the place

of merits. The damned man asked these things not out of charity, which he had neither in death nor afterwards; but out of servile fear, lest his own damnation be increased by the damnation of his brethren, with whom he was a partner in vices, and to whom he left examples of a vicious life, and the matter of sinning, namely wealth. *"And Abraham said to him"* (Luke 16:29): *"They have Moses and the prophets,"* that is, the books of the law and the Prophets, in which they are instructed concerning what is to be done and believed: *"let them hear them,"* with the ears of the heart, namely by understanding and obeying.

(p. 132) *"But he said: No, father Abraham"* (Luke 16:30), that is, they do not hear Moses and the prophets. This the damned man knew from the recent memory of the things he had perceived, or by conjectural knowledge, from considering himself in judging of others. Moreover, from the fact that Abraham says of the rich man's brethren, "They have Moses and the prophets," it is gathered that they were of Israelitic stock. *"But if one went to them from the dead, they will do penance,"* because by the unaccustomed apparition and the exhortation specially made to them, they will be the more strongly moved. But frequently the opposite happens. Such apparitions also are often judged phantastic; and although for an hour they move some, yet very often as time goes on they bear little fruit.

Hence it is subjoined: *"And he said to him"* (Luke 16:31): *"If they hear not Moses and the prophets,"* who were of so great sanctity and authority, by knowledge of the truth and fulfilment of justice, *"neither will they believe if one rise again from the dead,"* and come to them, with a credulity proceeding into a stable act of virtues. Whence the Jews, in the time of Christ, did not believe Lazarus the brother of Martha when raised, but decreed to put him to death (John 12:10). Nor did the Jews believe the dead who rose with Christ and appeared to many in the holy city, and testified that Christ had risen (Matt. 27:52–53), as they did not believe Christ either.

From this evangelical reading many most wholesome things can be considered, namely the rigour and subtlety of the divine judgment: by which it so happens that the rich man, who gave not the least things to Lazarus in this life, was in no point, even the least, heard after this life, according to that of Proverbs: "He that stoppeth his ear at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, and shall not be heard" (Prov. 21:13). Likewise, that as to the elect all things work together unto good, so to the perverse and reprobate all things work together unto evil (Rom. 8:28). Therefore let no one foolishly rejoice in garments, let no one dissolve himself in feasts, nor admit loquacity at the time of table, but with guard of heart and fear of God let him take food for necessity, not for pleasure. Whence Basil says: "As far as we can, let us flee the delights of the world and the opulence of meats, lest at any time, tormented in the flames of hell, we ask for a drop of water, and obtain no refreshment."

Luke 17

Article XL — Exposition of the Seventeenth Chapter: "And he said to his disciples: It is impossible that scandals should not come"

(p. 132) *"And he said to his disciples: It is impossible that scandals should not come"* (Luke 17:1). It is not necessary absolutely and in particular that scandals should happen; but in the way in which it is impossible that men should not sin, it is impossible that scandals should not arise. For scandal is a saying or deed less right, affording another occasion of culpable ruin or sin. And this description is given of active scandal. Passive scandal, however, is such a ruin of sin, by which one falls through the disordered word or deed of another. This, however, is to be understood of passive scandal, which one incurs directly and of itself from the word or deed of another.

Wherefore it is to be weighed, because, as Thomas writes in the *Secunda Secundae*, question 43, according to Jerome, *skandalon* in Greek is in Latin called offence, ruin, or stumbling. For as on a bodily way sometimes some obstacle is placed, against *(p. 133)* which if a passer-by stumble, he falls: so on the spiritual way, or in

the progress of life and works, it happens that a man is induced to the ruin of sin by the saying or deed of another; and such an obstacle is called scandal. Now nothing of its own nature disposes to spiritual ruin unless it suffers some defect of due rectitude. For even that which has the appearance of evil is defective and to be avoided, as the Apostle says: “From all appearance of evil refrain yourselves” (1 Thess. 5:22). — Moreover it is to be noted that a man’s saying or deed can in two ways be an occasion of sinning to another. In one way of itself, namely when one by example or admonition intends to induce another to sin; or even though he himself does not intend it, yet his work is such that of its own nature it can induce another to sin, either because it is evil, or because it has the appearance of evil: and such a saying or deed is called active scandal. In the second way, by accident, when from the saying or deed of someone another is scandalized, beside the intention of the agent, and beside the condition of the work, as when the work is in itself good, but another from his own malice is thence induced to sin: and this is passive scandal without active, for the agent does not sin, nor, as far as in him lies, supplies to another an occasion of ruin. It is plain therefore that sometimes there are together active scandal in one and passive scandal in another; but sometimes there is active scandal in one, but not passive in the other, when the other neither consents nor is hurt. Very often also there is passive scandal without active, as has now been shown.

So, “it is impossible that scandals should not come,” in the way in which the Apostle says: “There must be also heresies, that they also who are approved may be made manifest among you” (1 Cor. 11:19): which is a necessity of the end, because scandals and heresies profit for the probation of others. Again it is necessary that such things be, by a conditioned necessity, as things foreseen by God must needs come to pass.

“*But woe to him through whom they come,*” that is, eternal damnation threatens and is owed to him who scandalizes or begets scandals: and this is true of that active scandal which is a mortal sin. For active scandal is a venial sin when one commits an act of venial sin, or one which only has the appearance of evil; but sometimes it is a mortal sin, either because the man commits a mortal sin, or because he despises the salvation of his neighbour, does not care or makes little account of it, unwilling to omit for its sake what pleases himself. Now active scandal of itself, from the intention of the agent, is then a mortal sin, when one endeavours to induce another to sin mortally. But if he wishes to induce to venial sin, it will be a venial sin. “*It were better for him*” (Luke 17:2), “*that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should scandalize one of these little ones.*” Christ says this literally of the millstone, speaking according to the custom of the province of Palestine, where it was the custom that greater crimes were punished by a great stone tied to the neck of the culprit, the culprit himself being cast into the water and drowned: by which Christ insinuates the enormity of this sin. It is better, however, to die and be killed bodily, than to live impiously and spiritually kill another.

Moreover, there is a twofold [merely passive] scandal, namely: one of the Pharisees, that is, of those who from their own malice are scandalized at the word or deed of another though good, as the Pharisees at the words and works of Christ; another of the little ones, or the infirm or imperfect, which arises from their infirmity or ignorance, from the word or deed of another. — On this it is asked whether spiritual goods are to be omitted for the avoiding of scandal. To which Thomas answers, that certain goods are of necessity for salvation, to which man is bound: and these are not to be abandoned for the avoiding of another’s scandal. Other spiritual goods are not necessary to salvation: and about these a distinction is to be made. For the scandal that is caused by such goods is sometimes from *(p. 134)* the malice of the one scandalized, as has already been said of the Pharisees. Whence when some endeavour to hinder spiritual goods by stirring up scandals, such goods are not on that account to be omitted. But sometimes scandal arises from spiritual goods through the infirmity of some, which is that of the little ones: and then for the sake of charity the spiritual goods are to be concealed or deferred, until, reason being given, such scandal ceases. But if after reason given it should not cease, then it would belong to malice, and would be the scandal of the Pharisees, and the goods would not be omitted. Now what Jerome says, “Everything that can be passed over is to be let go for

the sake of scandal, saving the threefold truth, namely of life, of justice and of doctrine," is understood of the scandal of the little ones.

So, although scandals often come through virtuous men, as they came through Christ, yet woe is not due to them, because this does not happen through their fault, nor do they come through them causally, but occasionally and indirectly, namely by occasion taken, not given. Jerome also says: "He who is scandalized is a little one: for the greater do not receive scandals." For the perfect cleave firmly to God, and are stable in good things, doing all things in order: therefore they are not shaken by the disordered words or deeds of others, or moved to guilt, but rather to charitable and pious compassion, prayer and succour, and to fuller custody and caution of their own heart. On this matter Christ speaks more diffusely in Matthew, where the things said on it are to be seen (Matt. 18:6–10).

Moreover, if it is so grave a crime to scandalize one little one, what will become of those who scandalize a whole community, congregation, or Church? Which in prelates, doctors and religious is also a graver sin. Therefore it is subjoined: *"Take heed to yourselves"* (Luke 17:3), that is, carefully beware that you scandalize no one. For to our neighbour we owe good fame, or edification; to God honour and glory; to ourselves the fulfilment of what is due. He specially warns the disciples not to scandalize, because they bore the figure as well of prelates as of religious and preachers or doctors, whose active scandal is more perilous and graver, because their words and deeds are more drawn into examples. And since those hurt by the scandal of others are to be piously recovered, the Saviour subjoins: *"If thy brother sin against thee,"* that is, to thy knowledge, according to Augustine; or, "against thee," that is, wronging thee, *"thy brother,"* that is, thy neighbour, whoever he be, man or woman; *"reprove him,"* that is, charitably rebuke him, first in secret, in fit place and time, and if there be probable hope of his amendment. First, therefore, he is to be reproved secretly, lest the reprover be not a pious corrector, but the betrayer of a brother's crime, and the other, shame being lost, persevere in vices. For the neighbour's good name is to be preserved. *"And if he do penance,"* that is, say or show by deed that he is sorry and wishes to amend, *"forgive him,"* the offence committed against thee. For injury is always to be forgiven as to the guilt, that is, that he who offends be not hated, but loved; and the greater penance he shows, and the more humbly he asks pardon, the more is he to be forgiven, not only by not imputing the guilt, but also by relaxing the penalty or satisfaction, in part or whole, unless the relaxation of the penalty tend to the detriment of the commonwealth or of the common good and peace, or to the derogation of the observance of justice, or to the harm of the offender, as if from such forgiveness he be rendered more prone and shameless to perpetrate iniquities. *"And if he sin against thee seven times in a day"* (Luke 17:4), *"and seven times in a day be converted to thee, saying, I repent, forgive him."* By the number seven universality is many times designated, because in seven days all this time revolves. And in Tobias the angel Raphael says: "I am one of the seven who stand before God" (Tob. 12:15). So the sense is: As often as anyone sins against thee, forgive him as often as he asks this very thing. Yet, as was touched, even to him who does not repent and does not ask, forgiveness is to be given *(p. 135)* as to the remission of guilt and hatred, although there is greater reason for forgiving one who asks than one who does not ask.

Many things could be said in this place about fraternal correction and its manner and order, how it is to be done, and how it belongs to all, in so far as it is an act of charity, but specially to those who preside, according as it is an act of justice. Which, because they have been treated at length upon Matthew, are now omitted (Matt. 18:15–17).

So let us not be difficult to spare, nor slow to forgive, nor prone to revenge, nor immoderately mindful of injury inflicted on us, pondering what the most holy patriarch Jacob affirms in Genesis: "Cursed be their fury, because it is stubborn; and their wrath, because it is cruel" (Gen. 49:7). In Leviticus also the Lord says: "Seek not revenge, nor be mindful of the injury of thy citizens. Hate not thy brother in thy heart; but reprove him openly," that is, evidently (first secretly), "lest thou incur sin through him" (Lev. 19:18, 17). Hence the Apostle commands: "Put ye on anger and indignation, bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if

any have a complaint against another" (Col. 3:8, 13). Moreover in Mark Christ exhorts: "When you shall stand to pray, forgive, if you have aught against any man: that your Father also, who is in heaven, may forgive you your sins. But if you will not forgive, neither will your Father that is in heaven forgive you your sins" (Mark 11:25–26). Hence in Ecclesiasticus it is had: "He that seeketh to revenge himself shall find vengeance from the Lord, and he will surely keep his sins in remembrance. Forgive thy neighbour if he hath hurt thee, and then shall thy sins be forgiven to thee when thou prayest" (Ecclus. 28:1–2). Since, however, the offence is so much the graver as the honourableness and excellence of him who is offended is greater: is it not the gravest and most irrational and immense folly that a man, a putrid vessel, should ask to be forgiven by God, when he himself will not forgive his neighbour? And again, is not the piety of God infinite, who lays this law upon us, that as we wish it to be done to us by Him and be forgiven, so we should do and forgive our neighbours (Matt. 7:12)? Therefore in Ecclesiasticus it is written: "Man to man reserveth anger, and doth he seek remedy of God? He hath no mercy on a man like himself, and doth he entreat for his own sins? Who shall obtain pardon for his sins?" (Ecclus. 28:3–5). And again: "Remember thy last things, and let enmity cease; and be not angry with thy neighbour, and abstain from strife" (Ecclus. 28:6, 8, 10).

"And the apostles said to the Lord: Increase our faith" (Luke 17:5), that is, perfect and strengthen our faith, that we may be able to fulfil these arduous precepts and supernatural teachings of thine. This the Apostles asked, because to forgive one who so incessantly injures, and to avoid scandals, and to correct the delinquent, proceed from great faith, by which one firmly and lucidly believes the providence and judgment of God, and the blessed reward for good acts.

But they asked specially the increase of faith: First, because it is the foundation of the virtues. Secondly, on account of the difficulty of its acts, because it is difficult to subject reason in all things to faith, and so to bring the intellect into captivity (2 Cor. 10:5). On which account the Saviour said: "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark 9:22). And Paul testifies: "All men have not faith" (2 Thess. 3:2). Thirdly, because they had heard Christ frequently commend faith chiefly, saying: "Thy faith hath made thee whole" (Matt. 9:22). Fourthly, because the chief virtue of faith is for working miracles, which were necessary to the Apostles for the confirmation of their preachings. — Moreover faith is increased in two ways: First, extensively and as to its object, when more credible things are believed explicitly: as the learned believe explicitly many things which the simple believe implicitly, believing as the Church believes. Secondly, intensively and as to its subject, when the credible things are more lucidly known, and more firmly and fervently held. Which increase is given chiefly by the gift of understanding, by which man recognizes the reasons of the things to be believed; and by the gift of wisdom, by which he tastes with sweet foretaste the truth of divine things which he believes, and experimentally relishes what he believes, and how *(p. 136)* truly through Catholic faith he is pleasing to God and united to Him: and so he now receives a certain savour and pledge of future beatitude, so that nothing is more certain to him, and nothing appears more reasonable to him, than what Christian faith proposes. — Both of these increases of faith, however, are especially necessary to prelates and doctors, who have to instruct the rest in faith. Therefore the Apostles, as the first and chief after Christ in His Church, prelates and masters, reasonably asked that faith be increased in them: which Christ after His resurrection gradually perfected in them, until on the day of Pentecost He most fully consummated it in them. Whence also He consequently shows them the virtuousness of faith.

"And the Lord said: If you had faith like to a grain of mustard seed" (Luke 17:6), that is, very strong and vigorous, intense and invincible. As the grain of mustard seed, though it be small in quantity, is yet great in virtue, fervid and bitter, and expulsive of poison; so the faith of Christians ought to be fervid through charity, bitter through promptitude to bear adversities, lest in time of temptation it fail, and expulsive of every poison of errors and perfidy. *"You might say to this mulberry tree: Be thou rooted up, and be thou transplanted into the sea, and it would obey you,"* that is, at your prayer or command such a tree would suddenly be torn from the earth, and be planted in the sea: since such sudden uprooting is miraculous, and the planting of the tree in

the fluid place of the sea more miraculous. *"But all things are possible to him that believeth,"* because such things are done by divine power, and frequently by angelic ministry. Moreover in Matthew and Mark Christ exemplifies by a mountain: "You shall say," He says, "to this mountain, Remove, and cast thyself into the sea" (Matt. 21:21; Mark 11:23). And it is certain that the most blessed Apostles and many other Saints did miracles far more wonderful and more illustrious than these. And since Christ says, "You might say to this tree," some think that when He said this He saw such a tree near Him.

Moreover, because the Saviour promised and conferred on His elect the most excellent charisms of graces, and was about to bestow them, as well in the gifts of sanctifying grace as of grace gratuitously given; therefore after the foregoing He most wholesomely instructs them concerning the profound and unshaken humility always to be preserved in all things, that every good be continually ascribed to the omnipotent Creator, and the more we be thankful to Him, the more copious the gifts of grace we shall have obtained from Him. To persuade this, therefore, He introduces a most apt and plain parable.

"But which of you having a servant ploughing, or feeding cattle" (Luke 17:7), *"that will say to him, when he is come from the field: Immediately go, sit down,"* that is, rest, or eat; *"and will not rather say to him"* (Luke 17:8): *"Make ready my supper,"* that is, prepare for me food and table for supping, *"and gird thyself, and serve me, whilst I eat and drink,"* setting on and taking away the viands, *"and afterwards thou shalt eat and drink?" "Doth he thank that servant"* (Luke 17:9), that is, has the master to give thanks to his servant, *"for doing the things which he commanded him?" "I think not." "So you also"* (Luke 17:10): for the servant is bound to this, and after labour in the field has to labour in the house, that he may be assiduously in labour, and not grow insolent, according to that of Ecclesiasticus: "Fodder, and a rod, and a burden are for the ass; bread, and correction, and work for a servant" (Ecclus. 33:25); and likewise, "Assiduous works bend the servant" (Ecclus. 33:28). So you also, *"when you shall have done all the things that are commanded you"* by God, by the Church, by right reason, say with your whole heart with full humility: *"We are unprofitable servants,"* that is, by our service we have brought no utility or perfection to God, who hath no need of our goods (Ps. 15:2). Whence also in Job it is had: "If thou sin, what shalt thou hurt Him? and if thou do justly, what shalt thou give Him?" (Job 35:6–7). *"We have done that which we ought to do,"* by fulfilling the precepts.

By this most blessed teaching, the uncreated Wisdom of God takes away from us every occasion, cause and matter of vain glorying, presumption and pomp. For if those must reckon themselves unprofitable servants who have fulfilled all the precepts, *(p. 137)* what is incumbent on us, who offend in so many things (James 3:2), and fulfil those very precepts which perhaps we fulfil so imperfectly that (according to Isaias) all our justices are as the rag of a menstruous woman (Isa. 64:6)? Finally, even according to the Philosopher, an equivalent cannot be repaid to the gods, parents and masters: how then shall we be able to repay anything condign to the true and omnipotent God? But also whatever we are, have and do of good, is from Him, and is His, and is to be ascribed to Him as to the giver and conserver, as the Apostle says: "What hast thou that thou hast not received?" (1 Cor. 4:7). So, by the very fact that all we have and are we have received from God, we are obliged to devote the whole of this to His service, to order and convert it to His honour and glory, and to subject all to Him as far as we can; and the more gifts He has conferred on us, the more are we bound to thank, obey and serve Him. Hence holy men, the more perfect and gracious they were, the more humble they were too, and always weighed their imperfection, and whatever of good was in them they most humbly ascribed to God, and professed that of themselves they had nothing but to fail and to sin. These, therefore, let us, full of imperfections, strive to follow, turning over in continual memory this most wise teaching of Christ. — But since elsewhere Christ says, "Cast ye the unprofitable servant into the exterior darkness" (Matt. 25:30), how do the just truly call themselves unprofitable servants? And it must be answered that here they are called unprofitable servants in respect of God, in the sense before given, but elsewhere in respect of themselves or their neighbour, who neither worked their own salvation nor were exemplary to others.

Next is described a glorious miracle wrought by Christ, or rather several miracles, by which His supernatural doctrine was confirmed. For as natural science is proved by arguments and principles evident to natural reason, so the supernatural wisdom of Christ delivered in the Gospel was strengthened by supernatural works possible to God alone, by which God bore testimony to the evangelical truth.

"And it came to pass, as he was going to Jerusalem" (Luke 17:11), that is, toward that city in which a little after He was to suffer. For it is certain that this happened a little before Palm Sunday. *"He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee,"* that is, through the midst of those provinces, in which He preached very much and did many miracles. By Jerusalem, which is interpreted the vision of peace, the supernal fatherland of the Blessed is designated; by Samaria, however, which is interpreted keeping, is understood the active life, which consists in the observance of the precepts; but by Galilee, which is interpreted transmigration, the contemplative life is expressed, which is situated in the spiritual passage from visible to invisible things. Whoever therefore desires to attain to the supernal fatherland, let him first exercise himself in the acts of the active life, then in those of the contemplative, to which the active life leads, as a door to a dwelling. Moreover, as some write here, Samaria was a land of Gentiles; Galilee, of Jews. But it is to be noted that Samaria for a long time belonged to the children of Israel: who, on account of idolatry, having been wasted, conquered and transported by the kings of the Assyrians, that province was given to Gentiles, whom the king of the Assyrians settled there, as is clearly described in the books of Kings (4 Kings 17:6, 24).

"And as he entered into a certain town, there met him ten men that were lepers" (Luke 17:12): not casually; but those men, having learned from the report of many the power of Christ to heal, watched for His coming. *"Who stood afar off"*: because according to the law of Moses they ought not to dwell or converse among others (Lev. 13:46). And out of reverence for Christ they did not approach Him, being ashamed of their uncleanness, according to Theophylact, and suspecting that Christ, like others, might perhaps loathe them. *"And they lifted up their voice, saying"* (Luke 17:13), from a vehement desire of bodily healing. Which we, infected with spiritual leprosy, that is, defiled by variety of vices, ought to follow, *(p. 138)* saying from the most ardent desire of the heart what they said: *"Jesus, master."* To command belongs chiefly and most properly to Christ as God; but according to the nature assumed, it belongs to Him participatively and ministerially in regard to God, yet excellently in respect of the other servants of God. For every creature, even to the humanity of Christ, is believed to be subject (Heb. 2:8). *"Have mercy on us,"* that is, compassionate, and by compassionating succour us infirm, delivering us from this penal misery which is leprosy. Moreover, as the nature of evil belongs more to the evil of guilt than to the evil of punishment, so much the more let us pray that sins be taken from us than bodily inconveniences, diseases or adversities. But alas! many grieve and bewail more exterior, bodily and perishable evils than interior, spiritual and eternal ones: whose interior eye is greatly stopped.

"Whom when he saw" (Luke 17:14), not only with the exterior glance, but with the interior affection of compassion presently extending into the effect of mercy, *"he said: Go, shew yourselves to the priests."* He did not say, "I command you to be healed," or, "I cure you"; but, "Shew yourselves to the priests": that He might teach us to avoid all ostentation and pride, that we do not great things or desire to do them for the admiration, applause or praise of men. He also sent them to the priests: First, that He might then destroy the madness of the future heretics who say that the Mosaic law is not from God, but from some most cruel devil: of whom the chief was the most unclean Manichaeus. Secondly, that by willingly keeping the law He might give us examples of humility and obedience. For it was a precept in Leviticus that those cleansed of leprosy should present themselves to the priests (Lev. 14:2): first, that the priests might judge whether they were truly cleansed or not; secondly, that for their cure they might offer the sacrifice determined in the law. Legal things, however, had their course until the passion of Christ and the promulgation of the evangelical law. Thirdly, on account of a mystical reason, namely to commend the power of the keys. For it belongs to the priests of the new law to admit the clean or penitent, and to exclude the unclean and impenitent.

"And it came to pass, as they went, they were made clean": to show the piety and power of Christ, and to commend the merit of faith and obedience. For obedience is better than sacrifice (1 Kings 15:22). Likewise, lest they be thought cleansed by virtue of the law, or of the legal sacrifice, or of the priests, but by divine power alone.

"And one of them" (Luke 17:15), *"when he saw"* by experience and bodily sight, his flesh in colour and disposition so evidently and wonderfully suddenly changed, *"that he was made clean"* from bodily leprosy, nay and spiritual: for as is believed, Christ cured in mind those whom He healed bodily; *"went back to Jesus with a loud,"* that is, loving, devout, grateful, joyous, and sensibly resounding or high, *"voice,"* of thanksgiving and praise, *"glorifying,"* that is, professing and by deed demonstrating God to be spiritually great, as omnipotent and pious, by whose power he felt himself so wonderfully cured. And although this man perhaps did not yet explicitly believe Jesus to be true God, he believed Him a holy man and a prophet, who by divine power had done these things. *"And he fell on his face"* (Luke 17:16), *"before his feet,"* namely of Christ, giving Him thanks, and humbling himself before Him with all his powers, by whose gracious benefit he had been so mercifully and wonderfully cured. *"And this was a Samaritan,"* that is, a Gentile by nation, as born of the progeny of those whom Salmanasar, the ten tribes being transported, settled in their stead in the land of Samaria (4 Kings 17:24). And perhaps this man was a proselyte, that is, already before converted to Judaism. By this, however, that he is said to have been a Samaritan, it is taught that the other nine were Jews. Again, by this that he alone returned to Christ giving thanks, the conversion of the Gentiles to Christ, the Jews remaining in their perfidy, is mystically prefigured. Moreover the other nine did not return *(p. 139)* because they ascribed their cure to the observance of the law: either because He said to them, "Shew yourselves to the priests"; or because they were induced by the priests, who envied Christ, to ascribe their health not to the virtue and efficacy of Christ, but of the law.

"And Jesus answering, said" (Luke 17:17): *"Were not ten made clean? and where are the nine?"* as if He said: The great ingratitude of these is plain to the eye, or the impiety of the priests who so subverted them. *"There was no one found"* (Luke 17:18) of these ten *"to return and give glory to God,"* that is, to give thanks to God for his miraculous cure, and glorify His power, or honour me, the Son of God and true God, for so great a benefit, *"but this stranger,"* that is, a Gentile by nation and alien from God and the law. So also Naaman the Syrian, cured of leprosy by Eliseus, returned to him, giving thanks most devoutly (4 Kings 5:15). Moreover it is asked how those nine did not return, if they were cured by Christ not only bodily but also spiritually? To which one can answer that they were cleansed together bodily and spiritually on the way to the priests, but after they had spoken with the priests, they were seduced by them, and so were made ungrateful, and relapsed.

"And he said to him" (Luke 17:19): *"Arise,"* from the ground on which thou liest prostrate, and from the former custom and evil inclination in which thou didst once lie, *"go"* to places suited to thee, and from good to better, and from the way to the fatherland of eternal salvation, *"for thy faith hath made thee whole,"* that is, by the act of thy faith thou hast merited to be so cured by me, if not de condigno, at least de congruo.

"And being asked by the Pharisees" (Luke 17:20), either from curiosity or from derision: *"When the kingdom of God cometh?"* that is, when the heavenly beatitude which thou promisest and preachest shall be conferred or manifested? *"He answering them, said: The kingdom of God cometh not with observation,"* that is, with a certain pre-fixing of time or foreknowledge, so that it cannot be observed, nor foreknown when that kingdom is to come. For then it will come, when it is conferred on men: which will be at the hour of the particular judgment, as to individuals, and the soul alone; but at the hour of the universal judgment, as to all the elect, then to be glorified in body also. Since therefore the day or hour of each judgment remains unknown, and cannot without revelation be foreknown, it is certain that the aforesaid kingdom does not come with observation. For which kingdom we pray daily, "Thy kingdom come" (Matt. 6:10): therefore each day of this life is to be ordered and spent as if it were the last, that we may always be prepared for death. Whence

also to the Apostles asking about this Christ answered: "It is not for you to know the times or moments, which the Father hath put in his own power" (Acts 1:7). By which words Christ repressed the fingers of all who presume to prognosticate and calculate about this. Those also who have attempted to predict determinately the time of Christ's coming to judgment, as abbot Joachim and certain others, have been found to have erred, because the times determined by them have now passed. *"Neither shall they say"* (Luke 17:21), that is, they will not be able to predict with certainty, whoever they be, *"Behold here, or behold there,"* that is, in what place Christ will appear to judge; but then first it will be made known, when He Himself shall have shown Himself present to judge. Some expound this of ignorance of the time, as has been said; others of ignorance of the place, because although the judgment is said to be future in the valley of Josaphat, yet the determinate place in which Christ will sit is said to be unknown. Some also understand by the valley of Josaphat the valley of judgment, not that place literally, because Josaphat is interpreted judgment.

Next the Saviour touches the cause why this question is not to be asked, or why He ought to be believed. *"For lo, the kingdom of God is within you,"* that is, is placed in your power, that you may be able to merit it: because if you do what is in you, God will give the grace of meriting. *(p. 140)* Or, "The kingdom of God is within you," that is, I, Christ, King of heavens, through whom one comes to that kingdom, who reign in the minds of the elect, am among you, and speak to you, who cannot lie. Of whom in John the Baptist says: "In the midst of you there hath stood one whom you know not" (John 1:26).

"And he said to his disciples" (Luke 17:22): *"The days will come when you shall desire,"* that is, in which you will wish, *"to see one day of the Son of man,"* that is, that famous and special day of Christ, on which He is to reign in heaven: which is the day of eternity and glory, of which the Psalmist foretold: "One day in thy courts is better than thousands" (Ps. 83:11). Others expound it of the day of the general judgment, which shall be one, and is desirable to the elect, in so far as they shall obtain full beatitude in it. But some expound thus: You will desire to see one day of the Son of man, that is, Christ, whom now daily you behold, at least on one day to have Him bodily present for your consolation. By these words the Saviour insinuated that the disciples, about to suffer many things, and placed in persecutions, ought to wish for the aforesaid day: because Paul also testifies, "We were pressed out of measure, so that we were weary even of life" (2 Cor. 1:8); and likewise, "I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ" (Phil. 1:23). Such desire also often arises from fervent love, as the Psalmist says: "Woe is me, that my sojourning is prolonged," etc. (Ps. 119:5); and, "As the hart panteth after the fountains of water, so my soul panteth after thee, O God" (Ps. 41:2). *"And you shall not see"* the aforesaid day, immediately at your will, but at the time divinely appointed. By the vision of the day, however, is understood the thing desired to be seen in it.

"And they shall say to you" (Luke 17:23), the false prophets, who before the second coming of Christ will deceive many: *"Behold here, and behold there"*: that is, one will say that Christ is here, or is about to appear shortly; another will say that He is elsewhere, and that His coming is still far distant. This Christ said to His disciples in the person of the faithful who were afterwards to be. For it is certain that the disciples of Christ to whom He said this were translated to the fatherland before the fulfilment of these things. *"Go ye not after,"* believe not such errors, nor follow them by conformity of life. *"For as the lightning that lighteneth from under heaven"* (Luke 17:24), that is, from the clouds in which it is generated, which are under the starry heaven, and under any heavenly sphere, *"shineth unto those parts that are under heaven,"* that is, upon the earth and in the air, clearly and sensibly; *"so shall the Son of man be in his day,"* that is, so manifest will His coming to judgment be, on the day divinely pre-ordained for this, that to no one will doubt of it be left. Some often allege this authority to prove that that final judgment will be made and finished very swiftly, as the flash of lightning is as it were momentary: thereby reprobating the error of Lactantius, who asserts that the general judgment will last through long times. And so Thomas sometimes alleges it.

"But first" (Luke 17:25), that is, before His second coming is accomplished, *"he must"*, by a conditioned necessity, and it is useful for the salvation of the human race, *"suffer many things,"* namely divers kinds of torments, and very many and most bitter sorrows in body and in soul, in all powers and members, *"and be rejected,"* that is, adjudged to death, despised, loaded with reproaches, *"by this generation,"* that is, by the Pharisees now deriding me, and the other Jews.

Next Christ by two examples shows what His second coming to judge will be, namely most swift and uncertain as to foreknowledge of time: wherefore the fearless will be deceived by vain security, and those who do not now prepare themselves will be unprepared even then, and perish. *"And as it came to pass in the days of Noe"* (Luke 17:26), that is, in the time in which he lived, and by God's command built the ark, and foretold the flood to come (Gen. 6); *"so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man,"* that is, about the second coming of Christ, in which He will wonderfully declare His power: on which account that time is said specially to be His, although He is Lord of all *(p. 141)* time. *"They did eat and drink"* (Luke 17:27), namely riotously, *"they married wives, and were given in marriage,"* for pleasure rather than for the procreation of offspring, *"until the day on which Noe entered into the ark."* For they did not believe his preachings and threats; but gave attention to games, vanities and carnalities. *"And the flood came,"* as it is read in Genesis: "In the six hundredth year of the life of Noe, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the flood came, all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the flood-gates of heaven were opened; and the rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights. And the waters were multiplied, and lifted up the ark on high. The water was fifteen cubits higher than the high mountains. And the waters of the flood prevailed upon the earth a hundred and fifty days. And the ark rested upon the mountains of Armenia" (Gen. 7:11–12, 17, 20, 24; 8:4). *"And destroyed them all,"* that is, drowned all who were outside the ark. For eight persons were in the ark, namely Noe with his wife, and his three sons with their wives. Wherefore Peter says: "In the ark a few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water" (1 Peter 3:20). For that was a universal flood. Conformably, the inundation of vices, and of heresies and schisms, covers, destroys and condemns those who do not remain in ecclesiastical unity and charity.

"Likewise" (Luke 17:28), as it came to pass in the days of Lot, so shall it be about the second coming of the Son of man. *"They did eat and drink, they bought and sold, they planted and built,"* that is, they gave themselves immoderately with false security to earthly and carnal things, sinning without any fear, and, as if about to live long, making marriages and buildings. *"And in the day that Lot went out of Sodom"* (Luke 17:29), that is, from the city of the Sodomites, *"it rained fire and brimstone from heaven"* (the aerial heaven, whence also the birds are called birds of heaven), *"and destroyed them all"*: that is, the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrha and Adama (Gen. 19:24–25; Deut. 29:23), fire and brimstone destroyed, as is read in Genesis. *"According to these things shall it be"* (Luke 17:30), that is, in like manner it shall be, *"in the day when the Son of man shall be revealed,"* that is, in the judgment shall be visibly shown to all: because until that day or thereabouts some, hardened in vices, will be in secure folly, namely after Antichrist is slain. — But the common saying of Catholic doctors seems to oppose this, who say that when Antichrist is slain and his frauds laid open, all will be converted to Christ, and will serve Him most devoutly. And it must be answered that not simply all will be so converted; nay certain, most hardened in their impieties, will remain impenitent, saying: "Although our prince, namely Antichrist, be slain, we nevertheless have peace." Of whom the Apostle writes: "When they shall say, Peace and security, then shall sudden destruction come upon them" (1 Thess. 5:3).

"In that hour" (Luke 17:31), that is, at that time, a little before the judgment, not in the very hour of the judgment, in which all houses shall be destroyed, *"he that shall be on the housetop, and his goods in the house, let him not come down to take them"*: that is, so great will be the peril, horror and acceleration of that judgment, that then it will not be leisure nor expedient for anyone to be occupied about temporal things, which then will be wholly taken from him, and he will straightway have to be brought to the tribunal of

Christ. Whence then there will be no care for the least things, when that greatest and incomparable cause of infinite peril shall be at hand. *"And he that shall be in the field, in like manner let him not return back,"* that is, let him not care to return to his earthly possessions by love or bodily motion, since then all must be left; but let him provide for himself only how he may be presented to the dread Judge to be saved. *"Remember Lot's wife"* (Luke 17:32), that is, by pondering what befell that woman, beware of inordinate affection toward temporal things, lest with her the stroke of God touch you. For as she, looking back against the precept of God, was suddenly turned into a statue of salt (Gen. 19:26), so those who immoderately turn themselves to carnal and earthly things shall perish. Whence elsewhere Christ asserts: "No man putting his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62).

"Whosoever shall seek to save his life" (Luke 17:33) *(p. 142)* that is, in the present life shall wish to rescue it from persecutions and adversities or bodily death, preferring to deny Christ, or to abandon equity, rather than expose himself to death and persecutions, *"shall lose it,"* that is, by his own demerit and carnal fear shall bring it to eternal damnation. It can also be expounded thus: Whoever shall seek to save his life eternally in the future, shall lose it, that is, will gladly bear adversities, and if need be, even death for Christ. *"And whosoever shall lose it,"* that is, shall expose his life to death and tribulations for God and justice, *"shall preserve it,"* that is, shall acquire for himself the life of glory by the merit of his fortitude and constancy. Whence in Matthew Christ says: "He that shall lose his life for me shall find it" (Matt. 10:39). With this agrees what the Lord says in John: "He that hateth his life in this world, keepeth it unto life eternal" (John 12:25).

"I say to you: In that night there shall be two men in one bed: the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left" (Luke 17:34): that is, at the hour of judgment, even those who now are most closely joined to each other shall be divided from each other: so that one shall be elect, and on account of his virtues shall be taken into the number of the elect, and shall meet Christ in the air (as the Apostle says in the person of such: "We who are alive, who are left, shall be taken up together with them in the clouds to meet Christ, into the air," 1 Thess. 4:16); the other shall be reprobate, and on account of his demerits shall be left among those to be damned on the earth with a heavy body. More spiritually speaking, by the bed is understood the rest or state of contemplation. And so by these two are designated those who are placed in the state of contemplatives. Of whom many then will be cold, as they now are: because in every state there are good and bad, and in every condition and degree the worst are mixed with the best, as Augustine asserts; and Gregory asserts that everywhere Cain is joined to Abel for exercise. Such wicked therefore will then be left. Let no one therefore presume or promise himself foolish security: nay, blessed is the man that is always fearful (Prov. 28:14); and according to Augustine, they will then be secure who now are not secure.

"Two women shall be grinding together" (Luke 17:35), that is, equally, or in one mill; *"the one shall be taken, and the other left."* This can be taken literally of women then to be occupied about temporal things: of whom one, as good, will be saved; the other, as wicked, damned. More spiritually, by the women grinding are signified persons in the active life, who are burdened by the weight of temporal solicitude as by a certain millstone: of whom some will then be saved, others damned.

"Two shall be in the field: the one shall be taken, and the other left." By the field the Church is designated, in which grow the lilies and violets of virgins, the roses of martyrs, the lilies of confessors, and the fruit of all virtues. So by the two existing in the field are expressed prelates and preachers, who preside over the ecclesiastical flocks of Christ: of whom some duly fulfil the pastoral office, and perform in works what they teach, therefore they will be taken to beatitude. Of whom the Apostle writes to Timothy: "Let the priests that rule well be esteemed worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine" (1 Tim. 5:17). Others bear themselves negligently and scandalously, and destroy by deed what they teach by words, therefore they will be left. Of whom it is had in the book of Wisdom: "A most severe judgment shall be for them that bear rule" (Wisd. 6:6). For such do not purge the field committed to them, that is, the hearts of their

subjects, from thorns and thistles, that is, passions and sins, nor make it fruitful with the seeds of virtues; but leave it uncultivated, unseemly and dry, according to that of Proverbs: “I passed by the field of the slothful man, and by the vineyard of the foolish man; and behold it was all filled with nettles, and thorns had covered the face thereof” (Prov. 24:30–31).

“Answering, the disciples say to him” (Luke 17:36). How are the disciples said to have answered, when they were not asked, and their *(p. 143)* following words are not responsive to any question, but interrogative? To which it must be said that many times in the Scriptures *to answer* is taken for to speak correspondingly, or aptly and proportionately, to the words or deeds of another: and so it is now taken. *“Where, Lord?”* that is, whither is the one taken, and the other left? *“Who said to them”* (Luke 17:37), giving an answer to one of these, from which the solution of the other also is plain: *“Wheresoever the body shall be,”* that is, Christ, true man really bodily, who in the form of glorified humanity shall judge, *“thither will the eagles also be gathered together,”* that is, the Saints, who contemplated the things above, and by holy desires flew to heavenly things while placed on earth. For the members and servants will be joined to their head and Lord. Hence in John He says: “Father, I will that where I am, they also whom thou hast given me may be with me, that they may see my glory” (John 17:24). And again He says to the Apostles and all the elect: “I go to prepare a place for you; and if I shall go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will take you to myself; that where I am, you also may be” (John 14:2–3).

Finally of the aforesaid eagles, who fix the sight of their mind by contemplation upon the Sun of justice and the Sun of wisdom, it is read in Isaias: “They that hope in the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall take wings as eagles, they shall fly, and not faint” (Isa. 40:31). Such also, after the manner of eagles, are spiritually renewed, by profiting in the being of grace and virtues, whereby they cast off the oldness of vices, as the Apostle admonishes the Ephesians: “Be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man” (Eph. 4:23–24). So is he renewed who, praying for spiritual goods, is divinely heard. Wherefore the Psalmist said, speaking of God to the soul: “Who satisfieth thy desire with good things: thy youth shall be renewed like the eagle’s” (Ps. 102:5). Again, as the flight of the eagle in heaven is uncertain and most swift, so the inner life of the Saints is unknown to carnal men, and hastens vehemently to the heights. For the sensual man perceiveth not the things that are of the Spirit of God, according to the Apostle (1 Cor. 2:14); and the more ardently we love God, the more we hasten to the fatherland. In Proverbs also Solomon says: “Three things are hard to me, and the fourth I am utterly ignorant of: the way of an eagle in the air, the way of a serpent upon a rock, the way of a ship in the midst of the sea, and the way of a man in youth” (Prov. 30:18–19). Moreover, as the eagle builds her nest in high places, and provokes her young to fly (Deut. 32:11), so contemplatives choose for themselves a place and rest in the highest, namely in things supernal, and provoke others to contemplative acts.

Luke 18

Article XLI — Exposition of the Eighteenth Chapter: “And he spoke also a parable to them, that we ought always to pray”

(p. 143) Because prayer is the most efficacious remedy for escaping every peril and obtaining every good, therefore Christ in this chapter treats of it, and discloses what it ought to be, namely continual, or instant, and frequent, and humble. To declare which most plainly, He introduces certain parables, as will appear.

“And he spoke also a parable to them” (Luke 18:1), namely to His disciples, and in their person to all the faithful, *“that we ought always to pray, and not to faint.”* That He says, “always,” does not denote an entire continuation of time, but every hour opportune and due, or fitting for prayer. So also the Apostle says: *(p. 144)* “Pray without ceasing” (1 Thess. 5:17). And in the Acts it is read: “Cornelius a centurion, a religious man, and one that prayed to God always” (Acts 10:1–2). Finally, he equivalently prays always who always

does some good, or whatever he does refers to the glory of God and his own salvation (1 Cor. 10:31): nay in this way not only religious vigil and abstinence, but sleep and refection also can be meritorious. For prayer, according to Damascene, is the petition of fitting things from God. But something is petitioned not by words only, but also by signs and gestures.

Next Christ introduces the parable of the widow, who by her importunity obtained from a cruel judge what she asked. By an argument from the stronger, we shall obtain from Christ, the most clement judge, what we instantly pray for, if we fulfil that of Ecclesiasticus: "Be not hindered to pray always" (Ecclus. 18:22); and: "Before prayer prepare thy soul; and be not as a man that tempteth God" (Ecclus. 18:23). *"There was a judge in a certain city"* (Luke 18:2), *"who feared not God, nor regarded man."* Therefore he was unworthy of the authority, office and name of judge. For a judge is so called as it were *jus dicens*, "declaring the law": who ought on every side to be adorned with justice and to be God-fearing, lest in anything he offend God, whose minister he is. Hence, according to the Philosopher, a judge ought to be as it were a living law, and animated justice. But alas, many judges now are like to this one, who are blinded by cupidity, and love gifts, and follow affection rather than reason, not fearing the divine judgment. To whom the Wise Man says: "Hear, ye kings, and understand; learn, ye that are judges of the ends of the earth: for power is given you by the Lord, who will examine your works, and search out your thoughts: because being ministers of his kingdom, you have not judged rightly, nor kept the law of justice. Horribly and speedily will he appear to you" (Wisd. 6:2–5).

"And there was a certain widow in that city" (Luke 18:3). He puts the example of a widow, because she is a more pitiable person, being destitute of the solace of a husband: wherefore it is more cruel not to help her. Whence by Isaias the Lord says: "Defend the widow" (Isa. 1:17). And of wicked princes He protests in the same place: "The widow's cause cometh not in to them" (Isa. 1:23). *"And she came to him, saying,"* suppliantly: *"Avenge me of my adversary,"* according to process of law, of my adversary wronging me. This it is lawful to ask from zeal of justice, and to do it belongs to the judge, according to that to the Romans: "He is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil" (Rom. 13:4). But it belongs chiefly to the judge to help pitiable persons by right judgment, such as the oppressed, widows, pupils, orphans, the desolate, the needy, the infirm and strangers. For on such God chiefly has mercy, as it is written in Deuteronomy: "God, great and terrible, doth judgment to the fatherless and the widow, and loveth the stranger" (Deut. 10:17–18).

"And he would not for a long time" (Luke 18:4): in which his hardness and injustice appear. Like to him are those who prolong causes by frustratory delays, "drawing iniquity with cords of vanity" (Isa. 5:18). Against which holy Job declares of himself: "I have not made the eyes of the widow wait" (Job 31:16). *"But afterwards he said within himself,"* not outwardly, lest his iniquity be known to others, and that he might be believed to act from justice what he was about to do from weariness of bearing the molestation of the suppliant: *"Although I fear not God, nor regard man,"* so that neither for God nor for men do I keep justice, *"yet because this widow is troublesome to me, I will avenge her"* (Luke 18:5). For he was overcome not by piety, but by the importunity of the widow's prayers. For importunate labour conquers all. *"Lest at last she come and strike me in the face,"* that is, with her importunate cries throttle or suffocate me. — Finally, likeness of itself is a cause of love: therefore like joins itself to like and applauds it, and the interior habits of the soul also incline it to their acts. Hence impious judges, because they do not hate impiety, do not avenge it with sincere intention: and if they avenge, they do this from cruelty or cupidity, or like inordinate affection, rather than from zeal of equity. *(p. 145)* But just judges, the more just they are, the more they detest and pursue injustice.

"And the Lord Jesus Christ said" (Luke 18:6), exhorting, as is subjoined: *"Hear,"* that is, wisely attend *"what the unjust judge saith,"* that is, the aforesaid words of this unjust judge saying, "Because she is troublesome to me," etc. And from this Christ concludes His intent, namely that much more the most just

God will hear His own. *"And will not God revenge his elect"* (Luke 18:7), that is, nay assuredly He will do, the vengeance of His elect, *"who cry to him day and night"* for just retribution? For God by Moses and Paul exhorts: "Vengeance is mine, and I will repay" (Deut. 32:35; Rom. 12:19; Heb. 10:30). For He leaves no evil unpunished. *"And will he have patience in their regard?"* that is, He will not suffer the injury of His elect.

About these things three doubts occur: first, how by this unjust judge God the just can be designated; second, how it is lawful for the elect of God to cry to God for vengeance, since elsewhere Christ commands, "Pray for them that persecute and calumniate you" (Matt. 5:44); third, how God does not delay nor suffer the injury of the elect, since we frequently see the persecutors of the just live to the last age sound and prosperous. To the first it must be said that in this parable there is not made a comparison of person to person, but of business to business, not so much according to similitude as according to excess, as the things before brought in declare. To the second it must be said that the just always spiritually love their adversaries in the present life, nor do they from hatred pray for their punishment, but rather from spiritual love, in so far as it is expedient for their salvation, that they be corrected in this life, lest they sin more gravely or longer, or hurt the common good, or that thereby they may obtain mercy, or in the future be more mildly tormented. Hence the punishments of the present life are called medicinal. Again, the just often so pray from zeal of justice, and by conforming themselves to divine justice. To the third it is answered that God is said to avenge at once: either because by interior vengeance He avenges forthwith, by withdrawing grace, or by leaving the sinner more severely and hardening him (as He says in the Psalm, "I let them go according to the desires of their heart: they shall walk in their own inventions," Ps. 80:13), which is indeed the most dreadful and heaviest vengeance of God; or because at the pre-ordained time He avenges forthwith, according as He testifies in Deuteronomy, "Revenge is mine, and I will repay them in due time" (Deut. 32:35). Hence again it is said: "The Lord thy God, he is the strong and faithful God, repaying forthwith them that hate him, so as to destroy them, without further delay, forthwith restoring to them what they deserve" (Deut. 7:9–10). Therefore Christ says:

"I say to you, that he will quickly revenge them" (Luke 18:8): because both this life is short, and after it the vengeance of God is most grievous, according to that of Ecclesiasticus: "The vengeance on the flesh of the ungodly is fire and worms" (Ecclus. 7:19). *"But yet the Son of man, when he cometh, shall he find, think you, faith on earth?"* as if He said: Although God is so zealous for His elect, nevertheless Christ coming to judgment or to execute the vengeance of the elect, shall find few, comparatively speaking, truly faithful on earth, who by formed faith and fidelity of justice are faithful. For many are called, but few chosen (Matt. 22:14). Therefore by Micheas it is written: "The holy man is perished out of the earth, and there is none upright among men" (Mich. 7:2). And Paul declares: "All seek the things that are their own; not the things that are Jesus Christ's" (Phil. 2:21).

Moreover, since humility is the securest foundation of the virtues, rendering prayer very acceptable to God, according to that of Ecclesiasticus, "The prayer of him that humbleth himself shall pierce the clouds" (Ecclus. 35:21), therefore Christ next forms His own to humility by example. *"And to some who trusted in themselves"* (Luke 18:9), that is, in their own merits rather than in the piety and grace of God, *"as just,"* that is, as if they were truly just and virtuous, whereas they were vain and spiritually proud. And they were the Pharisees. Whom those now follow who vainly glory in themselves, and presume of their merits, or ascribe the good they do to their own powers and labours rather than to the grace of God. *(p. 146)* Of whom the Apostle says: "For they, not knowing the justice of God, and seeking to establish their own, have not submitted themselves to the justice of God" (Rom. 10:3). Against whom he again cries out: "What hast thou that thou hast not received? And if thou hast received, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" (1 Cor. 4:7). *"And despised others,"* as unjust and vile, whereas they themselves by their pride alone were viler than others: because pride alone destroys all, if it accompany. Finally, their very despising showed that they were not truly just, as Gregory says: "True justice has compassion, false has disdain." Nor did they heed

that of Isaias: “Woe to thee that despisest: shalt not thou thyself also be despised? When thou shalt have made an end of contemning, thou shalt be contemned” (Isa. 33:1). Such now are those who rejoice in foolish singularity, and do not fix themselves on the true foundation of the spiritual life, but desire to appear more religious, and, being altogether carnal, think themselves spiritual. Of whom the apostle Jude says in his Canonical Epistle: “These are they who separate themselves, sensual men, having not the Spirit” (Jude 19).

“Two men went up into the temple to pray” (Luke 18:10). For therefore we ought to enter the church, that we may pray, and do the other divine things that are to be done there. Therefore, woe to those who enter the temple to chatter, to look at women, to see, and to please men. “*The one a Pharisee.”* The Pharisees were the religious of the Jews, as now monks are of Christians; and the Pharisees were distinguished from others in habit, in many observances and in cult of religion: on which account they were called Pharisees, that is, divided. And their sect was celebrated and famous among the Jews. Whence in the Acts Paul declares: “According to the most sure sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee” (Acts 26:5). *“And the other a publican.”* Those were called publicans who were occupied in public business, exacting or farming the taxes, or pursuing the gains of this world. And because such things are rarely done without sin, publicans were reputed public sinners.

“The Pharisee standing” (Luke 18:11): whereas he ought rather to have prostrated himself on the ground or bent the knee, to the reverence of the divine majesty; but he stood to be seen by others, as elsewhere Christ says of such: “They love to stand and pray in the synagogues and corners of the streets” (Matt. 6:5). *“Prayed thus with himself,”* feignedly rather than truly. For prayer is a devout elevation of the mind to God with desire of obtaining; and as Gregory says, “To pray is in compunction to sound bitter groans from the heart, not composed words.” *“O God, I give thee thanks that I am not as the rest of men,”* as extortioners, unjust, adulterers. It may seem wonderful to some why and how this Pharisee was proud, who ascribed his goods to God as the giver, and gave Him thanks. But he laboured under manifold pride: first, because although he knew every good to be from God, yet he thought his goods bestowed on him by God, not only from divine clemency, but also for his own industry or justice; second, because although in words he gave thanks, yet in mind he was reflected upon himself, desiring to be seen and praised, nay even conceived vanity from his own thanksgiving; third, because he foolishly exalted himself over others for his goods; fourth, because he rashly judged and despised others, specially the publican, whose interior he did not see. Moreover, as Gregory says, there are four species of pride: the first, when one thinks that the good which he has he has from himself; the second, when although he believes it given from above, yet thinks it given for his own merits; the third, when he boasts that he has what he has not; the fourth, when, others being despised, he singularly desires to be seen to have what he has. Besides, since in Proverbs Solomon says, “The just is first accuser of himself” (Prov. 18:17), this Pharisee inordinately began from his own praise. The right order of praying, therefore, is first to accuse oneself humbly, then to pray God suppliantly, and in the end to give thanks: as the priest in the Mass first says the *Confiteor*, afterwards prays, and finally concludes the office in thanksgiving. *(p. 147)* “*Or even as this publican.”* He says this contemptuously and rashly judges. For who knoweth what is done in a man, but the spirit of a man (1 Cor. 2:11)? Therefore the Apostle says: “Who art thou that judgest another’s servant? To his own lord he standeth or falleth” (Rom. 14:4). Whence absolutely and certainly we cannot judge anyone to be in mortal sin, unless we see or certainly know him to be in the act of mortal sin, or the omission of a due act. Let us not therefore judge easily, nor despise others, especially because even if we knew what they now are, we yet know not what they are to be, or what they are in the foreknowledge of God. Therefore we ought fearfully to think that perhaps we are the foreknown, and they the predestinated. Hence in Malachias it is had: “Have we not all one father? Hath not one God created us? Why then doth every one of us despise his brother, violating the covenant of our fathers?” (Mal. 2:10). Wherefore the Apostle most wisely admonishes: “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in any fault, you who are spiritual, instruct such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted” (Gal. 6:1).

"I fast twice in the week" (Luke 18:12), that is, in the *sabbath*, which among the Jews was so called from the sabbath as from the more celebrated day. Such is the fast of those who fast in the belly from meats, not in the mind from vices. Against whom the Lord by Isaias affirms: "Is this such a fast as I have chosen?" (Isa. 58:5). *"I give tithes of all that I possess."* Which is no great thing, since all that we have we have received from God. Wherefore king David most devoutly confesses: "Who am I, and what is my people, O Lord God, that we should be able to promise thee these things? for all things are thine; and we have given thee what we received of thy hand" (1 Par. 29:14). *"And the publican standing afar off"* (Luke 18:13), namely in the hinder part of the temple, esteeming himself unworthy to approach the more sacred places, as the choir and the altar. By which the most shameless presumption of many even now of clerics and priests is reproved, who being full of vices of soul and body, fear not to enter sacred places, and with polluted lips to sing psalms to God, or even to celebrate. *"Would not so much as lift up his eyes"* bodily *"towards heaven,"* blushing for shame of his vices and former baseness to appear before the presence of divine holiness, and as not daring to look upon God dwelling in the heavens. Yet his interior eyes he swiftly raised to the God of heaven. So also Esdras, detesting the sins of his people, says: "O my God, I am confounded and ashamed to lift up my face to thee: for our iniquities are multiplied over our head, and our sins are grown up even unto heaven" (1 Esd. 9:6). *"But struck his breast,"* for sorrow of contrition, and reproving his heart, which was the origin and cause of so great crimes. For the striking of the breast is the sorrowful rebuke of interior depravity. *"Saying: O God, be merciful to me a sinner."* A prayer short in word, but great in power, small in quantity, but full of meaning, which proceeded from the fountain of Christ's breast. For this is a parable, not a thing done, although such a thing frequently could happen. Whence Christ asserts that the publican so prayed, to teach us so to pray. Let us therefore frequently say these words with a most humble and fervent heart.

Then for our instruction the sentence of the supreme Judge, namely Christ, is set down. *"Amen,"* that is, truly, *"I say to you"* (Luke 18:14): *"This man went down into his house justified,"* that is, from unjust made just by God through his true and humble penance: according to that of Ezechiel, "If the wicked do penance, I will remember all his iniquities no more" (Ezech. 18:21–22; 33:16); *"rather than the other,"* that is, in preference to the Pharisee, who as he came a sinner, so returned a sinner, nay a greater sinner than before, because in the temple he fell into many sins, as appeared. *"Because every one that exalteth himself"* by pride, that is, vainly reputes himself great and illustrious, desires human praise, aspires to prelacy, honours, the excellence of himself, *"shall be humbled,"* that is, shall be depressed by God the judge, reprobated, and *(p. 148)* cast down into Tartarus after the present life, unless meanwhile he voluntarily humble himself by true penance. *"And he that humbleth himself,"* now, by confession of his sins, by recognition of his own imperfection, defectiveness and frailty, by the hearty and inmost inclination, depression and obedient subjection of himself under the height of the divine majesty, *"shall be exalted,"* in the present by sublime increases of grace, and in the future by higher gifts of glory, according to that of Job: "He that shall be humbled shall be in glory" (Job 22:29). Hence in Proverbs it is had: "Glory shall uphold the humble of spirit" (Prov. 29:23); and likewise, "Humility followeth the proud" (Prov. 29:23). Which agrees with Christ saying: "He that exalteth himself shall be humbled." For as in a material balance, one scale being depressed, the other is raised, and conversely; so in the balance of divine justice it is decreed that those who in this life are elevated by pride are in the future depressed by confounding punishment, and vice versa. Hence the apostle Peter exhorts: "Be humbled under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in the time of visitation" (1 Peter 5:6). And in Ecclesiasticus it is taught: "The greater thou art, humble thyself in all things, and thou shalt find grace before God: for he is honoured by the humble" (Ecclus. 3:20–21). For as streams of waters run down to the deep valleys, and the lower the valley is, the more waters are gathered in it; so the charisms of divine graces descend to the hearts of the humble, who the more humble they are, the more copious grace they are receptive of. Wherefore the Scripture says: "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble" (1 Peter 5:5). So also the moral philosophers have testified that honour follows the one who flees. Woe therefore to ambitious and vain men, because they are the servants of him of whom it is written in Job: "He is

king over all the children of pride" (Job 41:25). Hence Pope Leo testifies: "The whole discipline of Christian wisdom consists not in abundance of speech, not in cunning of disputing, nor in appetite of praise and glory, but in true and voluntary humility, which the Lord Jesus, from the womb of His mother even to the torment of the cross, chose and taught in place of all fortitude."

"And they brought unto him also infants" (Luke 18:15), that is, parents or others brought little infants to Jesus, *"that he might touch them."* For from the miracles of Christ, and from the eminence of His wisdom, eloquence and conversation, they believed Him to be of extraordinary sanctity, and so that by His touch the little infants could be blessed or obtain grace, either for the present or for the future: because the virtue of Christ overflowed through His body and was diffused upon others (Luke 6:19). *"Which when the disciples saw, they rebuked them"* that brought the little infants: not that they were unwilling that the infants should be touched and blessed by Christ, but because they thought He was burdened by such bringing of infants, and wearied by the importunity of those offering them.

"But Jesus calling them together" (Luke 18:16), namely His disciples, *"said: Suffer little children to come unto me,"* because on account of their innocence, and the purity of nature in them, and the likeness of God expressed in them, I love them, especially those who have been cleansed from original sin, and have habitual grace and charity in the soul: such as these infants also are believed to have been, being circumcised; *"and forbid them not,"* that is, prohibit them not from access to me. *"For of such is the kingdom of heaven,"* that is, of the innocent, pious, simple and clean, who are figured by children, and are likened to children as to the good properties of children. But also of children purged from original sin is the kingdom of heaven, if they depart before the use of reason, or do not afterwards lose the grace received. *"Amen I say to you"* (Luke 18:17): *"Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child,"* that is, who by imitation of the good properties of a child does not tend to the heavenly kingdom, *"shall not enter into it."* For as a child does not persevere in anger, but is quickly appeased; does not aspire to high things, but is content with little; when hurt does not remember, nor plot against or detract from another; seeing a woman, is not inordinately affected: so unless *(p. 149)* one follow these properties by grace and exercise, he will be damned. Therefore the Apostle admonishes: "In malice be children" (1 Cor. 14:20); and Peter: "Laying away therefore all malice, and all guile, and dissimulations, and envies, and all detractions, as newborn babes, rational, without guile, desire milk, that thereby you may grow unto salvation" (1 Peter 2:1–2). In Proverbs also eternal Wisdom says: "Whosoever is a little one, let him come to me" (Prov. 9:4); and the Psalmist: "The declaration of thy words giveth light, and giveth understanding to little ones" (Ps. 118:130).

"And a certain ruler asked him, saying" (Luke 18:18). Some say that this ruler was a lawyer, and is called a ruler because he was rich. Nevertheless the evangelist Matthew calls him a young man (Matt. 19:20). *"Good master, what shall I do to possess everlasting life?"* that is, to have beatitude of life for ever? Christ was a good master, on account of the holiness of life and the truth of doctrine, and likewise because in preaching He was most eloquent, and confirmed His supernatural teachings by supernatural proofs, namely miracles possible to God alone. He also rightly asked, "What shall I do," not, "What shall I say," to possess eternal life? because not by bare words, but by virtuous works we merit eternal life, as the Apostle says: "The kingdom of God is not in speech, but in power" (1 Cor. 4:20). For words are compared to leaves, works to fruits. As therefore a tree is unfruitful and fit for fire which produces leaves, not fruit; so a man who has words without works is vain and empty, and is accounted worthy of eternal fire.

"And Jesus said to him" (Luke 18:19): *"Why dost thou call me good? None is good but God alone."* Since then Jesus was a good and best master, nay essentially good according as He is God, why did He rebuke this ruler, who spoke truly? And it must be answered that He therefore rebuked him, because he did not think altogether well of the goodness of Christ, esteeming Him a mere man, and good only participatively; likewise to hint that goodness belongs to God alone, according to the perfect and full notion of goodness, because God is the very essence of goodness, and goodness in every way pure, and in every manner perfect

and infinite, in whom there is nothing not good, neither privatively, nor contrarily, nor contradictorily; moreover, to hint that not without great and reasonable cause is one's own praise to be admitted, especially before a throng of the people. For, according to Chrysostom, a just and wise man is as it were struck in the face when he is openly praised: for he knows that glory and honour are due to God, and that of himself he has nothing but defect and fault.

"Thou knowest the commandments" (Luke 18:20), that is, the commandments of the law: which were threefold, namely moral, ceremonial, judicial. Christ, however, pursues only the moral, because they were the principal, and from the dictate of natural reason, and to be observed in the evangelical law. Hence it is subjoined: *"Thou shalt not kill,"* by affection or deed, by command, counsel, or by not hindering when thou canst. No one, however, ought to kill a man by his own and private authority; but by public authority it can be done, and speaking of a man as he is guilty, since it is written in Exodus: "Thou shalt not suffer witches to live" (Exod. 22:18). *"Thou shalt not commit adultery,"* in heart or deed. *"Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness"*: because a false witness shall not be unpunished (Prov. 19:5). For such an one sins against God, by lying or perjuring; and against his neighbour, by inflicting hurt upon him, or hindering his cause. *"Honour thy father and mother,"* that is, as well carnal as spiritual parents, showing them reverence, obeying, and succouring them in what they need, according to one's strength.

"Who said: All these things I have kept from my youth" (Luke 18:21). Which is very useful, since in the Lamentations Jeremias testifies: "It is good for a man when he hath borne the yoke from his youth" (Lam. 3:27). For it is most acceptable to God that a man spend the flower of his youth in divine service, because the passions then flourish more strongly, and man is then more apt for this world. Finally *(p. 150)* this young man uttered this word truly, not boastfully. He was indeed virtuous. Whence, according to Mark, he "ran before the crowd, and kneeling asked, saying: Good master" (Mark 10:17). And Mark adds: "And Jesus looking on him," namely after the answer already set down, "loved him" (Mark 10:21). Whence he did not ask feignedly, as some have thought, but with sincere intention.

"Which when Jesus had heard, he said to him: Yet one thing is wanting to thee" (Luke 18:22). By this word it is shown that that ruler spoke truly. So one thing was wanting to him, namely the fulfilment of the counsels: which is a work of supererogation, nor is it necessary to salvation, except to him who has voluntarily bound himself to it. Nevertheless St. Jerome says he lied, since a little after he is read to have been made sad, on hearing that he must give all his goods to the poor: from which Jerome concludes that he did not love his neighbour as himself. But this would easily be solved by saying that he loved his neighbour as himself, and was wont to give alms, as much as the divine precepts require, not as the perfection of the counsels demands. Whence even now there are some good Christians communicating their goods to the poor, who yet are not prepared to sell all their goods for Christ and give them to the poor. Some also affirm that this ruler kept all the precepts as to exterior work, not as to interior work. Which if it were true, Christ, who was the inspector of his heart, would not have loved him as good and just.

"Sell all whatever thou hast," namely immovable goods especially: for the moneys he had, and other like things, he could give to the poor without selling them equally well; *"and give to the poor,"* purely for God, not to the rich, nor for the favour, praise or service of men. Crato the philosopher, of whom it is read in the Life of the most blessed John the apostle, taught his disciples to sell and despise temporal things; but he did not teach them to bestow them on the poor, but rather to scatter them uselessly to catch the praise of men. The Apostle, however, converted the same with his disciples. *"And thou shalt have treasure,"* that is, copious reward, and eternal riches, *"in heaven"*: which is a happy trading, a wise exchange, a most abundant remuneration. For what is given to the poor for Christ's sake is conferred on Christ Himself: therefore Christ repays to the giver His heavenly goods. And he who for the love of God leaves earthly things, deservedly receives heavenly. So, as the law promised abundance of temporal things, so the Gospel counsels the casting away of them, that, the love, solicitude, and manifold occupation about earthly things being left, a man may

be more apt for the love of divine things, and with an unencumbered, simple and free mind tend daily to eternal things. Hence Jerome says: “If thou hast thy property in thy power, sell it; if thou hast it not, cast it away.” And Bernard: “Glory and riches were in the supernal house of Christ, but poverty was not found in it; but on earth it abounded: therefore Christ chose it, that by His esteem He might make it precious to us.” *“And come,”* by spontaneous promptitude of mind, *“follow me,”* by imitation of life. For Christ is the infallible leader, Himself the way and the door, the perfection and the exemplar, the judge and the reward (John 14:6; 10:9).

“He having heard these things, was made sad” (Luke 18:23): because on the one hand it was grievous to him to leave all his goods, and on the other hand he blushed, and it was grievous to him, not to obey the counsel of Christ (which he so reverently asked on bended knees). In which appears his goodness, and the imperfection of his goodness. For he had a somewhat immoderate affection to his wealth: for it is subjoined, “for he was very rich.” The Jews also abhorred poverty not moderately, since in Deuteronomy Moses says: “There shall be no needy nor beggar among you” (Deut. 15:4).

“And Jesus seeing him become sorrowful” (Luke 18:24), with inordinate and excessive sorrow, which overflowed from his soul into his body (of which it is had in Ecclesiasticus: “Give not up thy soul to sorrow,” Ecclus. 30:22), and appeared in his countenance (according to that of *(p. 151)* Ecclesiasticus: “The heart of a man changeth his countenance, whether it be for good or for evil,” Ecclus. 13:31), *“said: How hard it is for them that have riches,”* that is, wealth: which is here signified by money, because all things are procured with coin, *“to enter into the kingdom of God!”* that is, it is very hard and rare, although not impossible: because it is hard to abound in temporal things, and not to be inordinately affected to them, nor to use them superfluously, especially for those who are not perfect in charity. For such strong objects move the powers intensely, and it is hard for reason to moderate in all things their affections and operations. *“For it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle”* (Luke 18:25), *“than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.”* In this place expositors commonly understand by the rich man an immoderate lover of riches, so that he loves them more than God. For such an one is in mortal sin, and is rightly reckoned avaricious; nor can he be saved, if he remain such, according to the ordinary power of God: although God could pass a camel through the eye of a needle, by transubstantiating something small into a camel, which could go through the eye of a needle. But if by the rich man is understood one who abounds in temporal things, and is somewhat inordinately affected to them, yet below God, then each of these is possible to God. But in a manner God does something more wonderful in preserving such a rich man from mortal sins, and saving him eternally, than if He were to pass a camel through the eye of a needle in the aforesaid manner. According to which manner, as Augustine testifies, the justification of the ungodly is more wonderful than the creation of the world, which is not less incomprehensible and marvellous than would be the aforesaid passage of a camel through a needle.

These things are to be feared by the rich, most of all those who are rich from the patrimony of Christ, or seek to become so, seeking in ecclesiastical benefices their own comfort more than divine service. To all of whom that of St. Jerome is to be pondered: “It is hard, nay impossible, that one enjoy both present and future goods: that here he fill the belly, and there the mind, that he pass from delights to delights, that on earth and in heaven he appear glorious.” Hence the most sacred apostle James cries in his Canonical Epistle: “Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl in your miseries, which shall come upon you” (James 5:1). But, as Bernard says, some excuse themselves, saying: Abraham and Isaac and Jacob had earthly riches. It suffices for us to be such as they were. What shall we answer, he says, to the imitators of the ancient Saints? Let them lay calves upon the altar and sacrifice goats (Ps. 49:9; 50:21). For this Abraham and the fathers did, than whom we are not better. But they say: Where truth is revealed, those things have passed away. What then if we say that temporal riches were a shadow of things to come? And what wonder if they possess earthly things to whom only earthly things were promised?

"And they that heard it said" (Luke 18:26), the disciples of Christ, to Him: *"Who then can be saved?"* that is, if the way of salvation is so narrow (Matt. 7:14), who shall be able to attain beatitude, especially if the affection of riches alone makes one damnable? And Jeremias testifies: "From the least of them even to the greatest, all follow after covetousness" (Jer. 6:13). Now five things make the difficulty of attaining salvation. The first is the corruption of nature, or the wounding of its powers, which is cured with difficulty. Whence in the book of Wisdom it is asserted: "The corruptible body is a load upon the soul" (Wisd. 9:15); and in Genesis, "The imagination and thought of man's heart are prone to evil from his youth" (Gen. 8:21). The second is the narrowness of the way, according to that of Matthew: "Narrow is the way that leadeth to life" (Matt. 7:14). For it is hard in all things to observe the mean, and to decline neither to the right hand nor to the left. The third is the opposition of the invisible enemies, most cunning, strong and untiring: to resist whom is so much the more difficult than the own flesh and the world, that the Apostle says to the Ephesians: "For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the high places" (Eph. 6:12). *(p. 152)* The fourth is evil company, as it is written: "With the perverse thou shalt be perverted" (Ps. 17:27). The fifth is the desirableness, and apparent goodness and delightfulness existing in created things, which strongly allures, moves, inflames, so that it is hard to resist. But this difficulty of living rightly and serving God must be mitigated and removed, and turned into facility and delight, by the fervent and sincere love of God, to which all things that are God's seem easy and pleasant; by the example of Christ and of all the Saints, the greatness of the eternal reward, the dread of infernal fire, fear of the divine judgment, hatred of the devil and of all sin.

"And he said to them: The things that are impossible with men are possible with God" (Luke 18:27): that is, although men by their own strength cannot so despise earthly things, overcome vices, and merit eternal life, yet by the help of almighty God these things are possible, as the Apostle says: "I can do all things in him who strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13); and again, "The Spirit helpeth our infirmity" (Rom. 8:26). For it is proper to God to act immediately upon the very will of the rational creature, and to change, convert, inflame it at His pleasure. On account of which Solomon says: "The heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord; whithersoever he will he shall turn it" (Prov. 21:1).

"And Peter said" (Luke 18:28), who as the mouth of the Apostles, the head of the college, and the future prince, not only of the apostolic choir but of the whole universal Church, was first in asking, first in answering, first in the admission of heavenly secrets, first in excellence of miracles, greatness of benefits, and prelacy over all Christians. For such a primacy became the full vicar of Christ over the whole Church. *"Behold, we,"* the Apostles, *"have left all things"* temporal for thee, as to dominion, although not as to use, *"and have followed thee,"* not bodily only, but also spiritually, by believing, obeying, loving. For the exterior leaving of exterior things does not suffice, unless there be present the interior imitation of interior things, that we may learn from Christ humility, patience, meekness, charity. This Peter said, desiring to be informed by Christ of the reward. Whence according to Matthew he added: "What therefore shall we have?" (Matt. 19:27).

"Who said to them" (Luke 18:29), namely to all those in whose person and for whom Peter had inquired: *"Amen I say to you: There is no man that hath left house,"* that is, native place or dwelling, *"or family,"* or kinsmen, *"or parents, or brethren"* (by whom sisters also are understood), *"or wife"*: who after matrimony consummated is not to be left, except by the common consent of both, and for the entering of religion or other fit cause: who is then left as to bed and house, not as to the conjugal bond, since it is indissoluble before death. It can also be expounded of a woman not yet had, or had before the consummation of matrimony. *"Or children... who shall not receive much more in this present time"* (Luke 18:30), that is, more excellent and more abundant goods in the present life, namely the chief gifts of graces, interior consolations, sincere contemplations, daily progress in spiritual things, interior peace, interior riches. He is also made one of the number of the friends and sons of God; and all the angels and the Blessed and the devout love him familiarly

as a friend and brother. Which, however, is to be understood if, in leaving the aforesaid things, he cast away at the same time all carnal affections for them and vicious motions, nor in heart return into Egypt, leaving the former fervour, and, having begun in the spirit, be consummated in the flesh (Gal. 3:3). Otherwise, what would that external leaving profit? And he would have to dread what the Lord threatens in the Apocalypse: "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first charity. Be mindful therefore from whence thou art fallen, and do penance; or else I come to thee quickly" (Apoc. 2:4–5). *"And in the world to come life everlasting,"* that is, the beatific vision of God, the glorious fruition of the supremely blessed Trinity, the face-to-face sight *(p. 153)* of the Divinity. This is the full and perfectly quieting and contenting reward of the elect, by which their whole potentiality is wholly reduced to act, the participation of uncreated and infinite beatitude, most to be desired, delicious, most worthy: of which in John Christ says to the Father: "This is eternal life: that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3); and John also: "When he shall appear, we shall be like to him, because we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2).

Moreover, by these words very great consolation and confidence is given to those who have chosen to follow the evangelical counsels, and dwell in cloisters in the cloistered way. For if so great a reward is promised to those who have left house or parents or brethren, etc., how great will be the reward of those who have forsaken all these things even in the flower of youth, if only in the journey of God they do not grow lukewarm, but ceaselessly stretch themselves forth to the things that are before (Phil. 3:13)? — Lastly, many things lead to voluntary poverty. First, because we are born naked into this world (Job 1:21). Therefore the Apostle says: "We brought nothing into this world; and certainly we can carry nothing out" (1 Tim. 6:7). Second, because the sensitive and vegetative creatures, by possessing nothing, obtain sufficiency. Wherefore the Saviour says: "Behold the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap, and your heavenly Father feedeth them" (Matt. 6:26); and elsewhere, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow" (Matt. 6:28). The third is that holy Scripture exhorts to this. The fourth, that Christ and His most elect chose a poor life.

"Then Jesus took unto him the twelve" (Luke 18:31), that is, the Apostles, among whom was then one traitor (John 6:71), who like Satan was present among the sons of God (Job 1:6); *"and said to them"* secretly, as is read in Matthew (Matt. 20:17), to avoid the disquiet, disturbance and scandal of very many, and of some other disciples of His who were weaker than the Apostles: *"Behold"*: which is very notable and wonderful, that the only-begotten Son of God willingly went to the place of His passion, foreknowing it; *"we go up to Jerusalem"*: which was situated on mountains, and therefore those coming from Galilee ascended to it locally; of which Christ foretold, "It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem" (Luke 13:33); *"and all things shall be accomplished,"* that is, fulfilled in work, *"which were written by the prophets concerning the Son of man,"* that is, which pertain to His passion and resurrection. Of whose passion it is read prophesied so very clearly in Isaias and Daniel, and in the psalm which begins, "O God, my God, look upon me" (Isa. 53; Dan. 9:26; Ps. 21), that it seems rather history than prophecy. Finally, since Christ was of so great dignity, and His passion of so great fruitfulness, and His other mysteries so wonderful, nay all those almost incredible; it was most fitting and most useful that they should be announced long before and by many, that in their time they might be believed to be done and to be doing. Therefore Christ is the work of all the Prophets, and all the Prophets spoke only of the days of Messias, as the masters of the Jews also testify.

"For he shall be delivered to the Gentiles" (Luke 18:32). For first, to take Him came the cohort and the tribune, who were Gentiles, and ministers of the Jews, as it is had in John (John 18:3, 12); then the pontiffs and their ministers delivered Him to Pilate (Mark 15:1), who had Him scourged and mocked by his soldiers (John 19:1–3), as is subjoined; *"and shall be mocked"*, they saying, "Hail, king of the Jews"; *"and scourged"*, even to the laying bare of the ribs: which was to the most noble and most tender body of Christ an ineffably great punishment; *"and spit upon"* with the most unclean spittle of those dogs, as by Isaias He says: "I have given my body to the strikers, and my cheeks to them that plucked them: I have not turned

away my face from them that rebuked me and spit upon me" (Isa. 50:6). All which the Sibyl most openly foretold, as Augustine recalls in the book *De Civitate Dei*. *"And after they have scourged him," "they will put him to death"* (Luke 18:33), the Jews by procuring, the Gentiles by executing, Pilate by giving sentence; *"and the third day he shall rise again."* Hence it was predicted by Daniel: "After sixty-two weeks Christ shall be slain" *(p. 154)* (Dan. 9:26); and by Sophonias, "Wait for me, saith the Lord, in the day of my resurrection that is to come" (Soph. 3:8).

So Christ foretold His passion, that when it was fulfilled we might be strengthened in faith by such announcement, knowing that knowingly and willingly He came to the passion; likewise, that His disciples at the time of His passion might be less troubled and scandalized, and might also trust that He would rise again. For darts foreseen hurt less.

"And they understood none of these things" (Luke 18:34), *"and this word was hid from them,"* that is, unknown, and they did not understand the things said by Christ of this His passion and resurrection. In which appears their great and wonderful simplicity, since Christ spoke so most evidently. But His presence they so loved that words of His taking away and death did not enter their hearts; and again, since Christ most often spoke to them in parables, they perhaps thought that now also He was speaking something parabolically.

"And it came to pass, when Jesus drew nigh to Jericho" (Luke 18:35), a city, *"that a certain blind man,"* who by Mark is called Bartimaeus, that is, son of Timaeus, *"sat by the way side, begging."* In Matthew it is read that Christ enlightened two blind men as He went out of Jericho (Matt. 20:30); and Mark writes that He enlightened one blind man as He departed from the aforesaid city (Mark 10:46): therefore some say that this blind man is other than those; others say that he is one of them, and what is said, "When he drew nigh," they expound, He was not yet far off, or was near. *"And when he heard the multitude passing by"* (Luke 18:36). For many went with Jesus, diverse for diverse causes, namely from eagerness of seeing miracles, of hearing His most eloquent and most wise words, of receiving bodily food, of receiving consolation from His sight, and edification from His life and morals; but certain, to watch and accuse Him. *"He asked what this meant,"* that is, why so great a people went there, and who they were. *"And they told him"* (Luke 18:37) *"that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by,"* and therefore others passed with Him.

"And he cried out, saying" (Luke 18:38): *"Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me."* For although he had never seen Jesus bodily, yet from the report and fame of others he knew Him, and believed Him to be Christ. And since he had heard that He had done so great miracles, with a great cry, from ardent desire of health, he cried out that He would succour him. He also called Him son of David, because it was commonly spread among the Jews, and known to almost all, that the king Messias would be born of the seed of David. *"And they that went before"* (Luke 18:39) Jesus, as certain are wont to go before a king, *"rebuked him that he should hold his peace,"* either wearied by his cries, or fearing lest Christ should be offended by his cries, or because they were unwilling that their journey should be retarded with Christ. *"But he cried much more: Son of David, have mercy on me."* So much indeed was his affection kindled in itself, and became stronger and hotter, and broke forth into a more powerful vociferation, as he felt greater contrariety and resistance: as certain qualities, such as cold and heat, are intensified by antiperistasis, that is, by the opposition of their contrary. Wherefore Chrysostom says: "Such is the nature of faith, that the more it is forbidden, the more it is kindled: on account of which the servants of God in persecutions are not conquered; and the virtue of faith is secure in perils, but is imperilled in security." So by saying, "Son of David," he commemorates the dignity of the lineage, to win His benevolence, and by the example of the pious and liberal father, namely holy David, to provoke Him to clemency.

"And Jesus standing, commanded him to be brought unto him" (Luke 18:40). He could indeed have enlightened him without his being brought, sitting afar off, but for the glory of God and the edification of the people, also for the confirmation of His doctrine and the corroboration of our faith, He willed to exhibit this miracle manifestly and solemnly. — Finally, this work of Christ should be followed by our prelates, princes

and judges, namely to stand, when they hear or see *(p. 155)* the poor complaining, and to call them to themselves, to hear their complaints and petitions, that they may give them help and justice expeditiously. But, alas, now that of Isaias can be said of them: "They judge not the cause of the fatherless, and the widow's cause cometh not in to them" (Isa. 1:23): nay, if it often comes in, the poor perhaps spend more than their whole cause is worth, before it is terminated.

"And when he was come near" (Luke 18:41): this blind man having come near to Christ bodily: to whom he also drew near spiritually by increase of faith and devotion and good affection; *"he asked him"*: Jesus, who knew all things, *"saying: What wilt thou that I do to thee?"* For various causes one asks another. First, to learn or know something. So a disciple asks a master; and a master a disciple, because although he knows what he asks, perhaps he knows not whether the disciple knows it. Second, to instruct. Third, to show another's ignorance. Fourth, to touch and rebuke his fault, as God said: "Adam, where art thou?" (Gen. 3:9). Fifth, that the one asked may show his knowledge for the utility of others. Sixth, for a mystical reason: and in this manner Jesus asked this blind man what not only Christ Himself and the blind man, but all who were present knew. So He asked that from the blind man's answer His cure might appear more glorious, as the following words disclose; and to show how great is the force of pious prayer and good affection many times repeated; again, to teach that for salvation there is necessary not only belief of the heart, but also at times confession of the mouth.

"But he said: Lord, that I may see" (Luke 18:41), bodily, nay and spiritually. For the sense of sight, beyond the other exterior senses, is more useful, desirable and pleasant, because it serves and is necessary to men in more things, and shows us the differences of more things. Whence Tobias said: "What manner of joy shall be to me, who sit in darkness, and see not the light of heaven?" (Tob. 5:12). And in Ecclesiastes it is written: "Light is sweet, and it is delightful for the eyes to see the sun" (Eccles. 11:7). *"And Jesus said to him"* (Luke 18:42): *"Receive thy sight,"* exterior and interior. For him whom He enlightened bodily, He also illuminated spiritually. *"Thy faith hath made thee safe,"* by way of a meritorious and dispositive cause, not principally effective: that is, by the merit of thy faith thou hast procured this illumination. So great therefore is the virtue of faith that by it bodily salvation is obtained, as here; spiritual salvation, as in Mary Magdalen, to whom also these words were said (Luke 7:50); and eternal salvation, according to that of Mark, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16).

"And immediately he saw" (Luke 18:43). In which appears the power and magnificence of the Saviour, whose command was presently followed by a supernatural effect, as of one working miracles by power: to whom, according as He is God and of infinite power, it belongs to act in an instant when He will; and so between His word and deed there was no interval, as the Psalmist says (Ps. 32:9). *"And followed him,"* namely Jesus his enlightener, with sound body and devout and most grateful heart, *"glorifying God,"* that is, materially representing in himself, in his cure, the omnipotence and clemency of God, and with heart and mouth gladly professing the greatness of God in all perfection and glory, inflaming others also to the same, as is subjoined.

"And all the people when they saw it": in which miracle the manner of doing was more wonderful than the work, because Christ did it so imperially; *"gave praise to God"*: to which they were bound. For this God requires of us, and it is just that in all things we offer to Him glory and honour, as to the most principal cause of all, independent and needing nothing. On which account by Isaias He testifies: "I am the Lord, this is my name; my glory I will not give to another, nor my praise to graven things" (Isa. 42:8). The Psalmist also, kindled with zeal of divine honour, prays: "Not to us, O Lord, not to us; but to thy name give glory" (Ps. 113:9). Let us not therefore unjustly or most vainly usurp to ourselves any of these things which are due to God alone, *(p. 156)* lest, as thieves of divine honour, we be reprobated as sacrilegious. If, however, this blind man and these people believed explicitly Jesus to be true God, then by the name of God they understood the Lord Jesus Himself; but if they did not believe this explicitly, they meant that Jesus had done these things by

divine power.

Moreover, touching the spiritual understanding, by Jericho, which is interpreted *luna*, the moon, which is in continual change, is signified the defect of human mortality. To which when the Son of God by the mystery of the incarnation drew near, assuming our penalties without sin, a certain blind man, that is, the human race darkened by vices, sat by the way side, because for the greater part of itself it was outside the way of salvation: to which nevertheless, for some part of itself, instructed by the predictions of the Prophets and in other ways, He drew near by expecting the Saviour's coming. Whom when it heard to be seen on earth and to converse among men (Bar. 3:38), for the grace of interior illumination it began suppliantly to cry out: as is established in the course of the evangelical history, as from the beginning of Christ's nativity from the Virgin, some knew His coming, and prayed as well for themselves as for the salvation of the whole human race, as Zacharias, who said: "To enlighten them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death" (Luke 1:79). Beholding which, the malignant spirits, who strive by anticipation to hinder Christ's coming into our hearts, by suggesting vicious thoughts and affections, rebuked those so praying, instigating them to the opposite. Likewise the unbelieving Jews, seeing the conversion of the Gentiles to Christ, rebuked them lest they should invoke or honour His name, as is taught in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 13:45, 50; 4:18; 5:40): like to whom are all who strive to draw others back from good. But the elect cried to the Lord the more strongly, as those resisted more impudently. We also, the more gravely we find ourselves assailed, let us the more fervently and constantly strive, and cry to God, until with the Psalmist we are able to say: "I have laboured with crying, my jaws are become hoarse" (Ps. 68:4).

"And Jesus standing, commanded him to be brought to him": because through the Apostles and their coadjutors He commanded to be preached everywhere, and the human race to be brought to Him by faith and incorporated. But even now also daily the spiritually blind are to be led back to Christ by the prelates and doctors of the Church. But those brought to Christ by faith, when they asked fuller interior illumination, were eminently illumined with the gifts of the Holy Ghost, so that with open face they beheld the glory of the Lord with the Apostle (2 Cor. 3:18). Which being done, they offered thanks to God with their whole heart: which chiefly was done in the primitive Church. Which when all the people dispersed through the four quarters of the earth knew, they embraced their faith, and gave praise to God. Whence let us also incessantly pray God for His copious, continual and most pious illumination, that we never sleep in the death of sin (Ps. 12:4), but daily more alacriously serve God the most high. For so the Apostle says and prays to the Ephesians: "May the Father of glory give unto you the spirit of wisdom in the knowledge of him" (Eph. 1:17).

Luke 19

Article XLII — Exposition of the Nineteenth Chapter: "And entering in, he walked through Jericho; and behold a man named Zacheus"

(p. 157) At the end of the preceding chapter it is described that Jesus, drawing near to the city named Jericho, gave sight to a blind man. Now, continuing the history, the Evangelist testifies: *"And entering in"* (this city of Jericho) *"he walked through Jericho"* (Luke 19:1), passing through it, teaching that earthly things are to be passed through, that is, we are not to dwell on them by immoderate affection, but ought continually to adhere to the highest and unchangeable good. For by Jericho the present world, full of variations, is signified, since Jericho is interpreted *luna*, the moon, which varies daily.

"And behold, a man named Zacheus" (Luke 19:2). Zacheus was among others present there: who is expressed by name, because what is here recited of him is exemplary and virtuous, and he was of the number of the elect. *"And he was the chief of the publicans,"* that is, of those who attended to public business, namely exactions of tributes, and tolls, and the levying of taxes: which businesses are wont to be entangled with sins, and such men were commonly sinners; *"and he was rich"* in temporal things. These things are

narrated of him, that his conversion may appear the more gracious and wonderful, and that great sinners may not despair, nor the rich be despised, but imitate the example of this Zacheus.

"And he sought to see Jesus, who he was" (Luke 19:3), that is, he desired to behold Jesus bodily, because he had heard many things of His wisdom, eloquence, sanctity and miracles: and it is natural to men to look gladly upon such men, as also upon other things great and rare and new. Whence also below it is had that Herod was for a long time desirous to see Jesus, and having seen Him was exceedingly glad (Luke 23:8). *"And he could not for the crowd."* For on every side Jesus was thronged by a great crowd, many thousands going with Him. Finally, from the spiritual sight of Christ many are daily hindered by the crowd of disordered men, and of worldly cares, and of carnal phantasms, and of carnal kinsmen: therefore for giving oneself to God a secret place is most apt. On which account the Psalmist says: "Behold, I have gone far off, flying away, and I abode in the wilderness" (Ps. 54:8). And of the elect soul the Lord says by Osee: "I will lead her into the wilderness, and I will speak to her heart" (Osee 2:14). To abbot Arsenius also it was said from above: "Flee, be silent, be at rest." *"For he was low of stature,"* that is, small in body: as on the contrary Saul and certain others are written to have been tall (1 Kings 9:2).

"And running before, he climbed up into a sycamore tree" (Luke 19:4). The sycamore is a tree like the mulberry in its leaves, and like the fig in other respects, but different in the trunk, and greater in height: by which the cross of Christ is signified, on account of the redness of the mulberry and the sweetness of the fig. If therefore we wish to behold Christ with the mind, let us flee to His cross, and ascend it by love, meditation and imitation, considering what Christ suffered for us, and following His footsteps: and so we shall be graciously illuminated by God, and shall contemplate Christ radiantly. Such was Paul who says: "With Christ I am nailed to the cross" (Gal. 2:19); and again, "I bear the marks of the Lord Jesus in my body" (Gal. 6:17). *"That he might see him."* For blessed are the eyes that have faithfully beheld Christ (Luke 10:23). *"For he was to pass that way,"* that is, by that road. In this appears the vehement fervour of Zacheus for the sight of Christ, and that he was not ashamed to climb *(p. 158)* a tree, though he was so wealthy a chief.

"And when he was come to the place, looking up" (Luke 19:5), that is, looking up toward that tree, *"Jesus saw him,"* with the bodily glance, yet more with the interior look of piety, by which He mercifully prevented the mind of Zacheus, touched, softened, illumined, kindled it; and whatever Zacheus did outwardly, Christ saw within. *"And said to him: Zacheus."* He calls by his proper name him whom perhaps He had not seen bodily before, nor heard named; but He Himself knew all things in the light of His wisdom. *"Make haste and come down"*: because good works are to be done with fervour and a ready mind; *"for this day I must abide in thy house,"* that is, by thy devotion thou hast deserved this, that I be with thee today in thy material house by bodily presence, and in thy spiritual house, that is, in thy mind, I abide by the indwelling of grace: as the Apostle says that Christ dwells by faith in our hearts (Eph. 3:17).

If therefore we also seek the gracious indwelling of Christ, let us seek Him with fervour, and, leaving the tumult of men, let us ascend into the height of virtues, spurning carnal desires. Whence of uncreated Wisdom, which is Christ, it is written in the book of Wisdom: "Wisdom is glorious, and never fadeth away, and is easily seen by them that love her, and is found by them that seek her; she preventeth them that covet her" (Wisd. 6:13–14). Now how true this is becomes known in this work of Christ: who, not yet invited by Zacheus, invited Himself to him; who knew his affection, and showed him more than he dared to ask, because He gave Himself to him to abide with him and eat with him. For Christ by the abundance of His piety exceeds the merits and desires of suppliants; and the more ardently He is asked, the more copiously He imparts Himself and His gifts, because the fervour of love makes the mind of the lover as it were gaping, open and wide for the reception of the beloved.

"And he made haste and came down" (Luke 19:6), as one perfectly obedient, and leaving the height of his former swelling. For no one, as Ambrose says, seeks Jesus with sloth. And, as Bernard says: "The true obedient knows no delays, nor puts off the command; he prepares his eyes for seeing, his heart for the

command, his ears for hearing, his hands for work, his feet for the journey, and gathers himself wholly within, that he may fulfil without the command of the one who commands." And this is most pleasing to God, because we can offer Him nothing more acceptable than our own will fully. *"And received him with joy"* into his house, that is, giving very great thanks that one so great and such deigned to turn aside to him. In his interior house also he received Him most joyfully, in that Christ most kindly illumined his mind, to consider the things that are God's and regard true salvation, and inflamed it with divine love. So let us also receive Christ within gladly, and we shall experience heavenly consolations, if we shall have been promptly obedient to His exhortations and commands and those of His vicars, descending wholly from the height of our own reputation.

"And when all saw it" (Luke 19:7), that Jesus went with His disciples to Zacheus, *"they murmured, saying that he was gone to be a guest with a man that was a sinner"*: as if they said, This was unbecoming. These were the Pharisees, and certain others just in their own eyes, and manifoldly indiscreet: First, in judging rashly, as well of Zacheus, who was already converted and justified by true contrition, as of Christ, who, being the physician of souls, ought not to avoid sinners, but approach them, to convert them; nor was it forbidden in the old law to mingle with sinners for such a cause. Zacheus also by his penance had already deserved to be visited by Christ. But it is most presumptuous and dangerous to judge easily the deeds of superiors, and of better and wiser men.

"But Zacheus standing" (Luke 19:8), that he might speak to Christ with due reverence, and *(p. 159)* by publicly protesting his good purpose might show that the Saviour had not unbecomingly turned aside to him, and so repress the words of the malignant, *"said to the Lord Jesus: Behold, the half of my goods, Lord, I give to the poor,"* purely for God, and that my sins may be forgiven me, even as to the penalty, and I may obtain a fuller grace: since, as the Scripture testifies, "As water quencheth a flaming fire, so alms quencheth sin" (Ecclus. 3:33). In these words appears the great and wonderful conversion of Zacheus, so that of it could be said: "This change is the work of the right hand of the Most High" (Ps. 76:11). For he who a little before was so avaricious in acquiring and retaining earthly things, suddenly became so prompt and liberal in giving. For he did not say, "I will give," but, "I give," as now prepared for it.

"And if I have wronged any man of any thing," that is, by fraud or otherwise against justice have taken anything from anyone. And by saying, "If I have wronged any man," etc., he intimates that he was not conscious to himself of having defrauded many or very many. *"I restore him fourfold,"* prepared to restore more, if thou command. He did not say, "I will restore," or, "I will have restitution made": because, according to Augustine, a man is bound to restore unjust goods at once, if he can; and he is always to be judged in delay, until the thing which ought and can be restored is restored, and is not restored; nor is penance done before this, but feigned; nor is the sin forgiven unless what was taken away be restored. But there are some who, as long as they live, or as long as they trust to be able to live, defer to restore; but when lethally sick, or worn out by old age, dispose concerning restitution: whose life and death is most perilous. Finally, the law of Moses commanded in some cases double to be restored, in some fourfold, in some fivefold, as is had in Exodus (Exod. 22:1–4). Solomon also in Proverbs says of the thief: "When he is found he shall restore sevenfold" (Prov. 6:31). Whence Zacheus seems to speak of restitution through bestowal, so that he knew he had not committed such defrauding as demands more than double to be restored; or by this one middle number which he expressed, the other extremes are understood. But the penalty of theft also, according to variety of times and the exigency of the cause, could be diverse among the Jews.

"Jesus said to him: This day is salvation come to this house" (Luke 19:9): that is, on this day the grace of conversion and the merit of true salvation have been granted from above to the father of the family of this house, and to his household, who by his example did penance; and it was made a spiritual day in their hearts, the Sun of justice shining in their mind, who thence put to flight the darkness of vices and the night of sin; *"because he also is a son of Abraham."* On this Bede, the Gloss and Gorran say that Zacheus is called a son

of Abraham, not by propagation of flesh, but by imitation of virtues, so that he was a Gentile by nation. Which Ambrose also seems to hold, saying: “Zacheus, raised by no nobility of inborn dignity, small in merits, like the people of the nations.” But to some it appears rather that he was a Hebrew by nation: otherwise the Jews, in murmuring, would rather have said against Christ that He had turned aside to a Gentile man, than that He had turned aside to a sinful man. For they reputed it more detestable to approach Gentiles than Jewish sinners. On which account in the Acts Peter says: “You know how abominable it is for a man that is a Jew to keep company or to come to one of another nation” (Acts 10:28). Next, because the Gentiles were bound only to simple restitution, except perhaps in some case: and so, if Zacheus had been a Gentile, he would not have spoken of restoring fourfold. Which of these is truer I do not think certain, though this is certain, that these arguments conclude nothing: because the Jews also commonly called Gentiles sinners. For Paul also says: “We are by nature Jews, and not of the Gentiles sinners” (Gal. 2:15). Zacheus also, as was said, from fervour of devotion, by way of supererogation, made mention of restitution fourfold.

“For the Son of man is come” (Luke 19:10), into this world, by the mystery of the incarnation, *(p. 160)* that is, Christ the Son of the Virgin, *“to seek,”* by teaching, and by going to men through diverse places, *“and to save,”* that is, to snatch from sins and eternal punishments, and bring back to heavenly felicity, *“that which was lost,”* that is, the human race originally vitiated in the first parent, and on account of original sin deprived of grace and glory, infected also and lost by the many actual and personal sins of posterity. Therefore the Apostle says: “A faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into this world to save sinners” (1 Tim. 1:15). And by Isaias it was foretold of Christ: “Surely he hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows” (Isa. 53:4). The angel also said to Joseph: “He shall save his people from their sins” (Matt. 1:21).

Behold, this Zacheus is set for an example to us all, that we may follow his penance, fervour, liberality and piety. But if anyone is not prepared to restore fourfold what he has unjustly held, let him at least restore simply; and if another has suffered loss from his defrauding, not only in what was taken, but also in other things which by the lawful use of what was taken he could gain, let him study as far as he can to satisfy and refund. Whence also delay in restoring is perilous and vicious, since another suffers loss by it.

“As they heard these things” (Luke 19:11), that is, the disciples of Christ, and the others also who were present, hearing that Christ said He had come to seek and save that which was lost, adding what follows, *“he added and spoke a parable,”* which is at once subjoined; *“because he was nigh to Jerusalem,”* that is, drawing near to that city; *“and because they thought that the kingdom of God was immediately to be manifested,”* that is, his disciples and others thought that presently, that is, soon, when Jesus should have come into Jerusalem, the kingdom of God would be manifested, that is, the kingdom which God by the Prophets foretold Christ should have, would evidently be possessed and held by Christ: according to that of Isaias, “He shall sit upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom” (Isa. 9:7). Of which the angel also said to the Virgin: “The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father, and he shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever” (Luke 1:32–33). For the Jews, nay and the disciples of Christ before His ascension, believed that Christ in His first coming would reign temporally in this world, with the greatest opulence and magnificence, carnally understanding the promises of the Prophets speaking literally of the kingdom of Christ. On which account the Apostles on the day of the ascension said to Christ: “Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6). And because Jerusalem was the metropolitan and royal city of Judea, they thought that Christ would set His throne in it, presently when at this time He should have entered it: especially because He had now done so many and so great miracles, so that He was believed by very many to be the Messias king of Israel, and many thousands followed Him, as ready to accept Him as king. Whence also a little after, namely on Palm Sunday, they met Him with wonderful reverence as the king Messias (John 12:13). — He spoke therefore the following parable (Luke 19:12), to exclude from them this error.

"A certain nobleman," that is, Christ, most noble according to both His natures, because according to the divinity born of the eternal Father eternally, and according to the humanity sprung from the Virgin of royal and Davidic stock, *"went into a far country,"* that is, from this world into the empyrean heaven, of which it is said in the Psalm: "I will please the Lord in the land of the living" (Ps. 114:9); *"to receive for himself a kingdom,"* over all the orders of the angels: who although from the beginning of the world they were subject to Christ according as He is God, yet in His ascension He began in a special manner to reign over them even according to His humanity as united to the Word. For all the angelic spirits are subject to and serve the man Christ, and are purged, illumined and perfected by Him, nay by His humanity, or soul, according to the teachings of the divine Dionysius. *"And to return"* on the day of judgment, to give to each what he deserves, as He declares in the Apocalypse: "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to render to every man according to his works" *(p. 161)* (Apoc. 22:12).

It can also be expounded thus: *"A certain nobleman went into a far country,"* that is, from the highest heaven came into this lower world, as it is written: "His going out is from the end of heaven" (Ps. 18:7). On which account Christ in John says of Himself: "No man hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended from heaven, the Son of man who is in heaven" (John 3:13). *"To receive for himself a kingdom,"* that is, to gather to Himself, from the elect Jews and Gentiles, a people in which He might reign by grace. Whence in the Psalm the Father says to the Son: "Ask of me, and I will give thee the Gentiles for thy inheritance," etc. (Ps. 2:8). By Zacharias also it was foretold of Christ: "His power shall be from sea to sea, and from the rivers even to the ends of the earth" (Zach. 9:10). *"And to return"* at the end of the world, or a little before, when by His virtue and grace the Jews generally shall be converted to the faith by the preaching of Elias, as is read in Malachias (Mal. 4:5–6). Of which Paul also testifies to the Romans: "Blindness in part has happened in Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles should come in, and so all Israel should be saved" (Rom. 11:25–26).

"And calling his ten servants" (Luke 19:13), that is, all believers: who are signified by ten, on account of the fulfilment of the Decalogue, by which they are worthy to be called servants of God; or, because ten is the first limit of numbers, and the following numbers are repetitions of it and of its parts. By these servants can also be specially understood the order of prelates, preachers, or doctors. *"He gave them ten pounds,"* that is, various gifts as well of sanctifying grace as of grace gratuitously given; not equally much to all, but to each according to his virtue, or capacity. Hence the Apostle says: "To one indeed, by the Spirit, is given the word of wisdom; and to another, the word of knowledge; to another, the grace of healing; to another, the working of miracles; to another, divers kinds of tongues; to another, discerning of spirits; to another, interpretation of speeches" (1 Cor. 12:8–10); and likewise, "Every one hath his proper gift from God" (1 Cor. 7:7). Now, according to the Gloss, a mna weighs, or is worth, ten drachmas.

"And said to them: Trade till I come," that is, use fruitfully the benefits and gifts of God granted you, growing in them, and multiplying them by good works or merits, and so by the goods of the present life trading for the goods of the glory of the future life: and this, through the whole time of this life, until the end of the world, in which I shall return to judge. For in the meantime is the state of meriting and demeriting. This is the spiritual and good trading, by which the heavenly kingdom is bought with poverty, eternal rest with temporal labour, the honour and joy of the heavenly kingdom with the confusion and sorrow of the earthly sojourn. Hence in Matthew the Saviour says: "The kingdom of heaven is like to a merchant" (Matt. 13:45). There is also secular trading, which is forbidden in a sacred place, of which Christ says: "Make not the house of my Father a house of traffic" (John 2:16).

"But his citizens," namely the Jews, of whose land and people according to the flesh Christ was born, *"hated him"* (Luke 19:14). For Pilate also knew that they had delivered Him up out of envy (Matt. 27:18). And in John Christ asserts: "They have hated me without cause" (John 15:25). Nay, He was grievous to them even to look upon. The cause of which is most clearly opened in the book of Wisdom, where in their person it is asserted: "We are esteemed by him as triflers, and he abstaineth from our ways as from filthiness, and his life

is unlike other men's" (Wisd. 2:16, 12, 15). And there was fulfilled in them what is read in the Proverbs of Solomon: "A pestilent man loveth not one that reproveth him" (Prov. 15:12). Whose perversity many now follow, who refuse to be cured of the wounds of their souls, and unceasingly wound themselves. *"And they sent an embassy after him"*: that is, after the ascension of Christ they endeavoured to destroy the evangelical faith and law, and the kingdom of Christ on earth. To do which they sent certain ones hither and thither: of whom for a time one was Paul, going to Damascus to persecute the Christians there (Acts 9:1–2). *(p. 162)* Hence in Jeremias it is said: "Let us cut him off from the land of the living, and let his name be remembered no more" (Jer. 11:19). *"Saying: We will not have this man to reign over us,"* that is, this Jesus is not the Messias promised in the law and the Prophets. Whence in John it is said: "We have no king but Caesar" (John 19:15). Of whom it is read prophesied by Daniel: "The people that shall deny him shall not be his" (Dan. 9:26).

"And it came to pass that he returned" (Luke 19:15), to the general judgment, to which at the end of the world He will come with the kingdom received (Luke 19:15): because before the end of the world almost the whole world will be converted to Christ, the Jews chiefly by Elias, and the rest, chiefly after Antichrist is slain (Mal. 4:5–6). Wherefore by Daniel it is written: "And he gave him," namely the Father to Christ, "power, and glory, and a kingdom: and all peoples, tribes and tongues shall serve him" (Dan. 7:14). *"And he commanded his servants to be called, to whom he had given the money,"* that is, He will command the believers to be brought to His judgment by the angels, as the Apostle says: "We must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ" (Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10); *"that he might know,"* that is, by the effect of retribution and His judicial sentence, He would make them know, and be known to others (in which manner it is written in Exodus: "The Lord said to the children of Israel: Now put off thy ornaments, that I may know what to do to thee," Exod. 33:5), *"how much every man had gained by trading,"* that is, how much he had fructified in good works, and made of spiritual gain from the gifts of God granted him. For to whom more is given, of him more will be required (Luke 12:48); and he who has bound himself to higher things is bound to more perfect. Whence of prelates and preachers these things can be expounded spiritually: of whom a most severe judgment shall then be made, because souls were committed to them, for whose salvation Christ deigned to be crucified; and then the mighty shall mightily suffer torments, and to the stronger a stronger torment shall be at hand, as is said in the book of Wisdom (Wisd. 6:6–9).

"And the first came, saying: Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds" (Luke 19:16). By this first servant to be presented at the divine tribunal on the day of judgment are understood those who have obtained greater gifts of grace, and have fruitfully used them, as those who beyond the precepts keep the counsels, or worthily fulfil the pastoral office. So the first said: "Lord, thy pound," that is, the grace furnished me by thee, "hath gained ten pounds," that is, with thy cooperation has produced copious fruit: as the Apostle protests, "His grace in me hath not been void" (1 Cor. 15:10). *"And he said to him"* (Luke 19:17), Christ the infallible judge: *"Well done, good servant,"* that is, virtuous, who hast diffused, communicated and increased the goodness granted thee. For the good is diffusive of itself, as St. Dionysius says. "Well done," in this place, is an interjection designating the affection of one commending; not of one mocking, as in the Psalm which says, "Let them be presently ashamed that say to me: 'Tis well, 'tis well" (Ps. 69:4). *"Because thou hast been faithful in a very little,"* that is, in the goods of the present life, which in comparison with the future goods are small and few, hast laudably used them to the glory of God, and the edification of thy neighbour, and thy own salvation, *"thou shalt have power over ten cities,"* that is, thou shalt obtain more abundant felicity and honour in heaven, and for all, and by all, of whose salvation thou wast a cooperator, thou shalt be glorified in the heavens. For even after the judgment there will remain among the Blessed an order of dignity, and of fitting mutual honouring. Whence the Apostle says: "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of glory? Are not you in the presence of our Lord?" (1 Thess. 2:19). *"And the second came, saying: Lord, thy pound"* (Luke 19:18), that is, thy grace conferred on me, *"hath made five pounds,"* that is, produced a competent and moderate fruit. By him are understood those who are content to keep the divine precepts. *"And he said to*

him: Be thou also over five cities" (Luke 19:19), that is, receive a proportioned and due reward and honour in heaven, where all are kings, as crowned with glory and honour.

"And another came, saying: Lord, behold here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin" (Luke 19:20), that is, the gift which I received from thee, and used not fruitfully by multiplying it, I bring back to thee. Now *(p. 163)* a *sudarium*, napkin, is the cloth with which the face is wiped from sweat, or with which the bodies of the dead are wrapped. By this, therefore, that he says he put the pound in a napkin, it is signified that it was dead to good works, or by carnal life profited neither himself nor others. Against which the Apostle says: "We exhort you that you receive not the grace of God in vain" (2 Cor. 6:1); and likewise, "Neglect not the grace that is in thee" (1 Tim. 4:14). *"For I feared thee"* (Luke 19:21). If he had truly feared with filial fear, he would have avoided sins out of love of justice, and lest he incur the offence of God; but if he had feared God with servile fear, he would at least in a manner have avoided certain sins out of fear of punishments. Yet this fear can here be understood as pusillanimity in doing well, by which some are drawn back from good works. *"Because thou art an austere man."* For Christ in judgment will be terrible and rigorous. Now also He, who in Himself is pious and sweet, seems austere to some perverse men, in so far as He commands things which to them appear hard or difficult and displeasing, and prohibits those which are to them delightful and pleasing. *"Thou takest up what thou didst not lay down,"* that is, thou requirest more than thou gavest; *"and thou reapest that which thou didst not sow,"* that is, thou ascribest to thyself, and requirest to be ascribed, what thou didst not effect personally. This the wicked servant therefore says, because Christ from the gifts of grace which He gave exacts spiritual gain, as was said, and commands all the good that man works by His grace to be ascribed chiefly to Himself, saying: "Without me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). And by Osee: "Thy destruction is from thee; thy help is only in me" (Osee 13:9). Now Christ does this most justly, because for this end He bestows on us the habit of gifts and virtues, that through them we may proceed into act; nor does He so ascribe all to Himself, as not to impute good works to us for merit, and for them confer a most copious reward, remunerating beyond the condign.

"He saith to him" (Luke 19:22): the Judge: *"Out of thy own mouth I judge thee"* (or, according to some, "From thy mouth"), that is, from thy own words now spoken against me I reprobate thee, and prove thee guilty: as the Scripture says, "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matt. 12:37). Whence in Job it is read: "Thy own mouth shall condemn thee, and not I; and thy lips shall testify against thee" (Job 15:6). *"Thou wicked servant,"* because fraudulent toward thy lord, and casting calumny upon him, slothful to do well, prone to accuse impiously, froward to amend. So what he thought he had aptly said for his excuse is turned to him for an increase of guilt. Therefore it is great folly to excuse one's own sins, because, as Bernard says, he sins against his own soul who excuses himself, as repelling from himself the medicine of indulgence, and by his own mouth shutting against himself the life of grace. For what greater wickedness, nay and folly, than to arm oneself against one's own salvation, and with the point of the tongue to stab oneself? Therefore the Psalmist prays: "Incline not my heart to words of malice, to make excuses in sins" (Ps. 140:4). Let us do therefore what holy Job says: "I will reprove my ways in the sight of God, and he shall be my saviour" (Job 13:15–16).

"Thou knewest that I am an austere man, taking up what I laid not down, and reaping what I did not sow": that is, if thou knewest me hard and rigorous, why did not this knowledge induce thee to live more fearfully and fruitfully, attending that I should more diligently exact what was mine? *"And why didst thou not give my money into the bank"* (Luke 19:23)? that is, why didst thou not expend the gift of grace granted thee for the spiritual refreshment, instruction or edification of others? *"And I at my coming"* to the universal or particular judgment, that is, visiting thee by a judicial act, *"might have exacted it with usury,"* that is, with spiritual gains, profits, or merits of thyself or of another who has been edified or profited by thee, *"I would have required it,"* that is, would have asked an account of it, and conferred the reward. For this Christ requires, that from the goods He has bestowed we profit ourselves and others. By this servant are understood negligent

rulers and unfruitful doctors and useless faithful, who are neither faithful nor useful to themselves or others, *(p. 164)* nay rather hurtful: of whom the Apostle says: “Evil men shall grow worse and worse, erring, and driving into error” (2 Tim. 3:13).

“And he said to them that stood by” (Luke 19:24), namely the angels, who stand by God incessantly for obeying, ministering, praising, contemplating and enjoying, according to that of Daniel: “Thousands of thousands ministered to him, and ten thousand times a hundred thousand stood before him” (Dan. 7:10): *“Take the pound away from him,”* that is, the gift of grace conferred on him: which is said to be taken away, as to the habit, or as to the use or fruit. The angels, however, take it away by no longer bestowing their administration upon men after this life, or by showing that man is justly deprived of the grace given to him, or by cooperating in the execution of the divine judgment, according to that of Matthew: “The Son of man shall send his angels, and they shall cast them into the furnace of fire” (Matt. 13:41–42). *“And give it to him that hath ten pounds,”* that is, who with abundant grace given to him has used it best with abundant fruit. For the more one profits daily in spiritual goods, the more his grace is increased, and all his virtues are perfected. For grace by good use of it merits to be increased, that increased it may merit to be perfected. Tully also says: “Knowledge is the treasure of a noble soul, which when distributed receives increase, and disdains an avaricious possessor, and unless it be made public, will slip away.” With which agrees that of Ecclesiasticus: “Wisdom that is hid, and treasure that is not seen, what profit is there in them both?” (Ecclus. 41:17). Now grace is said to be taken from one and given to another, not that the same in number is so taken away and given, since an accident does not migrate from one subject into another; but because a like in species is so conferred, and the fruit which one, if he had lived well, would have obtained, another obtains gratis. The angels give such grace to someone by disposing and cooperating or illuminating, or by impetrating. *“And they said to him: Lord, he hath ten pounds”* (Luke 19:25), that is, copious charisms of graces. *“But I say to you”* (Luke 19:26), I Christ, the judge of all, *“that to every one that hath shall be given,”* that is, to him who has grace with fruitful use of it, greater grace shall be added, and he shall abound in spiritual goods; *“and from him that hath not,”* the use or act of grace, to which grace is ordained, as from a slothful servant; or, “that hath not,” that is, in comparison of some of the elect, has little or as it were nothing of grace, because what is small is reputed for nothing, according to the Philosopher; *“that also which he seemeth to have shall be taken away from him,”* that is, the habitual or small gift of grace itself. For he by sinning loses it, and deprives himself of it, and takes it from himself in a manner effectively, but God or the angels permissively.

“But as for those my enemies” (Luke 19:27), that is, unbelievers, chiefly the unbelieving Jews, *“who would not have me reign over them.”* For when Pilate said, “Shall I crucify your king?” the hardened Jews answered, “We have no king but Caesar” (John 19:15). Of whom it is had in Jeremias: “The house of Israel and the house of Juda have grievously transgressed against me, saith the Lord; they have denied the Lord, and said: It is not he” (Jer. 5:11–12). Of whom is verified what by Osee the Lord says: “They have departed from me; and I have chastised them, and strengthened their arms, and they have imagined evil against me” (Osee 7:13, 15). *“Bring them hither,”* that is, to my tribunal. For on the day of judgment the holy angels will carry the reprobate, raised again, to the place of judgment, as in Matthew Christ asserts: “At the end of the world the angels shall go out, and shall separate the wicked from among the just” (Matt. 13:49). *“And kill them before me,”* that is, in my sight cast them into eternal fire, and by approbation judge them worthy of eternal death. This is the death of eternal punishment and misery, of which in the Apocalypse it is set forth: “But the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and all liars, shall have their portion in the pool burning with fire and brimstone, which is the second death” (Apoc. 21:8). Into which most unhappy, most bitter and unfailing death the holy angels together will thrust and cast *(p. 165)* that whole most sad heap of the reprobate, namely into hell, as has been said.

Some expound these things of the slaying of the Jews by Titus and the army of the Romans, which was done in vengeance of the blood of Christ in the forty-second year after His passion: to which slaughter of the

impious God instigated the Romans, in so far as it was done for the avenging of the blood of Christ, although the Romans knew not this, and did it for another cause: as by Jeremias and Ezechiel He asserted that He brought the Chaldeans against the most wicked Jews, in the times of the aforesaid Prophets, as is plain in their books.

"And having said these things, he went before" (Luke 19:28), the disciples, instructing them by words and deeds to fortitude and constancy of mind, that they might be ready to bear death for faith or justice, *"going up to Jerusalem,"* in which He foreknew and foretold that He should presently suffer: and so by deed He showed what He foretold in words. In which He gave an example to prelates of voluntarily going before to pain and death for the salvation of the flock committed to them, or even of others, when it shall be opportune, as in the books of the Machabees it is written of a certain one: "Eleazar, advanced in age, choosing rather a most glorious death than a hateful life, went voluntarily before to the torment" (2 Mach. 6:18–19). Hence in the epistle of John it is written: "In this we have known the charity of God, because he hath laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 John 3:16).

"And it came to pass, when he was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethania, at the mount called Olivet" (Luke 19:29). According to the Gloss, Bethphage was a village or hamlet of priests near the mount of Olives. For the priests of the old Testament had villages outside the city for feeding their cattle. Bethania also was a village not far from the side of the aforesaid mount. But it is to be known that Luke here does not observe strictly the order of the thing done. For first Christ came to Bethania, namely on the sabbath before Palm Sunday; and there then was made the banquet of which it is read in John, at which Lazarus was one of them that were at table, and Martha served (John 12:1–2). But on the following day, Jesus coming from Bethania to Jerusalem passed through Bethphage, which was in the midst, and so came to the mount of Olives, which is so called because many olive trees grew on it.

"He sent two of his disciples." For the same reasons He sent two, for which, as was said in the exposition of the tenth chapter, He sent His disciples two by two to preach (Luke 10:1). And some say that, according to Chrysostom, these two were Peter and Philip: of whom one, namely Peter, led Cornelius, as the ass, Philip Samaria, as the she-ass, by faith to Jesus, or converted them. But according to this, that could not be understood of Philip the apostle, since he did not convert Samaria; but of Philip, one of the seven first deacons, who converted Samaria, as is described in the Acts, as the expositors there testify (Acts 8:5; 10). Chrysostom, however, does not assert it, but says he read it in the exposition of someone. And if I rightly remember, I read that Origen said this. Who these two disciples were the Scripture does not express, nor is it certain.

"Saying: Go into the town" (Luke 19:30), that is, into the city of Jerusalem: which is called a *castellum*, a town, either in contempt, because in it there was no true union of citizens, but great dissension and envy; or on account of the site of the place, because it was set on mountains, and on account of the strength of its walls and fortifications. It can also, as some think, by the *castellum* be understood some stone house or fortress by the wall, in which, or near which, the ass was. *"Which is over against you,"* that is, opposite you, by local distance; or, "Against you," because its inhabitants strive to kill me, your Lord and master, and to disperse you. *"At your entering into it, you shall find a colt tied,"* to a manger or other thing, lest *(p. 166)* wandering it run about, *"on which no man ever hath sitten,"* that is, on which no one hitherto has sat to travel, on account of the colt's youth and tenderness. *"Loose him and bring him to me."* In Matthew it is had that Jesus said: "You shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them to me" (Matt. 21:2). Whence it is gathered that both animals were bound and commanded by Christ to be brought. *"And if any man shall ask you"* (Luke 19:31), *"Why do you loose him?" "thus shall you say to him: Because the Lord hath need of his service,"* that is, ministration: not from His own absolute necessity, but for the verification of the Scripture, and for our instruction, and a mystical reason, because by the sitting upon the colt was figured that the Gentile world would be subjected to the empire of Christ, so that that of the Apostle

should be fulfilled: “Glorify and bear God in your body” (1 Cor. 6:20). *“And they that were sent went their way, and found the colt standing, as he had said to them”* (Luke 19:32).

“And as they were loosing the colt,” the two disciples of Christ, *“the owners thereof said to them”* (Luke 19:33), namely of the colt, that is, the keepers, or those frequently using it, if not for sitting, yet for some other things. For as is commonly said, the colt and the ass were deputed to the common uses of men. *“Why loose you the colt, on which no one hitherto hath sat?” “But they said”* (Luke 19:34): *“Because the Lord hath need of him”*: in the manner aforesaid, and for the causes already touched. But what did they know whom the disciples of Christ designated by the name of Lord? To which it is answered that perhaps they had already heard that Jesus of Nazareth was coming thither, and from the dress or other signs noted that those two were His disciples, and the common rumour then was that Jesus was the king Messias: whence by the Lord they understood Jesus. *“And they brought him”* (Luke 19:35), namely the colt together with the ass, *“to Jesus. And casting their garments upon the colt,”* nay and upon the ass, according to Matthew (Matt. 21:7), that Jesus might sit more softly and becomingly, *“they set Jesus thereon,”* reverently ministering. *“And as he went, they spread their garments underneath in the way”* (Luke 19:36).

About these things many questions could be asked and said, as about the mystical signification of the town and the colt and the ass, and whether Christ sat successively upon each animal. Of which, because I have written these things on Matthew, I will now say nothing.

“And when he was now coming near the descent of mount Olivet” (Luke 19:37), *“the whole multitude of his disciples began,”* the crowds of those descending with Jesus from the higher places about this mountain. Or, “of those descending,” that is, from Jerusalem, which was situated higher, meeting Him: because, as in John it is read, “a great multitude that was come to the festival day, when they heard that Jesus cometh to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him” (John 12:12–13). *“Rejoicing”* with spiritual joy at the omnipotence of God and His wonderful deeds done through Christ, *“to praise God with a loud voice,”* that is, devout and sonorous, *“for all the mighty works they had seen,”* that is, for the miracles of Christ wrought by divine power, which they had beheld done with bodily eyes, *“saying: Blessed”* (Luke 19:38), that is, worthy of every good speaking or appellation, and holy, or praised is he and be he, *“who cometh the king in the name of the Lord,”* that is, in God, namely in His power and according to His will and to His glory. *“Peace in heaven,”* that is, in the heavenly kingdom is the peace of eternity, peace undisturbed and complete, that is, everlasting tranquillity, most delicious, unshaken and consummate quieting of the mind of all the Blessed in God. Moreover by this that they say, “Peace in heaven,” is designated the reconciliation of the human race with God and the holy angels made through Christ, as the Apostle says of Christ: “Making peace through the blood of his cross, both as to the things that are on earth, and the things that are in heaven” (Col. 1:20). And so it can be expounded: Peace, that is, pacification, is in heaven of God and of the angels toward men. Moreover it can be asked why, at the birth of Christ, the angels sang, “Peace on earth” (Luke 2:14) , but now, as He tends to His passion, the crowds cry, “Peace in heaven.” *(p. 167)* To which it is said that in the incarnation and nativity of Christ true peace, namely Christ, descended from heaven to earth, but by His passion this peace ascended into heaven. *“And glory on high,”* that is, honour, glorification, beatitude, joy be to God dwelling in the heavens, to whom is due all honour and glory. Whence also above the angels are read to have sung, “Glory to God in the highest” (Luke 2:14): where these things are more fully expounded.

“And some of the Pharisees from the multitude” (Luke 19:39), that is, among those peoples then present, *“said to him,”* namely Christ: *“Master.”* They dared not speak to Him irreverently, for fear of the people. *“Rebuke thy disciples,”* that is, those who so excellently extol thee; or, “thy disciples,” who do this beyond the rest, or induce others to it. This they uttered from envy, because they despised Christ, and did not believe Him to be king of Israel, nor to have come from God.

"To whom he said" (Luke 19:40): *"I say to you, that if these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out."* As if He said: I have pre-ordained this day, that on it due honour may be shown me, and who and what I am be manifested, lest by ignorance you can excuse your not believing me. Therefore if men did not utter my praises, the rocks by some signs, rendings or movements would wonderfully declare my majesty. Which is established as fulfilled also in the passion of Christ, according to the Gloss. For while He hung on the cross the rocks were rent, and by their rendings as it were compassionated their Creator, and by the very fact protested His eminence (Matt. 27:51). By the stones also can be understood the hard hearts of the Gentiles, of whom some, as the centurion and those like him, seeing the wonders that were done in the passion of Christ, glorified God, saying: "Indeed this man was the Son of God" (Matt. 27:54; Mark 15:39).

"And when he drew near, seeing the city, he wept over it" (Luke 19:41). Bodily He drew near to the city of Jerusalem, from which He was not distant by circumscription of body, who according to His divinity incessantly fills the whole world. Finally, when He had beheld it with bodily eyes, He showed a sign of special compassion, bewailing the present iniquity of the city and its future calamity and punishment: who not only as God, but also according to His created and infused knowledge, had from the beginning of the incarnation infallibly seen that city and all its property and quality by intellectual sight; but this time, having seen these things sensibly, He willingly assumed a movement of special compassion, which He also showed by material tears as by a sure sign. — Moreover, Jesus wept: first, in His nativity, according to the holy doctors; second, in His circumcision, according to Bernard and others; third, in the raising of Lazarus, as is said in John (John 11:35); fourth, in this procession; fifth, when His passion was at hand, when also His sweat became as drops of blood trickling down upon the ground (Luke 22:44) (whence it is said to the Hebrews: "With a strong cry and tears offering up prayers," Heb. 5:7); sixth, in His passion, in which also more often, for the bitterness of sorrows, He wept of His own will.

So, seeing the aforesaid city and its exterior beauty, He bewailed its guilt, and its punishment both temporal and eternal. By the name of the city, however, its inhabitants are understood. *"Saying: If thou also hadst known"* (Luke 19:42), that is, if thou knewest the misery and overthrow impending over thee, thou also wouldst surely weep, who now, unhappily blinded, rejoicest when thou hast done evil, and exultest in the worst things (Prov. 2:14), because thou dost not weigh thine own perversity, and dost not foresee the punishments due and impending to thee. In this manner daily virtuous men deplore the interior darkness and eternal damnation of wicked and blinded men, who know not why they are bewailed: of whom Solomon testifies: "Who leave the right way, and walk by dark ways" (Prov. 2:13). This piety of Christ we ought to follow, because He also, as most pious, bewailed the calamity even of a hostile city. Whence we also ought to bewail *(p. 168)* the evils not only of friends, but also of enemies, and pray for them, as the Apostle says: "Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is scandalized, and I am not on fire?" (2 Cor. 11:29). So holy Job also says: "I wept heretofore for him that was afflicted, and my soul had compassion on the poor" (Job 30:25). But the hardened in vices and all the wicked are to be compassionated continually. Wherefore in Ecclesiasticus it is asserted: "The mourning for the dead is seven days; but for the fool and the ungodly all the days of their life" (Ecclus. 22:13). — Augustine relates in the book *De Civitate Dei* how a certain Roman general, about to take and overthrow the most opulent and most beautiful city of Syracuse, standing first on an eminence, bewailed its ruin.

"And that in this thy day," that is, in the small and fleeting time in which thou livest to thy vanities, not to the honour and worship of thy Creator, *"the things that are to thy peace,"* that is, thou hast those things which belong to thy carnal and deceitful peace. In this manner the children of this world, who walk in their concupiscences and their own wills, who prosper temporally, enjoy this carnal and deceptive peace: who in transitory and sensible things set their end, and in such things somehow rest in mind. Of whom the Psalmist says: "Because I was zealous against the wicked, seeing the prosperity of sinners" (Ps. 72:3). Of whom in Job it is had: "Their houses are secure and peaceable, and the rod of God is not upon them; they spend their

days in wealth, and in a moment they go down to hell" (Job 21:9, 13). But there is also another peace, true, spiritual, interior, which is tranquillity of mind in God: which the wicked lack, according to that of Isaias, "There is no peace to the wicked, saith the Lord" (Isa. 57:21). Of which in John the Saviour says: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you" (John 14:27). Which the Apostle places among the fruits of the Spirit to the Galatians, saying: "But the fruit of the Spirit is charity, joy, peace, patience, longanimity" (Gal. 5:22).

"But now they are hidden from thy eyes," that is, the adversities impending over thee now lie hid from thee, because thou also refusest to believe me foretelling them to thee. The most perilous security of these many follow, who from the longanimity and patience of God sin more boldly and are made worse, rushing into the habit of sin. On which account in Ecclesiastes it is said: "For because sentence is not speedily pronounced against the evil, the children of men commit evils without any fear" (Eccles. 8:11); and likewise, "There are wicked men who are as secure as though they had the deeds of the just" (Eccles. 8:14). To these that of Wisdom is fitting: "The ungodly said, reasoning with themselves, but not right: Come on therefore, let us enjoy the good things that are present, and let us speedily use the creature as in youth" (Wisd. 2:1, 6).

"For the days shall come upon thee" (Luke 19:43), that is, against thee; *"and thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee,"* namely the Romans, to wit Titus and Vespasian with the army of the Romans, *"a trench,"* that is, a rampart: because (as is read) they made three ramparts about Jerusalem to take it. Or, "a trench," that is, their army, disposed like a rampart round about the city, according to that of Isaias: "I will compass thee as a sphere round about, and will cast up a bank against thee" (Isa. 29:3). *"And straiten thee on every side,"* that is, will so besiege that thou canst not nor darest go out, but art most gravely afflicted by famine and thirst and other ways. For the inhabitants of Jerusalem came to such anguish that women ate their own children, as Josephus relates in the book *De Bello Judaico*. *"And beat thee flat to the ground"* (Luke 19:44): because the Romans laid prostrate both the men and the buildings of Jerusalem. Therefore it is subjoined: *"and thy children,"* that is, the citizens, *"who are in thee."* For a city or community stands as a mother toward the particular persons contained in it, whom it cherishes and protects. *"And they shall not leave in thee a stone upon a stone,"* that is, they will overthrow thee from the foundations. This, however, can be understood by way of hyperbolical speech, as in the book of Judges the children of Benjamin are read to have cast stones so surely at a mark that they could hit a hair (Judg. 20:16). It is also read that when Titus and Vespasian, Jerusalem being destroyed, had returned to their own, the Jews, who for fear of the Romans had hidden in caves and woods, returning, began to repair the city of Jerusalem, and to venerate the sacred places. *(p. 169)* Which being known, the Romans sent Aelius Hadrian, who was afterwards emperor: by whom the city of Jerusalem was then altogether overthrown, so that a stone did not remain upon a stone.

Finally, since God inflicts punishment on account of fault, and heavier punishment on account of greater fault, Christ next subjoins the cause and fault on account of which so many penal evils were to be inflicted. *"Because thou hast not known the time of thy visitation,"* that is, thou hast not noted nor willed to recognize in these days that I am the king Messias sent to thee, nor believest me to be Christ, nor acknowledgest my coming. For although for a time they in some way knew these things, yet as time went on, and Christ sharply rebuking them, they were blinded by their own envy. So the visitation of Christ is here taken in a good sense, and was His mission into this world, incarnation, and conversation among men, preaching. Of which above Zacharias spoke: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel: because he hath visited and wrought the redemption of his people" (Luke 1:68); and likewise, "Through the bowels of the mercy of our God, in which the Orient from on high hath visited us" (Luke 1:78). To this blindness of the Jews is applied that of the prophet Isaias: "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel hath not known me, and my people hath not understood" (Isa. 1:3). And that of the prophet Jeremias: "The kite in the air hath known her time; but my people have not known the judgment of the Lord" (Jer. 8:7).

Moreover, Christ the Son of God, God and man, visited the human race, as creator the creature, as lord the servant, as physician the sick, as redeemer the captive, as saviour the condemned, as life the dead, as master the ignorant. Whence by Zacharias the prophet He exhorts: “Give praise, and rejoice, O daughter of Sion: for behold I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee” (Zach. 2:10). But, alas, the reprobate and ungrateful children of men did not know their creator, saviour, teacher and physician: nay, like phrenetics and as raving sick men, they rushed upon Him, and laid sacrilegious hands upon Him, according to that of John: “The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it; he came unto his own, and his own received him not” (John 1:5, 11). In whom was fulfilled what by Osee the Lord protests: “I have redeemed them, and they have spoken lies against me; and I have chastised them, but they have departed from me, and they have imagined evil against me” (Osee 7:13, 15).

“And entering into the temple” (Luke 19:45). For when He had entered the city of Jerusalem, first He entered the temple: First, because as He Himself said, “I must be about my Father’s business” (Luke 2:49), that is, in the temple and the sacred acts which He exercised in the temple. So He did this first for the honour of His Father, as He says in John: “I honour my Father” (John 8:49). Second, for our edification, that is, that entering any city whatever, we may first enter the church, and adore the Lord. Hence Chrysostom says: “Thou imitator of Christ, when thou hast entered any city, before every act run to the church.” Third, that He might correct the abuses that were in the temple, and teach us to have zeal of God and justice against sins. For it is subjoined, *“he began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought.”* In John it is read that with a scourge made of cords He cast them out (John 2:15). Nevertheless John speaks there of another casting out, that namely which happened at the paschal solemnity first following after the changing of water into wine: therefore it is not so certain whether this casting out also was done with such a scourge. Each, however, was exceedingly wonderful, and (as Origen asserts) more wonderful than the changing of water into wine and the raising of Lazarus: because to restrain the minds of so many men, to bind their powers, to change their dispositions, was most wonderful. For a certain divine splendour went forth from the countenance and eyes of the Only-begotten of God, terrified by which they neither dared nor were able to resist. From which it is proved that secular acts ought not to be exercised in a church. *(p. 170)* The princes of the Jews, however, made in the first court of the temple, from avarice, three places for things on sale: in one of which sat the sellers, in another the money-changers, in the third others: and this that no one might excuse himself from the offering. For if they did not bring with them what was to be offered, they found it there on sale: and if they had not money, they found there money-changers ready to lend: who nevertheless in this sought their own advantages and emoluments. For, because under manifest usury they were forbidden to lend to their brethren the Jews (Deut. 23:19), they lent to them for certain little presents of fruits.

Gorran says in this place: By these sellers and buyers are designated seven kinds of men to be expelled from the church. The first are those given to secular acts. Hence pleas ought not to be held in the church. The second are the tumultuous, lest they hinder the devotion of the divine Office. The third are clerics who trade, because it is not lawful for them to trade, as the Apostle says: “No man being a soldier to God entangleth himself with secular businesses” (2 Tim. 2:4). The fourth are simoniacs; the fifth, the excommunicated; the sixth, the interdicted; the seventh, the contentious. For the casting out of all whom now great ropes would scarcely suffice, since many are infected with these vices. Chrysostom also says: “Whoever will be a merchant, let him be cast out of the church,” as the Psalmist says: “Because I have not known trading, I will enter into the powers of the Lord” (Ps. 70:15–16). And Cassiodorus says the like. From which the office of trading seems to be altogether unlawful: which, according to Thomas in the *Secunda Secundae*, is true of trading which is done only and finally with a view to gain, not for a lawful and honest end.

So Christ cast out of the temple the sellers and buyers; and lest He should seem to do this unreasonably, He alleged Scripture, saying (Luke 19:46): *“It is written”* in Isaias, in the person of God speaking: *“My house,”* that is, the temple, or material church consecrated to divine worship, *“is the house of prayer,”* that is, the

place of the divine Office, not of secular and unlawful acts or confabulations (Isa. 56:7). They sin enormously, therefore, who abuse sacred places, and heap irreverence upon them: as those who enter the church to look at women, and women who enter to see men; and those who there look about lasciviously hither and thither, or lustfully and most wickedly covet, or show themselves off to others; and those who there are intent on fables, scurrilities, jests and laughter. Nor in cemeteries ought they to give themselves to games or other vain acts, but there with all reverence and devotion to the praises of God, to prayers, contemplations, preachings and sacred oblations, that nothing else be done there except for the sake of which the place was built and dedicated to God, to which also on account of the dignity of the Sacrament a special honour is due. *"But you have made it a den of thieves,"* that is, like to such a den, exercising so many crimes in the house of God, in which you have spiritually killed souls, and perhaps some you have slain bodily, as in the first temple Zacharias the son of Joiada was stoned (2 Par. 24:21). Whence by Jeremias the Lord says: "Is this house then become a den of thieves?" (Jer. 7:11).

"And he was teaching daily in the temple" (Luke 19:47). This is true as to a certain time, because on Palm Sunday and the two following days; but not on the fourth day of the week, because then He remained in Bethania, and the traitor sold Him. So Christ, His passion being at hand, did not cease from preachings and holy rebukes: whereby we are taught not through fear of death or any inconvenience to cease from the spiritual acts we owe. By this also the sloth of some is rebuked, who, as they grow old, give themselves to ease and bodily quiet, whereas they can still profit the flock committed to them, and many others, nay then would be heard with greater reverence. Let these heed what the Saviour says: "He that shall persevere to the end, he shall be saved" (Matt. 10:22).

"And the chief priests," namely the pontiffs, *"and the scribes,"* that is, the doctors of the law, *"and the rulers of the people,"* namely the inferior rulers and elders of the people, *"sought to destroy him,"* that is, to kill Christ; *"and they found not what to do to him"* (Luke 19:48), *(p. 171)* that is, they found not the way of executing their malice, because for fear of the community they dared not lay hands on Jesus. Therefore it is subjoined: *"for all the people were very attentive to hear him,"* that is, in mind very attentive to the doctrine and miracles of Christ, hearing Him preaching with the ears of mind and body. For, as the evangelist Matthew testifies, Christ in the same hour cured many blind and other infirm (Matt. 21:14). Behold how envy blinds the mind, how ambition begets envy, how passions subvert reason, and how great is the malice of the human heart. For the more illustrious miracles the Saviour did, the more gloriously He preached, the more hearers He had, the more He was honoured by the people; so much the more the most unhappy princes, scribes, Pharisees and elders of the Jews were tormented with envy, and were kindled, thinking of nothing else but how they might crush Him who surpassed them in wisdom, eloquence, fame, sanctity, miracles. For they were exceedingly ambitious, avaricious and vain: therefore seeing their magistracy made little of, and Christ magnified by all, they were grievously afflicted. Whence they said: "Do you see that we prevail nothing? behold, the whole world is gone after him" (John 12:19). And, alas, many follow their perversity, among whom are zeal and contention, detraction and tumult of unhappy suspicions, while one fears lest another precede him in honour: who would that they strove to surpass one another in true virtues. To whom the Prophet rightly cries: "O ye sons of men, how long will you be dull of heart? why do you love vanity, and seek after lying?" (Ps. 4:3). But, as the same declares: "Blessed is the man whose trust is in the name of the Lord, and who hath not had regard to vanities and lying follies" (Ps. 39:5).

Lastly, according to the tropological understanding, as the Lord Jesus, seeing the city of Jerusalem, wept over it: so every one truly faithful in Christ, considering the deformity and ruin of the militant Church, or of any ecclesiastical person or soul, from the compassion of fraternal charity bewails it, prays for it, strives to help it; and speaks to it: "If thou also hadst known," that is, rightly attended, what and how great perils impend over thee, how great torments thou shalt suffer (unless thou do penance); thou also wouldst weep, and correct thyself and thy life, which now thou dost not weigh, because thou enjoyest secular prosperity and

carnal peace, and by these and thy other iniquities art so darkened and deceived that thou dost not consider the things that pertain to thy salvation. But days shall come in which these will be encompassed by their invisible enemies, assailed, straitened, conquered, that is, drawn to eternal torments. All which is done chiefly at the hour of death. For the demons surround the sinner, drawing near in concord to his casting down; and prepare a rampart for him, setting before him various cunning deceits; they assail him, suggesting vices; they straiten him, enticing dreadfully, or terrifying by adversities; they conquer and cast him to the ground, leading him through to consent and wicked works. *"And they shall not leave in him a stone upon a stone,"* that is, one virtue leaning upon another: because when a man rushes into mortal sin, he presently loses grace and the infused virtues, of which one strengthens another, and one leans on another, as in a well-disposed army one gives support to another. Whence, according to one consideration, faith is called the foundation of virtues; according to another, humility; according to another, charity, without which the action of no virtue is meritorious. — But since the house of God is the truly devout soul, which is the seat and throne of uncreated Wisdom (Wisd. 7), let us see that our soul become not a den of thieves, that is, a habitation of demons, by cleaving to vices, or by detracting from or envying anyone; nor become a house of traffic, so that for the good we do we seek human praises or carnal comforts, but seek to please God alone and always to adhere to Him, and to be united to Him eternally.

Luke 20

Article XLIII — Exposition of the Twentieth Chapter: "And it came to pass, on one of the days, as he was teaching the people in the temple, and preaching the gospel"

(p. 172) When on the most sacred day of Palms the princes, the Scribes, the Pharisees and the elders of the Jews had heard Jesus called by the people king of Israel, that is, Messias, and commended with the greatest praises, and had seen Him received with immense honour by almost all, and brought into the city of Jerusalem, whom immediately after the raising of Lazarus they had unanimously determined to kill (John 11:53), they were most vehemently troubled, and devised several ways by which they might circumvent and take Him, as the Evangelist in part touches in the present chapter.

"And it came to pass on one of the days" (Luke 20:1), namely on the second feria after Palm Sunday, as appears from what is written by Matthew (Matt. 21:18 ff.), *"as he was teaching the people,"* the common people, who reverently heard Him, *"in the temple, and preaching the gospel,"* that is, announcing the goods of eternal beatitude. For He taught them moral things, namely to flee vices, and to cleave to the exercises of virtues; and He preached to them that eternal salvation was to be afforded them if they obeyed His teachings. *"The chief priests and the scribes with the ancients met together,"* that is, the pontiffs, in whom was greater authority, and the Scribes, that is, the doctors, in whom was greater knowledge of the law, in some manner, with the elders, in whom was riper age, and who succeeded the seventy elders whom, at God's command, Moses appointed to bear with him the burden of the people (Num. 11:16–17). All these, seeing that so great was the wisdom, eloquence, efficacy and constancy of Christ that He could not easily be overcome, came together, that by their multitude, authority, excellence and skill they might overwhelm, terrify and conquer Him.

"And they spoke to him, saying: Tell us, by what authority dost thou these things" (Luke 20:2)? that is, by what authority dost thou take to thyself this office of preaching, and draw the people to thee, and rebuke whom thou wilt, all which regard our authority lawfully given to us? *"Or who is he that hath given thee this authority?"* as if they said: Since thou art not God, on which account thou hast not this power of thyself, we wish to hear from thee from whom thou hast it. For thou hast it not from us, nor from the emperor, nor from the senate, nor art thou of the priestly tribe, nor do we believe that thou hast it from God. It seems therefore that thou doest these things by usurpation, and presumptuously thrustest thyself into them at the instigation of the devil. These were chiefly envious of Christ. For the priests thought within themselves: We were as the

pillar of our people, and now the people leans on this man as on a pillar. The Scribes also said: We were as the living and sounding tongue of the Scriptures, and now this man sounds most eloquently, and our muse no longer resounds.

"And Jesus answering, said to them" (Luke 20:3): *"I will also ask you one word,"* that is, one question; or, "One word," that is, one thing signified by a complex of words. For often *verbum* is taken for a discourse or the thing itself signified by a word. Whence in the books of Kings Ezechias says: "There was not any word in my house that I did not show them" (4 Kings 20:13). *"Answer me,"* to one word or one question, you who have proposed two questions to me. Christ, the wisdom of the Father, beholding the secrets of all hearts, knowing that they asked not from desire of instruction but maliciously, did not answer them evidently to what was asked, but as driving out a nail with a nail, so answered them as they deserved; *(p. 173)* and proposed to them such a question, from the solution of which they would have been confounded and conquered, and from the omission of which solution they were nevertheless confounded.

So He asked (Luke 20:4): *"The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or from men?"* that is, whether by divine authority and heavenly commission John the Baptist baptized the people, or by human institution only, commission or presumption? It is called the baptism of John as of a minister: and because in that baptism grace was not given, but all that was done in it John did, since there was only exterior washing on the part of baptism; therefore it is denominated from John. But in the baptism of Christ grace is given by virtue of the sacrament, therefore it is denominated from Christ or God, not from the Apostles or other ministers.

"But they thought within themselves, saying" (Luke 20:5), by mental, not vocal word: *"If we say, From heaven,"* that is, by divine and heavenly institution, *"he will say: Why then did you not believe him,"* me, who bore testimony to him and said of me, "He that cometh from heaven is above all" (John 3:31); and, "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world" (John 1:29)? Nay at length they denied even John himself to be a prophet, asserting that he was a seducer, according to that of Matthew: "John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say: He hath a devil" (Matt. 11:18). *"But if we say, From men"* (Luke 20:6), that is, that John's baptism was by human institution or invention, *"all the people will stone us."* For the common people were for the greatest part baptized by the most blessed John, according to that of Mark: "And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all they of Jerusalem, and were baptized by him in the river of Jordan" (Mark 1:5). Whence also above it was said: "It came to pass that all the people were baptized" (Luke 3:21). *"For they are persuaded,"* that is, hold for certain, *"that John was a prophet."* To feel this firmly they were induced by the recollection of the miraculous conception of blessed John, and of the wonders that happened about John's father, who, an angel appearing to him, was made dumb, and on John's birth recovered speech (Luke 1); also by the most holy conversation of John, who from boyish years led an eremitic life, and was a most constant zealot of justice: whence he stood in such repute with them that they believed him to be the Christ. So two causes would have incited the people to stone them, if they had said that John's baptism came from human institution. The first is, because they would have reputed this to be in derogation of John, nay and of God, because if his baptism had been from men, then John would have been a false prophet and presumptuous. The second is, because they would have reputed this to be in derogation of themselves, because from this it would follow that they had been deceived, in receiving John's baptism.

"And they answered that they knew not whence it was" (Luke 20:7). This they said from fear of being stoned by the people, or of confusion or defeat by Christ, as is plain from what has been said; and yet, darkened by their own malignity, they now thought that John's baptism was from men, not from God, and his preaching in which he bore testimony to the Saviour false. Nevertheless, in the beginning of the baptizing and preaching of St. John, they rather thought him a true prophet, and his baptism from heaven; but as time went on, John giving testimony to Christ, they were turned away from him, and thought otherwise. *"And Jesus*

said to them" (Luke 20:8): *"Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things,"* as you asked maliciously, and are unworthy of a plain answer, nor would you believe me if I brought forth to you the truth asked. From another source also they ought to have noted this. For before this question Christ did such illustrious miracles publicly, and possible to God alone, that from them they ought evidently to have recognized that He was sent from above, and taught and wrought by divine power. So not from a movement of impatience, but from zeal of justice, Christ so answered those perverse men.

Thereupon the Lord Jesus, by the introduction of a parable, shows the benefits of God the *(p. 174)* Father toward the Jews, and the ingratitude and malevolence of the Jews, especially of the pontiffs and Scribes. *"And he began to speak to the people this parable"* (Luke 20:9). For the people heard Him gladly, and He had already confuted the elders. *"A certain man planted a vineyard."* Although by the vineyard the universal Church militant can be designated, yet in this place, literally, by the vineyard is understood the Synagogue, namely the people of the old Testament, which in the Scripture of the old Testament is many times called a vineyard: as in the Psalm, "Thou hast brought a vineyard out of Egypt" (Ps. 79:9); and in Osee, "Israel is a vine full of branches" (Osee 10:1); and in Isaias, "The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the man of Juda his pleasant plant" (Isa. 5:7). The Synagogue, however, and likewise the Church, is called a vineyard by similitude, because, like a vineyard, it bears sweet and precious fruit, namely spiritual children, and acts of virtues.

This vineyard *"a certain man,"* that is, God the Father: who is called man, not because He has bodily or human lineaments, but because He is human, that is, pious and mild, and of intellectual nature, and the highest reason; *"planted,"* spiritually and bodily: since He founded their hearts in His law and grace, chiefly as to the elect; and in the land of promise He set them, and rooted them there with various benefits; *"and let it out,"* that is, under the promise and hope of beatific remuneration committed it to be ruled and cultivated, *"to husbandmen,"* that is, to the prelates and rulers of the Synagogue, namely Moses, Aaron, and the other Prophets, kings, judges, and doctors of the Jewish people. Whence He says to Jeremias: "I have set thee over nations and over kingdoms, to root up, and to pull down, and to waste, and to build, and to plant" (Jer. 1:10). Isaias also, declaring himself to be the husbandman of the Synagogue, says to it: "O my threshing, and the son of my floor, what I have heard of the Lord of hosts I have declared unto you" (Isa. 21:10).

Moreover it can be asked how the Church or Synagogue is called a vineyard, since the Saviour says in John of Himself, "I am the true vine" (John 15:1); how again prelates and doctors are called husbandmen, since in the same place Christ asserts, "My Father is the husbandman." And it must be answered that by the same thing, according to its diverse properties, diverse things can be signified: as by a lion, by reason of fortitude, Christ is expressed; by reason of cruelty, the devil. Christ therefore is called vine or vineyard according to His human nature, which God the Father, and the whole most blessed Trinity, ruled by gifts of grace, made flowering and fruitful. The Synagogue, however, for the cause before touched is called a vineyard; likewise the Church. Moreover God the Father, or the supreme Trinity, is called the principal husbandman, because He works interiorly, by extirpating vices, infusing grace and virtues. But prelates and vicars of God are instrumental husbandmen, working extrinsically, and disposing to grace.

"And he was abroad for a long time": that is, God the Father for a long time showed Himself as it were absent to the Synagogue, leaving the Jewish people to their own liberty (according to that of Ecclesiasticus: "God from the beginning made man, and left him in the hand of his own counsel," that is, in the power of his own free will, Ecclus. 15:14), and also awaiting their penance, and deferring judgment, according to that of Isaias: "Therefore the Lord waiteth, that he may have mercy on you" (Isa. 30:18). Or He is said to have been long abroad, as to the negligent, because as Solomon testifies, "The Lord is far from the wicked" (Prov. 15:29). Hence Ambrose says: "He who is everywhere present to those who love, is absent from the negligent."

"And at the season of the vintage he sent to the husbandmen a servant" (Luke 20:10). Some understand by the time of vintage the time of universal or particular judgment, because then is the time of gathering the fruit of virtuous works. With which exposition the following do not seem to agree, in which God is described as having sent to this vineyard at the vintage time diverse servants through intervals of times, by whom are understood Moses and Aaron and the later rulers and *(p. 175)* doctors of the Synagogue, and at length His Son, the king Messias. More aptly therefore by the time of vintage seems to be understood the time of the present life, in which at certain hours the faithful are bound to insist on good works, and bring forth the fruit of virtues. So, *"at the season of the vintage,"* that is, at the time of gathering the fruit: whence in Matthew it is had, "And when the time of the fruits drew nigh," *"he sent to the husbandmen,"* that is, the aforesaid husbandmen of the vineyard, *"a servant,"* namely Moses, the lawgiver of the Jews, and their first prelate in the desert, *"that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard,"* that is, assign to Moses the virtuous works to which the Synagogue was bound, showing him that they observed the law given them from above. For prelates exact good works of their subjects. *"Who beating him, sent him away empty,"* that is, they afflicted Moses manifoldly, and obeyed not, but were rebellious to him, according to that of the Psalm: "It went ill with Moses for their sakes, because they exasperated his spirit" (Ps. 105:32–33). On which account he said to the Lord: "What shall I do to this people? Yet a little more and they will stone me" (Exod. 17:4).

"And again he sent another servant" (Luke 20:11), that is, after Moses He sent to the Synagogue another servant, by whom some understand king David; and by him the prophet Samuel can also be understood: each of whom was very diligent for the direction and salvation of the Israelitic people. *"But they beat this one also, and treating him shamefully, sent him away empty."* For Samuel they cast out of the government, saying, "Appoint us a king" (1 Kings 8:5). Likewise they persecuted David, adhering to his son Absalom, and willed to deprive holy David of life and kingdom, as in the books of Kings it is had (2 Kings 15). None the less by this second servant can be understood the choir or universality of the judges who ruled the people after Moses: some of whom they afflicted most unjustly, as the Ephraimites rose against Gedeon and Jephte (Judg. 8:1; 12:1), and the men of Sichem showed themselves most ungrateful to the benefits of Gedeon (Judg. 9:4 ff.). Likewise the tribe of Juda bound Samson, to deliver him into the hands of the Philistines (Judg. 15:12). Moreover Samuel was the last of the judges. And all things already touched are written in the book of Judges.

"And he sent yet a third" (Luke 20:12). After those, He sent to the Synagogue the choir or multitude of the Prophets, who under Samuel and David and the other kings, first to the one whole kingdom, then to the peoples of both kingdoms, namely to the kingdom of Juda and of the ten tribes, taught the people, and sharply rebuked the vices of kings and subjects. *"And they wounded him also, and cast him out"*: that is, not only by words but by blows they resisted the Prophets; and some they killed, namely Isaias, Jeremias, Amos, Urias, and cast them out from their company. Whence blessed Stephen said: "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?" (Acts 7:52).

"And the lord of the vineyard said" (Luke 20:13), that is, God the Father almighty, lawgiver and Lord of the Synagogue: *"What shall I do?"* That He says, "What shall I do?" He speaks not doubting, but insinuating the very great perversity of the people, and as it were compassionating them, and as it were wondering at their ingratitude. As if He said: They behave so wickedly that it is a wonder; and what remains to be done I inquire as it were by way of one deliberating. In which manner He says in Genesis of the Sodomites: "I will go down and see whether they have done according to the cry that is come to me, or whether it be not so, that I may know" (Gen. 18:21). In Exodus also He said to the children of Israel idolatrizing: "Now put off thy ornaments, that I may know what to do to thee" (Exod. 33:5). Finally God, by saying, "What shall I do?" teaches us that by His example in arduous matters we deliberate and take counsel what we ought to do. Whence Tobias admonishes: "Always seek counsel of a wise man" (Tob. 4:19). In Ecclesiasticus also: "Do nothing without counsel, and thou shalt not repent when thou hast done" (Ecclus. 32:24).

"I will send my beloved son," that is, My Only-begotten, by the mystery of the incarnation I will send to the Synagogue. Whence the Son also in the Gospel protests: "I was not sent but to the sheep that are lost of the house *(p. 176)* of Israel" (Matt. 15:24). Now the Father loves Christ according to the deity with altogether immense love, certainly not less than Himself; according to the nature assumed also, He loves Him more than all the rest of creation, because to the hypostatic being of the eternal Word He joined immediately the humanity of Christ. *"Perhaps when they see him, they will reverence him,"* that is, when they shall see my Only-begotten incarnate conversing bodily among them, shining in miracles, wisdom, eloquence, sanctity before all, they will fear Him, nor dare to persecute Him. — It can be asked why the Father, knowing all things most certainly, says, "Perhaps," which is a sign of doubt; why also He said, "They will reverence my Son," whereas it was otherwise and happened otherwise, as is presently subjoined. It is answered that He says, "Perhaps," not doubting, but designating the liberty of the human will; and that He says, "They will reverence my Son," He does not say that so it was to be, but that deservedly so it should have been. From this place the holy doctors Jerome and Augustine took an argument against the most impious heresiarchs Arius and Eunomius, who said that the Son is not true God, because He says He knows not the day of judgment. For God the Father also says in this place, "Perhaps they will reverence my Son," whereas what He says, "Perhaps," cannot be expounded as uttered doubtfully, nor what He says, "They will reverence my Son," as expressed assertorily or ignorantly. Conformably, that the Son says He knows not the day of judgment, He did not say, by insinuating any ignorance in Himself, but as it were by way of bearing Himself as one ignorant, since conversing among His own, He did not inform them of that hour as of other things which they asked.

"Whom when the husbandmen saw" (Luke 20:14), that is, the aforesaid husbandmen and cultivators, namely the pontiffs, Scribes and elders, *"they thought within themselves, saying,"* by mental word, since they dared not manifest to the people their machinations against Christ: yet they intimated their conceptions to one another, as is subjoined: *"This is the heir,"* that is, the true king of Israel and Messias promised in the law, the Lord of the Synagogue. From which it appears that they knew Jesus to be the Christ and Son of God: whereas the prince of the Apostles testifies, "Brethren, I know that you did it through ignorance, as did also your rulers" (Acts 3:17); and Paul, "If they had known it, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory" (1 Cor. 2:8). To which above full answer was made. And upon Matthew about this place I wrote more diffusely (Matt. 21:38). Whence now it suffices to touch so far, that for a time they in some way knew Jesus to be the Messias, by probable conjectural knowledge; but as time went on, Christ publicly and most sharply reproving them, they conceived intolerable envy and displeasure against Him, by which they were blinded in heart, and interpreted all His acts for the worse, and lost their former knowledge of Christ.

"Let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours," that is, we shall remain princes and rulers of the Synagogue, nor lose land and people. Hence in John it is read: "The chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council, and said: What do we? for this man doth many miracles. If we let him alone so, all will believe in him; and the Romans will come, and take away our place and nation. And so from that day they devised to put him to death" (John 11:47–53). Whence in the Psalm the Saviour says: "All my enemies whispered together against me; they devised evils to me" (Ps. 40:8). For they therefore killed Christ, lest they should lose the inheritance, that is, the temple, land and subjects; and yet, because they killed Christ, they lost all those things, and "the wrath of God is come upon them to the end," according to the Apostle (1 Thess. 2:16). On which account Christ says in the Psalm: "Pour out thy wrath upon them, and let thy fury take hold of them; let their habitation be made desolate: because they have persecuted him whom thou hast smitten, and they have added to the grief of my wounds" (Ps. 68:25–27).

"And casting him out of the vineyard, they killed him" (Luke 20:15), that is, Christ outside the city *(p. 177)* of Jerusalem, which was the metropolis of the Synagogue or Jewish people, they crucified, according to that to the Hebrews: "Jesus, that he might sanctify the people by his own blood, suffered without the gate" (Heb.

13:12). Or “cast out of the vineyard,” that is, excluded from the hearts of the Jews, because they turned away almost the whole people from Christ, especially on Parasceve, when the whole people cried out: “His blood be upon us and upon our children” (Matt. 27:25). Those believing in Christ also they excommunicated, according to that of John: “For the Jews had already agreed among themselves, that if any man should confess him to be Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue” (John 9:22).

“What therefore will the lord of the vineyard do to them?” that is, what punishment for so great a crime will God, the Lord of the Synagogue, inflict on them? This Christ asked, to make them more attentive, and to show the enormity of their excess: because the slaying of the Son of God was a singular, supreme and incomparable crime, for which they deserved to be left to the end, and bodily and spiritually wasted and slaughtered. Hence Christ in person answers His own question (Luke 20:16): *“He will come,”* not by changing place, but by exercising the due vengeance, *“and will destroy these husbandmen,”* that is, will deliver them into the hands of the Romans, and permit them to be wholly blinded by their invisible enemies, and drawn to everlasting torments. And so in them was fulfilled that of Jeremias: “Bring upon them the day of affliction, and with a double destruction destroy them, O Lord” (Jer. 17:18). This also was most openly foretold by Daniel: where after it was said, “After sixty-two weeks Christ shall be slain, and the people that shall deny him shall not be his”; it is presently subjoined, “And a people with their leader that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary” (Dan. 9:26). Whence in the preceding chapter the Saviour said: “They shall not leave in thee a stone upon a stone, because thou hast not known the time of thy visitation” (Luke 19:44). *“And will give the vineyard to others,”* that is, the Synagogue, as to the elect from it, He will commit to be ruled by the Apostles, who after the passion of Christ and the sending of the Holy Ghost converted many thousands of the Jews, building of them the primitive Church, as is described in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2:41; 4:4). *“Which they hearing, said to him,”* namely the aforesaid husbandmen: *“God forbid.”*

About this a twofold question arises: First, how Luke affirms that Christ Himself answered these words, “He will destroy those husbandmen”; whereas in Matthew the husbandmen are written to have answered thus: “He will bring those evil men to an evil end,” etc. (Matt. 21:41). Second, how Luke writes that they said, “God forbid”; whereas Matthew relates that they said the aforesaid words affirmatively, “He will bring those evil men to an evil end, and let out his vineyard to other husbandmen.” — To this it is answered, according to Augustine in the book *De Consensu Evangelistarum*, that Christ spoke this parable in the presence of the priests and Scribes, and of the people, in which many were favourable to Christ; who also, not fully understanding this parable, first answered, “He will bring those evil men to an evil end”: whose answer Christ approving, repeated it; and then the priests and Scribes, understanding that the parable pertained to them, their conscience remorsing, said, “God forbid.” But if it be objected that according to Matthew the priests and Scribes answered, “He will bring those evil men to an evil end”: it must be said that the words of the evangelist Matthew do not determinately express this, because it is said in Matthew, “They say to him.” Yet from the order and context of the words it sufficiently appears that the husbandmen themselves, namely the priests and Scribes, answered this. Which granted, it can be said that some of them together with the people so answered, and a little after some, considering more acutely the sense of the parable, said, “God forbid.”

Now Chrysostom offers another answer, saying that the Jews or husbandmen answered in heart what Matthew writes, namely, “He will bring those evil men to an evil end”; but with the mouth said the opposite, as Luke recites. Scripture, however, frequently relates the thoughts of the heart as if they were spoken in speech. For Chrysostom says something notable: “God,” he says, “placed a certain spirit of knowledge of good and evil in men, *(p. 178)* that as often as we sin, that spirit in silence may accuse our deed, and tacitly say to the soul, This is evil; and then man, his conscience being examined, confesses in heart that he has sinned, although he deny with the mouth: as a servant caught in theft, although asked whether he deserves to

be beaten, answers with the mouth, No; yet his conscience says the opposite." But by the spirit of knowledge of good and evil, Chrysostom, I think, understands synderesis, always murmuring against evil. So these Jews also spoke otherwise in heart, and otherwise with the mouth.

"But Jesus looking on them, said" (Luke 20:17). He directed His bodily sight specially at the priests and Scribes: First, to intimate that He noted them. Second, to rebuke them by such a look, that they answered so perversely and against conscience: and so from zeal of justice He was angry with them, as it is related also in Mark on another occasion: "Being grieved for the blindness of their hearts, looking round about on them with anger" (Mark 3:5). Third, because He grieved for their error and future calamity: as also seeing the city He wept over it (Luke 19:41). *"What is this then that is written?"* that is, if as you say the vineyard is not to be given to others because its husbandmen killed the heir or Christ whom it signifies, or how is it true what the Prophet says in the Psalm: *"The stone which the builders rejected,"* that is, Christ called a stone, whom the aforesaid husbandmen, building, that is, instructing the people and exhorting to works of virtues, rejected, by reviling Him, and asserting Him not to be Christ but a seducer (Matt. 27:63; John 8:25), *"the same is become the head of the corner,"* that is, is constituted a principle, in which two peoples, namely Jews and Gentiles, are joined by faith to constitute one Church: and by this Christ is made like to the corner stone, in which two walls are joined (Eph. 2:11 ff.). Whence the Apostle writes to the faithful: "Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" (Eph. 2:20). Of whom the prince of the Apostles says: "To whom coming, as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen and made honourable by God" (1 Peter 2:4). Of this stone it is had in Daniel: "A stone was cut out of a mountain without hands, and it became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth" (Dan. 2:34–35). Of whom also God the Father speaks by Isaias: "Behold, I will lay a stone in the foundations of Sion, a tried stone, a corner stone, a precious stone" (Isa. 28:16).

Finally, Christ is called a stone, as the Apostle says, "And the rock was Christ" (1 Cor. 10:4): First, on account of His immovable fortitude, and in every adversity firm and unshaken patience. On account of which by Isaias He testifies: "I have set my face as a most hard rock" (Isa. 50:7). Whence God says to Ezechiel the prophet: "I have made thy face like an adamant and a flint" (Ezech. 3:9). Second, on account of the insuperable power of His operation: therefore of this stone in Daniel it is asserted that it broke the statue in pieces (Dan. 2:45). Third, on account of the supreme aptitude of building upon it: of whom Paul testifies, "For other foundation no man can lay, but that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus" (1 Cor. 3:11).

"Whosoever shall fall upon that stone, shall be bruised; and upon whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder" (Luke 20:18). Whoever sins mortally falls grievously. The faithful, however, when they sin, are said to fall upon the aforesaid corner stone, namely Christ: because although they lose charity and grace, yet they remain in unformed faith and hope, and so are not wholly ground to powder, although they be spiritually hurt or bruised. But frequently by penance they rise again, and become more cautious and stronger, as the Apostle says: "Where sin abounded, grace did more abound" (Rom. 5:20). But unbelievers by sinning are wholly ground to powder, because they are in no way founded in Christ by faith: therefore neither do they rise again. So, "Whosoever shall fall upon that stone," that is, every Christian sinning mortally, "shall be bruised," because he ceases to be spiritually; yet by persisting in faith and hope, *(p. 179)* he has something of good, and obtains an aptitude for doing penance. *"But upon whomsoever it shall fall,"* this stone or Christ, that is, the unbeliever sinning mortally, upon whom Christ the judge will rush by the rigour of His judgment, *"it shall grind him to powder"* by final damnation: as of the unbelieving Jews in Jeremias it is read, "Destroy them with a double destruction, O Lord our God" (Jer. 17:18).

But from these it seems to follow that the sins and punishments of unbelievers are graver than those of impious Christians, since it is more to be ground to powder or wholly broken than to be bruised: whereas the opposite of this is commonly asserted, and is read in many examples, especially the Apostle saying: "But I obtained the mercy of God, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief" (1 Tim. 1:13). By which it is established

that ignorance of unbelief in some way lightens the guilt. And it must be answered that although in the same kind of sin, and other things being equal, a bad Christian by sinning sins more gravely than an unbeliever (according to what the Saviour says above, in the twelfth chapter: “That servant who knew the will of his lord, and did not according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few,” Luke 12:47–48); nevertheless infidelity itself is a most grievous fault, and the weight of the offence of the sin of infidelity outweighs the diminution of the other vices on account of the ignorance of unbelief: therefore unbelievers by sinning are wholly ground to powder. And although the faithful, as was said, absolutely speaking, sin more gravely; yet on account of unformed faith and hope remaining in them, they are more apt and nearer to rise again spiritually; and also they do some goods in kind according to the precepts of God and the Church, although they do not do them meritoriously: whence by such things they are often disposed to grace.

“And the chief priests and the scribes sought to lay hands on him at that same hour” (Luke 20:19), *“and they feared the people”* more than God. For they knew that Christ had spoken this similitude of the vineyard to them: and so by the very deed they desired to verify the words of Christ, by killing the heir, and showing themselves to be most wicked husbandmen and tenants, who from charitable instruction, pious threatening, true conclusion, were made worse. To whom are likened the impatient, and all who from wholesome reproof and just correction are made worse, excusing themselves falsely, or being indignant, speaking against, or in any way hurting: to whom that of Amos is fitting: “They have hated him that rebuketh in the gate, and have abhorred him that speaketh perfectly” (Amos 5:10). Of such it is said in Isaias: “Who say to the seers: See not; and to them that behold: Behold not for us those things that are right; speak unto us pleasing things, see errors for us” (Isa. 30:10). The Apostle also: “They will indeed turn away their hearing from the truth, but will be turned unto fables” (2 Tim. 4:4). In whom is fulfilled also that: “As he that taketh a dog by the ears, so is he that passeth by in anger and meddleth with another man’s quarrel” (Prov. 26:17), such is he that reproves an impatient man. — Here it could be asked whether and how the aforesaid Jews knew Christ. Of which because above, and likewise upon Matthew, it has been treated diffusely, I pass it over.

Moreover, since the priests, Scribes and Pharisees dared not offer violence to Christ for fear of the people, they devised another way of circumventing Him, as is subjoined (Luke 20:20): *“And watching him,”* that is, considering and spying out the words and deeds of Christ to find fault, not to believe and imitate. Whose followers are many, who watch their neighbours to accuse and calumniate, and neglect to weigh and bewail their own defects and excesses. To whom Solomon says: “He that is an observer of evils shall be oppressed by them” (Prov. 11:27). And again the Scripture says: “It is the folly of a man to hearken at the door” (Ecclus. 21:26). *“They sent spies, who should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of him in his words,”* that is, from the words and answers of Christ might be able to find fault with Him: that whom they could not conquer by truth, they might circumvent and conquer by cunning, not attending nor fearing that of Job, “Dissemblers and crafty men provoke the wrath of God” (Job 36:13); nor that of Proverbs, “The crafty man is hateful” (Prov. 14:17). *(p. 180)* So they came not in their own person, but, as is asserted in Matthew, they sent to Him their disciples with the Herodians, that He might guard Himself the less against them (Matt. 22:16). *“That they might deliver him up to the principality,”* that is, the dominion and military power, *“and power of the governor,”* Pilate. Or each is referred to the governor, understanding by principality his dominion or military force; by power, his judiciary authority. So also certain crafty and impious men watch their neighbours, and feignedly and cunningly inquire, that they may be able to accuse them. To whom it shall befall: “He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and he that breaketh down a hedge, a serpent shall bite him” (Eccles. 10:8). Of such Jeremias speaks: “Their tongue is a piercing arrow; one speaketh peaceably to his friend, and secretly lieth in wait for him” (Jer. 9:8).

“And they asked him, saying: Master, we know that thou speakest and teachest rightly” (Luke 20:21), that is, truly and justly, speaking apart, *“and teachest,”* preaching publicly. Moreover, as Anselm says, truth is a

rectitude perceptible by the mind alone. *"And thou dost not respect any person,"* that is, from regard or love of no one dost thou depart from truth and equity, nor against justice sparest anyone. Whence in the Acts of the Apostles Peter asserts: "In truth I perceive that God is not a respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34). The contrary of this certain prelates, princes and unjust judges do, sparing one of the delinquents, especially the more powerful, dearer or nearer, and punishing another. On which account a certain philosopher compared the laws of princes to the webs of spiders, which catch the weaker flies, and let the stronger escape. Likewise they sin who not from charity and zeal of justice, but from a bad root, namely hatred, indignation, impatience, anger, cupidity, reprove and punish the guilty. *"But teachest the way of God in truth,"* that is, the divine precepts, teachings and counsels, by which from the exile of this pilgrimage the fatherland of supreme salvation is attained, thou proposest and teachest truthfully, without admixture of falsehood.

This flattery they premised, to soften, and vainly delight, and win over the mind of Christ to answer according to their will. For this is proper to hypocrites and the crafty, to commend feignedly, to speak pleasing things, to apply themselves blandly by apparel, word and signs, and so to enervate the mind of another, lead it away, and draw it to their good pleasure: as beasts which cannot be taken by power are taken by bland rubbing and various simulations. Whence presently they propose the question:

"Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar, or not?" (Luke 20:22). Pompey, the Roman prince, subjugated Judea to the Romans, and from that time the Romans exacted tribute from the Jews: which the Jews also paid. Afterwards it seemed to the Scribes and Pharisees that the Jews, as the peculiar people of God, ought not to pay tribute to earthly princes, nor be subject to human laws, because they were ruled by the divine law, and paid tithes and first-fruits in the temple. But to some of the Jews the opposite seemed, since the Romans fought for the common peace. Therefore they proposed this question to Christ to be determined, that whatever He answered, He might be found fault with. For if He said that it was not to be paid, they would presently accuse Him to the governor, as rebellious to the Roman empire; but if He had answered that it was to be paid, they would judge Him to derogate from the divine honour and law. And they desired that Christ should say that tribute was not to be paid to Caesar, not therefore chiefly that they might seem exempt from the debt of that payment, but that they might be able to accuse and deliver the Saviour to death.

"But he considering their guile" (Luke 20:23), namely their envious simulation. For He knew what was in man (John 2:25); and the secrets of all hearts, and whatever is in creatures, He knew, not only as God, by uncreated knowledge, but also according to the nature assumed in the eternal Word, by created knowledge. *"Said to them: Why tempt you me?"* that is, in vain and unreasonably you endeavour to deceive me by feigned and flattering words. — *(p. 181)* Finally, flattery is a grave sin; and he who praises another incautiously, or feignedly flatters him, exposes him to great peril, namely of vain glory, by which he may lose all the grace and virtue he has. Hence Augustine: "There are," he says, "two kinds of persecutors: one of those who revile, the other of flatterers. The tongue of the flatterer persecutes more than the hand of the slayer. The flatterer indeed destroys the soul, the slayer the body." Deservedly therefore the Psalmist says: "The bloody and the deceitful man the Lord will abhor" (Ps. 5:7). And again: "Thou hast wrought deceit like a sharp razor" (Ps. 51:4). For as a sharp razor cuts off the hairs, so the flatterer takes away virtue. Hence the Prophet, kindled with zeal of justice against flatterers and double-tongued, testifies: "They speak peace with their neighbour, but evils are in their hearts" (Ps. 27:3). Then he prays: "Give them according to their works, and according to the wickedness of their inventions" (Ps. 27:4). — Therefore the Lord Christ sharply rebuked these flatterers and fraudulent: first, that we may always avoid flatteries and frauds; second, that we may stoutly refute flatterers, singing with the Prophet: "The just man shall correct me in mercy, and shall reprove me: but let not the oil of the sinner fatten my head" (Ps. 140:5).

"Shew me a penny" (Luke 20:24), which by the emperor's precept is paid for tribute. And when they had shown Christ the penny, He asked: *"Whose image and inscription hath it?"* that is, the superscription engraved on the coin? Not from ignorance did He ask this, but that from their answer He might give them an

irreprehensible solution. Therefore it is subjoined: *"They answering, said: Caesar's,"* namely Tiberius's, under whose empire Christ suffered. *"And he said to them"* (Luke 20:25): *"Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's,"* that is, those things which you owe him by reasonable institution, namely census, tribute, obsequy. For these do not derogate from the spiritual liberty and subjection under God, to which the divine law is ordained, because spiritual liberty is immunity from the servitude of sin and the yoke of the devil. On which account the most sacred apostles Peter and Paul in their epistles exhort faithful servants to serve faithfully even unbelieving masters (1 Peter 2:18; Col. 3:22; Tit. 2:9). *"And to God the things that are God's,"* that is, the things you are bound to God, namely the observance of the precepts, continually show to Him, nay devote yourselves wholly to the divine worship, since all that you are is God's, and is marked with His image. For as the penny of Caesar is metal adorned with his image, so the coin of God is man polished with the image of the supreme Trinity. Moreover the aforesaid words of Christ are not to be so understood as if anything were the emperor's that is not the Creator's, who by right of creation is most truly declared Lord of all; but the Saviour so spoke because some things are specially deputed to the earthly governor, and some to the Creator.

"And they could not reprehend his word before the people" (Luke 20:26), that is, the aforesaid answer of Christ. For (as Solomon says) "There is no wisdom, there is no prudence, there is no counsel against the Lord" (Prov. 21:30). Of whom in Job it is asserted: "Who catcheth the wise in their craftiness, and bringeth to nought the counsel of the wicked" (Job 5:13). *"And wondering at his answer, they held their peace,"* seeing that they could not conclude against Him: nay the more they questioned Him, the more they glorified Him, and confounded themselves. So they wondered that He answered so irreprehensibly, and that He left no place for insidiousness and calumny they found.

Next is described the question put to Christ by the Sadducees, by which the Sadducees wished to confound the Pharisees and to test the wisdom of Christ. *"And there came to him some of the Sadducees, who deny that there is any resurrection"* (Luke 20:27). Of the threefold sect existing among the Jews, namely the Essenes, the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and of their distinction from one another, it has been said above, on Matthew and on Mark 12. Now the Sadducees among them erred most gravely, because they believed that there was neither angel *(p. 182)* nor spirit, nor a future general resurrection; nay, they said that the souls of men are mortal like those of brutes; and they received the books of Moses, not of the Prophets, although from the books of Moses it is clearer than light that there are angels. *"And they asked him,"* namely the Sadducees asked Christ, *"saying: Master, Moses wrote unto us"* (Luke 20:28), that is, in Deuteronomy, by God's command, he prescribed to us: *"If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he leave no children,"* that is, die without lawful offspring (so that under the name of sons daughters also are understood, as when father and son are spoken of correlatively, since a man is truly and relatively called a father even if he lacks a son, not a daughter, if "son" denotes the sex) *"that his brother should take her to wife, and raise up seed to his brother,"* that is, beget of that woman offspring who would be ascribed to the deceased husband, and be called his legal son, although he be the carnal son of the following husband (Deut. 25:5–6). The first and literal cause of this precept was that the name and memory of the former husband should not be removed from his tribe; the second, that the distinction of families and tribes should remain. — Mystically, however, this precept signified that when a brother is dead, that is, Christ crucified for us, his brother, namely the ecclesiastical prelate, ought to raise up spiritual seed to Him, by converting some to Him, and by leading the good on to spiritual progress.

"There were therefore seven brethren" (Luke 20:29), of the Israelite stock. *"And the first took a wife, and died without children. And the next,"* that is, the second brother, *"took her"* after the death of the first, *"and he also died childless"* (Luke 20:30). *"And the third took her"* (Luke 20:31). *"In like manner all the seven,"* that is, all the rest, *"and they left no children, and died. Last of all the woman also died"* (Luke 20:32). The Sadducees put this question to show that the resurrection of the dead was not possible, because it could not

reasonably be said to which of the aforesaid brothers the wife would belong in the future resurrection. Therefore it is added: *"In the resurrection therefore, whose wife of them shall she be? For all the seven had her to wife"* (Luke 20:33), successively: so by the same reason by which she would belong in the future resurrection to one, she would belong also to another. Which being granted, the brothers would at the same time and at once have the same wife: which is contrary to the law. Whence the most blessed John the Baptist said to the most wretched and impious Herod: "It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife" (Mark 6:18). Now the Sadducees in this question presupposed one falsehood, which nevertheless was reputed true by the Pharisees, namely that after the resurrection there will be use of foods and of venereal things. Whence also Nicholas of Gorran testifies that the Pharisees believed that after the resurrection they would have wife and offspring, and earthly opulence; and that a golden and gem-set Jerusalem would be granted from above for a thousand years; and that after a thousand years they would be happily translated into heaven. Whose error the Lord lays open, as is subjoined.

"And Jesus said to them: The children of this world," (Luke 20:34) that is, who are begotten in this world, and are sons of the human race, *"marry,"* that is, take wives, *"and are given in marriage,"* even before they are of advanced age and their own master: which is necessary in order that the species may persevere, since this life is mortal. For which reason the Philosopher said: Generation is given to animals to this end, that what cannot be perpetuated in the individual may be preserved in the species, namely by the succession of generations.

"But they that shall be accounted worthy of that world" (Luke 20:35), that is, the elect and just, whom God will mercifully reckon worthy of the duration and dwelling of future felicity, *"and of the resurrection from the dead,"* that is, of the happy change and resurrection from the death of nature to the life of glory, *"shall neither marry,"* that is, the women shall not be married, *"nor take wives,"* the men. The most true reason of which is subjoined: *"Neither can they die any more"* (Luke 20:36), because neither death of nature, nor death of guilt, nor death of misery can have place in them. *"For they are equal to the angels,"* that is, they will be equal to the angels, because they will be assumed to the various orders of angels, according to the demand of the diversity of their merits; *(p. 183) "and are the children of God,"* by the filiation of perfect adoption through likeness of glory, and by the receiving of the eternal inheritance, the Apostle saying: "If sons, heirs also; heirs indeed of God, and joint heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17); and the Psalmist, "Thou art he that wilt restore my inheritance to me" (Ps. 15:5). Now this inheritance is the essential reward of the Blessed; then there is also the accidental reward. Whence the Apostle says: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Cor. 2:9). *"Being the children of the resurrection,"* that is, of the beatific change: which is properly called resurrection, for the impious shall rise again to a greater calamity.

Finally, from these words of the eternal, uncreated and infinite Wisdom, the perfidy of the most wicked Mahomet is evident, the falsity of the Alcoran, the error of the Saracens, and of the Jews and the Tartars. For the standard-bearer of all falsity, the most perfidious Mahomet, in his Alcoran very often declares that after the general resurrection the just will be in an earthly paradise, and will enjoy most abundantly for ever foods, drinks and venereal things. And marvellous is the blindness of that most lost Mahomet, because he frequently confesses that God sent the Testament to Moses, the Psalter to David, the Gospel to Christ, and the Alcoran to himself: whereas in the Alcoran he contradicts, almost innumerable times, the Scriptures of the Old Testament and of the Psalter and the Gospel: as I have demonstrated, clearer than light, in the treatise which I composed against the perfidies of the Alcoran and against the errors of its several chapters, one by one. Nor is there doubt that it is also against all natural philosophy to place the beatitude of man in the pleasures of taste and touch.

Next the Truth specially reproves the error of the Sadducees who deny the resurrection. *"Now that the dead rise again,"* (Luke 20:37) that is, that the dead are to rise again, *"Moses also shewed, at the bush,"* that is,

teaches and intimates, by describing the words which God by an angel spoke to him about the bush, from the midst of which the angel spoke to him, as is plain in Exodus: *"when he calleth the Lord, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob"*: according to what Moses there recites, that He Himself, the Lord and Creator of all, called Himself the God of these three Patriarchs. From which it is proved that in some manner they live, namely in soul, since their bodies are corrupted. For when Moses asked the name of God, and God said, "I am who am. Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel," He straightway added: "The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me to you. This is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations" (Exod. 3:14–15).

Moreover, as Pope St. Sylvester expounded, God willed to be called the God of these three Patriarchs, and to be entreated under the commemoration of their names, to insinuate the mystery of the most blessed Trinity. There are also other causes: first, because these Patriarchs were the first and general progenitors of the Israelite people; second, because they were of eminent holiness, and in many things obtain some excellence; third, because to them was made the manifest promise concerning the coming of Christ, as is plain in Genesis; fourth, that the children of Israel might advert to the dignity of their stock, and so, avoiding idolatry, might worship the true God, and stand acceptable to God; fifth, that the virtues of these Patriarchs might be proposed as examples to all their posterity.

Furthermore, that from the aforealleged words of Moses it follows that these Patriarchs live, the Saviour proves: *"For he is not the God of the dead, but of the living: for all live to him"* (Luke 20:38). But against these words a threefold objection can be made: First, because God is called judge of the living and of the dead (Acts 10:42): therefore likewise He can be called their God. Second, because the aforesaid Patriarchs are truly dead, as Scripture describes (Gen. 25:8; 35:29; 49:32). Third, *(p. 184)* because the impious do not live to God, but rather to their own will; before God they are declared dead. — And to the first it must be answered that a thing is said to be dead in two ways: first, wholly, according to body and soul, and so He is not the God or judge of the dead; second, as to the body only, and so the Lord is God and judge of the dead. To the second the answer is clear from the same, because the aforesaid are truly dead as to the body. To the third it must be said that the impious and damned do not live to God, that is, according to the divine law: nevertheless they live to God, that is, for the declaration of His justice, or for the honour of His majesty: because in them is shown the omnipotence of the Creator and His equity; nay, His piety in some manner, since the damned are punished short of what is condign, and the impious in this world are at times mercifully converted, and piously borne with by God, and obtain His various benefits.

But someone might say: How is the resurrection of the dead proved from these words, since nothing else seems to follow from them but that the rational soul is immortal? It is answered that Christ was speaking to the Sadducees, who therefore denied the resurrection because they said that souls are mortal: therefore, the immortality of the soul having been demonstrated, the resurrection of bodies was proved to them. And the same can also be inferred from other things: First, since the soul is naturally the form of the body, it has a natural inclination to reunion with it. Second, since as the soul merited and demerited, so also it is finally to be rewarded. As therefore it merited and demerited in the body, so in it it is ultimately to be recompensed. Third, since the soul, being naturally part of some whole, cannot have perfect subsistence in itself: therefore neither full felicity. Fourth, since the sensitive powers remain radically in the soul: therefore it has a natural affection to the body, nor without it does it fully rest or is content. Whence also the Platonists said that souls were to be reunited to bodies; but they erred in this, that they said they would be united to bodies to die again.

Lastly, from the very manner of speaking of Moses in his five books, it is most clearly made known that the souls of men are perpetual. For he frequently says that those who died were gathered to their fathers. And Jacob the patriarch: "I will go down to my son mourning into hell" (Gen. 37:35). To Abraham also God declared: "I am thy reward exceeding great" (Gen. 15:1). But temporal things cannot be a sufficient

retribution for works of charity and grace, which are works of supernatural and most excellent dignity, incomparably exceeding the value and dignity of temporal things. Finally, many just and holy men of the Old Testament in the present life were afflicted with the greatest and various adversities even to the end of life, and at length slain for justice, as Jeremias recites of himself (Jer. 11:19; 20:2), and it is clear of many Prophets: of whom it is certain that in the present life they were not rewarded according to their merits: therefore after this life.

"And some of the scribes answering, said to him" (Luke 20:39), who were doctors of the law. But how are they said to have answered who had not been questioned? It must be said that they answered, that is, spoke aptly and correspondingly to the words of Christ which had been brought forward. *"Master, thou hast said well,"* that is, hast answered truly. *"And after that they durst not ask him any question"* (Luke 20:40), the Pharisees and Sadducees, because the more they questioned Christ, the clearer and greater His wisdom appeared, and the more they themselves were confuted. If, however, they had questioned the Lord Jesus with pious intention, with desire of profiting, the more quickly and wisely He answered, the more eagerly and unceasingly they would have inquired. So they did not dare any further to question the Master of truth for a time, namely on that day: yet a little after, at the time of the passion, they often questioned Him. From which it is gathered that envy, reasonably convicted, grows more bitter in malice.

(p. 185) And since they dared not question Christ further, He Himself charitably questioned them, to exclude their error, because He knew that they thought ill of the king Messias, namely that He was a mere man. *"And he said to them"* (Luke 20:41), namely the Scribes and Pharisees: *"How say they that Christ is the son of David?"* that is, how do the Scribes and Pharisees and the rest commonly affirm that Christ is to be born of the seed of King David, and is to be called his son, in that, according to them, He will be only the son of David, and not his Lord? *"And David himself saith in the book of Psalms"* (Luke 20:42): *"The Lord said,"* namely God the Father, *"to my Lord,"* namely to Christ: *"Sit thou at my right hand,"* that is, be equal to me and sit, according as thou art God; and according to thy human nature, abide in greater goods and in more ample beatitude among all the Blessed, as being by far nearer to me than any pure creature, because in the gifts of grace and glory thou dost inestimably outshine them all. So to Christ, according to both His natures, it belongs to sit at the right hand of God the Father, but in different ways, as has been said. *"Till I make thy enemies"* (Luke 20:43), namely all unbelievers, the impious and reprobate, *"thy footstool,"* that is, I will perfectly subject them to thee by a coerced subjection, through judgment and condemnation: which will be in the final judgment and in hell.

Now to the Lord Saviour, as to His humanity, all power and dominion over all creatures was given from the beginning of His incarnation, as to the authority and the possession of this power. For by the very fact that the humanity of Christ was united to the eternal Word by the hypostatic union, it was set above every creature. Whence also before the passion He said: "The Father loveth the Son, and he hath given all things into his hand" (John 3:35); and again, "He hath given him power to do judgment, because he is the Son of man" (John 5:27). But in the resurrection this power was given to Christ as man as to its manifestation, because from then the majesty of Christ began to be publicly preached and made known to all. And in the last judgment this power will be given to Him as to its full execution, when, according to the oracle of Isaias, "To him shall all come, and all that resist him shall be confounded" (Isa. 45:24).

"David then calleth him Lord: and how is he his son?" (Luke 20:44). As if He should say: Since David, who was a most powerful king, and an eminent prophet, and of especial holiness, names Christ his Lord, he intimates that Christ is more than prophet and king. How then is He his son? To this none of them could answer Christ, as is had in Matthew (Matt. 22:46). But if they had known that there is in Christ a twofold nature and generation, they would easily have answered that according to the divine nature and eternal generation He is the Lord of David, and the son of the same David according to the human nature and temporal generation.

"And in the hearing of all the people, who was present at the preaching, he said to his disciples" (Luke 20:45): *"Beware"* (Luke 20:46), that is, guard and keep yourselves *"of the scribes, who desire to walk in long robes,"* that is, in white and shining garments, that they may seem holier than the rest: whereby it is plain that they loved vain ostentation; *"and love salutations in the market place,"* that is, public salutations, and given with reverence and inclination of the head, especially by great persons: so they sought human favour; *"and the first chairs,"* that is, the more honourable seats, *"in the synagogues"*: whereby their ambition is made known; *"and the first places at feasts,"* that is, the higher places at banquets: whereby their gluttony and pride is designated. *"Who devour the houses of widows"* (Luke 20:47), that is, gluttonously consume their means, *"feigning long prayers,"* that is, praying prolixly, although they prayed with the mouth, not with the heart: nor did they pray from true virtue, but from cupidity and vanity, that they might be reputed holy by men, especially by widows who had something; and so might acquire abundant gifts from the widows, because widows are more prone and free to give to the devout than married women. *"These" (p. 186)* Scribes, in whom was knowledge unformed and puffing up, *"shall receive greater damnation,"* that is, shall be more gravely punished for ever, according as they sinned more enormously than others.

O how many, even now in the Church, imitate the vices of these Scribes and Pharisees, seeking not the honour and glory of God, but their own convenience and veneration, praise and fame, serving carnality, ambitious and dissemblers, and offering spiritual things for the sake of temporal, as some priests multiply Masses on account of the offerings! Woe to ambitious prelates, to carnal and covetous doctors, and to all the sons of pride. — Finally, concerning the foregoing Chrysostom says: While Christ confounds the Jewish priests, He also admonishes Christian priests not to dwell with widows more than with other women, because although the will be not evil, yet the suspicion is evil. And again he says: Let us be last not only in body in the lowest place, but let us also in mind reckon ourselves the last of all.

Lastly, it could here be asked why the Fountain of wisdom, the Word of God on high, whose every action is our instruction, publicly rebuked the clergy of the Jews, namely the priests, Scribes and Pharisees, before the crowd. And it must be answered that it is certain He did this by divine instinct, for various causes: first, because their vices were public; second, because they had been a scandal to the people; third, for the information of the disciples, that even the greater might dare to reprove. Yet although every action of Christ is an instruction to Christians, nevertheless that instruction is not always to be imitated, but at times is for firmness of faith or reformation of morals, or other things. — Now this rebuke of the Scribes and Pharisees by Christ is described much more diffusely by Matthew (Matt. 23:1 ff.), in which also the justice of Christ is declared: because when the Scribes had commended His response, He was not reprehensibly softened, so as to be silent against justice from their correction, but straightway sharply rebuked them. By the imitation of which they fail who by human favour, adulation, praise, or gift, are so enervated in mind that they are drawn back from fraternal reproof or paternal correction of delinquents. Others, on the contrary, not from charity and zeal of justice, but from anger, impatience, aversion, or other passion, are moved to reproof or correction of their neighbours; and while they seem to wish to cure others, they hurt themselves more gravely.

Luke 21

Article XLIV — Exposition of the Twenty-First Chapter: "And looking on, he saw them that cast their gifts into the treasury, the rich"

(p. 186) "And looking on," that is, Jesus, considering the people making their offerings in the temple, that He might set forth some spiritual lesson: and by that outward gaze He intimated that He gladly attends to those who are intent on good works, and rejoices with their devotion; *"he saw them that cast their gifts"* (Luke 21:1).

"Their gifts," that is, their offerings, the rich were putting or casting *"into the treasury,"* that is, into the repository of such offerings. And it is called *gazophylacium* from *gaza*, which is riches, and *phylassein*, which is to keep, as if a storehouse of riches. And the treasury was threefold: one in which the offerings and gifts of kings were put, *(p. 187)* which in the books of the Kings is called *musach sabbati* (4 Kings 16:18); the second, in which the offerings of the priests were put, and it was called *corbona* (Matt. 27:6); the third, in which the offerings of the common people were laid up, which by the common name was called the *gazophylacium*: which, according to Augustine, was a chest in which offerings were put for the support of the ministers of the temple, or also for the repair of its buildings. Sometimes also the place in which a chest of this kind was is called a *gazophylacium*, according to that of John: "These words Jesus spoke in the treasury, teaching in the temple" (John 8:20); sometimes the house of the priests and Levites near the temple; at times the storehouse in which first-fruits and tithes were laid up. Spiritually, however, let our soul be the chest of God, in which daily we offer to God the sacrifice of praise, the incense of devout prayer, the fire of the fervent affections of charity, and the transports of contemplation.

"And he saw also a certain poor widow" (Luke 21:2), *"casting in two mites,"* that is, two small coins made of brass, not of silver or gold: which, according to Chrysostom, were worth the fourth part of a penny. *"And he said: Verily I say to you"* (Luke 21:3), His disciples, *"that this poor widow hath cast in more than all,"* that is, than all the others who at that time were offering, she offered more: more, I say, not in respect of the greatness of the thing offered in itself, but in respect of the interior devotion, and the readiness of mind, and the divine acceptance, and the quality of the gift, because it was out of what she needed. Hence it is subjoined:

"For all these," namely the rich, *"of their abundance have cast into the offerings of God"* (Luke 21:4), out of their copious substance have put something into the treasury among the offerings: which are called the gifts of God: first, because they have been conferred on men by God, as David speaks to the Lord, "All things are thine; and we have given thee what we received of thy hand" (1 Par. 29:14); second, because they are offered to God by men. Therefore not the viler things are to be offered to the Lord, but the better, as we read in Genesis that Abel offered to God of the firstlings of his flock, and of their fat, but Cain of the fruits of the earth (Gen. 4:3–4). In Malachias also it is had: "If you offer the lame and the sick, is it not evil? Offer it to thy prince, if he will be pleased with it" (Mal. 1:8). As if He should say: Thy earthly prince would be indignant with thee, if thou shouldst offer him what is viler. And again it is said there: "Cursed is the deceitful man that hath in his flock a male, and making a vow offereth in sacrifice that which is feeble to the Lord" (Mal. 1:14). *"But she of her want,"* that is, this poor little widow, out of the earthly substance which she had not, *"cast in all the living that she had,"* that is, that very little which she had, from which she could somewhat sustain herself, she offered. And so that little was part of earthly substance commonly taken, of which she had little. And what He says, "all the living that she had," etc., can be understood either simply, so that of the coin she kept nothing for herself, or by way of hyperbolic speech, in which something is said by excess.

But if it be objected how Christ praises this widow for an offering of this sort, since virtue is said to consist in a mean: it is answered that virtue consists in a mean in those things which are of necessity, not always in those which are of supererogation, in which often the complete forsaking of temporal things is commended, as is plain in the poverty and chastity of religious. Moreover it is to be noted that since proportion is twofold, namely geometrical and arithmetical, according to the one of these proportions this widow is said to have offered more than the others, because in respect of her little substance she offered more than the rich, by comparison with their possessions. — Finally let us also with this widow offer to God two mites, namely body and soul, and whatever we can and have.

"And some saying of the temple" (Luke 21:5), that is, some disciples of Christ saying to Him of the temple of Jerusalem, *"that it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts,"* that is, that it was built of fitting stones, and

decorated with precious vessels or votive offerings, and beautifully formed, *(p. 188)* *"he said"* the Saviour to these disciples as yet unlettered. To whom many are now like, who look more to the bodily adornment of the Church than the spiritual, to the beauty of buildings than the holiness of ministers, to revenues than virtues: whence also they more choose as prelates those who can procure, increase and defend those bodily things than those spiritual: therefore the Church has come to a lamentable ruin. Hence Christ answered the disciples: *"These things which you see, the days will come in which there shall not be left a stone upon a stone that shall not be thrown down"* (Luke 21:6). This in the forty-second year after the passion of Christ was in great part done by Titus, then completed by Adrian, as was more fully said above (Luke 19:44).

"And they asked him, saying: Master, when shall these things be?" (Luke 21:7), that is, when shall Jerusalem be so utterly destroyed? *"And what shall be the sign when they shall begin to come to pass?"* These disciples, as is said in Mark, were Peter, James, John and Andrew, who privately inquired of Christ, not only about these things, but also about the final judgment and the consummation of the world, according to that of Matthew: "The disciples came to him privately, saying: Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the consummation of the world?" (Mark 13:3; Matt. 24:3).

"Who said: Take heed you be not seduced" (Luke 21:8), by false and impious men. *"For many will come in my name, saying, I am he,"* that is, they will say that they come in my name, and will falsely ascribe my name to themselves: so that each of them will say that he is Christ, or some great one, as the heresiarchs were. Now Simon Magus said that he was Christ, and the power and word of God (Acts 8:9–10); similarly Simon the Essene said that he was the Messias and would free the Jews from the tribute and dominion of the Romans, as Josephus relates: and these preceded the destruction of Jerusalem. Likewise before the second coming of Christ such wicked men will precede. Moreover Christ does not expressly state the time of the aforesaid destruction of Jerusalem, or of His second coming and the consummation of the world, but certain signs, that the uncertainty of the time may render us cautious and fearful, and the occurrence of the signs watchful and prepared. Whence elsewhere the Saviour says: "Watch ye, for at what hour you think not, the Son of man will come" (Luke 12:40).

"And the time is at hand." This can be expounded in two ways: First, that those false ones will say, "The time is at hand," namely the time of salvation to be effected by them, or of the final judgment; second, that it be the word of Christ, so that after the coming of those falsifiers the ruin of Jerusalem or the consummation of the world will draw near. *"Go ye not therefore after them,"* that is, neither follow them bodily, nor believe or consent to them. On this the most learned Nicholas of Gorran writes: Many today follow Simon Magus. For few are beneficed, unless either by prayer, or by price, or by temporal service, or in view of blood-relationship, or from love or fear of a prince. Many also follow Antichrist, who for avarice desert Christ. For Christ had in one person three natures, namely body, soul and deity; but the ambitious in one subsistent gather several personates or prebends.

"And when you shall hear of wars" (Luke 21:9), which shall be waged by foreigners, *"and seditions,"* which shall be stirred up by fellow-citizens, *"be not terrified,"* by an inordinate and worldly fear disturbing reason. For "the just, bold as a lion, shall be without dread"; nor will whatever befalls the just man make him sad, as Solomon attests (Prov. 28:1; 12:21). *"These things must first come to pass,"* that is, before the destruction of Jerusalem, or the end of the world, these things must needs happen, not by absolute and fatal necessity, but by conditional necessity and of consequence, inasmuch as they are foreseen by God, although in themselves they are contingent. Again, they must happen, not by God compelling, but by the malice of men *(p. 189)* demanding. Or, "must," because it is fitting, and in some way expedient, that they happen: after which manner the Apostle says, "There must be also heresies, that they also who are approved may be made manifest" (1 Cor. 11:19). *"But the end is not yet presently"*: that is, when these happen, the time and hour of the devastation of Jerusalem will not be able to be definitely known, nor will the end of the world forthwith be at hand.

"Then he said to them" (Luke 21:10), setting forth the aforesaid signs more specially: *"Nation shall rise against nation,"* that is, the peoples of the lesser provinces will fight among themselves, *"and kingdom against kingdom,"* that is, the greater provinces or regions and their kings will war against one another. *"And there shall be great earthquakes in divers places, and pestilences, and famines, and terrors from heaven"* (Luke 21:11): that is, great terror will be struck into men by those things which will appear in the airy heaven, and will be done by heavenly and angelic power. Indeed, as Josephus recounts, when the overthrow of Jerusalem was impending, fiery battle-lines, chariots, and armed horsemen appeared running about and fighting in the air; a star also having the form of a sword hung over Jerusalem for a year. *"And there shall be great signs,"* that is, supernatural changes, and unusual events. Whence also at that time a heifer in the hands of those offering sacrifice brought forth a lamb.

Moreover it is asked, since wars, seditions, earthquakes, pestilences, famines, and terrible and various exhalations, impressions, figures and alterations, such as comets, flying dragons, leaping goats, armies, and the like (of which treatment is made in the book of Meteors), come about naturally: how can they be signs of future things, especially of things not naturally foreknowable? Nay, how can they be signs, since (as Gregory testifies) things which happen naturally are not signs? St. Gregory answers that Christ speaks of the things brought forward, according as they shall come supernaturally, and not observe the order of times. Whence others also assert that the aforesaid things occurred more abundantly when the destruction of Jerusalem was at hand, and will occur much more abundantly when the end of the world is at hand, than they are wont naturally, and so are signs. Finally, because these signs can be referred both to the destruction of Jerusalem and to the second coming of Christ, nor is it certain in what greater abundance or measure they will occur when the end of the world is imminent; therefore from their occurrence the determinate time of the coming of Antichrist and of the consummation of the world cannot be foreknown, as Augustine proves more diffusely.

"But before all these things" (Luke 21:12), that is, before the aforesaid signs happen, *"they will lay their hands on you,"* that is, bring violence, *"and persecute you,"* driving you from place to place, inflicting blows and reproaches, or otherwise molesting; *"delivering you up to the synagogues,"* that is, leading you away to their public assemblies, *"and into prisons,"* that is, into gaols; *"dragging you"* violently and irreverently, as sacrilegious persons, *"before kings and governors for my name's sake,"* that is, because you are Christians, and preach my faith and the evangelical law. That all these things were really fulfilled in the Apostles and disciples of Christ after the resurrection of Christ, before the destruction of Jerusalem, is most clearly shown from the book of the Acts of the Apostles. For there the Apostles are read to have been seized by the Jews, brought into their council, imprisoned, beaten with scourges, and in many ways afflicted: which nevertheless they bore with joy (Acts 4:3; 5:18, 40–41). Peter also, the prelate and head of the Apostles, and James the Greater, were brought before king Herod (Acts 12:1–3); and Paul was presented before divers governors, namely before Felix and Festus, and others (Acts 24; 25). Nevertheless these things can, under the person and name of the Apostles, be expounded of the faithful who shall be near the end of the world, nay of others also, especially of the holy martyrs.

"And it shall happen to you for a testimony" (Luke 21:13), that is, the whole persecution brought forward will come upon you for a sign and attestation that you are truly my most faithful disciples, and that they acted impiously against you, and are justly condemned, because they despised and afflicted you, nor would believe your preachings, *(p. 190)* confirmed by divine miracles.

"Lay it up therefore in your hearts" (Luke 21:14), that is, firmly resolve, *"not to meditate before how you shall answer"* the adversaries of the law and faith which I have delivered to you. *"For I will give you a mouth and wisdom"* (Luke 21:15): for I, who am eternal and omnipotent God, the Word of God the Father, the fountain of wisdom (Ecclus. 1:5), and wisdom uncreated and begotten, will give you a mouth, that is, efficacy and constancy of speaking, and wisdom, to understand the things that are of God and of the Christian faith, and to reprove idolatry and every heretical pravity, *"which all your adversaries will not be*

able to resist," by reasonably answering, *"and gainsay,"* by truly objecting and replying, namely the Jews and heretics and pagans, who in the Apocalypse are designated by the three unclean spirits who came out like frogs from the mouth of the beast (Apoc. 16:13). Hence also in the Acts it is read that the Jews were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit that spoke by Stephen (Acts 6:10).

And in the most blessed innumerable martyrs of both sexes this has been fulfilled most copiously and most wonderfully, who amid the most savage and manifold kinds of torments answered so promptly, so wisely, so constantly, so tranquilly, so insuperably: as if not they themselves, but others in their person were enduring the torments; or as if not they themselves, but another were forming the words through them: which indeed was so, according to what Christ said in another place: "For it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you" (Matt. 10:20). And it was supremely wonderful in many most illustrious and most tender maidens, very young girls, who by their eloquence, wisdom and constancy utterly confounded and overcame tyrants and the wise of the world: which could in no wise have been done without the supernatural help of God, is clearer than light. And this is itself an indubitable argument of the truth of the Christian faith, most of all because the glorious martyrs, in their passions and afterwards, shone with so many and such great miracles. Therefore, since to defend the Catholic faith and to fight against its adversaries, and to suffer and die for it, is the battle of God; therefore Christ said to His martyrs that they should not arm themselves with anxious or solicitous premeditation, but commit their cause to God, and invoke His help, that He may deign to strengthen and preserve them in every adversity, and fix all their hope in Him, presuming nothing of their own strength. Finally, if anyone will perspicaciously read the deeds and passions of the most blessed martyrs Dionysius, Ignatius, Laurence, Vincent, Catharine, Agatha, Agnes, Eulalia, Christina, and of others altogether innumerable, he will know how true these things are.

"And you shall be betrayed by your parents, and brethren, and kinsmen, and friends, and some of you they will put to death" (Luke 21:16), that is, they will slay many of you: and this increased the suffering, that they were delivered up and slain by those so near and before so friendly. For adversities which are inflicted by relatives and familiars, of whose friendship there was presumption, are borne more grievously: because beyond the bodily tribulation inflicted, the mind is afflicted for the lost charity, and for the infidelity of relatives and friends. Wherefore Christ speaks of His betrayer: "If my enemy had reviled me, I would verily have borne with it; but thou, a man of one mind," etc. (Ps. 54:13–14). Now in the beginning of the primitive Church, Jews and Gentiles were converted to Christ everywhere, against the will of parents and other kinsfolk, and so were delivered up by them, and often slain, as her own father beheaded the most sacred virgin Barbara with his own hand: as Christ foretold in Matthew: "The brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the son; and the children shall rise up against their parents, and shall put them to death" (Matt. 10:21). And again: "Do not think," He says, "that I came to send peace upon earth: I came not to send peace, but the sword. For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's enemies shall be they of his own household" (Matt. 10:34–36).

(p. 191) "And you shall be hated by all men" (Luke 21:17), that is, by some of every kind of men, so that the distribution be for kinds of individuals, not for individuals of the kinds. Or He says, "by all men," on account of the multitude of those hating them: after which manner the Apostle says, "All seek the things that are their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's" (Phil. 2:21). *"For my name's sake,"* that is, for the preaching, confession and worship of my name and of the Christian law and faith. Indeed, as Terence testifies, "As obsequiousness begets friends, so truth hatred."

But there can be objected that of the Apostle: "I in all things please all men" (1 Cor. 10:33). It is answered that the same Apostle says: "If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (Gal. 1:10). Therefore it is to be noted that Scripture speaks of man in two ways: First, according to that which is supreme and better in man, namely according to reason, grace and virtue: and so that is called human which is reasonable

and pious. So the Apostle says: “If according to man,” that is, reasonably, “I fought with beasts,” that is, against bestial men, “at Ephesus,” that is, disputed in Ephesus (1 Cor. 15:32). And in this manner the Apostle says: “I in all things please all men.” Second, Scripture speaks of man according to that which is carnal and depraved in him: which also predominates in the greater part of men, since the greater part of men follow sensuality, errors and vices. And so now Christ speaks; and likewise the Apostle where he says: “If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.” Now the cause of this hatred is the dissimilarity which is between the servants of Christ and of the world, between the citizens of Jerusalem and of Babylon. For which cause in John Christ asserts to the Apostles: “If you had been of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you” (John 15:19).

“But a hair of your head shall not perish” (Luke 21:18). This is not to be so taken as that in the risen there will be all the hairs which were on their heads, but so many as shall pertain to the perfection and adornment of the head. It can also be understood thus: Nothing pertaining to the truth, integrity and comeliness of the body will be wanting in the resurrection to the elect. For if the hairs shall not perish, much less the members, flesh and bones. Spiritually, however, the hairs are the thoughts and affections of the soul: which, if they were good and charitable, shall not lack the reward of beatitude.

“In your patience” (Luke 21:19), that is, by the virtue and merit of your patience, *“you shall possess your souls,”* that is, you will salubriously guard them, and preserve them from the various vices into which man falls through impatience, and you will have them subject to reason and to God. By impatience, however, man loses his soul, since Solomon says: “He that is impatient worketh folly” (Prov. 14:17); and Job also: “Why dost thou destroy thy soul in thy fury?” (Job 18:4). Now so great is the virtue of patience that James says: “Patience hath a perfect work” (James 1:4); and Solomon: “The patient man is better than the valiant: and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh cities” (Prov. 16:32).

Patience, moreover, is a moral virtue by which man moderates and bridles the passion of sadness, that he be not immoderately saddened in adversities, nay rather rejoice in the same on account of the manifold fruit proceeding therefrom. For which reason in the beginning of his Canonical Epistle James admonishes: “My brethren, count it all joy, when you shall fall into divers temptations” (James 1:2). Finally, patience is the prover of all virtues and spiritual progress; nor can it be better tried whether a man be truly humble, charitable, meek, patient, than through patience in adversities, in which if he be impatient, his imperfection is plain. Therefore it is read in Ecclesiasticus: “The furnace trieth the potter’s vessels, and the trial of affliction just men” (Ecclus. 27:6). For patience in adversities is a sign of the uprooting of private love, which is the origin of all vices; it is an indication of humility. Impatience is a sign of private love and of elation. Rightly therefore Solomon taught: “He that *(p. 192)* is patient is governed by much wisdom; but he that is impatient exalteth his folly” (Prov. 14:29). Moreover, according to Gregory, true patience is to bear adversities with equanimity, and against him who inflicts injuries to be bitten by no sorrow.

Article XLV — Declaration of the Remaining Part of the Twenty-First Chapter: “And when you shall see Jerusalem compassed about with an army”

Next the Saviour sets down a near sign of the destruction of Jerusalem. *“And when you shall see Jerusalem compassed about with an army”* (Luke 21:20), that is, the city of Jerusalem besieged on every side by the army of the Romans under Vespasian and Titus: as was done in the forty-second year after the passion of Christ; *“then know that the desolation thereof is at hand,”* that is, its ruin and most grievous oppression: because then it was presently taken. *“Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains”* (Luke 21:21), that is, to the hidden and remote hiding-places of the mountains; *“and those who are in the midst thereof,”* that is, dwelling in Jerusalem, *“let them depart out of it,”* before they are so gravely besieged; *“and those who are in the countries,”* that is, dwelling in Judea, Galilee, Samaria, *“let them not enter into it,”* that is,

into Jerusalem, that in it they may be defended from the enemy. Yet very many did the opposite of this, and perished in Jerusalem itself. *"For these are the days of vengeance"* (Luke 21:22), that is, the days of the siege and capture and destruction of Jerusalem are the days in which God of His justice decreed to punish Jerusalem for its sins, and to avenge the blood of Christ and of His disciples, unjustly shed in Jerusalem and in Judea, as was more fully said above (Luke 19:41 ff.); *"that all things may be fulfilled which are written,"* that is, which concerning the devastation of Jerusalem and the punishment of the Jews were foretold by the Prophets: for concerning this last and final greatest overthrow, desolation and abandonment of the Jews, in Isaias, and in the book of Psalms, and in Osee, and Jeremias, and the other Prophets, especially in Daniel, many things were prophesied: as is that, "And the people with their leader that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary, and the end thereof shall be waste, and after the end of the war shall be appointed desolation" (Dan. 9:26); and in the Psalm, "Let their habitation be made desolate, and let there be none to dwell in their tabernacles" (Ps. 68:26); in Jeremias also, "I have forsaken my house, I have left my inheritance" (Jer. 12:7).

"But woe to them that are with child, and that give suck in those days" (Luke 21:23): that is, to women near their delivery, and also to those who have given birth, or are nursing infants, there will then be a special calamity and woes of manifold temporal affliction: because from vehement grief and fear they sometimes suffer miscarriage, or cannot bring forth in due time, nor can flee so expeditiously as others. And this was specially so in the siege and capture of Jerusalem by the Romans, when certain women are read to have eaten their own infants by reason of the greatness of the famine, and the infants themselves perished. *"For there shall be great distress in the land,"* that is, in the kingdom of Judea, and most of all in Jerusalem, there will be an altogether most grievous affliction, *"and wrath upon this people,"* that is, just chastisement upon the people of the Jews, on account of their excesses.

"And they shall fall by the edge of the sword" (Luke 21:24), that is, shall be slain by the sword, as food is consumed by the mouth, *"and shall be led away captive into all nations."* For many thousands of the Jews were slain by the Romans, many thousands perished by famine, many thousands also were sold: so much so that as Christ was sold for thirty pence, so thirty Jews were sold for one penny; and some of them were scattered hither and thither through all the kingdoms or climes of the world. *(p. 193)* Which however can be understood by way of hyperbolical speech, to insinuate that the Jews have been dispersed through very many nations. Finally, this dispersion of the Jews was made by God's ordinance, for the confirmation of the Christian faith, and the greater memory of the name of Christ: while those converted from the Gentiles see their adversaries dwelling among them, from whose books they prove what they believe, and in whose so long and grievous captivity and desolation they see before their eyes fulfilled what the Prophets foretold of their captivity and dispersion; and by looking upon the unbelieving Jews they are made mindful of the Lord's passion. Hence it is said in the Psalm: "God shall let me see over my enemies; slay them not, lest at any time my people forget; scatter them by thy power, and bring them down, O Lord, my protector" (Ps. 58:11–12).

"And Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles," that is, shall be delivered to the power of foreigners, or inhabited by Gentiles converted to the faith, *"till the times of the nations be fulfilled."* This saying is obscure. Yet it can first be understood in this way: for so long Jerusalem will be possessed by the Gentiles, until all the Gentiles are converted to the faith, or thereabouts, because as the Apostle says, "When the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in, then all Israel shall be saved" (Rom. 11:25–26). For then the Jews also will be converted to Christ. Second, it seems it can be understood thus: that Jerusalem or the Holy Land will be inhabited by unconverted Gentiles, namely the Saracens, until the times of the nations be fulfilled, that is, until the time come of the vanquishing or expulsion of the Saracens from the Holy Land, and it is restored to Christian worship.

Next the Saviour foretells the destruction of the world, and the signs that will go before the general judgment. *"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars"* (Luke 21:25). What these signs will

be, Christ expresses in Matthew, saying: “And immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven” (Matt. 24:29). Wherefore the expositors say that after the end of the persecution of Antichrist, and he being slain, God will grant to those deceived by Antichrist forty-five days or thereabouts for doing penance, according as this is drawn from Daniel (Dan. 12:12): which being completed, there will be signs in the sun and moon witnessing that the coming of Christ is imminent. Which signs can be understood in three ways: First, that the sun and moon in themselves will not be darkened, but will seem to be darkened by the interposition of opaque bodies, because they will not shine to men, as happens in an eclipse: and some are of opinion that the moon will then be placed under the sun; yet from this alone a universal eclipse or darkening of the whole earth would not follow. Second, those signs can be understood to mean that the sun and moon will be darkened only by comparison with the true and greater light, namely Christ, as the stars are obscured when the sun rises. For so great then will be the brightness of the Judge coming to judgment, that by comparison with Him all else is said to be obscured. And this Jerome says; and it can be saved if it be understood of the very moment of the coming of Christ to judge, as Thomas avows on the fourth book of the Sentences. Third, those signs can be understood so that the sun, moon and the other luminaries of heaven, or the stars, will truly in themselves be darkened for a time to strike terror into men, as Rabanus asserts. And this very thing Thomas alleges and approves, that nothing prevents the sun, moon and stars from being then truly deprived of their light, so that there will then be, as it were, palpable darkness, most dense, ineffably horrible. Now the stars are said to be about to fall from heaven, not truly, but in appearance, because so many fiery exhalations and sparks will appear and descend in the air, so that the stars will seem to fall.

“And upon the earth distress of nations” really will there be, that is, anguish of men, or also mutual crush from the superabounding concourse *(p. 194)* of those who shall flee from their dwellings, *“by reason of the confusion of the roaring of the sea and of the waves,”* that is, from the dread which they will have because of the horrible crashings, and the impetuous commotions, and the sounds of the waters of the sea and of other rivers. Whence among the fifteen signs which (it is said) will precede the judgment are also these: that the sea will be lifted above its natural place so high that it will be forty cubits higher than the mountains; then it will be depressed so deep under the earth that it can scarcely be seen. And if this be denied, or said to be uncertain, nevertheless it is certain that beyond all estimation and custom there will be most tempestuous inundations, sounds and crashings in the sea and the waters. *“Men withering away for fear, and expectation of what shall come upon the whole world”* (Luke 21:26), that is, upon all men, especially the unjust: for by the greatness of fear and grief the bodily harmony will incur a certain drying up and wasting in them, as Solomon says: “A sorrowful spirit drieth up the bones” (Prov. 17:22).

“For the powers of heaven shall be moved,” that is, the angelic powers, and all the angels, will be moved with a motion of a certain reverence and wonder, from effects of the divine justice so unaccustomed and fearful. Or, “shall be moved,” because they will bear themselves as those that fear, according to that of Job: “The pillars of heaven tremble, and dread at his beck” (Job 26:11). Moreover they will be moved in obsequy of the Judge, and will descend with Him, as in an expedition against His enemies. Hence Chrysostom says: If an earthly king advance against anyone, he orders an expedition among the people, every dignity is moved, the army is stirred up, the city is in ferment: how much more when the heavenly King rises to judge the living and the dead, are the angelic powers moved? Some by the powers of heaven understand the angels of the middle order of the middle angelic hierarchy, to whom it pertains (as they say) to work miracles: therefore they are said to be then about to be moved, because beyond the wont they will advance to effect supernatural transmutations in creatures.

So, as when an earthly prince and father of a family is angered, offended, and disposes himself to vengeance, his household is disturbed, and the subject people, and a preparation of arms is made; so when the supernal King at the end of the world is angered and wills to judge, there will be in creatures the aforesaid changes,

and miraculous operations, and risings against the impious. Whence in the book of Wisdom it is had: “God shall arm the creature for the revenge of his enemies; and the world shall fight for him against the unwise” (Wis. 5:18, 21).

“And then they shall see the Son of man coming in a cloud” (Luke 21:27), that is, all, good and bad, shall see with bodily eye Christ the Judge coming to judge in the luminous clouds of heaven with all the army of the heavenly citizens: because the holy angels also will then all appear visibly, according to Gregory. Whence in the Apocalypse it is asserted: “Behold he cometh with the clouds, and every eye shall see him” (Apoc. 1:7). For as He ascended in a cloud, so in a cloud He will descend to judge, according to that of the Acts: “So shall he come as you have seen him going into heaven” (Acts 1:11). *“With great power,”* that is, encompassed with all the army of the Blessed, *“and majesty,”* that is, brightness, and glory, and all power, which none shall be able to resist.

Next the Saviour sets down the consolation of the just. *“But when these things begin to come to pass”* (Luke 21:28), those aforesaid signs, *“look up, and lift up your heads,”* that is, raise your hearts to God, trust in Him, and by hope make your souls glad; *“because your redemption is at hand,”* that is, perfect salvation from the present exile and eternal salvation. Finally, Christ said these things in the person of His disciples to the elect and just who shall be at the end of the world: who will then receive confortation and consolation from above, and to whom their own conscience will bear good witness.

“And he spoke to them a similitude” (Luke 21:29), apt for understanding what He said of the end of the world, to be considered from the signs foretold. *“See the fig tree, and all the trees” (p. 195) “when they now shoot forth their fruit”* (Luke 21:30), that is, in the spring, when leaves, flowers and certain other things are put forth from the trees, *“you know that summer is nigh”* from the natural course of the seasons. And Christ speaks according to the custom of the country; and by the name of fruit can be understood whatever is produced from a tree. *“So you also, when you shall see these things come to pass”* (Luke 21:31), which have now been recited, *“know that the kingdom of God is at hand,”* that is, the ultimate consummation of the heavenly fatherland, by which the whole number of the predestined will be completed, and holy men will be glorified in body and soul. Or, “the kingdom of God is at hand,” that is, the hour is at hand in which the heavenly kingdom shall be communicated to you, and you will be brought to the heavenly fatherland, and will hear that sweetest voice: “Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Matt. 25:34). Hence we pray daily: “Our Father, who art in heaven, thy kingdom come” (Matt. 6:9–10). *“Amen I say to you, this generation shall not pass away”* (Luke 21:32), that is, the human race, or the people of the Jews, will not wholly fail upon the earth, *“till all be fulfilled”* which I have said will be before the judgment. *“Heaven and earth shall pass away”* (Luke 21:33), that is, shall cease to be as to their manner of subsisting, and as to certain accidentals, because the motions and influence of the heavens will cease, and the celestial orbs and the elements will be renewed (according to that of the Apocalypse: “I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth was gone,” Apoc. 21:1); but as to substantial being, they will remain incorruptibly. *“But my words shall not pass away,”* that is, in truth and fulfilment they shall not be made void: although the vocal words, in sounding, have passed away, as have the other successive things, whose being is the same as their becoming.

“And take heed to yourselves” (Luke 21:34), that is, guard yourselves, and be considerate, *“lest perhaps your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness,”* that is, with the vices of gluttony, or immoderation of food and drink: by which first the body is burdened; and in consequence the heart, reason, will and interior senses are burdened, and are hindered from the works of the virtues, from the contemplations of divine things, and from spiritual affections. For divers vices arise from gluttony, namely loquacity, sleepiness, sloth, lasciviousness, negligence, dullness. But divers diseases and indispositions are also born of it in the body: on account of which more are said to perish by gluttony than by the sword. Hence the Apostle says: “If you live according to the flesh, you shall die” (Rom. 8:13); and again, “Not in rioting

and drunkenness" (Rom. 13:13); and the Saviour, "Woe to you that are filled" (Luke 6:25). And again Scripture says: "In many meats there will be sickness; by surfeiting many have perished; but he that is temperate shall prolong life" (Ecclus. 37:33–34). Specially also superfluous drink does harm, as moderate drink especially profits, according to that: "Sound sleep and wholesome drink... the health of soul and body is sober drink" (Ecclus. 31:37). — See also that your hearts be not overcharged *"with the cares of this life,"* that is, with solicitudes about carnal and earthly things: for the obtaining and preserving of which, immoderate and anxious solicitude is not to be had, which is the daughter of distrust; but we must hope in God as in a most loving and provident father, as on this many things have been introduced above (Luke 12:22 ff.). Whence in Matthew Christ speaks: "Be not solicitous for tomorrow; for your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things" (Matt. 6:34, 32).

"And that day come upon you suddenly." Therefore beware these vices, lest that sudden day come upon you, that is, lest on the day of judgment you be found unprepared; *"for as a snare shall it come upon all that sit upon the face of the whole earth"* (Luke 21:35): that is, unforeseen and suddenly that day will envelop both those who were then in the world, and those who now sit upon the surface of the earth, namely the lovers of the world: who are said to sit on the earth because they love it as their country, nor do they bear themselves as pilgrims and exiles, who use this world, not enjoy it, but rest in mind in God as in the last end. Whence the Apostle protests: "When they shall say, Peace and security, then shall sudden destruction come upon them" (1 Thess. 5:3). And Christ in Matthew speaks: "As in the days of Noe," etc. (Matt. 24:37). *(p. 196)* With these agrees that of Ecclesiastes: "Man knoweth not his own end: but as fishes are taken with the hook, and as birds are caught with the snare, so men are taken in the evil time, when it shall suddenly come upon them" (Eccles. 9:12).

"Watch ye, therefore, praying at all times" (Luke 21:36). That He says "at all times" can be referred to the word "watch," and to the participle "praying." At every opportune time therefore, and as far as human frailty makes it possible, we ought to watch and pray: as also when the passion was at hand Christ said to the Apostles, "Watch ye, and pray that ye enter not into temptation" (Matt. 26:41). For bodily vigil also, holy and discreet, is very fruitful, and weakens the passions, and disposes to prayers, meditations and contemplations. Unceasing prayer also is held necessary for us, who are beset by so many perils, so many invisible, most cruel, untiring enemies. Wherefore the most blessed prince of the Apostles in his Canonical Epistle says: "Be sober and watch: because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour: whom resist ye, strong in faith" (1 Peter 5:8–9). And in Ecclesiasticus it is had: "The watching of honesty shall consume the flesh, and the thought thereof shall take away sleep" (Ecclus. 31:1); and again, "The wise man will give his heart to resort early to the Lord that made him, and he will pray in the sight of the Most High" (Ecclus. 39:6). — Now superfluous sleep is most unbecoming to a Christian, and is hurtful to body and soul, burdens nature, dulls the sense, clouds reason, and nourishes vices. Wherefore Cato spoke well: "Watch more always, nor be given to sleep: for long rest supplies nourishment to vices." And Solomon says: "How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou rise out of thy sleep?" (Prov. 6:9). And again: "As the door is turned upon its hinges, so is the slothful man upon his bed" (Prov. 26:14). And again Scripture admonishes: "Love not sleep, lest poverty oppress thee" (Prov. 20:13). O how many goods the sleepy and slothful neglect, and how damnably they spend their time, and those who late at night prolong vigils in vices, on account of which they rise late! This is not the narrow way of salvation, nor penitential conversation, nor custody of the heart, nor true diligence before God. Whence the Saviour now subjoins: *"That you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that are to come,"* that is, that you may be able by the divine judgment to escape all the penal evils to be inflicted on the reprobate on the day of judgment, *"and to stand before the Son of man,"* that is, to stand securely before the tribunal of the supreme Judge, as the Wise Man asserts: "Then shall the just stand with great constancy against those that have afflicted them" (Wis. 5:1).

"And in the daytime he was teaching in the temple" (Luke 21:37): for on Palm Sunday and the two following days He preached in the temple of Jerusalem; but at night, going out, *"he abode in the mount that is called Olivet,"* that is, going out of Jerusalem before evening, He prolonged His stay on the Mount of Olives, there giving Himself to prayers, then proceeding to Bethany, and abiding in the house of Martha with His disciples. *"And all the people,"* namely the common folk, *"came early in the morning to him in the temple"* (Luke 21:38), on the second and third day of the week after Palm Sunday (for on the fourth day He remained in Bethany: likewise on the fifth day until after the hour of dinner), *"to hear him"*: because truly it was exceedingly delightful to hear the wisdom of God, the Word of the eternal Father, the Only-begotten of God, true God incarnate, preaching in His own person, on account of the depth of His doctrine and its most wholesome usefulness, and on account of the most gracious beauty of His eloquence, and also on account of the glorious and abundant miracles confirming His preaching.

Luke 22

Article XLVI — Preface to the Exposition of the Lord's Passion according to Luke

(p. 197) "Christ hath loved us, and hath delivered himself for us, an oblation and a sacrifice to God for an odour of sweetness" (Eph. 5:2).

These are the words of the blessed Apostle Paul, in which three things are touched. The first is the original and motive cause which led Christ, inflamed Him and moved Him to undergo a most bitter and most salutary death for us, when it is said: "Christ hath loved us." For Christ, from His supreme, gratuitous and most pure love for us, willed to suffer for us. For which cause He Himself protests in John: "Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). And the Apostle says to the Galatians: "And that I live now in the flesh: I live in the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered himself for me" (Gal. 2:20). Second, in the theme is touched the very delivering up by which Christ spontaneously offered Himself to the passion, and presented Himself with a most ready mind, as Isaias foretold: "He hath delivered his soul unto death" (Isa. 53:12); and again, "He was offered because it was his own will" (Isa. 53:7). Hence Christ professes in John: "No man taketh my soul from me, but I lay it down of myself"; and again, "I am the good shepherd; and I lay down my life for my sheep" (John 10:18, 14–15): in which words soul can be taken for human life, the animal and bodily substance, which by the death of the cross was extinguished in Christ. Third, in the theme is touched the most fruitful end, or most copious fruit, of the Lord's passion, namely the appeasing of God the Father, and the reconciliation of the human race with God through the death of His Only-begotten Son, when it is said: "An oblation and a sacrifice to God for an odour of sweetness." For Christ was a peace-offering, that is, making peace between God and men, appeasing the eternal Father toward men, according to that of the apostle Paul: "He is our peace, who hath made both one, … making peace and reconciling both … by the cross, killing the enmities in himself" (Eph. 2:14–16). Christ also was a victim for sin, that is, satisfactory for sins, reconciling men to God, as the Apostle says to the Romans: "We were reconciled to God by the death of his Son" (Rom. 5:10); and elsewhere: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself" (2 Cor. 5:19). Of these three therefore in the present collation I intend to speak, as far as the Holy Ghost shall grant.

But because in all these things the help of the Holy Spirit is first and supremely necessary to us, the Apostle saying: "Not that we are sufficient to think any thing of ourselves, as of ourselves: but our sufficiency is from God" (2 Cor. 3:5); and, "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmity" (Rom. 8:26): it is clear that for speaking and hearing worthily and meritoriously of the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, the help of the Holy Ghost is the more necessary to us, as this blessed, salvific and most holy passion is a more excellent work of God, and more salutary and more heartily to be recalled, especially when the Apostle says: "No man can say the Lord Jesus, but by the Holy Ghost" (1 Cor. 12:3), that is, no man can attentively, lovingly and meritoriously name our Lord Jesus Christ, but by the grace and inspiration and internal motion of the Holy Ghost. Hence

therefore, about to speak and hear of the passion and death of the Only-begotten Son of God, let us first most devoutly invoke the aid of the Holy Ghost, that He may deign to purge, enlighten and inflame our hearts, so that we may worthily, affectionately and meritoriously speak and hear of the passion of our Saviour. Moreover, that we may the sooner and more fully obtain this help of the grace of *(p. 198)* the Holy Ghost, let us heartily invoke the Mother of piety and grace, the most blessed and sweetest virgin Mary, our advocate and lady, saluting and honouring her with the angelic salutation, saying with pious mind: Hail Mary.

"Christ hath loved us," etc., as above.

Before I set forth the text and history of the Lord's passion according to the order of the thing done, first it is to be seen why it was necessary that Christ the Son of God should suffer for the salvation of the world; second, it is to be seen by what manner and by what justice the human race was reconciled to God the Father through the death or passion of His only Son.

Concerning the first, therefore, it must be acknowledged that Holy Scripture teaches otherwise concerning the human race, both as to its first condition and as to the end for which it was created, than the natural doctrine of the philosophers, or the sect of the Gentiles. For although the better and subtler and more learned philosophers and Gentiles knew and confessed that the whole world and the human race proceeded in being from the supreme God, whom they named the first cause, and depend on Him or are conserved by Him, as is plain from the books of Plato and Aristotle and their followers; nevertheless they thought the world to have been from eternity: as if the sun had been from eternity, its ray also would have existed eternally, and yet would have flowed from the sun. Moreover they thought man originally procreated in purely natural things, and made only for a natural beatitude: therefore they did not know that a saviour and mediator, namely Christ, was necessary for men, as the Catholic faith delivers.

But Holy Scripture, divinely inspired, teaches otherwise, namely that the world was created by God in time, and the first man was fashioned by God, not in natural gifts only, but also in the supernatural gifts of grace, and after his formation was straightway placed in paradise, and made for supernatural beatitude, namely to see God in the heavenly kingdom by sight, by a clear, eternal and fruitive vision: which beneficent, face-to-face and most joyous vision the philosophers thought to be impossible not only to the human mind, but also to angelic spirits, whom they call intelligences. It is therefore the Christian faith that God omnipotent and eternal created the first man in original justice, by which his body was subject to his soul, and sensuality to reason, and reason to God, so that body and sensuality readily and without difficulty obeyed soul and reason, and likewise reason and will obeyed God.

Further, this original justice was so conferred on our first parent that if he had remained in it, he would have transfused the same to his posterity, and both he and his posterity would have remained in the earthly paradise. Again, it was so granted to the first parent that as long as his reason remained obedient and subject to God, so long his body and sensuality would remain obediently subject to his soul and reason. Since therefore the first man transgressed the divine command (Gen. 3:6), so that his reason and will were disobedient to God, he therefore lost original justice, and his flesh and sensuality straightway began to weigh down the soul, to struggle against reason. Nor did he lose original justice for himself alone, but for all his posterity. And as he would have transfused original justice into it, had he not sinned; so because he sinned, he transfused into his posterity original sin, which, according to Anselm, is the lack of original justice owed to be in us. Therefore, on account of that first and original sin of Adam, both he and his posterity, by the just judgment of God, were deprived of eternal and supernatural beatitude: so that they could not return and be brought to it, unless satisfaction were made to God for that original sin.

Although original sin of Adam *(p. 199)* was not in the will and power of his posterity, yet no injury is done them when on account of it they are deprived of eternal happiness: because neither was that happiness owed to them from elsewhere, or from any dignity or property of nature; but by the sole munificence of the Creator

they were created for it, in the manner aforesaid. And an example of this St. Thomas and Giles of Rome assign: If an earthly prince should confer upon some knight a feudal benefice or a castle, on this condition that if the knight remained faithful to his prince, that benefice and gift should remain to him and his posterity; but if he became disobedient to his prince, both he and his posterity should be deprived of the aforesaid good. If therefore that knight became disobedient and rebellious to his lord, and consented to his adversary, it is certain that both he and his offspring would justly be wholly deprived of the aforesaid good.

Moreover, when the first man had lost original justice, both for himself and his posterity, he could not recover it for himself and his posterity. Therefore a saviour and mediator was necessary to the whole human race, who would redeem the human race from original sin, and merit for it the grace of returning to conformity with original justice, and so reconcile the human race to God Most High, and bring it back to everlasting beatitude, the obstacle to attaining it being removed, namely the guilt of original sin.

Moreover, there are many causes why neither the first man, nor any mere man, nor any angelic spirit, nor any pure creature was fit to redeem the whole human race from sin, and to merit for it grace and glory. — The first is the gravity of sin itself. For the enormity of a fault is so much the greater, as He against whom it is committed is of higher dignity, and the more benefits He has bestowed, or is prepared to bestow. Since therefore God, sublime and blessed, is of altogether infinite dignity and holiness, and an incomparable benefactor, from whom we have received whatever good we have or are, by whom also we are unceasingly conserved in being and provided for: who has also prepared for us eternal beatitude, promised it, and is ready to give it provided we put no obstacle: it is clear that mortal sin, by which He is offended, is in a certain manner of immense enormity. Therefore the human race could not be freed from its sin, except by a redeemer of infinite dignity and efficacy. But a pure creature cannot be of infinite dignity: therefore it behoved our Saviour to be God and Creator. Hence sin, even venial sin, is of infinite avoidableness: so that for nothing should a man venially sin, but rather undergo death than commit a venial sin, especially since man owes it to love the living and true God, naturally good, incomparably and infinitely more than himself or the whole world.

The second cause for the same is the dignity of sanctifying grace: which, since it is a certain supernatural likeness of the divine essence, placing the soul in a supernatural being and one fit to merit eternal happiness, could not be merited or recovered for the whole human race, except by a mediator and saviour of immense dignity, whom it is necessary to be God. — The third cause of the same is the ineffable dignity of the happiness and glory everlasting, which by sinning we lost. For this beatitude, since it is the immediate and clear vision of the supreme and uncreated truth and divine beauty (which is the divine essence itself), and the full enjoyment of the immense goodness and sweetness of God, is in a certain manner of infinite dignity, preciousness and excellence: therefore no pure creature could bring the human race back to it, or merit it for men. — The fourth cause of the same is assigned, that human nature is in a certain manner communicable to infinity: therefore to redeem the whole of it belongs to a deliverer of unbounded dignity alone.

Thus therefore it is plain why it was necessary for Christ to suffer for the salvation of the world.

(p. 200) Next it must be said by what manner or by what equity the human race was reconciled to God the Father through the passion and death of His Only-begotten Son. For it seems that, the Son of God having been so most cruelly and impiously slain by men, God the Father ought to have been more angry with men than before, especially since the slaying of the Son of God was a much greater sin than the original sin of the first-formed man, on account of which God inflicted His wrath upon the whole human race. Moreover, as will appear below, on account of the slaying of Christ God the Father was so offended and angered against the Jews that His wrath came upon them (as the Apostle says) “to the end” (1 Thess. 2:16). Therefore it appears that the human race by the passion of Christ was not reconciled to God, but rather made more odious. An example of this also can be introduced: for if there were discord between an earthly prince and his city or community, and the prince sent his only-begotten son to that city, to bring it back to obedience and concord

with its prince: if then the citizens of such a place disdained to hear the prince's son, nay even butchered him, the prince by this deed would be more provoked against that city than he had been provoked before. With this example finally agrees that which Christ speaks in the Gospel in the parable of the father of a family who let out the vineyard which he planted to husbandmen: who at length killed the son of the father of the family, on account of which they perished (Matt. 21:33 ff.).

To these it must be answered that, as the holy doctors say, the death, or passion, or slaying of Christ was most pious and most impious, most cruel and most merciful, most loving and most envious, supremely meritorious and most appeasing to the Father, and supremely demeritorious and offensive to the Father. For it was most pious, most merciful, most loving, supremely meritorious and appeasing God the Father, on the part of the sufferer, namely Christ, inasmuch as He willingly underwent that passion from most perfect charity, most clement compassion, and most ready obedience: by which charity Christ loved God the Father and us, and from His charity and piety had compassion on our damnation; by which obedience also He was made obedient to God the Father unto death, even to the death of the cross (Phil. 2:8), contemptible, most bitter and horrible. But the passion of Christ was most impious, most cruel, most envious, and supremely demeritorious, and offensive to the Father, on the part of the inflicting, that is, of the Jews and others who killed Christ, because from supreme envy, cruelty and impiety they did this.

Therefore, since Christ as man obeyed the Father in all things, teaching and rebuking the Jews, as God the Father commanded Him (John 12:49), and by this incurred the envy of the Jews, who hated the truth, so that they were moved and inflamed to slay Him; and Christ bore that slaying for justice most patiently, nay accepted and endured it from most ardent charity and obedience, ordaining it to the appeasing and honouring of the Father, and the reconciliation of men with the Father: therefore the passion of Christ, according as it was accepted by Christ from that root and referred to the aforesaid end, was most pleasing and most grateful or acceptable to the Father, and appeased Him toward the human race: so that by the virtue and merit of the passion of Christ He remitted to the whole human race original sin, and other sins also, provided the merit of the Lord's passion be applied to them by the sacraments of the Church, or in some other way, namely by faith in Christ, or otherwise, according as in the law of nature and the written law of Moses men were variously united to Christ the head of all the elect, as Hugh teaches in the book *De Sacramentis*. For since Christ is the head of all elect men (Eph. 1:22), men cannot become partakers of the merit of the passion of Christ, unless they be already in some manner united to Christ. And so the passion of Christ blotted out all sins, because by its virtue and merit God pardons all who are united to Christ as to their head by Baptism or otherwise. *(p. 201)* Whence Augustine testifies that the blood of Christ was so shed unto the remission of all sins, that it could blot out even the sins of those who shed it, and the very sin by which it was shed: because those who killed Christ obtained pardon and salvation by the merit of the passion of Christ, provided they were willing to believe in Christ and receive His Baptism; nay indeed many of them were so saved, redeemed by the very blood which they had shed, as Augustine says. For Christ beheld them in the crowd, and said to them when the passion was at hand: "When you shall have lifted up the Son of man, then shall you know that I am he" (John 8:28). How this was fulfilled, St. Luke describes in the Acts of the Apostles , relating how at the preaching of the most blessed apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost, first three thousand of the Jews were converted; then five thousand, when Peter had cured the man lame from his birth (Acts 2:41; 4:4). And besides these, daily at that time many of the Jews were converted to Christ, so much so that even a great multitude of priests were converted to the faith, as Luke recites (Acts 6:7).

From these it is plain by what equity the human race was saved by the passion of Christ. For it became the goodness and piety of God the Father to be appeased, and to indulge, and to impart grace, through such and so great love, obedience and passion of His only-begotten and most dear Son. Finally, it was fitting that, as for the disobedience of one man God was angry with the whole human race, so for the obedience of Christ, the mediator of God and men, God should be reconciled to men (Rom. 5:10; 1 Tim. 2:5). Moreover it was

fitting that as the human race incurred damnation by the deception of diabolical envy, the first man our parent being deceived from without; so the human race should be mercifully helped from without, and be redeemed by the charity and help of Christ. Again, charity makes all things common: therefore Christ by His most ardent and greatest love for us could communicate His merit to us. Lastly, even in earthly princes we see that an earthly king or prince, for the love, merit and instance of one, pardons another: and so much the more fully and easily, as he who entreats for the culprit is of greater dignity and more beloved by the prince.

But then arises the question, how by the particular and temporal death of Christ the human race was freed from general and eternal death. And it must be answered that so great was the dignity of the person of Christ, and His obedience and passion of so great merit and acceptability before the eternal Father, that the temporal and particular death of Christ was truly sufficient, and ineffably more than sufficient, to redeem the whole human race from every evil, and not only from common and eternal death, or infernal damnation, but also from temporal death, and every defect and bodily corruptibility. Whence in the future resurrection, by the merit of the passion of Christ, all the elect shall also obtain incorruptibility, impassibility and glorification of the body. The passion of Christ was also supremely fit, efficacious and most worthy to merit for the human race the gifts of grace in the present and the rewards of glory in the future: nay not only the passion of Christ, but His whole conversation in this world, was supremely fit for this.

For it is to be contemplated that Christ in unity of person is God and man: so that to merit and obey and suffer belonged to Him by reason of His humanity; but fitness and dignity for meriting and satisfying for men belonged to Him on the part of His divinity. Since therefore Christ is true God, it is clear that He was of infinite fitness and dignity to satisfy and merit by His humanity, by reason of His most superworthy deity: therefore it is wont to be said, and it is truly so, that the least drop of the blood of Christ, or the least particle of His passion, would have been sufficient for the liberation of the whole world.

Moreover, the greater the holiness, dignity and perfection of the humanity of Christ, the greater also on His own part was the merit of His obedience and passion. *(p. 202)* But so great is the holiness, dignity and perfection of the humanity of Christ that it alone exceeds the holiness, dignity and perfection of all creatures, namely of all the Saints and elect, both angels and men, and of the whole created universe. And this most of all belongs to the humanity of Christ by reason of its hypostatic or personal union with the eternal Word, namely with true God; and also because the grace conferred, infused and implanted in the humanity of Christ was and is in a certain manner infinite, and it had virtues and gifts, and the other perfections and endowments of grace, in the greatest and incomparable excellence. For which reason John the Baptist said of Christ: “For God doth not give the Spirit by measure” (John 3:34), that is, the grace and gifts of the Holy Ghost to Christ, as man. So it is made known that Christ, not only by reason of His divinity, but also on the part of His humanity so perfect and virtuous, was of ineffable fitness for meriting.

Further, the more Christ was beloved by God the Father, the more efficacious He was to satisfy for our sins, and the more all His conversation, prayer, obedience and passion displayed for us in this world were pleasing and acceptable to God the Father, and also more fit to succour men, or of greater merit. But God the Father loves Christ according to His divinity with altogether infinite love, and so much indeed as Himself: because the divinity of Christ, as it is of infinite goodness, so also is it of infinite lovableness. The Father also loves Christ according to His humanity more than the whole universe, and all pure creatures taken together. For to love is to will good to someone. Whence God loves a thing the more, the greater the good He bestows on it. Since therefore, by the will of God the Father, and the assuming of the eternal Word, the humanity of Christ was assumed to the uncreated and hypostatic being of the eternal Word, so that in the same personal being subsists the humanity of Christ in which the eternal Word eternally subsists: it is clear that a greater good was given to the humanity of Christ than the whole created universe is: therefore it is more beloved by God. So Christ, even on this part, was ineffably fit and acceptable for working and praying and suffering for us.

Moreover, as the holy Fathers and doctors teach, although God omnipotent and eternal could by His omnipotence, simply speaking, have redeemed the human race in another way than by the incarnation and passion of His only-begotten Son; yet there was no other way so fitting as this: so that it was most fitting that the Son of God should be incarnate and die for our salvation. Which is first proved from the incarnation of God: because in the incarnation of the Son of God, equal to God the Father, the goodness of God is chiefly shown and shines forth, in that He communicated Himself so most copiously to His creature, and did not despise the infirmity of His own handiwork, but assumed a nature created by Himself, namely humanity, to His hypostatic being. For the property of the good is to be communicative and diffusive of itself. Moreover, in the incarnation of the Son of God, the love of God for us is ineffably beautifully shown and laid open. For love is a unitive power: therefore in this, that God united our nature to Himself so most nearly and intimately, it is plain that He loved us most vehemently and most specially. In the incarnation also is shown the mercy and condescension of God toward us, that He so most clemently inclined His majesty to our littleness and lowliness, and deigned so most mercifully to help us, pardoning our sins, and not scorning to assume that nature by whose first individual and the other supposits He was so manifoldly and enormously offended.

Again, in the incarnation of the Son of God the omnipotence of God is most chiefly declared: because *(p. 203)* He joined the divine and human nature in unity of person, whereas in the order of intellectual substances the rational soul is the lowest and last, and especially the human body is inestimably distant from the supersimplest Deity: therefore the hypostatic union of these is most declarative of the divine power, nay more, as some maintain, than the creation of the whole world. But the justice of God also is shown in the incarnation of the Word: because God does not by force snatch man away, nor make another overcome the tyrant than man; but as man was conquered, so man conquered, as Damascene asserts in the third book. Likewise in the incarnation of the Word the wisdom of God is shown, in that of so most difficult a matter He found so most fitting a solution. For it appeared most difficult how the human race, saving the justice and truth of God, could be saved; but the wisdom of God found the most apt way for this, so saving man that neither to divine truth and justice nor to divine mercy was any derogation made.

Moreover, “necessary” is said in two ways: First, that without which another thing cannot be, as man without soul: and so it was not necessary that God be incarnate to redeem the human race, because God could do this in other ways, to whom no word is impossible, nay not even difficult, as the angel Gabriel and the prophet Jeremias testify (Luke 1:37; Jer. 32:17). Second, that is called necessary without which a thing cannot suitably or so aptly be: and so for redeeming the human race it was necessary that the Son of God be incarnate, because, as Augustine says in the thirteenth book *De Trinitate*, there was no other more fitting way for healing our misery. For by this most of all the Catholic faith is strengthened, that God Himself incarnate speaks and testifies to us in the Gospel. By this also hope toward God is most greatly increased, and charity is kindled in Him, that we know God, on account of us, from His excessive love for us, to have become incarnate: nay most confidently we approach God and pray, when we confess Him incarnate for our salvation, and because so great things God has bestowed on us through the incarnation of the Word, that from the incarnation itself we are kindled with the love of God.

Moreover, as it was most fitting that the Son of God should begin our redemption by His incarnation, so it was most fitting that He should complete the same our redemption by His most sacred passion. For from this, that the Son of God suffered for us, it is most made known how great is the enormity of sin, and how much God abhors sins, for the taking away and satisfaction of which the only-begotten Son of God Himself endured so great things. From the passion of Christ also we recognise how ineffable is the justice of God the Father, who “spared not even his own Son, but delivered him up for us all” (Rom. 8:32), preferring that He should suffer so most bitter a death, rather than that the sins of men should remain unavenged. For punishment is owed to guilt according to justice. And because by our sins we deserved eternal punishments, it was of the infinite mercy of God the Father that by the temporal passion of His Son He snatched us from

eternal punishment; and it was of His infinite justice that He preferred His most beloved Son to suffer and die, rather than that our sins should remain unpunished. Finally, from this, that God the Father permitted His only Son, most innocent and most holy, to be so taken, handled, afflicted, slain by the most wicked and vilest of men, to free us, His incomprehensible love for us is most clearly manifest. Likewise the most perfect love of Christ for us is hence made manifest, that He deigned spontaneously to bear such and so great things for us. Moreover Christ by His passion gave us the most perfect exemplar of all virtues, as will appear in following the history of the passion.

Again, from this, that Christ suffered for us, it most evidently shines forth how great is the bitterness of the infernal punishments, and how most delicious, greatest and most excellent is the felicity of the elect in heaven: *(p. 204)* since therefore the Son of God suffered, that He might snatch us from those punishments, and bring us back to the joys of eternal beatitude. Lastly, by this, that Christ for us endured so most bitter a death, He bestowed most copious help on our poverty and indigence: because that passion, the more bitter it was, the more meritorious it was, and Christ communicates all that merit to us. And that merit is the treasure of the Church, from which indulgences are granted, and on account of which our sins are daily remitted, and various charisms of graces are conferred: whence the time of the evangelical law and of Christ is called the time of grace.

Article XLVII — Exposition of the Passion and of the Twenty-Second Chapter: “Now the feast of Unleavened Bread was at hand, which is called the Pasch”

“Now the feast of Unleavened Bread was at hand, which is called the Pasch. And the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might put Jesus to death” (Luke 22:1–2). The Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, at the time eternally preordained by the most blessed Trinity, having assumed our nature, conversed a short time among men in this world, namely about thirty-three years, and for about the last three years of His life in this world He preached and wrought miracles. And since in preaching and working miracles He gloriously exceeded all the Saints who were before, He was heard by the people with great eagerness.

But since, straightway after the beginnings of His preaching, He began justly and sharply to rebuke the errors and vices of the priests and Scribes and Pharisees, they straightway began to conceive envy against Him, and to detract from Him, and to interpret all His deeds for the worse. Finally, since envy is sadness at the good and prosperity of another, the more illustrious the miracles Christ wrought, the more the aforesaid were stung against Him by a sharper and more bitter envy; and they began to think how they might deprive Him of life and fame, so that not even His memory should remain on earth, as by Jeremias was foretold in their person: “Let us cut him off from the land of the living, and let his name be remembered no more” (Jer. 11:19).

Moreover, when Christ had raised Lazarus from the dead, the aforesaid Jews, hearing of so signal a miracle, were most vehemently disturbed, and were tortured by the spite of their envy, grieving at the magnificence and honour of Christ (John 11:45 ff.). Nay, according to Augustine, no miracle of Christ made them so rage and fret against Him as the raising of Lazarus, because that miracle was most evident, and could not be obscured by any evasion, in that it was done most solemnly *(p. 205)* before many Jews, and because Lazarus was a noble man and a knight, sprung of royal stock, and had been dead four days (John 11:39). Whence, when they heard that that miracle had been done, on the next day they straightway assembled, and took counsel among themselves what to do with Christ, according to that in John: “But some of them,” namely of the number of the Jews who were present at the raising of Lazarus and had seen what Jesus did, “went to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done. The chief priests therefore and the Pharisees gathered a council, and said: What do we, for this man doth many miracles? If we let him alone so, all will believe in him. From that day therefore they devised to put him to death,” according as Caiphas counselled them (John 11:46–53).

"Jesus therefore," as the evangelist John says, *"walked no more openly among the Jews, but went into a country near the desert, into a city that is called Ephrem, and there he abode with his disciples"* (John 11:54): and this, not except for a few days, namely eight or thereabouts. For it is believed that Christ raised Lazarus on the sixth day of the week, a fortnight before the day of Parasceve on which He was Himself crucified. Afterwards, as is described in John, "Jesus, six days before the Pasch" (John 12:1), that is on the Sabbath of Palm Sunday, which was six days before the first day of the festival of the Pasch of the Jews then imminent (whose paschal solemnity began on the following fifth day of the week in the evening, and on the sixth day was the first whole day of the paschal solemnity), "came to Bethania," etc. Moreover, as the evangelist John teaches, on that Sabbath of Palm Sunday, when Jesus had come with the Apostles to Bethania, they made Him a supper there, and Lazarus was one of them that sat at table with Him (John 12:2). Now that supper was not in the house of Martha and Mary Magdalene, as some have thought, but in the house of Simon the leper, whom Christ cured of leprosy (Matt. 26:6); and at that supper Mary Magdalene poured precious ointment upon the head and feet of Christ, as is proved from the words of the evangelists Matthew and John (Matt. 26:7; John 12:3). And on the following day Jesus came to Jerusalem sitting upon an ass; and then in Jerusalem He preached and wrought many miracles, as the Evangelists describe (John 12:12 ff.). Moreover, on the second and third day of the week after Palm Sunday, Jesus likewise preached in Jerusalem, and most severely rebuked and reproved the priests, Scribes and Pharisees before all, so that they were kindled with the greatest envy against Christ; but on the fourth day He remained in Bethania.

Therefore the evangelist Luke now says: *"Now the feast of Unleavened Bread was at hand"* (Luke 22:1), that is, the paschal celebration: which is called of Unleavened Bread, that is, of loaves not leavened, because during that whole solemnity, which lasted seven days, the Jews ate not leavened bread, but unleavened loaves. That the feast of Unleavened Bread is here taken in the aforesaid manner is clear from what is subjoined, *"which is called the Pasch,"* that is, the paschal solemnity, which began from the evening of the fifth day of the week, the fourteenth day of the moon being current, in which evening the Jews removed from their houses all leavened bread, and ate the paschal lamb with unleavened loaves, in commemoration that their fathers so ate the paschal lamb when they were about to go out of Egypt, as is read in Exodus (Exod. 12:8–11). Whence also now the day of Unleavened Bread is called the Pasch, because on the aforesaid evening, which was the beginning of the paschal solemnity, the paschal lamb was eaten. Some, however, in this place take the day of Unleavened Bread and the Pasch for the day of Parasceve following the aforesaid evening. But the first exposition is more apt, because a little after it is subjoined: "And the day of Unleavened Bread came, on which it was necessary that the Pasch should be killed" (Luke 22:7): which is certain to be said of the fifth day of the week.

Moreover, "pasch" is taken in Scripture in many ways: First, for the whole week of Unleavened Bread or paschal solemnity, as in the Acts of the Apostles it is written of Herod that he intended after the Pasch to bring Peter forth to the people (Acts 12:4). Second, it is taken for the paschal celebration *(p. 206)* on the aforesaid sixth day of the week. Third, for the hour of the immolation and eating of the paschal lamb, as it is written in Mark: "Now the Pasch, and the feast of Unleavened Bread was after two days" (Mark 14:1). Fourth, for any food or bread on which the Jews fed during the paschal festival, as when it is said in John: "The Jews went not into the hall, that they might not be defiled, but that they might eat the Pasch" (John 18:28), that is, the unleavened loaves. Fifth, for the paschal lamb. Sixth, for the figured of that lamb, namely Christ, of whom the Apostle says: "For Christ our pasch is sacrificed" (1 Cor. 5:7). Seventh, for the festivity of the paschal banquets. Whence in the book of Paralipomenon it is said: "There was no Phase like to this in Israel from the days of the judges" (2 Par. 35:18).

"And the chief priests," namely Annas and Caiphas, *"and the scribes,"* that is, those skilled in the law, namely the masters and doctors of the people (to whom that of Daniel is fitting: "Iniquity came out from the ancients, who seemed to govern the people," Dan. 13:5), *"sought how they might put Jesus to death"* (Luke

22:2). To whom He had already said: “Why seek you to kill me?” (John 7:19); and: “Many good works I have shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do you stone me?” (John 10:32). This crime of the Jews the evangelist Matthew relates more fully, saying: “Then,” namely on the fourth day of the week before the passion of Christ, “were gathered together the chief priests and ancients of the people into the court of the high priest, who was called Caiphas; and they consulted together, that by subtilty they might apprehend Jesus, and kill him” (Matt. 26:3–4). So, “they sought,” that is, they searched among themselves, “how,” that is, by what manner, “they might put Jesus to death,” by craftily seizing Him and falsely accusing Him. *“But they feared the people.”* They did not fear almighty God, with virtuous and ordered fear, lest they should offend Him on so great a festival; but the crowd, with inordinate and vicious fear. For they knew that the people gladly heard Christ: therefore they dreaded lest it should defend Christ, and, though He were seized, rescue Him from their hands. They feared also lest a dangerous uproar be stirred up among the people. For which reason they proposed not to kill Christ during the paschal feast, according to that of Matthew: “But they said: Not on the festival day, lest perhaps there should be a tumult among the people” (Matt. 26:5). — Now the chief priests were called and were high priests; and although at the same time there was only one chief priest or high priest, nevertheless they are named in the plural, chief priests and high priests, because year by year one succeeded another at that time, and they bought the pontificate from the Gentile princes: which was contrary to the law of Moses, according to which the son ought to succeed the father in the pontificate; but then that lawful succession failed.

Next is narrated the manner in which the high priests of the Jews and the principal men of that people brought their counsel and machination to effect. *“And Satan entered into Judas”* (Luke 22:3), that is, the adversary of human salvation, namely the devil, *“who was surnamed Iscariot,”* because he was a native of a village so called, existing (it is said) in the tribe of Issachar, *“one of the twelve,”* principal disciples of Christ, namely Apostles. Of whom and of whom Christ says: “Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?” (John 6:71). But the devil entered into Judas, that is, into his mind or soul, not by gliding into him essentially, since God alone, the Creator, uncircumscribed and immense, is in the essences of things, and fills, penetrates and exceeds all (Jer. 23:24); but he entered by effect, suggesting the selling of Christ. Nor did he enter into him in this manner this time only, but also before, often, namely as often as he led him into mortal sin. Whence in John it is read: “And when supper was done, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas to betray him” (John 13:2). So now he entered his vessel, possessing it more fully. In this way also the devil enters the hearts of those who consent to his temptations and suggestions. For he enters not by compelling or necessitating to guilt, but by suggesting and alluring to it; but we, from our negligence, freely open to him, by giving consent. Against which the apostle *(p. 207)* Paul exhorts: “Give not place to the devil” (Eph. 4:27). James the apostle also says: “Resist the devil, and he will fly from you” (James 4:7). Therefore let us unceasingly and manfully resist every impious thought, affection and perverse suggestion, strongly adhering to God and His commandments and testimonies, and rejecting whatever is contrary to truth and equity.

“And he went” (Luke 22:4), by aversion of mind and step of body, from Christ and the other Apostles, *“and talked with the chief priests,”* to whom that of Esdras is fitting, “The hand of the princes and magistrates was first in this transgression” (1 Esd. 9:2); *“and the magistrates,”* that is, the rulers and ancients of the people. Theophilus, however, by magistrates understands the overseers of the fabric of the temple, or those whom the Romans set over the Jews, that they should not oppose the Romans, because they were seditious. *“How he might betray him to them.”*

“And they were glad” (Luke 22:5), having found so fitting an occasion of seizing and killing Jesus. To whom applies what Solomon says in Proverbs: “Who are glad when they have done evil, and rejoice in the worst things” (Prov. 2:14). *“And covenanted”*, that is, entered a pact or covenant with Judas, *“to give him money,”* namely thirty pieces of silver. *“And he promised”* (Luke 22:6), that is, Judas promised that he would betray

Jesus to them. The other Evangelists describe this deed more fully. Indeed, as Matthew relates, Judas, coming to the aforesaid, said: "What will you give me, and I will deliver him unto you?" "And they appointed," that is, promised to give him, "thirty pieces of silver" (Matt. 26:14–15). The occasion also by which Judas was moved to sell Christ was that sadness by which he grieved over the ointment poured upon Christ by Mary Magdalene, at the supper made in the house of Simon the leper in Bethania, on the Sabbath of Palm Sunday. Whence he then said: "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?" (John 12:5). Now each of the thirty pieces of silver which they promised the betrayer was worth (it is said) ten pence or usual denarii, so that the thirty pieces of silver were worth three hundred usual denarii: and so in the sale of Christ Judas recovered the value of the ointment poured out. Hence by Zacharias Christ foretold: "They weighed for my wages thirty pieces of silver. … a handsome price, that I was prized at by them" (Zach. 11:12–13). *"And he sought opportunity,"* that is, a fit place and suitable time, *"to betray him in the absence of the multitude,"* that is, secretly, and in the night time, when the crowd was not present with Christ.

From these it is plain that Christ suffered the greatest vilification, when by His own disciple He was sold for so vile a price, He in whom is the full, perfect and infinite possession of all good and beautiful and desirable things. Moreover the impiety of Judas selling Christ is followed by those who for temporal praise, gain or advantage desert justice, bear false witness, or knowingly give judgment against the truth, and likewise sell ecclesiastical benefices, sacraments or judgments; and they are made like to those of whom it is said in Micheas: "Her princes judged for bribes, and her priests taught for hire, and her prophets divined for money" (Mich. 3:11).

"And the day of Unleavened Bread came" (Luke 22:7). This has been expounded in the manner aforesaid. *"On which it was necessary that the Pasch should be killed,"* that is, the paschal lamb, to observe the precept of the law written in Exodus (Exod. 12:6): which lamb was killed and eaten on the fifth day of the week, and evidently figured Christ and His immolation and slaying. *"And he sent Peter and John"* (Luke 22:8), on the fifth day of the week from Bethania into Jerusalem, *"saying: Go and prepare for us the Pasch,"* that is, the paschal lamb, *"that we may eat,"* it together according to the law. For Christ came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it (Matt. 5:17). Christ also was wont to send His disciples two and two, for the solace of mutual company, and for the commendation of social life (Luke 10:1). For, as Solomon says, "A brother that is helped by his brother is like a strong city" (Prov. 18:19). Now by the eating of the paschal lamb was designated the receiving of Christ in the Sacrament of the altar; by Peter, the active life; by John, *(p. 208)* the contemplative. As therefore Peter and John prepared the paschal lamb, so we also, by virtuous action and contemplation of the mysteries and benefits of Christ and of His divinity, ought to prepare our hearts for sacred communion. *"But they said: Where wilt thou that we prepare?"* (Luke 22:9), that is, in what house? *"And he said to them: Behold, as you go into the city,"* Jerusalem, *"there shall meet you a man carrying a pitcher of water"* (Luke 22:10): which man, according to Origen, was the servant of the father of the family to whom Christ directed these disciples; *"follow him into the house where he entereth in."* This could not be foreknown by natural reason, because of future things purely contingent there is no determinate foreknowledge, unless it be divinely revealed. But Christ foreknew this, both by His uncreated knowledge according as He is God, and by created knowledge infused, and by the grace of prophecy which He had most fully according to the human nature. *"And you shall say to the master of the house"* (Luke 22:11): *"The Master saith to thee,"* that is, Christ, called Master by excellence, as the wisdom of the Father according to the divinity (1 Cor. 1:24), and in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge according to the humanity (Col. 2:3). Christ therefore called Himself master, not from love of vanity, but of truth. *"Where is the guest-chamber,"* that is, a secret and quiet place, *"where I may eat the Pasch,"* that is, the paschal lamb, *"with my disciples?" "And he will shew you a large dining-room, furnished"* (Luke 22:12), that is, disposed and prepared or apt for the eating of the lamb. *"There prepare ye."*

The doctors commonly say that the house of this father of a family was near mount Sion and next to the temple: in which house was the aforesaid supper-room, in which the Apostles after the resurrection of Christ lay hid with doors shut until Pentecost (John 20:19); and then in the same supper-room they were filled with the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:1–4). Although the blessed Ambrose and the Gloss say that this man, the father of the family, was poor and ignoble, others however more probably judge that he was a man of great power, rich and noble, in that, notwithstanding the prohibition of the pontiffs, and despising the fear of the chief Jews, he dared to receive Christ and His disciples into his house, and after the passion of Christ so long to entertain His disciples, as one not fearing the Jews. Poor men also are not wont to have so large a house, in which is so large a supper-room, as was this, in which a hundred and twenty men sitting together received the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:15). Finally some think that he was one of the disciples of Christ, so that by the name of master he knew his master the Lord Jesus to be signified. For Christ had also some rich disciples, by whom He sometimes willed that He and His poor disciples be refreshed: for in John it is written that many of the chief men of the Jews believed in Jesus at the approach of this supper (John 12:42).

"And they going," (Luke 22:13), *"found as he had said to them,"* the man carrying a pitcher of water and meeting them, and the house and supper-room, as Jesus said to them: who according as He is God is truth by essence, and as man was confirmed in good from the beginning of the incarnation, so that He could not lie (John 14:6); *"and they made ready the Pasch." "And when the hour was come"* (Luke 22:14), the evening hour of the fifth day of the week, in which hour the paschal lamb was eaten according to the law, *"he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him."* Hence Bede affirms: The hour of eating the Pasch designates the fourteenth day of the first month drawn on to evening, and the fifteenth moon already appearing. On this Theophilus asks how the Lord is said to sit down, that is, to eat sitting, since the Jews ate the Pasch standing, as He commanded (Exod. 12:11). To which (as he relates) some say that Christ and the Apostles ate the paschal lamb standing, then reclined according to the common use, eating certain foods. Some also say that the table was set upon the ground, *(p. 209)* and Christ sat with His Apostles on the ground, after the custom of the ancients. Again some say that the seventy-two disciples also were present, at least in part, and ate the lamb at another table.

"And he said to them: With desire I have desired" (Luke 22:15), that is, intensely and fervently I have longed, *"to eat this Pasch,"* namely this paschal lamb, *"with you, before I suffer,"* that is, be slain by the Jews. This indeed Christ most ardently desired, not principally on account of that legal and prefigurative lamb, but for the fulfilment of that which that lamb prefigured, namely for the institution of the Sacrament of the new and evangelical law: of which Sacrament the figure went before in the paschal lamb, and the eating and immolation of it. For this most worthy Sacrament Christ supremely and ineffably desired to institute, for the eternal honour and glory of God the Father, and for the greatest inestimable utility of the faithful, according to the love which He had for the Father and for us. Again, He desired to eat this last pasch, in order to put an end to the legal observances, and, the figures of the Old Testament being completed, to begin the New Testament, and to do and teach the other things which after the Supper He did and taught. Now Theophilus thus expounds: With desire I have desired, etc. As if He should say: This is the last Supper for me with you, on which account the last is singularly dear to me: as those who are about to go abroad display their deeds and words more affectionately. But according to Cyril, Christ therefore uttered this word because the avaricious Judas was watching the time of the betrayal; but lest he should betray Christ before the completion of this Supper, He had not made known the house, or the man with whom He would celebrate the Pasch: the reason of which He shows by these words.

That the aforesaid eating of the paschal lamb was the last supper of Christ with His disciples, and therefore desired by Him, He makes known by subjoining: *"For I say to you, that from this time,"* that is, after this hour, *"I will not eat it"* (Luke 22:16), the Pasch, or paschal lamb, *"till it be fulfilled,"* that is, truly accomplished what was figuratively signified by that lamb, *"in the kingdom of God,"* that is, in the Church

militant, which in the Gospel is most frequently called the kingdom of God. For that legal lamb prefigured, as was said, the institution and eating of the Sacrament of the altar, and the immolation of Christ on the altar of the cross: all which, after these words, were fulfilled, because a little after Christ instituted the Sacrament of the New Testament, and gave it to His own, and offered Himself to the Father. Whence, according to this exposition, "till" excludes the following time, because after this hour Christ did not eat the typical lamb. Whence, according to Bede, Christ by these words forbids the paschal lamb to be any longer carnally presented, and asserts that He will in no wise celebrate the Mosaic Pasch any more.

"And having taken the chalice" (Luke 22:17), that is, the little cup from which He drank, *"he gave thanks"* to God the Father, according as He was man, teaching us to give thanks to God for all His benefits, even for bodily nourishment; or He gave thanks for the consummation and termination of these legal foods, because this chalice or drink also pertained to the old Pasch, to which He was putting an end. For twice at this Supper He is read to have taken the chalice. The first pertained to the old Pasch and Testament, the second to the new, as will be said. *"And said: Take, and divide it among you,"* that is, successively and in order drink of this drink or little cup: as was the custom in the eating of the paschal lamb to drink. And that drink prefigured the receiving of the blood of Christ under the sacramental species: whence in the institution of the sacrament of the Eucharist the legal things ceased, as to obligation, and an end was put to the typical lamb and its drink. For when the truth comes, and the thing figured is presented, the figures and types cease. *"For I say to you"* (Luke 22:18), *"that I will not drink of the fruit of the vine,"* that is, of wine of this kind, which is generated in the vine, *(p. 210) "till the kingdom of God come,"* that is, until after the passion I shall have risen immortal, and so in me shall come and be shown the kingdom of the Church militant, so that I may appear the glorious King of the Church, and in the elect and faithful by faith and grace begin to reign, converting them to me, either anew, or more perfectly. According to this exposition Christ insinuated that after His passion and resurrection He would drink with His disciples: which it is certain happened. Whence in the Acts of the Apostles Peter testifies that he and the other Apostles did eat and drink with Christ, after He rose again from the dead (Acts 10:41). Nor is there doubt that the disciples then gave Christ wine to drink, namely the best drink they had. Or thus: "I will not drink of the fruit of the vine," that is, I will not take this typical drink any more, "till the kingdom of God come," that is, till the faith of the Church be preached and received. And so Christ insinuated that that legal drink was to cease, and the thing figured by it was henceforth to be celebrated, namely the receiving of His blood. So also, "till" can be taken as before, namely exclusively.

Finally, the things pertaining to the legal lamb being performed and ended, He completes and begins what was figured by it, instituting and confecting the sacrament of the Eucharist. *"And taking bread"* (Luke 22:19), that is, unleavened wheaten bread, on which they then fed, taking it into His blessed hands, *"he gave thanks"* as man to God the Father for all His benefits conferred upon Him, and because through Himself He decreed to redeem the human race. But specially He then gave thanks for the old things ended, and the new mysteries now to be begun. *"And broke,"* the bread now consecrated, since He transubstantiated the whole bread into His body. But the bread is said to have been broken, not because the substance of bread was then there, or because He broke His own body existing there, but because the sacramental species, namely the remaining quantity of the bread, under which the body of the Lord was contained, was truly broken, and was the subject of that division, as also now in the fraction of the host. *"And gave to them, saying: This"* which I now reach to you, and from supreme love and most liberally bestow, *"is my body,"* truly, not merely representatively, *"which is given for you,"* that is, for your deliverance is now to be exposed to passion and death, the betrayer betraying, and I of My own will going to the passion. Or, "Which is given for you," that is, which I now most munificently give you to eat for your profit and strength, that grace may be increased in you. *"Do this,"* that is, celebrate and confect this Sacrament in its time, give and receive it, *"for a commemoration of me,"* that is, in memory of my supreme love for you, and of my most bitter passion for you. So, as the legal pasch was figurative of the future, so this evangelical pasch is commemorative of the past. But since Christ confected this Sacrament by saying, "This is my body," therefore He said this before

He reached the body to the disciples. Some however say that in reaching it He repeated these words. But I pass over difficulties of this sort, because here and there in divers books they are found most copiously solved.

Next is described the institution of the sacrament of the Eucharist under the species of wine, and specially the consecration of the blood of Christ. *"In like manner the chalice also,"* (Luke 22:20) He took in His hands, and gave to the disciples, *"after he had supped,"* that is, eaten the paschal lamb, *"saying: This is the chalice, the new testament,"* supply, confirming and signing, *"in my blood,"* dedicated, confirmed and consecrated. But the container is put for the contained, when it is said, "The chalice in my blood": so that the sense is, My blood existing in the chalice. So the new testament is confirmed in the blood of Christ, because in the consecration of His blood it was instituted, and in the shedding of His blood it was ratified. For a testament is confirmed in death (Heb. 9:16–17). *"Which shall be shed for you,"* that is, for your salvation I will shed this blood and permit it to be shed. *(p. 211)* And by the disciples the Saviour understood all the elect to be freed by His blood. Indeed the blood of Christ was shed for all men, as to sufficiency, since, as far as in itself is, it is fit to take away the sins of all, and to confer grace and glory; but for the elect alone was it shed, as to efficacy, because they alone salubriously obtain the fruit of the Lord's passion. Now Chrysostom says: This blood works in us the royal image, does not suffer the nobility of the soul to wither, forthwith watering the soul, and inspiring great virtue. This blood puts demons to flight, calls angels to us; it has washed the world, made heaven accessible; and by it its partakers become friends of the supernal powers. It clothes us with a royal robe, or rather with the King Himself. And as, if thou hast approached clean, thou hast approached salubriously; so if clothed with an evil conscience, thou approachest to thy damnation, into guilt and punishments. For if those who defile the imperial purple are visited with the same penalty as those who tear it away; it is not absurd that those also who with an unclean mind receive the body of Christ are visited with the same penalty as those who fixed it with nails.

Moreover it is to be noted that the Sacrament of the Lord's body and blood was instituted by Christ for many causes: First, in remembrance of His passion and of His obedience even unto death, and of the other mysteries and acts of His, that we may most devoutly recall them to memory and imitate them, conforming ourselves to His passion by the chastisement of our own body, and the mortification of our own will, pleasure and vanity. For, as the Apostle says, "They that are Christ's have crucified their flesh with the vices and concupiscences" (Gal. 5:24). The prince also of the Apostles says: "Christ suffered for us, leaving you an example that you should follow his steps" (1 Peter 2:21). Second, in sign and memorial of His charity toward us. For this is the greatest indication of charity, that He left us His own body and blood as food and drink salutary to the soul: because that is the most loving and most munificent donation by which one gives himself to another, as Christ in this Sacrament was and is giver and gift. Third, as nourishment of spiritual life, because in this Sacrament the fountain of grace is contained, and He Himself bestows the chief charisms of graces on those who receive worthily. Fourth, for the strength of mental confirmation, because this food strengthens the soul, as other food the body. Fifth, as viaticum of this pilgrimage, that by the virtue of this most worthy nourishment we may proceed and arrive at the fatherland of the heavenly paradise, as Elias walked in the strength of the hearth-cake even to mount Horeb (3 Kings 19:6–8). Sixth, as a remedy of satisfaction for our sins, because this Sacrament avails in many ways for those who worthily receive it, and by its oblation and reception our sins are relaxed, and the departed also are succoured. Seventh, as pledge and earnest of the future eternal inheritance. For it prefigures the beatific fruition in the fatherland, because those whom the Saviour now deigns to refresh with the Sacrament of His body and blood, He will then refresh with the sight of His divinity without end; and what is now mystically done will then be fulfilled in truth. Therefore let us daily, with due attention, weigh the institution of this Sacrament and the causes of the institution, and repay Christ in return according to our strength. Finally Chrysostom says: See, O man, with what honour thou art honoured by Christ, with what a table thou art favoured, at which angels seeing tremble, and dare not look without reverence because of the brightness which is carried within. Again he

says, showing how great is the charity of Christ toward us: What shepherd nourishes the sheep with his own members? But mothers also give their sons to others to nurse; Christ, however, did not so, but those whom He begot nourishes by Himself, from Himself. Therefore let us ever strive to be grateful for so great charity and liberality of our Saviour and God, and in all things obey Him from most pure charity, *(p. 212)* and sorrow with Him, nor celebrate or communicate without due preparation and devotion. Otherwise, the greater the love and beneficence of Christ toward us, the graver will be our ingratitude, perversity and damnation.

Lastly, since Christ at the Supper communicated His disciples with His own hands, hence on the day of the Supper religious receive the body of the Saviour from the hand of their prelate. — This also is to be known, that although Christ after supper gave His body and blood to His disciples, yet afterwards the Church ordained that this Sacrament be received by those fasting, on account of reverence for it, and that it may be received more devoutly.

Consequently Christ foretells His betrayal, as also He frequently foretold His passion, that He might not be thought betrayed and slain unforeseen and unaware, and that He might manifest that He was spontaneously betrayed, taken and crucified. *"But yet behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me"* (Luke 22:21), that is, although I have bestowed on you so great goods, nevertheless the hand of him who will soon betray me, *"is with me on the table,"* that is, my betrayer eats with me as a friend. By which words Christ, as far as in Him lay, admonished Judas, who was conscious to himself of his crime, to desist from evil; but He does not name the betrayer, lest in the supper of peace a great disturbance should arise, and lest any of the disciples should rise against the betrayer. Christ also complains of this against priests of unclean and impious conversation, and the rest who eat unworthily, who (as the Apostle says) are guilty of the body and blood of Christ, and eat and drink judgment to themselves (1 Cor. 11:27, 29). *"And the Son of man indeed goeth, according to that which is determined"* (Luke 22:22), that is, Christ the Son of the Virgin, and the highest among the sons of the first man, according as it was defined, that is, eternally foreseen and preordained by the Father, and foretold by the Prophets, goes from life to death, from this exile to the fatherland, and from temporal passion to eternal glory: for also this God foretold by the Prophet, that Christ was to be betrayed by His disciple, holy David saying in the person of Christ: "For even the man of my peace," etc. (Ps. 40:10). Hence in the Acts Peter says to the Jews: "Jesus of Nazareth… being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have slain" (Acts 2:22–23). For God the Father decreed to save the world by the passion of Christ, as Isaias said: "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all… by his bruises we are healed" (Isa. 53:6, 5). And again in the same place God speaks: "For the wickedness of my people have I struck him" (Isa. 53:8). *"But yet woe to that man by whom he shall be betrayed"*: that is, he will sin mortally and merit and obtain eternal punishment. By which word Christ, as far as in Him lay, drew back the betrayer from so great a crime by terror and threat of punishment.

On which let us sagaciously weigh how great is the frailty and malice of the human mind, in that this most wretched Judas, having heard such great sermons of Christ and these admonitions, and having received other benefits from Christ, even at this Supper, in the communion, and in the washing of his feet by Christ (John 13:5), having finally seen so many miracles of Christ, and having so long conversed in the so holy and most chosen society of the Apostles, slid into so great impiety, nor was recalled from his conceived wicked purpose. Let none of us therefore presume on his own strength, nor vainly glory, but let him ever be fearful. Hence St. Bernard says: If neither in the kingdom of majesty, nor in the paradise of pleasure, nor in the college of unity, namely of Christ, was a fall wanting, who can be secure in this place of horror and vast solitude (Deut. 32:10)? To the aforesaid words also, as the evangelist Matthew writes, Christ added: "It were better for that man if he had not been born" (Matt. 26:24).

"And they began to inquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing" (Luke 22:23): the innocent Apostles themselves. Where the wonderful holy simplicity of the Apostles appears and is

commended, who although they had never thought anything of the betrayal of their master, yet believed Christ more than themselves: therefore they inquired among themselves *(p. 213)* which of them should commit so great a crime. Nay they inquired of this in a threefold way: First, each examined his own conscience, whether he had thought any such thing. Second, they asked among themselves. Third, as the evangelist Matthew says: "And they began to be very much troubled, and every one to say: Is it I, Lord?" (Matt. 26:22) — they asked one by one. Judas also said: "Is it I, Rabbi?" To whom Christ answered: "Thou hast said it" (Matt. 26:25). On which Basil writes: As in bodily passions there are many which the sufferers do not feel, but rather give credit to the conjecture of the physicians; so also in the passions of the soul, if anyone does not feel sin in himself, he ought to believe those who are able more to know his sins.

"And there was also a strife amongst them" (Luke 22:24), namely the Apostles, *"which of them should seem to be greater,"* that is, higher than the rest. Although some say that this strife was one of humility, so that they were endeavouring to prevent one another in honour, yet it is truer what Chrysostom says, asserting that it was of some little elation, because they suffered something human: which is plain from the rebuke and instruction of them subjoined. The occasion of which, according to Gregory, was that they had heard Christ already foretell His passion, and soon to be. He being taken from them, one of them ought in Christ's place to preside over the rest: therefore they began to contend which of them was greater or more apt for this. Now Theophilus says: When they were inquiring among themselves which of them was to betray the Lord, the sequel was that they said to one another: Art thou about to betray? And from this they were compelled to say: I am the better, I am the greater, and the like. As Bede, however, testifies: As the good seek and take from the Scriptures what they may profit by; so the perverse and reprobate, if they find anything reprehensible in the Scriptures, gladly embrace this, that thereby they may excuse or cover their wickedness. Whence some read more ardently that a strife arose among the disciples of Christ; but let us rather look at and imitate, not what the as yet carnal disciples did, but what the spiritual Master commanded.

"And he said to them," (Luke 22:25) rebuking their error, and instructing them to humility: *"The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them,"* that is, of the Gentiles, in such a way that they preside over their subjects with ambition and vain glorying in their power and excellence. Whence Christ makes mention of the Gentiles, to show the detestableness of ambition. For it is of the Gentiles to aspire to primacy. *"And they that have power over them,"* namely the princes of the Gentiles, who exercise power over their subjects, *"are called beneficent,"* that is, are vainly praised by their subjects and said to act well, even when they act unjustly. For very many flatter princes, and offer laudatory and adulatory discourses, that they may obtain their favour or gifts. *"But you not so"* (Luke 22:26), that is, be not made like to those Gentile princes by aspiring to principality, because they, as lacking sacred laws, are subject to the aforesaid manners, but your height is and is founded on true humility. Therefore it is subjoined: *"But he that is the greater among you,"* that is, wiser or more virtuous among you, *"let him become as the younger,"* that is, let him show himself more humble than the rest; and let him be the more subject to God and the more exemplary to his neighbours in every virtue, as he has obtained greater grace from God, and sees himself the more bound to render account to the Most High. For which reason in Ecclesiasticus it is read: "The greater thou art, humble thyself in all things, and thou shalt find grace before God" (Ecclus. 3:20). And again it is written: "Humble thy spirit very much: for the vengeance on the flesh of the ungodly is fire and worms" (Ecclus. 7:19). For the sign of true spiritual progress and true wisdom and perfection is true, stable and deep humility, according to that of Proverbs: "Where humility is, there also is wisdom" (Prov. 11:2).

On this Chrysostom says: The princes of the world are made that they may lord it over their inferiors; but the princes of the Church, that they may serve their inferiors, that they may neglect their own advantages and procure theirs, *(p. 214)* and not fear to die for their salvation. To desire secular principality, even if there be no reason, there is a cause. But to covet the principality of the Church, there is neither reason nor cause, because it is neither just nor useful. For what wise man endures to subject himself to servitude and so great a

peril, unless perhaps he who believes not the judgment of God, or who fears not that God will punish the impious? — Hence Basil says: Let not the dignity then exalt him that presides, lest he fall from the beatitude of humility. But let him know that true humility is the ministry of many. For as he who ministers to many wounded, and wipes away the matter of every wound, takes not from that ministry cause of elation; so also much more he to whom are committed the cares of brotherly infirmities, as one who is to be the minister of all, to render account for all (Heb. 13:17), ought to be humble and solicitous. Nevertheless against the vices of delinquents he ought, by zeal of justice, to be erect, that his humility be ruled by discretion, nor so submit himself to his subjects as to become pusillanimous or remiss in the correction of the erring, but by his authority discharge the part of vicar of Christ, and pay the debt of his office, although in his own heart he prefer to himself those whom he corrects.

"And he that is the leader," that is, who exceeds others in dignity or holiness, *"as he that serveth,"* that is, let him show himself obsequious, according to the exigency of place and cause and time, and humbly think of himself. As Chrysostom says: Primacy desires him who flees it, and abhors him who desires it. Again he says: Man knows which member he has honourable and which unseemly. But this member does not know this of itself, lest there be schism in the body. So Christ, whose members we are, knows the difference among the saints of this way; but to the saints themselves it is not granted to know here their difference from one another. Nevertheless, even if anyone know by revelation that he is more virtuous than others, he ought none the less humbly to serve others, and humble himself to the rest, because according to certain considerations he can truly judge himself inferior to others, namely by considering himself according to that which he is or has or had from himself, or would soon again have, if he were left by grace; but others according to that which they have, had, or perhaps will have from God. For so the Apostle said: "Jesus Christ came into this world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief" (1 Tim. 1:15).

Finally, thus Christ according to the form assumed humbled Himself and ministered, as if He ignored His own excellence (Phil. 2:7): therefore consequently by His example He exhorts to humility. *"For which is greater, he that sitteth at table, or he that serveth?"* (Luke 22:27) *"Is not he that sitteth at table,"* greater and worthier than he that serveth, according as he is such? although frequently on other grounds before God he that serveth is greater in gifts of grace. *"But I am in the midst of you, as he that serveth,"* who bear myself in the contrary manner to the world, that is, I show myself more humble than you all, although I am greater than you, and am obsequious to you. For also at this Supper Christ washed their feet (John 13:4 ff.), and ministered His body and blood to them in the Sacrament; the best spiritual dishes also of grace in the present and of glory in the future, Christ ministers. So it is clear from what has been said, and the Gloss asserts it, that it is necessary that the ruler show himself to his subjects as father by discipline, and as mother by piety, and as servant by humility, that neither rigid severity nor piety be remiss, but on both sides discretion be kept.

Article XLVIII — Continuation of the Exposition of this Chapter: "But you are they who have continued with me in my temptations"

(p. 215) A little before, Christ foretold eternal woe to the unfaithful disciple, namely Judas the betrayer: who, when the following words were being said, went out, because, as is read in John, "When he had received the morsel, he went out immediately" (John 13:30). Now therefore He promises good things to His other faithful disciples, namely the Apostles. *"And you are they who have continued with me in my temptations"* (Luke 22:28), that is, in the time of adversity and of the tribulations which the Jews brought upon me (who frequently tempted Christ: now by asking a sign from heaven (Luke 11:16); now by inquiring whether it was lawful to pay tribute, on account of which He said to them, "Why tempt you me, ye hypocrites?" (Luke 20:23; Matt. 22:18); now by wishing to stone Him, John 8:59), and until this hour, in which most grievous tribulation is at hand for me, you have stayed with me. Whence already before Thomas the apostle said to his fellow Apostles: "Let us also go, that we may die with him" (John 11:16).

"And I dispose to you, as my Father hath disposed to me, a kingdom" (Luke 22:29), that is, in the heavenly kingdom I prepare for you a beatific abode, and by the merit of my passion I will now unlock to you the gate of the eternal kingdom. Hence in John He says: "I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2). And this Christ accomplished, as the eternal Father disposed to Him, that is, decreed and ordained to be done by Him, as in Matthew He professes: "To sit on my right or left hand is not mine to give to you, but to them for whom it is prepared by my Father" (Matt. 20:23): that is, not by human power, but by paternal and divine disposition I furnish this. Or, "As my Father hath disposed to me": that is, as the Father of His goodness and charity bestowed on me, according to my human nature, the goods of glory, and prepared the same for me from eternity, and from the beginning of the incarnation gave them as to the essential reward; so of my goodness and charity toward you, I prepare the goods of glory and will bestow them upon you. *"That you may eat and drink"* (Luke 22:30), that is, be spiritually refreshed fully and most joyously: according to that of the Psalm: "They shall be inebriated with the plenty of thy house, and thou shalt make them drink of the torrent of thy pleasure" (Ps. 35:9); and in the Canticles: "Eat, O friends, and drink, and be inebriated, my dearly beloved" (Cant. 5:1); *"at my table,"* that is, in the fruition of the Godhead. For as dishes are set upon a table, so in the superessential, superblessed and supersimple Godhead is infinite opulence, and the most joyous and immense possession of every beatific nourishment (namely of all goodness and beauty). It is therefore itself the spiritual table, and at once food and drink, in my heavenly kingdom.

Finally some expound this place of the kingdom of the Church militant: in which Christ disposed to the Apostles principality over the faithful, according to what is written, "Thou shalt make them princes over all the earth" (Ps. 44:17); *"that you may eat and drink at my table,"* that is, at the table of the altar, receive the Sacrament of His body and blood. The words adduced, therefore, are not to be understood carnally, as if in the future life there would be a use of bodily foods, but by bodily things spiritual things are designated, as is the custom of the Scriptures. For since those who are table-companions of earthly kings enjoy a great prerogative, Christ so speaks, to intimate how great will be the felicity of His elect. And plainly this is the change of the right hand of the Most High (Ps. 76:11), that they who now choose to be humbled with Christ, to be subject, and to serve, are afterwards so exalted. *(p. 216) "And may sit upon thrones"* twelve. By the thrones or seats upon which the Apostles shall sit can be understood the multitudes converted by them, or the judiciary power granted them, in which they happily rest. *"Judging,"* as chief assessors of the supreme Judge, not as pronouncers of the sentence, *"the twelve tribes of Israel,"* by condemning those who remained in infidelity. Nor is this promised to the Apostles alone, but to all the perfect also, who have left all for Christ, and follow the apostolic life. But how does the Saviour say, "You shall sit upon twelve thrones," when Judas had already gone away and was reprobate? To which it can be answered, that it is because another succeeded in his place, namely Matthias the apostle (Acts 1:26).

"And the Lord said" (Luke 22:31), Jesus, who according to His divinity is the supreme, universal and authoritative Lord of all, *"to Simon Peter: Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you,"* that is, has eagerly sought, and asked leave of God: for he cannot tempt men, save insofar as it is permitted by God and the holy angels; *"that he may sift,"* that is, agitate, shake and trouble by the impulse of his temptation, *"as wheat,"* is sifted in a sieve, so that the chaff remains, and the flour passes through. So Judas remained as bran to the devil for torments, but the other Apostles passed over to glory. From these words it appears that the more the devil sees anyone advancing in the grace of God, or disposed to better things, the more he strives to overthrow him by his temptations, because he envies him the more, since he is the perpetual detester of every honest good. *"But I have prayed for thee"* (Luke 22:32). For it belonged to Christ according to the assumed nature to pray. Whence in John He prays much for His own, and for the other elect, saying: "Holy Father, keep them in thy name whom thou hast given me" (John 17:11). *"That thy faith fail not,"* that is, that it be not utterly uprooted, or finally fail, although for a time it waver. So Christ prayed for Peter, not that he should not be tempted, but that in the evil of temptation he should not be left. Nor is there doubt that for the other elect Apostles also Christ asked the same; but therefore He speaks specially to Peter, because among

the Apostles he was more principal, more fervent and bolder, and because he was to fall into a greater temptation, and to fall the more: on which account He deigned the more to forewarn and fortify him. Likewise, because the Church was specially to be committed to Peter. Whence what is said, "That thy faith fail not," is expounded, That the faith of the Church to be committed to thee fail not. And so from these words an argument is taken that the faith of the Roman Church, which Peter planted in it, will last to the end of the world. — Finally, Christ uttered these words to provoke the Apostles to the consideration of their own frailty and imminent danger, lest they be puffed up by the praise and great promise before given.

"And thou, being once converted," that is, perfectly converted: which was most of all when the Holy Ghost was received on the day of Pentecost; *"confirm thy brethren,"* that is, thy neighbours and the faithful, and all whom I shall commit to thee to be ruled. How faithfully Peter did this, appears partly in the Acts of the Apostles, and in his legend, and the Itinerary of Clement. These things Christ speaks to Peter chiefly, because to him He was to commit the Church, as is plain in John where it is said to him: "Feed my sheep" (John 21:17). As if He should say: As thou obtainest from me special mercy, and after thy fall art raised up and strengthened; so thou, perfectly converted, bestow mercy upon thy neighbours, and strengthen and raise them. Whence this was one chief cause why Christ permitted the future pastor of His Church to fall more gravely than the other elect Apostles, that in his own frailty, fault and most pious reparation he might learn how to compassionate and succour others. For temptation profits the elect in very many ways, namely, that they may recognise their own infirmity, invoke God more fervently, rise again more cautious, and learn to compassionate others, and so obtain the crown of glory. Hence in Ecclesiasticus it is had: "He that hath not been tried, what manner of things doth he know? A man that hath much experience, shall think of many things; *(p. 217)* and he that hath learned many things, shall shew forth understanding" (Ecclus. 34:9–10) — and he that is not tried knows few things. And James: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he hath been proved, he shall receive the crown of life" (James 1:12).

"Who said to him" (Luke 22:33), as one not fearing to be overcome by the tempter, or to succumb by his own frailty: *"Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison and to death."* This Peter said incautiously, presuming on his own constancy, neither leaning on due grace, nor weighing human defectiveness. Yet a certain chief fervour of love for Christ was to him the occasion of speaking so confidently; but with that love was mixed a certain inconsiderateness or indiscretion, and from it Peter spoke what he esteemed himself to say from virtuous love. For no one directly uses virtue ill, since an elicited act of virtue is always virtuous.

"And he said," (Luke 22:34) repressing Peter's incautious speech: *"I say to thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day,"* that is, this night (which is the natural part of the day containing twenty-four hours), *"till thou thrice deny that thou knowest me,"* that is, thou shalt thrice deny me with the mouth, not with the heart, before the cock crow. Yet in Mark Christ says to Peter: "This night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice" (Mark 14:30). Whence what He now says, "shall not crow," is expounded, that is, shall not crow through, or shall not complete his crow. On this I have written more fully on Matthew (Matt. 26:34). — Now, as Theophilus says, from these we draw great doctrine: that human resolve is not sufficient without divine help. For Peter, although he showed himself fervent, being yet forsaken by God, was straightway supplanted by the enemy. Basil also says: By God's permission, the fearful at times suffer a fall, as a remedy for the preceding pride. But although the fault of the fearful and of others seems the same, yet it makes no small difference: for the God-fearing man sinned from certain snares, and almost as he would not; but others sin by taking no care either of God or of themselves, not distinguishing between sinning and acting virtuously.

"And he said to them," namely Christ to the Apostles: *"When I sent you without purse and scrip"* (Luke 22:35), when I sent you to preach to the Jews through divers places, commanding you to go without purse and scrip, that is, repositories of money and of provisions, that your hope might be in God alone, and that you should not carry exterior aids with you, *"and shoes,"* because they went with bare feet, as did Christ, in sign

of contempt of this world (Luke 10:3–4); *"did you want anything?"* necessary to sustenance. *"But they said: Nothing"* (Luke 22:36). For then Christ allowed the Apostles to receive food from those to whom they preached the gospel, from whom also they received a competence of life. For nature is content with little; but the abuse of human pleasure seeks many superfluous things, and quickly complains, although beyond natural necessity and usefulness it has them.

"He said therefore to them: But now he that hath a purse, let him take it," that is, carry and keep with him, *"and likewise a scrip,"* in which he may carry provisions, let him bring along. As if He should say: To these things now I give you leave, which before I forbade, because now a greater persecution is at hand for you: during which you will not be able to preach, nor be sustained by others in the accustomed way: therefore you can provide for yourselves. For laws are to be changed when necessity requires. *"And he that hath not, let him sell his coat and buy a sword."* If this be understood of a material sword, Christ commanded this very thing to the Apostles for mystical reasons: first, to teach that at times a moderate defence of oneself and of a friend is lawful; second, to encourage the Apostles to have a mind prepared for the defence of their master, out of zeal of love and justice; third, to prove by the presence of swords to His disciples that the faculty of resisting His enemies was not wanting, especially His enemies prostrated by divine virtue (John 18:6); fourth, by the material sword to teach that to the Church *(p. 218)* the spiritual sword is necessary, which is the word of God and the law of the Church (Eph. 6:17). Hence Ambrose says, speaking to Christ: Why dost thou bid to buy a sword, who forbiddest to strike? Why dost thou command to have what thou forbiddest to be drawn? unless perhaps that defence may be ready, vengeance not necessary; and that thou mayest seem to have been able to avenge, but not to have willed. Therefore He subjoins the cause of this precept:

"For I say to you, that this that is written must yet be fulfilled in me" (Luke 22:37), that is, at the time now at hand, and beyond the rest now completed in me, this which is written to the letter of me by Isaias, must, by conditional necessity, be fulfilled in me, namely: *"And with the wicked he was reckoned."* This Isaias foretold of Christ the Holy of Holies (Isa. 53:12); and Christ straightway after these words, the same night, was taken as a robber, and on the next day hanged between robbers. *"For the things concerning me have an end,"* that is, those which the Prophets prophesied of my passion are nearing their end, and will straightway be fulfilled, and thereafter I shall rise to impassible life.

"But they said: Lord, behold here are two swords" (Luke 22:38), that is, we have two swords already at hand, as ready for thy defence. *"And he said to them: It is enough,"* two suffice for that for which I bade you have swords. For one sword drawn by Peter sufficiently shows the readiness of the Apostles for the defence of their master, and the voluntary passion of Christ, who forbade the wounding use of the sword; but the other sword, not drawn, sufficiently shows that the Apostles were not permitted to do what they wished, and that at times it is more virtuous to bear death patiently for God and equity than to resist in self-defence. Or therefore He said, "It is enough," because the two swords sufficiently prefigured the two spiritual swords of the Church, namely the spiritual and the secular right: of which the first uses the sword of the word of God, the other the material sword. Now Ambrose touches some ways of expounding these: namely, of the spiritual sword (Eph. 6:17), which is the word of God, or Holy Scripture, which is twofold, namely of the New and Old Testament. There is also the sword of the passion and martyrdom, which is bought by putting the body to death for the Saviour: for the body is as the tunic of the soul. But the sword of the word of God is bought by selling patrimony, and forsaking all for Christ.

"And going out, he went, according to his custom, to the Mount of Olives" (Luke 22:39), going out of the supper-room, in which He did and uttered what has been already written. For in the night times He was wont to come to this place with His disciples for the sake of prayer, and also He frequently went by this mount towards Bethania for the sake of lodging. Matthew also says that, "a hymn being said, they went out unto the mount of Olives" (Matt. 26:30). For on this mount olives grew and stood abundantly, by which piety is designated: therefore that place befitted Christ, the most pure fountain of all piety and grace. Now John

testifies that He went forth with His disciples “over the brook Cedron” (John 18:1), that is, of the cedars growing about that brook: which brook is between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives. And at the foot of this mountain was a village named Gethsemani, to which Christ came, according to Matthew (Matt. 26:36). And there was a garden there, into which Christ entered and His disciples: which garden, as some say, stood in the field next the aforesaid village. *“And his disciples also followed him,”* that is, the eleven Apostles went out together with their master, and, as is read, went in a body near Him, as chickens by the hen. As Theophilus says: After the Supper, neither idleness nor jest nor sleep occupies the Lord, but prayer and doctrine. Which is especially to be imitated by prelates.

“And when he was come to the place” (Luke 22:40), namely to the aforesaid garden, *“he said to them: Pray, lest ye enter into temptation.”* He does not say, Pray that ye be not tempted, because this life is not lived without temptation, since it is written, “The life of man upon earth is a warfare” (Job 7:1); but He says, “Pray, lest ye enter into temptation,” that is, that temptation take you, enclose you, or conquer you, *(p. 219)* drawing you to consent or to work or to the omission of a due work. For the beginning of temptation is the suggestion of sin, its middle is consent to delight in the work, its consummation is the wicked work, or omission of a due act. Finally prayer is the strongest shield and protector against temptation, since prayer, according to Damascene, is the ascent of the mind to God: and so it raises the mind from earthly things, and joins it to God, and merits His help. But we must pray confidently, fervently, and instantly, or unceasingly. For as a thief, the outcry being heard, flees, and friends and neighbours hasten to succour; so the cry of fervent prayer puts the devil to flight, summons the angels to help, and obtains aid from God.

“And he was withdrawn away from them a stone’s cast” (Luke 22:41), that is, He withdrew from the Apostles by so much space as a light stone could be thrown, wishing to pray apart: not that His mind could be hindered by the presence of others from the contemplation of God and attention of prayer, since He beheld the Deity by sight; but that He might instruct us by His example, at the time of prayer freely to flee the public and all that hinder the recollection of the mind in God, since with attentive heart and tranquil mind we must converse with God, sublime and blessed. Moreover, as Matthew testifies, Christ took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, James and John, and going on a little with them from the other eight Apostles, began to grow sorrowful and to be sad; to fear also and to be heavy, according to Mark. “And he saith to them: My soul is sorrowful even unto death; stay you here, and watch with me. And going a little further from them,” namely a stone’s cast, “he fell upon his face, praying” (Matt. 26:37–39; Mark 14:33–34). But Luke now subjoins: *“And kneeling down, he prayed.”* Therefore it must be said that He prayed in both ways or postures. And it is probable that first He bent the knee, then prostrated Himself on the ground, supremely humbling Himself to God the Father, and most intensely supplicating: which only belonged to Him according to the human nature, then mortal, and a little after to suffer dreadfully.

“Saying: Father, if thou wilt, remove this chalice from me” (Luke 22:42). Christ prayed that the Father would take from Him this chalice, that is, this most bitter passion: yet He did not pray this by absolute prayer, and according to deliberative reason, or the will simply so called; but conditionally, and according to natural and sensitive appetite, by which His most tender inferior sensitive nature naturally abhorred so violent and most penal a death. For prayer, as Augustine and Damascene say, is the interpreter and messenger of desire: therefore what it is lawful to desire, it is lawful to pray for. Whence in that mode in which Christ desired not to be slain, He prayed that the chalice be taken away from Him. But He did not desire this according to His divine and uncreated will, which He has as God, which in Him and in the Father and the Holy Ghost is one in number, as in the three Persons there is one essence; nor did He desire it according to His human deliberative, superior and intellective will, which is properly and simply named will, nor according to reason. For this will and reason of the soul of Christ were ever conformed to the divine and uncreated will, both in the thing willed, and in the manner and cause of willing. For such a will in itself is indeterminate to one, and freely moved to either of opposites; but in Christ it was from the first instant of the incarnation confirmed in

good, and perfectly subject and conformed to the divine will. Therefore Christ desired this only according to natural and sensitive appetite: which is determined to one of the opposites, inasmuch as it is only natural, nor freely borne to both; therefore it cannot always be conformed to the divine will in the thing willed, because it cannot will but the one or the other of the opposites. Yet neither in Christ nor in the other Saints was it wholly or, properly speaking, contrary to the divine and superior will, because it desired as God willed it to desire. *(p. 220)* So, according to this natural and sensitive will, which is nevertheless improperly called will, Christ wished and prayed that this chalice be taken from Him; and this prayer was of the sensitive appetite as moving to propose, and of reason as proposing, as an allegation before a judge is said to be of the party as moving, and of the advocate as proposing.

Finally every prayer of Christ which He poured forth from reason and deliberative intellectual will was always heard: and such prayer is called properly and absolutely prayer. But the prayer which He poured forth from natural and sensitive appetite is said in a certain way not to have been heard, namely as to the matter; but that prayer was not absolute and simply so called prayer. So it is plain that every prayer of Christ, properly called prayer, was heard. For which reason He Himself says in John: "Father, I give thee thanks that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always" (John 11:41–42). The Apostle also confesses to the Hebrews that Christ "with a strong cry and tears offering up prayers, was heard for his reverence" (Heb. 5:7). — But it can be objected that in the person of Christ it is said in the Psalm: "O my God, I shall cry by day, and thou wilt not hear" (Ps. 21:3). To which it must be answered that this is to be understood of the petition of Christ in a certain respect, namely of His prayer which is improperly called prayer, and took origin from sensitive appetite.

Moreover Christ so prayed that nevertheless He knew it ought not to be done: first, to show that in Him was true humanity, and its natural affections; second, to demonstrate to us that it is lawful to wish, according to natural appetite, something which God wills not; third, to show that man ought always to subject his will to the divine will; fourth, to teach us in every necessity to flee to God by praying; fifth, because what He taught others, He Himself willed to do, namely to pray. Now Chrysostom says: Consider how great and wonderful it was to hear that the ineffable God, transcending all intellect, willed to be conceived in the womb of a Virgin, to suck milk, and to suffer all human things. Since therefore what was to be was almost incredible, first He sent before Prophets announcing it; afterwards He Himself, coming clothed with flesh, that He might not be thought a phantasm, so permits His flesh to bear natural defects, to hunger, thirst, labour, sleep, be affected, and be anxious; therefore also He shrinks from death by natural horror, demonstrating true humanity in Himself.

"Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done": that is, let not that be fulfilled which according to sensitive affection I desire, but what thou willest. Whence He says this of the inferior and sensitive will, according to which He abhorred death. This Christ prayed with deliberate will: and in this He was heard absolutely.

"And there appeared to him an angel from heaven, strengthening him" (Luke 22:43). It is probable that this angel was Michael, then prince of the Synagogue, whose most worthy person Christ was. Now this angel appeared from heaven, that is, descending from heaven, and standing visibly near and before Christ in an assumed body; *"and strengthened him,"* that is, spoke words consolatory and comforting, full of praise, to Christ, saying: O Lord, thou art now about to deliver the whole world; this hour and thy most salutary passion the Prophets foretold, and the Saints await in limbo. These or like words he said. By which, ministerially as a servant, and occasionally as one recalling and proposing the cause of comfort against the great sadness and fear of Christ, he strengthened Christ as to the inferior and sensitive part of His soul, according to which He was less and lower than the angels. Whence by these words Christ a little after lessened or removed those penal affections of the sensitive part: not that He needed comfort or angelic help, or as if by His own power and virtue He could not mitigate and remove those aforesaid passions, or rather propassions; *(p. 221)* nay He assumed them spontaneously and from the previous judgment of reason for

reasonable causes, so that when He willed, He made them cease by His own power: but He willed also to hear from the angel the cause of comfort, and occasionally to be comforted according to His sensitive part, to show in Himself the truth of human nature in all things; likewise, for our instruction, that we may know that to those who pray devoutly and affectionately holy angels assist, and bestow help and consolation; and likewise, as some say, for the consolation and comfort of the Apostles standing near: from which it seems to follow that the Apostles bodily beheld this angel, especially those three who were nearer to Christ.

"And being in an agony" (Luke 22:43): that is, in a certain interior contest or struggle, in which the natural and sensitive appetite of the soul of Christ abhorring death, and His reason or deliberate will accepting and desiring death, in some manner contended with each other. Yet on this account there was in Christ no disorder or contrariety of wills, because the superior will of Christ, both divine and human, willed that the inferior appetite of His soul be so affected and moved, for the causes aforesaid, so that the affections of the sensitive part neither anticipated nor hindered reason, and at reason's command gave way. But in us it happens otherwise, in whom the passions anticipate and hinder reason, and resist it, even against its will: whence they often lead it to a fall, while the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh (Gal. 5:17). Moreover this agony can be understood to be that vehement anxiety of imminent death, which Christ most clearly saw intellectually to be at hand: nay even in the imaginative power He proposed it to Himself inwardly as determinately to be considered. Which being considered, His most tender and most noble inferior nature feared beyond estimation: therefore He is said to have been in agony, as the sick labouring in extremis. *"He prayed the longer"* for the salvation of the world. And in this His perfection and constancy appear, that in so great anxiety He prayed the longer.

"And his sweat became as drops of blood trickling down upon the ground" (Luke 22:44). "As" in this place says truth, not likeness only, because Christ truly sweated blood: which happened from most vehement anxiety, agony and fear. And, as some probably assert, from the body of Christ sweat burst forth together, and blood tinging the sweat. Moreover, as some say, this was supernatural and miraculous, that from the body of Christ blood flowed for sweat, as if it were against nature to sweat blood, namely that Christ should now begin to shed His blood. Others however say that to sweat blood can be natural, although perhaps it was miraculous that drops of blood flowed. — Now it is read that Christ shed His blood six times for us, namely: first, in the circumcision, when He was eight days old; second, in this His most fervent prayer; third, in His scourging; fourth, in His crowning with thorns; fifth, in the crucifixion, in which indeed He shed blood three times, namely twice in the piercing of the hands, and once while the most sacred feet were likewise pierced; sixth, in the opening of the side. Nevertheless I think that also in the night granted to the power of darkness, when the defiled struck His cheeks and mouth, He shed blood; and again when they stripped His garments, when He was to be crucified.

Moreover Christ assumed so vehement sadness and fear, not only from consideration of the passion at hand, but also from consideration of the ruin and ingratitude and destruction of the Jews, for whose salvation specially He had been sent (Matt. 15:24), and because He saw that His passion was not to profit so many, nay rather to hurt, on account of their ingratitude and sins; and likewise, as some say, because He foresaw all the future tribulations of all His elect, which they were to suffer for Him *(p. 222)* until the end of the world in this age, and intimately compassionated them, inasmuch as tribulations are certain penal evils.

All these things we ought to weigh with intimate compassion and pious imitation, and be grateful to Christ, and by His example observe patience in every adversity; and in the time of tribulation fervently invoke God, and then pray the longer when greater danger is at hand: conform also our will to the divine will and subject it, and confidently and finally commit ourselves to the most wise and paternal disposition of the divine piety.

"And when he rose up from prayer," namely from the place and act of this prayer, *"and was come to his disciples,"* Peter, James and John, who on His return were first in the way, *"he found them sleeping for sorrow"* (Luke 22:45). For they were most vehemently saddened, having heard the words of Christ in which

He said, “My soul is sorrowful even unto death” (Matt. 26:38), and having seen so great affliction in Him who was wont always sweetly to console them, and because they knew that He was soon to be slain. Whence in John He says: “But because I have spoken these things to you, sorrow hath filled your heart” (John 16:6). Sadness therefore was one cause of their sleeping. Another cause was their torpor and negligence, so that their soul slumbered for weariness and a certain disgust of spiritual exercise, namely prayer (Ps. 118:28). Therefore Jerome says that they slept not only with natural sleep, but also with the sleep of guilt. The third cause of their sleep was natural, namely the ascent of humours to the brain, and because it was deep night, and they were wearied with hearing that long discourse of Christ, and by other occupations already gone through. Whence, according to the Philosopher, sleep is impotence of the senses. But I wonder, if these disciples saw the angel, that having seen him they so quickly fell asleep, since from an angelic apparition stupor and great admiration are wont to be struck into men, and great alteration of bodily nature, which for a time hinder sleep: unless perhaps the prayer of Christ was so long that, the aforesaid admiration and alteration being somewhat mitigated, they were overcome by sleep.

“And he said to them: Why sleep you?” (Luke 22:46). By which words He roused them from sleep; or perhaps before uttering these words, He roused them by some motion, touch or other way. And He added: *“Arise.”* As if He should say: With so great danger impending over you, and my capture now near, it is not the time of sloth and torpor or sleep, but of vigilance and imploring divine help: therefore arise, both from prostration of body and dispersion of your mind. *“Pray,”* so much the more ardently, as the greater necessity of praying lies upon you: for according to the measure of the gravity and greatness of the danger ought to be the fervour and instance of prayer; *“lest you enter into temptation,”* that is, lest you be overcome by it. This is said to us all, and committed to be fulfilled, since we are placed in the midst of snares, and, as the apostle Peter protests, “our adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8). For which reason the Saviour says: “We ought always to pray, and not to faint” (Luke 18:1); and Paul: “Pray without ceasing” (1 Thess. 5:17).

It is to be noted that Luke here omits some things which he already knew to have been written by Matthew, namely how Christ prayed the Father three times, and returned thrice to the disciples (Matt. 26:36–44; Mark 14:35–42). And in the first prayer He said: “Abba, Father, all things are possible to thee, remove this chalice from me; but not what I will, but what thou wilt.” “And he cometh to his disciples, and findeth them asleep; and he saith to Peter: Simon, sleepest thou? couldst thou not watch one hour with me?” For He specially rebuked Peter, because he had spoken more boldly than the rest. He also specially admonished him, because he was to be the supreme pastor of the Church, insinuating that the higher anyone is placed in rank and prelacy, the more diligent and active in good things it behoves him to be. Then He spoke both to Peter and to the other two: “Watch ye, and pray that ye enter not *(p. 223)* into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing,” that is, your soul according to its superior powers is ready to watch with me, to suffer and to persevere; “but the flesh is weak,” that is, sensuality is frail and prone to evil, and the flesh is slow to spiritual works, unless it be helped by the grace of the Spirit: therefore the gracious and most clement unceasing and continual help of God is always to be invoked. These things said, He went again the second time, and prayed: “My Father, if this chalice may not pass away, but I must drink it, unless I drink it, thy will be done” (Matt. 26:42). “And he cometh again to his disciples, and findeth them asleep. For their eyes were heavy”; and according to Mark, “they knew not what to answer him” (Mark 14:40): for they could not reasonably excuse themselves. Then He went the third time, and prayed the same words: and then, as Luke has described, an angel appeared to Him, and being in an agony, He prayed the longer, pouring forth a bloody sweat. “And He cometh to his disciples, and findeth them sleeping, and saith: Why sleep you? It is enough. Behold the hour is at hand, and the Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us go” (Mark 14:41–42). Finally, in that Christ so often returned to the disciples, He gave prelates an example of paternal solicitude as to the frequent visitation and exhortation and constant custody of their own flock, and that they should not so dwell on contemplation and their own progress as to omit the works of the active life, or relax the direction of their

subjects.

"As he was yet speaking" (Luke 22:47), that is, while Christ was relating the aforesaid words. Then also Christ came with the aforesaid three Apostles to the other eight, admonishing all together to go with Him to meet His adversaries. *"Behold a multitude,"* that is, a multitude disturbed and disordered by vices. Now in this multitude were great bands both of Gentiles and of Jews, according to that of John: "Judas therefore, having received a band of soldiers" (that is, a multitude of Roman soldiers standing under a tribune), "and servants from the chief priests and the Pharisees" (John 18:3). For the family of either court armed itself, lest anyone should dare or be able to succour Christ. But the tribune, who was the commander of the cohort, and the cohort, Pilate sent at the instance of the Jews. *"And he that was called Judas,"* as one unworthy of that name, nor truly Judas: for Judas is interpreted confession, or confessing to the Lord; but this most unhappy merchant denied and sold his Lord by deed; *"one of the twelve,"* Apostles, by temporal vocation, not by eternal predestination; and in number, not in merit; *"went before them,"* that by a sign he might show his master to them; *"and drew near to Jesus,"* in body, not in devotion of mind, *"to kiss him,"* fraudulently and traitorously. Whence Matthew testifies: "And he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying: Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is he, hold him fast" (Matt. 26:48). And as Mark says, he added: "and lead him away carefully" (Mark 14:44). For Judas knew that his master was subtle, and had frequently slipped out of the hands of the Jews: therefore he exhorted that having seized Him they should lead Him away carefully. Next, he gave the multitude a sign for knowing Jesus, lest they err in the person, taking another in Christ's place, especially since James the Less was most like Christ in disposition of body; second, because it was night, and although they had brought lights, they could more easily be deceived than by day; third, because Judas feared lest Christ should hide Himself among others. Again, he gave a kiss to the wicked for a sign, because Jesus dismissed or received disciples departing from Him or returning to Him with the kiss of peace; and likewise, that he might be the less suspected by Christ and the Apostles of this betrayal, because, as Cyril says, Judas, forgetful of the wisdom of Christ, perhaps thought he could do this secretly, Christ being ignorant of his deceit.

"And Jesus said to him: Judas, dost thou betray the Son of man with a kiss?" (Luke 22:48). As if He should say: O Judas, how impiously thou doest, that with the sign of love thou deliverest me, the Son of the Virgin, to the enemies to be slain! This Christ uttered to show Judas and the rest that He knew the deceit of His betrayer, and to induce Judas to *(p. 224)* good shame and penance: for therefore also He deigned to call him by his proper name, that He might soften a hardened soul to penance.

In this place Luke omitted some things, which John afterwards writing supplied, saying: "Jesus therefore, knowing all things that were to come upon him, went forth, and said to them: Whom seek ye? They answered him: Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith to them: I am he. And Judas also, who betrayed him, stood with them. As soon therefore as he had said to them, I am he; they went backward, and fell to the ground. Again therefore he asked them: Whom seek ye? And they said: Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered: I have told you that I am he. If therefore you seek me, let these go their way" (John 18:4–8). So great therefore was the omnipotence of Christ, that by one word He prostrated His adversaries: which happened miraculously, by divine power, by means of this word, terrifying and casting them down, which willed such force to consist in the words of Christ, which sounded terribly in the ears of the impious themselves. Finally, as Christ showed His countenance to the Jews in terror and majesty, fiery rays going out from His eyes, and a certain divine lightning wondrously radiating in His face, when He cast all the buyers and sellers out of the temple (John 2:15; Matt. 21:12): so He did now also; and so by both words and the appearance of His countenance He terrified and prostrated them. Which, according to Origen and Jerome, was a greater miracle than the raising of Lazarus, because to restrain the wits of so many men and crush their strength was most wonderful. These things done, when, Christ permitting, the multitude had risen, Judas, not corrected by so great a prodigy, came on kissing Jesus.

"And they that were about him," (Luke 22:49) that is, the Apostles standing near Christ in heart and body, *"seeing what would follow,"* that is, that Jesus was to be taken by the impious, *"said to him,"* namely to Christ: *"Lord, shall we strike with the sword?"* that is, dost thou give us leave to hurt these with the swords which we have? which, according to Chrysostom, were large knives which fishermen are wont to use in cutting up fish. But how did the fearful Apostles dare to say this, or whence did they trust they could do it, since that armed multitude was so great? And it must be answered that the Apostles, seeing the casting down of the multitude, and that when it rose from the ground it still stood trembling and disturbed, took boldness, trusting that the multitude, bridled by the virtue of Christ, could not resist them.

"And one of them struck" (Luke 22:50), namely Peter, not awaiting the response of Christ, and from ardent love of his master abhorring the crime of the adversaries, and desiring to avenge, *"the servant of the high priest,"* namely Malchus, the servant of Caiphas, who was high priest of that year (John 18:10), *"and cut off his right ear."* Chrysostom says that he intended to cut off his head. Ambrose asserts that Peter was learned in the law, so that he knew that Phinees, the son of Eleazar the priest, was divinely commended because, kindled with zeal of God, he ran through the sinners (Num. 25:7–8): on which account Peter with like zeal willed to avenge the Son of God. Now that he hurt Malchus rather than another happened because this Malchus was more than the rest eager to lay hands on Jesus, at whose side Peter stood, as bolder and readier to defend Christ than the other Apostles.

"But Jesus answering, said: Suffer ye thus far" (Luke 22:51). This is explained in two ways. First thus: Suffer ye thus far, that is, permit this Malchus who has been struck to approach me, that I may heal him. And so Christ by these words answered, that is, spoke aptly and correctively to the deed of Peter, intimating that he had done it reprehensibly. Second thus: Suffer ye thus far, that is, permit the multitude to come up to me, that it may seize me, and resist not. And so Christ answered the question of the Apostles asking: "Lord, shall we strike with the sword?" But as the other Evangelists write, when Peter had hurt this servant, Christ said to Peter: "Put up thy sword into the scabbard. The chalice which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" (John 18:11) *(p. 225)* that is, wilt thou not have me undergo the death which God the Father decreed and wills me to undergo? "For all that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (Matt. 26:52), that is, he who by his own and private authority seizes any warlike instrument, to hurt another or avenge himself, by that very iniquity which he commits in doing this, spiritually kills himself, by sinning mortally. According to which sense the Lord says in Genesis: "Whosoever shall shed man's blood, his blood shall be shed" (Gen. 9:6). And Solomon says: "He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and he that breaketh down a hedge, a serpent shall bite him" (Eccles. 10:8). From these it is plain that most depraved is the custom of many, who, one of theirs being struck, or themselves having suffered some injury, immediately strive to avenge it by their own authority, and do not rather prosecute their cause according to the order of law. "Thinkest thou that I cannot ask my Father, and he will give me presently more than twelve legions of angels? How then shall the scriptures be fulfilled?" (Matt. 26:53–54). As if the Saviour should say to Peter: I need not thy defence, who could have the help of so many thousands of angels; and it is necessary that I suffer, that the words of the Prophets foretold of my passion may be verified and fulfilled in me.

"And when he had touched his ear," namely of Malchus, *"he healed him,"* by restoring the ear to its former place, and suddenly healing the wound. For the same causes Christ did this for which He prostrated the multitude, namely: first, for the declaration of His power; second, that by so pious a miracle He might give the impious, as far as in Him lay, occasion of repenting; third, that those persisting in malice might become altogether inexcusable; fourth, for the confirmation of the Apostles in faith; fifth, for our instruction. Let us consider in these things, and strive to imitate, the ineffable piety, meekness and patience of Christ, who so most benignly touched and cured His most cruel enemy, fulfilling and teaching to be fulfilled what He had commanded: "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you" (Matt. 5:44). Attend, O Christian, that from Christ thou art called a Christian. If therefore thou followest not the virtues of Christ, He will reprobate

thee, and will judge thee not to be a Christian.

"And Jesus said to the chief priests, and magistrates of the temple, and the ancients, that were come to him" (Luke 22:52), the magistrates of the temple, who were officials in the temple, or doctors of others, and the ancients, who were the ordinary judges of the people, succeeding the seventy ancients whom Moses ordained (Num. 11:24). These three chief ranks of the Jews principally procured the death of Christ: therefore He specially speaks to them what follows. But it does not seem that these were personally there: nay they sent servants, as the other Evangelists admit (Matt. 26:47; Mark 14:43). To which it is first answered that they came and were present, not by bodily presence, but by authority, and in the multitude directed by them; second, that some of them were present, that the matter might be done more diligently and boldly. Yet it is certain that neither Annas nor Caiphas was personally there; but perhaps some others chief among the priests. *"Are you come out, as it were against a thief, with swords and clubs"* (nay even with lanterns and torches, according to John, John 18:3), to take me unarmed and innocent? *"When I was daily with you in the temple"* (Luke 22:53), that is, frequently and on many days, namely all those ordained for this from above, *"you did not stretch forth your sacrilegious hands against me; but now at night you come to me,"* as if now I could not escape, who with one word prostrated you. This Christ speaks, proving their injustice and guile, because, as He says elsewhere, "Every one that doth evil hateth the light; but he that doth truth cometh to the light" (John 3:20–21). *"But this is your hour,"* that is, fitting to your guile and sin, namely the night time; or, "Your hour," that is, granted or permitted to you for invading me; *"and the power of darkness,"* that is, the tyrannical violence of your princes and of the demons, at whose instigation you exercise this power against me; or, "The power of darkness," that *(p. 226)* is, your dark and vicious power, on account of its abuse against me.

"And apprehending him, they led him to the high priest's house" (Luke 22:54). This John expresses more fully, saying: "Then the band and the tribune, and the servants of the Jews, took Jesus, and bound him: and they led him away to Annas first" (John 18:12–13), that is, first, before they led Him to Caiphas: because, as is said, the house of Annas first met them on the way; and also to please him, and out of reverence for him, because in the preceding year he had been high priest, and was father-in-law to Caiphas. Now they bound Christ with hard cords strongly and cruelly, and according to Bernard, put an iron chain upon His neck. For they feared lest He should slip out of their hands, as He had often slipped away, and because they intended to present Him to the governor as guilty of death. Such, however, were wont to be bound. And this Christ deigned to suffer, that He might free us from the bonds of vices, and from the chains of eternal damnation.

"Then," as Matthew says, *"the disciples all leaving him, fled"* (Matt. 26:56). Nor is it an objection that it is subjoined, *"But Peter followed him afar off."* For first he fled with the other Apostles; but when the multitude with Christ had gone on a little, Peter, drawn by love of his master, returned, and with fear followed afar off, not daring to approach near in the way, lest being recognised he should be taken. Mark also affirms that a certain young man followed Him afar off, "covered with a linen cloth," that is, a white and linen garment, "upon his naked body," namely, "and they laid hold on him. But he, casting off the linen cloth, naked," that is, scantily clad, "fled from them" (Mark 14:51–52). And although some say that that young man was James the Less, yet more commonly and probably it is said that it was John the apostle, who testifies of himself: "And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and another disciple. And that disciple was known to the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the court of the high priest," namely of Annas. "But Peter stood at the door without," not daring or not permitted to enter. "The other disciple therefore, who was known to the high priest (either because he was wont at times to carry fish to his house, or because he was of beautiful and noble lineage, being of the tribe of Juda and the seed of David), went out, and spoke to the portress," asking her to let Peter enter: and so she consenting, "brought in Peter" (John 18:15–16). Therefore I judge that John and Peter began to go together after Jesus now seized; then that John, as less fearing, went a little before Peter, and was then held by the impious, but escaped; and having recovered his garment, went again after

Jesus: so that even to His cross and death he did not depart from Him.

"And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the court, and were sitting about it" (Luke 22:55), namely the servants of the high priest at the fire: because (as John says) "it was cold" (John 18:18), as is the custom in March after midnight; *"Peter was in the midst of them,"* namely a lamb among wolves. Now the court is a space or open-air yard, between the first gate and the second. *"And Peter wished,"* as Matthew says, *"to see the end"* (Matt. 26:58). *"Whom when a certain servant maid had seen sitting at the light"* (Luke 22:56), *"and had earnestly looked upon him,"* diligently considering his countenance, and apparel and bearing, to conjecture whether Peter was a disciple of Jesus, *"she said"* to the rest sitting at the fire: *"This man also was with him,"* namely Jesus, that is, adhered to Him before His capture, as a disciple. *"But he denied him, saying: Woman, I know him not"* (Luke 22:57). In which Peter's frailty is plain. *"And after a little while,"* (Luke 22:58) namely a short time intervening, *"another,"* of the servants, *"seeing him, said: Thou also art one of them,"* that is, of the company and number of the disciples of this Galilean. *"But Peter said: O man, I am not." "And after the space as it were of one hour, another certain man affirmed, saying"* (Luke 22:59): *"Of a truth this man also was with him,"* that is, with Jesus; *"for he is also a Galilean,"* as Jesus is. Whence Matthew affirms the saying: "For even thy speech doth discover thee" (Matt. 26:73). For although the Galileans were Jews, like the inhabitants of Jerusalem, yet in manner of speaking the Hebrew idiom somewhat *(p. 227)* differed, as we see men of the cities of the same province differ somewhat in speaking. *"And Peter said: Man, I know not what thou sayest"* (Luke 22:60).

Now, according to Matthew, Peter the first time denied simply. In the second questioning, more terrified, he denied with an oath. In the third, most terrified, he began to curse and to swear that he knew not the man (Matt. 26:70, 72, 74): nay, according to Mark, he began to anathematize, that is, to swear with execration, imprecating evils upon himself if he lied in denying (Mark 14:71). In which his great infirmity is plain. But Christ not without cause permitted so choice an Apostle so to fall and sin; but that Peter from his own frailty and fault might learn in his time to have mercy on others, and likewise that neither he nor the rest of the faithful, knowing these things, should ever presume on their own strength.

Moreover it is to be noted that in the description of the threefold denial of Peter the most blessed Evangelists seem to speak in many diverse ways, although they do not disagree with the truth. They seem to be contrary: First, because according to Luke the second denial of Peter was made to a man questioning him; according to Matthew it was made to a woman charging him that he was a disciple of Jesus (Matt. 26:71); but, as John says, it was made at the questioning of several and near the fire (John 18:25), whereas Matthew says it was made to Peter going out at the gate. But this is easily enough reconciled. For the maid accusing Peter, the men hearing this ran up, and confirmed the woman's words: therefore John says this happened at the voice of several; Luke, at the voice of one, who perhaps pressed Peter more importunately. Moreover, that John asserts this to have been done near the fire, Matthew near the gate, is reconciled by saying that, Peter turning from the fire to go out, some followed him, charging him that he was a disciple of Jesus. And so the denial in a manner began at the fire, and the distance between the fire and the door was small: therefore the Evangelists did not care to express the place so determinately, but principally intended to show that Peter denied thrice, as the Saviour foretold.

But it seems more difficult to reconcile that according to John the first denial was made in the house of Annas (John 18:15–17), which Matthew affirms to have been made in the court of Caiphas (Matt. 26:57, 69). To which the doctors have answered variously. For Augustine holds that all three denials were completed in the house of Annas, and that what the other Evangelists say is to be understood by recapitulation. But Chrysostom thinks that the three denials were made in the house or court of Caiphas, and that what John says of the first denial is to be understood by anticipation. For many things in the Scriptures are read by anticipation and recapitulation, since deeds are not always recited in the order in which they were done. Others say that the first denial was made in the house of Annas, the other two in the house of Caiphas.

"And immediately, while he was yet speaking, the cock crew" (Luke 22:60), that is, while Peter was occupied with the words of denying Christ, the cock crew the second time, according to Mark, as was touched (Mark 14:72). *"And the Lord turning,"* Jesus Christ, from that equity by which He permitted Peter to deny, by not affording the help of grace, to the effect of His clemency, *"looked on Peter"* (Luke 22:61), that is, mercifully touched his mind, enlightened it, and aroused it to the consideration of his excess, and gave the grace of compunction and penance. This is the look of divine piety, which he desires who says: "Look upon me, and have mercy on me" (Ps. 85:16). *"And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, as he had said: Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice"*: which was expounded above (Luke 22:34). *"And Peter going out"* (Luke 22:62), leaving the company and house of the impious, because there and among such is not a fit place for penance and tears, *"wept bitterly,"* that is, with the most heart-deep sorrow of heart he bewailed his sin, that he had so often and so dreadfully denied his most sweet and dearest master and Lord. St. Clement relates that Peter from this night drew into a custom that every night from the first crowing of the cocks until the morning hour *(p. 228)* he stood in prayer, most abundantly bewailing his denial, so that his face seemed as if burnt by tears.

Finally Luke and the other Evangelists omit how Christ in the house of Annas was questioned by Annas himself about His doctrine and about His disciples (John 18:19–24). To whom Christ answered nothing about His disciples, because they had already fled from Him, nor were they to be praised for the time. But of His doctrine He answered: "I have always taught in the synagogue, and openly. Why askest thou me? Ask them who have heard me." This Christ uttered, because He knew that Annas questioned maliciously, not with a mind to learn. And then one of the servants gave Jesus a blow; and Annas sent Jesus bound to Caiphas.

"And the men that held him," (Luke 22:63) namely Christ, guarding Him bound, *"mocked him, and struck him,"* that is, most impiously beat His head, neck and cheeks. *"And they blindfolded him"* (Luke 22:64), that is, covered His eyes with a veil. Mark indeed says: "They covered his face" (Mark 14:65). Which they did, most vehemently despising Christ, and as if He were unworthy to look at them, or be seen by them. *"And they smote his face,"* giving Him blows. Matthew however says more fully: "Then they spit in his face, and buffeted him with fists," namely striking His neck (Matt. 26:67): which was from the greatest contempt of Christ, as if He had been the vilest and most wicked of all men.

And behold all these things the Lord of hosts, the King of glory (Ps. 23:10), the Creator of all, and the Holy of Holies, deigned to suffer for us, that by His contempt, disesteem, spitting upon, temporal beating, He might snatch us from eternal reprobation, contempt, mockery and tribulation, and render us honourable to God the Father, blessed and glorious. Let us therefore be grateful, and daily weigh these things sagaciously and deeply with due piety, compassion, thanksgiving and imitation: in view of them bearing every injury, disesteem and reproach as nothing, with joy, and giving thanks to Christ that we are now able at least in some small measure to be conformed to Him and make Him return, as the Apostles went away rejoicing from the presence of the council, because they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus (Acts 5:41).

"And they asked him, saying: Prophesy, who is it that struck thee?" (Luke 22:64). This they likewise said derisively and cruelly, as if, His outward eyes being covered, He could not see with His inward eyes by whom He was struck; and because He permitted Himself to be called a prophet by the people, they inquire this, wishing to prove that, ignorant of His striker, He was not a prophet. *"And blaspheming, many other things they said against him"* (Luke 22:65), that is, they reviled Him with very many blasphemous words not written down, calling Him a seducer, a sacrilegious man and a blasphemer.

"And as soon as it was day" (Luke 22:66). Here Luke omitted many things which Matthew and Mark describe: how in the same night, or before morning, Christ coming to Caiphas, where then the Scribes and Pharisees and ancients had assembled, awaiting the coming of Christ, Caiphas and all the council sought false witness against Jesus, to put Him to death; and could not find any, although many false witnesses had

borne false testimonies against Him. Then two false witnesses said: “This man said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and after three days to rebuild it.” And when Christ was silent to all these things, Caiphas, kindled with anger, and rising from his seat, adjured Christ, saying: “I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us if thou be the Christ the Son of God.” To which, when Christ had said, “Thou hast said it; nevertheless I say to you, hereafter you shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of the power of God, and coming in the clouds of heaven,” Caiphas rent his garments, saying: “He hath blasphemed. What think you?” They answered: “He is guilty of death.” And then, as Matthew and Mark describe, they did to Christ the reproaches already mentioned; afterwards it seems that happened which Luke now recites (Matt. 26:59–68; Mark 14:55–65).

(p. 229) “And as soon as it was day,” namely at clear morning, *“the ancients of the people, and the chief priests and scribes came together, and they brought him into their council,”* that is, ordered Him to be presented before them, *“saying: If thou be the Christ, tell us.”* So now more were assembled than in the night, and Annas was now present; and so the question before proposed by Caiphas they now repeated before all, that, having heard Christ’s answer, they might unanimously accuse Him. *“And he said to them: If I shall tell you,”* (Luke 22:67) the truth, namely that I am the Christ, *“you will not believe me,”* as neither before did you believe me, when by many miracles I proved that I am the Christ: because you question me not to believe and profit, but to calumniate and accuse me. *“And if I shall also ask you, you will not answer me”* (Luke 22:68). This the Saviour says, who had already before asked about the baptism of John, whether it was from heaven or from men (Luke 20:4); likewise concerning Christ, how David calls Him his Lord, if He be his son (Luke 20:41 ff.): and they did not answer to these, either from ignorance, or lest they should incur offence of the people, or be refuted and convinced by Christ; as also now, if they had answered to the question of Christ. *“Nor let me go,”* as innocent, although I am innocent. *“But hereafter,”* that is, after this time, *“the Son of man shall be sitting on the right hand of the power of God”* (Luke 22:69), that is, in the better goods of God the Father. Which was fulfilled when in the ascension He ascended with glorified body to the empyrean heaven, and obtained perfect beatitude according to His humanity, even as to the accidental reward; but in the essential reward He did not advance, but from the beginning of the incarnation was perfect in it. So the right hand of God is spiritually understood to be the fruition of His best goods, and the beatific union chiefly with Him. Christ also according to the divinity eternally sits at the right hand of the Father, and in true equality and the same majesty rests with Him.

“Then said they all” (Luke 22:70). For some saying it, the rest consented. *“Art thou then the Son of God?”* For they knew from Christ’s manner of speaking that by the Son of man He meant Himself. And since He said that the Son of man would sit at the right hand of the Father, which properly belongs to Christ the Son of God, according to that, “The Lord said to my Lord: Sit thou at my right hand” (Ps. 109:1; Matt. 22:44), they concluded that Jesus affirmed Himself the Son of God. *“Who said: You say that I am”*: what is true, because I am the Son of God. *“And they said”* (Luke 22:71): *“What need we any further testimony against him, whereby he may be proved guilty of death? For we ourselves have heard it from his own mouth,”* that He named Himself Christ the Son of God. Nay indeed, as is shown from the Gospel of John, Christ frequently and evidently before this day testified this to them, by words and testimonies of the Scriptures and by miracles, so that they were bound to believe. Whence now they impiously concluded that He had therefore deserved death because He confessed Himself to be Christ the Son of God.

Now some think this examination and questioning of Christ to be the same of which Matthew and Mark speak, as was touched. But it seems an obstacle that Matthew, having described that examination and questioning, likewise the denial of Peter, and the blindfolding of Christ, the striking and spitting upon Him, because He testified Himself to be Christ, says: “And when morning was come, all the chief priests and ancients of the people took counsel against Jesus, that they might put him to death” (Matt. 27:1; Mark 15:1).

Luke 23

Article XLIX — Exposition of the Twenty-Third Chapter: “And the whole multitude of them rising up, led him to Pilate”

(p. 230) Next is described how Christ was presented by the Jews to a Gentile governor, and by him and his ministers put to death, and in many ways afflicted, according as Christ foretold: “Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man shall be delivered to the Gentiles to be mocked, and scourged, and spit upon; and they will put him to death” (Matt. 20:18–19; Luke 18:31–33).

“And the whole multitude of them rising up” (Luke 23:1), that is, all the chief priests and Scribes and Pharisees and ancients, a numerous people following them, *“led him,”* namely Jesus, *“to Pilate.”* And, as Matthew says, “They brought him bound to Pilate” (Matt. 27:2); Mark however says, “Binding Jesus, they delivered him to Pilate” (Mark 15:1): not that they then first bound Him, but perhaps for a time they had Him loosed from His bonds, and now bound Him again; or they bound Him now more ignominiously than before, perhaps with hands tied behind. *“And they began to accuse him, saying”* (Luke 23:2): *“We have found this man”* (whom from contempt they did not name expressly) *“perverting,”* that is, ill instructing and deceiving, *“our nation,”* namely the Jewish people, *“and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar,”* that thus he might provoke the Romans against Him, *“and saying that he is Christ the king.”* What they say, “Christ the king,” they say as if by way of explanation, that Pilate might understand them more clearly. For they themselves by the name of Christ understood a king, nay the greatest king, namely king Messias. But Pilate, as a Gentile, did not so know what they meant by Christ: therefore they added, “King,” that Pilate might understand that Jesus wished to usurp an earthly kingdom.

“And Pilate asked him, saying: Art thou the king of the Jews?” (Luke 23:3). These Jews had objected three things to Christ; but of the first Pilate took no care, namely whether Christ had taught the Jews well or ill: for he was a Gentile, and despised the law of the Jews as a superstition. But the other two seemed contrary to the Roman empire. But Pilate knew that the first of these two was false, because already before he had perceived that Jesus had said: “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s” (Luke 20:25). Therefore he inquires about the third, which seemed more to derogate from the emperor. For the Romans commanded that none should call himself king without their leave or consent: for they held the monarchy. Pilate therefore asked Jesus whether He was king of the Jews by right, because he saw that in fact He was not a king reigning in a worldly way.

Now John the evangelist here adds some things which Luke does not write. For John says: “They lead Jesus therefore from Caiphas to the governor’s hall,” that is, to the house where the praetors or prefects judging the causes of the people were wont to sit (John 18:28–38). “And they went not into the hall, that they might not be defiled,” by entering the house of a Gentile man, because it had been the praetorium of Pilate, “but that they might eat the Pasch,” that is, unleavened loaves, of which the unclean could not eat: but they would have reckoned themselves unclean if they had entered a Gentile’s house against the law. “Pilate therefore went out to them, and said: What accusation bring you against this man?” as if he should say: You have presented Him to me so bound, as if He were guilty of death. What then do you charge Him with? For it was a custom of the Romans not to condemn a man unless he had his accusers present, and received place to defend himself, to wash away the crimes laid against him, as is had in the Acts (Acts 25:16). *(p. 231)* “They answered: If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up to thee. Pilate therefore said to them: Take him you, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said to him: It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.” This they said, either because during the paschal feast this was not lawful for them, lest by shedding of blood they should defile the holiness of so great a solemnity; or because the Romans had taken from them the judgment of blood, although they had left them lesser judgments, as some think; or they said it craftily, that Christ being condemned by a Gentile judge, they might seem free of it.

"Pilate therefore went into the hall again, and called Jesus," that there in a quiet place apart he might examine Him more perfectly. "And said to him: Art thou the king of the Jews?" Pilate asked this after the accusation made by the Jews, which Luke here describes.

Finally Luke subjoins: *"But he,"* namely Jesus, *"answering him, said: Thou sayest it."* As if He should say: I neither deny nor affirm this now, but thou sayest what is true. *"And Pilate said to the chief priests and to the multitudes: I find no cause in this man"* (Luke 23:4). For Pilate took Christ's answer as if He said that He was not a king, namely a temporal one. Whence John, describing this more fully, says that Jesus said to Pilate: "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36), that is, not such as is the worldly kingdom, but is heavenly and spiritual. As if He should say: I have not derogated from the emperor, by seeking earthly and temporal dominion. Nay, as is had in John, when the Jews would have made Him king, He fled (John 6:15). Whence He added: "If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would certainly strive that I should not be delivered to the Jews." "Pilate therefore said to him: Art thou a king then? Jesus answered: Thou sayest that I am a king. For this was I born, and for this came I into the world; that I should give testimony to the truth. Every one that is of the truth," that is, of God not only by creation, but also by predestination and imitation, "heareth my voice. Pilate saith to him: What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and saith to them: I find no cause in him" (John 18:37–38): as Luke now recites. Who subjoins:

"But they," namely the Jews, *"were more earnest,"* that is, cried out more vehemently and strongly than before, having heard that the governor excused Jesus, *"saying: He stirreth up the people"* (Luke 23:5), that is, by His doctrines and false prodigies has troubled, subverted and roused our people to unlawful things, *"teaching throughout all Judea,"* that is, through our whole region, *"beginning from Galilee."* For there He first began to gather disciples, to preach, and to work miracles. For in Galilee He called Peter and the sons of Zebedee (Matt. 4:18 ff.); and in Cana of Galilee He worked His first miracle, changing water into wine (John 2:1, 11). *"Hither,"* that is, reaching and coming, by preaching and subverting others, *"to Jerusalem,"* the metropolitan or principal city of Judea. Now Judea is sometimes taken as distinguished from Galilee and Samaria, but now it is taken as including those provinces.

All these things are to be considered by us for compassion, imitation and thanksgiving. Let us consider therefore how most reproachfully Christ was offered to Pilate, how most falsely accused, how meekly, patiently and silently He bore Himself: and so let us despise all the vanity and glory of the world, and bear with equanimity injuries of words and lying accusations. Yet at times, to avoid scandal, it is lawful to excuse oneself truthfully.

"But Pilate hearing Galilee named, asked if the man were a Galilean" (Luke 23:6), that is, whether Jesus was a native of Galilee. For although He was born in Bethlehem of Juda (Matt. 2:1–6), yet He was conceived in Galilee (Luke 1:26 ff.), and conversed there most: for which reason He was called Jesus of Nazareth. *"And when he understood that he was of Herod's jurisdiction"* (Luke 23:7), that is, of the province and dominion of Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee: who *(p. 232)* beheaded the most blessed John the Baptist (Luke 3:1; Mark 6:27), and was the son of the elder Herod, under whom Christ was born (Matt. 2:1), *"he sent him away to Herod,"* desiring to rid himself of the judgment of Him whom he knew to be innocent, falsely accused, and delivered from envy, and not to put his hand into another's harvest. And as Theophilus says, in this Pilate acted according to the law of the Romans, which commanded every one to be judged by the prince of his own jurisdiction. *"Who was himself,"* namely Herod, *"at Jerusalem in those days,"* of the paschal solemnity, on account of the feast. For he was a Jew by religion and birth. For his father also, although he was a Gentile by nation, namely an Idumean, yet became a proselyte, that is, assumed the rite of the Jews, and was circumcised out of love for his wife, who was a Jewess. And as it is said, he had also another wife, a Jerusalemite, of whom he begot this Herod Antipas.

"And Herod, seeing Jesus, was very glad" (Luke 23:8), not from devotion, but from curiosity. The cause of whose joy is subjoined: *"For he was desirous of a long time to see him,"* that is, he had long wished to see

Jesus, especially from the time that he beheaded John, because after this Jesus began to preach more publicly, and to work miracles, so that His fame came to Herod. Therefore it follows: *"because he had heard many things of him,"* namely of Christ's miracles, eloquence and doctrine. Whence the Evangelists say that straightway in the beginning of Christ's preaching His fame went out into the whole country (Matt. 9:31; 14:1; Luke 4:14). *"And he hoped to see some sign wrought by him."* For it is natural to men gladly to see wonderful and unusual things. Specially also, as the Apostle says, the Jews seek signs (1 Cor. 1:22). And above it is written that Herod said of Christ: "Who is this of whom I hear such things?" (Luke 9:9).

"And he questioned him," namely Jesus, *"in many words"* (Luke 23:9), that is, put various questions to Christ: which are not described by any of the Evangelists; but some think that he asked Jesus whether He were the one on account of whom his father had the infants slain, and the like. *"But he answered him nothing"*: because Herod was unworthy, in that he was moved from curiosity. Christ also would not be freed from the passion by Herod. But if He had worked a miracle before him, or according to His wisdom had answered Herod, Herod would not have permitted Him to be slain. Therefore also Jesus was silent, to give an example of avoiding ostentation before the great. *"And the chief priests and the scribes stood by,"* (Luke 23:10) that is, the doctors of the law, *"earnestly accusing him,"* that is, boldly and obstinately, perhaps for the same causes for which they had accused Him before Pilate. But Jesus answered nothing, teaching patience, and yielding to the fury of the incorrigible: especially since His works which He had done, namely the sanctity of life and the excellence of the miracles, by which He had shone even to this hour, excused Him even silent; nay by His most meek taciturnity His innocence was manifest. Whence Pilate wondered exceedingly at Christ's taciturnity, knowing that with a single word He could have excused Himself.

"And Herod with his army set him at nought" (Luke 23:11), as a simple and foolish man, because He answered nothing either to him or to the accusers. Whence in Job it is written: "The simplicity of the just man is laughed to scorn" (Job 12:4). *"And mocked him, putting on him a white garment,"* as fools are wont to be derided. And so the Son of God deigned to be sent from judge to judge, and so to be derided, that we, guilty, might be freed from the judgment of reprobation and eternal damnation, and snatched from eternal confusion and the mockery of demons, and be clothed with the stole of immortality and glory, and by the merit of Christ be made partakers and sons of the true wisdom from above. Therefore let us glory when we are despised, nor love pomp of garments, superfluity and curiosity; but let us weigh what our Lord and Saviour suffered for us, with thanksgiving and efficacious imitation. Indeed if He who is the uncreated wisdom and omnipotent power of God the Father (1 Cor. 1:24) deigned to be so derided for us: why do we, weak, *(p. 233)* full of ignorance, and darkened with vices, wish to be reputed wise and virtuous, and straightway to be indignant against our derisors? "The servant is not greater than his lord, nor is the disciple wiser than his master" (John 13:16; Matt. 10:24).

"And sent him back to Pilate," reckoning Christ unworthy of his help, and that Pilate should judge a man taken in his own dominion. Which also he did therefore, because he would not offend the high priests and the Jews by rescuing Christ, but rather please them, by thus deriding Him before so many thousands of men, in the royal city and on a chief feast. *"And Herod and Pilate were made friends that same day"* (Luke 23:12). For Pilate honoured Herod, by sending to him a man of his province, and committing his cause to Herod's discretion. For before they were enemies to each other: because Pilate had unjustly slain certain Galileans, who had been under the power of Herod: in which he derogated from Herod, thus slaying his subjects, and stretching his hand into another's harvest.

"Pilate then calling together the chief priests and the magistrates," (Luke 23:13) that is, the rulers of the people, *"and the people,"* namely the community of the Jews, *"said to them: You have presented unto me this man, as one that perverteth the people"* (Luke 23:14), that is, perverting his hearers from your law and obedience to Caesar; *"and behold I, having examined him before you,"* that is, interrogating this man, *"find no cause in this man in those things,"* that is, in the number of the crimes, *"wherein you accuse him. No, nor*

Herod neither" (Luke 23:15): found any of these excesses in Him. *"For I sent you to him,"* that is, Herod, *"and behold, nothing worthy of death is done to him,"* that is, Herod inflicted on Him no penalty or sentence, from which it might appear that he judged this man to have deserved death. For the mockery in a white garment designated not a grave crime, but folly. *"I will chastise him therefore, and release him"* (Luke 23:16). Since He has not deserved death, I will have Him scourged, and treated with mockeries, that if perhaps He has offended in words, you may forgive Him so corrected, and I may so let Him go.

Next is touched another occasion by which Pilate desired to rescue Jesus from death. *"Now of necessity he was to release unto them,"* namely to the Jews, *"one upon the feast day"* (Luke 23:17), that is, in the paschal solemnity, one bound, whomever they asked. For the Jews, before they were subject to the Romans, had a custom at the paschal feast of releasing one free of the prisoners, in sign and memory of the liberation of their fathers from Egypt at the time of the Pasch. Afterwards, being subject to the Romans, they obtained from them that this custom should be observed for them by the Roman judge set over them: therefore Pilate, appointed over the Jews by the Roman empire, had need to observe this custom, by conditional necessity, namely if he were to content the Jews, and obey the Romans. Yet Bede affirms that he did this, not by sanction of imperial law, but by the annual custom of the Jews, to please them. *"But the whole multitude together cried out, saying"* (Luke 23:18): *"Away with this man,"* that is, kill Jesus (whom from contempt this multitude did not name), *"and release unto us Barabbas"*: *"who, for a certain sedition made in the city,"* Jerusalem, *"and for murder, was cast into prison"* (Luke 23:19), that after the feast he might be put to death at a fit time.

Luke touches this briefly, which he knew to have been recited more fully by Matthew. For Matthew says: "Now upon the solemn day the governor was accustomed to release to the people one prisoner, whom they would. And he had then a notable prisoner, that was called Barabbas," that is, famous and singular in malice. "They therefore being gathered together, Pilate said: Whom will you that I release to you, Barabbas, or Jesus that is called Christ? For he knew that for envy they had delivered him." And while Pilate was saying this, it happened also, as Matthew says: "And as he was sitting," namely Pilate, "in the place of judgment," that is, in the judgment seat to judge of Christ, "his wife sent to him, saying: Have thou nothing to do with that just man," that is, do nothing against Him, because it does not concern thee, in that He is innocent: "for I have suffered many things this day," that is, this natural day *(p. 234)* (namely in the dawn, as is believed, when Pilate had risen from bed: because the ladies and wives of the great are wont to remain in bed for a time after their husbands), "in a dream," that is, in vision and sleep, "because of him," that is, to this end that I should procure His liberation from thee. To which, as is believed, the devil instigated that woman, already almost conjecturing for certain that Jesus was the Messias, because he saw the ineffable meekness, patience and constancy of Christ in all His injury and passion, and because he already saw the damnation of Judea, and likewise the unwonted consolation of the saints in limbo, as is said: therefore he feared to be despoiled and conquered by Jesus, although a little before he had incited Judas to His betrayal, and the Jews to His slaying. Moreover Matthew says: "But the chief priests and ancients persuaded the people that they should ask Barabbas, and make Jesus away," that is, demand that He be slain. "But the governor answering, said to them: Whether will you of the two to be released unto you? But they said: Barabbas. Pilate saith to them: What shall I do then with Jesus that is called Christ? They say all: Let him be crucified" (Matt. 27:15–23). *"And he said to them the third time"* (Luke 23:22): *"Why, what evil hath this man done? I find no cause of death in him: I will chastise him therefore, and let him go."* This word Luke asserts.

What follows John writes: "Then therefore Pilate took Jesus, and scourged him" (John 19:1), that is, commanded his servants to strip Jesus, bind Him to a pillar, and strike Him with scourges. O how shameful it was to be stripped in the sight of so many thousands! and how most painful it was to the most tender and most noble body of Christ to be so atrociously scourged! For the most sacred widow St. Bridget writes in her Revelations, the blessed and glorious virgin Mary relating it to her, that they scourged Christ so long and so

sharply that His ribs lay bare, so that one of the adversaries of Christ cut the rope by which He was bound, and said to the scourgers: Will you kill Him, not yet judged and condemned, and make His death your cause? Then St. Bridget writes that the flesh and skin of Christ were of such tenderness that the blood was seen through it; likewise that at the first stroke of the scourge His flesh was torn, and the blood leapt out, and that the Virgin Mary was standing by, and, beholding that first stroke and the wounding of her Son following thence, fell to the ground as dead, nor came to herself till the scourging was completed, and then she looked upon the body of her Son torn and bloodied all over.

Then John and Matthew say: "And the soldiers of the governor" (namely grooms: for they were not noble men, as now soldiers are gilt), "taking Jesus into the hall, gathered together unto him the whole band; and stripping him, they put a scarlet cloak about him," that is, clothed Him with a red garment in likeness of purple. Whence John says: "They put on him a purple garment." And some say that it was some vile red thing like purple. "And platting a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed," that is, a cane, "in his right hand," namely for a royal sceptre. "And bowing the knee before him, they mocked him, saying: Hail, king of the Jews. And they gave him blows. And spitting upon him, they took the reed, and struck his head" (Matt. 27:27–30; John 19:1–3).

"Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith to the Jews: Behold, I bring him forth unto you, that you may know that I find no cause in him. (Jesus therefore came forth, bearing the crown of thorns and the purple garment.) And he saith to them: Behold the man. When the chief priests therefore and the servants had seen him, they cried out, saying: Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith to them: Take him you, and crucify him; for I find no cause in him. The Jews answered him: We have a law; and according to the law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God. When Pilate therefore had heard this saying, he feared the more," namely lest perhaps it were so, *(p. 235)* and so he had sinned most gravely, causing the Son of God thus to be scourged, crowned, mocked and struck. More also than before he feared to kill Jesus, lest perhaps he should destroy the Son of God. But whence had Pilate, since he was a Gentile and idolater, knowledge of the true God? And it must be answered that, dwelling among the Jews, he perhaps heard something of the omnipotence and majesty of the supreme God, whom the Israelites worshipped. To all also, as Damascene says, the knowledge that God exists is naturally implanted; but many of the Gentiles also knew there is one most high God.

"And he entered into the hall again, and said to Jesus: Whence art thou?" For although he had already before heard that Jesus was of Galilee, yet now having heard that He had said He was the Son of God, he more diligently inquires about the place and origin of His nativity, namely whether He were truly born of God, or of men. "But Jesus gave him no answer," as was foretold through Isaias: "As a lamb before his shearer he shall be dumb" (Isa. 53:7). "Pilate therefore saith to him: Speakest thou not to me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and I have power to release thee? Jesus answered: Thou shouldst not have any power against me, unless it were given thee from above," namely from God, or from the Roman empire. For from God is all power (Rom. 13:1); but the abuse of power is in men from perverse and their own will. "Therefore he that hath delivered me to thee hath the greater sin. And from henceforth Pilate sought to release him," namely Jesus, even more than before. For he considered the innocence and modesty of Christ. "But the Jews cried out, saying: If thou release this man, thou art not Caesar's friend. For whosoever maketh himself a king," that is, by his own authority asserts himself king, "speaketh against Caesar," who forbade this. And by Caesar can be understood Tiberius, under whom Jesus was crucified. "Now when Pilate had heard these words, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat. And it was the Parasceve of the Pasch, about the sixth hour" (John 19:4–14).

But against this it seems that in Mark it is read: "And it was the third hour, and they crucified him" (Mark 15:25): therefore before the third hour Pilate sat on the judgment seat, since it is certain that Jesus was first judged before He was hung on the cross. Below also Luke says that it was about the sixth hour when they

crucified Him (Luke 23:44). Matthew however says that from the sixth hour until the ninth there was darkness over all the earth (Matt. 27:45): and during all that time Christ hung on the wood. It must be said that at the sixth hour or a little before, Jesus was crucified, as Luke asserts. Therefore John says that it was about the sixth hour, because it was before the sixth. But what Mark says of the third hour, he referred to the mind of the Jews, because at that hour they cried out: "Away with him, crucify him." Or Mark says this therefore because Jesus was crucified between the third and the sixth: now the mean is signified by either of the extremes, because it partakes of both.

Then John writes: "And he saith to the Jews: Behold your king. But they cried out: Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith to them: Shall I crucify your king? The chief priests answered: We have no king but Caesar" (John 19:14–15). Then, as Matthew says, "Pilate seeing that he prevailed nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, taking water, washed his hands before the people, saying: I am innocent of the blood of this just man; look you to it," that is, weigh you yourselves what you do, because not I, but you slay Him. "And the whole people answering, said: His blood be upon us, and upon our children," that is, let the shedding of His blood be imputed to us and our children (Matt. 27:24–25). O most darkened and most cruel Jews, who involve not only yourselves, but your children also, in so incomparable and enormous a sin, and so irreverently treat Christ promised to you in the law and the Prophets! Finally your prayer was heard, and the wrath of God came upon you "to the end" (1 Thess. 2:16): as the Psalmist also foretold, addressing God: "Pour out thy wrath upon them: and let thy fury take hold of them" *(p. 236)* (Ps. 68:25). Daniel also foretold: "The people that shall deny him," namely Christ, "shall not be his; and the end thereof shall be waste, and unto the end of the war shall be appointed desolation" (Dan. 9:26).

The words, therefore, brought forward and omitted by Luke, being supplied, those which he himself now writes are to be continued. *"But they,"* namely the Jews, *"were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified; and their voices prevailed"* (Luke 23:23). For what they could not obtain by reason and equity, namely the crucifixion of Christ, they endeavoured to obtain by importunate cries and unjust demand. Whose insolence many unjust men follow. *"And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required"* (Luke 23:24), that is, gave sentence that Jesus should be crucified, as the Jews asked: who also therefore the more asked that Christ be crucified than slain by another death, because the death of those fixed on the cross was most ignominious among the Jews, and most penal to those suffering it. *"And he released unto them him who for murder and sedition had been cast into prison, whom they had desired"* (Luke 23:25): who also, as John says, was a robber (John 18:40). Whence Pilate therefore gave the Jews the choice between Jesus and Barabbas, because he by no means thought that they would ask that so most wicked a man be released to them rather than Jesus: and, as I think, if Pilate had had a worse prisoner than Barabbas, he would have proposed him to the Jews. *"But Jesus he delivered up to their will"* to be crucified: and in this he sinned dreadfully, although less than the Jews. He sinned also by thus scourging Jesus, and punishing Him in other ways, although he did not do this with mind to persecute, but to deliver the Lord Jesus, namely that he might appease the fury of the Jews, and so they might permit Christ to depart. For since he was judge, he ought in no wise to condemn the innocent, especially since the adverse party failed in proof; nor from human fear of the emperor ought he to act against justice, and scourge the innocent.

"And as they led him away" (Luke 23:26), that is, while Pilate's ministers and the rest led Jesus out to the place of crucifixion. But first, as the other Evangelists testify, they stripped Him of the cloak or purple, and put on Him His own garments; and bearing His cross, He went forth to the place of Calvary (Matt. 27:31; John 19:16–17). *"They laid hold of one Simon of Cyrene,"* that is, from Cyrene a city of Libya, as some say: whom some say to have been a Gentile by nation, but converted to Judaism; or perhaps he was of the synagogue of the aforesaid city and born a Jew. His sons, according to Mark, were Alexander and Rufus, whom some say to have been disciples of Christ (Mark 15:21). *"Coming from the country,"* from a certain farm outside Jerusalem toward it, so that he met them on the way. *"And they laid the cross on him to carry*

after Jesus." Nay by fear and threats they compelled him to this. For Matthew says: "Him they forced to take up his cross" (Matt. 27:32). Which those most cruel men did not do from compassion or for the relief of Jesus: but because He was already greatly wearied by the punishments, they feared lest perhaps fainting under the weight of the cross, He should die on the way, and so escape the future punishments by an easier death; or that they might come the sooner to the place of Calvary, in which they might fulfil their desire concerning the crucifixion of Christ.

"And there followed him a great multitude of people" (Luke 23:27), some compassionating, but many more deriding, and desiring His crucifixion: nay, the more famous He had been before, so many more now followed to see the spectacle; *"and of women, who bewailed and lamented him,"* that is, were saddened in heart, and wept for Him bodily. *"But Jesus turning to them"* (Luke 23:28), turning His face to them: which seen, they wept the more, as is the way of women. There were also there some men, disciples and friends of Christ, as Nicodemus, Joseph, John the apostle, and perhaps Gamaliel, and others: who although they grieved vehemently, yet restrained their weeping as far as they could. *"Said: Daughters of Jerusalem."* For some of these women were inhabitants of Jerusalem, and others were of Galilee, or other places. *"Weep not over me."* He does not reprove their compassion and weeping, *(p. 237)* but exhorts that they weep not only so as they were weeping: whence He admonished them that they should also bewail their own calamity, and the fault of their children, and the impending punishments. For it is subjoined: *"For behold the days shall come, wherein they will say"* (Luke 23:29), the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judea: *"Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that have not borne, and the paps that have not given suck,"* that is, had no offspring to whom they might give milk. This Christ foretold of the time of the siege of Jerusalem by the Romans, which was made in the forty-second year after the passion of Christ. And there was in it unspeakable calamity, distress and sorrow of the Jews, so much so that parents ate their children: therefore those who were without offspring were then reckoned happier than those having offspring, because they had less cause of sorrow, since they had no children whose miseries they should behold.

"Then shall they begin to say to the mountains: Fall upon us; and to the hills: Cover us" (Luke 23:30). This they said either from despair, or to insinuate the greatness of their calamity and desolation, or from desire of escaping their adversaries. Then also many of the Jews fled to caves and dens. For Josephus also writes that he then fled with forty men into a certain cave. In like sense it is written by Osee: "They shall say to the mountains: Cover us; and to the hills: Fall upon us" (Osee 10:8). Which can also be understood of the time about the final judgment, in which there will be the greatest tribulation. *"For if in the green wood they do these things"* (Luke 23:31), that is, if these wicked men so slay and vex me, who am likened to the green wood, because I have always been and am full of the fruit and flower of all virtues and the greenness of grace of perfection, so that by this violent death I did not deserve to be cut off and taken away; *"what shall be done in the dry?"* that is, what will be the punishment of the Jewish people persecuting me, and of every wicked man, who on account of lack of virtues and unfruitfulness of depravity is compared to the dry wood? Hence Solomon says: "If the just man receive in the earth, how much more the wicked and the sinner?" (Prov. 11:31).

"And there were also two other malefactors led with him, to be put to death" (Luke 23:32). This the most defiled Jews procured, that from the company of those robbers Christ might appear the more wicked; nor is it read that those wicked men bore their own cross, as Jesus did. But Jesus suffered this that we, by the merit of this confusion and His passion, might be reckoned among the elect of God and the angels.

"And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary" (Luke 23:33). Calvary is called the bone of the human head, stripped of flesh, skin and hair. Some therefore, as Jerome relates, asserted that this place was called the place of Calvary because Adam was buried there, and his head laid there; and that Christ therefore willed to be crucified there, that His blood might drip upon the tomb of the first man, and save him with his posterity. This opinion Jerome reprehends, saying that Adam was buried near Hebron, as is proved

from the book of Josue. For it is written in the book of Josue: “Adam the greatest is laid there,” namely in the double cave, where Abraham is read to have buried his wife in Genesis (Jos. 14:15; Gen. 23:19). For which cause Hebron was formerly called Cariatharbe, that is, the city of four, because there were buried four great Patriarchs with their wives, namely Adam with Eve, Abraham with Sara, Isaac with Rebecca, Jacob with Lia (Gen. 25:9; 35:27; 49:30–31). Yet Thomas on Luke writes that Athanasius says that the doctors of the Jews affirm that Adam was buried in the place of Calvary: and perhaps some doctors of the Jews so thought. It is truer however that this place was called Calvary on account of the heads of the criminals slain there: which heads in process of time became calvaries, that is, stripped of flesh, skin and hair. Whence in so ignominious a place Christ deigned to be slain, that we, by the merit of this His disesteem, *(p. 238)* might be raised to the most honourable thrones of the empyrean heaven.

“There they crucified him” (Luke 23:33), that is, fixed Him to the cross with nails. Now Christ willed to endure this kind of death for us: First, because hanging on a tree was the most ignominious, most execrable and most penal punishment of criminals; therefore Christ chose it, that He might help us more copiously, and appease the eternal Father the more for us. Second, that He might afford a most perfect example of obedience and fortitude, while He obeyed the Father not only unto death, but even unto the hardest and most shameful kind of death (Phil. 2:8); and that we may not only not fear to suffer death for God and equity, but not any kind of death. Third, because by the four horns of the cross are signified the four parts of the world, which Christ redeemed by His passion. Fourth, because Adam sinned in a tree, and by eating its fruit, and lost the world (Gen. 3:6); therefore Christ willed to redeem the world by a tree. Therefore Theophilus says: Because by a tree death entered, it was necessary that by a tree it should be exterminated. Hence in the Preface we say to God the Father: “Who didst establish the salvation of mankind on the tree of the cross, that whence death arose, thence life might rise again; and he that overcame by a tree, namely the devil, might also by a tree be overcome, through Christ our Lord.”

Now the leading forth of Christ to the passion, and His passion, were prefigured by the leading forth by which Cain led forth the just Abel into the field, and slew him there (Gen. 4:8); likewise by the leading forth of Isaac to be immolated (Gen. 22:6 ff.); and the brazen serpent, which Moses set up for a sign, that those looking upon that serpent might be freed from the bites of the fiery serpents (Num. 21:9; John 3:14). So those who faithfully and devoutly attend to the passion of Christ are snatched from the temptations of demons and the bites of vices. Finally, in this leading forth and crucifixion of Christ were fulfilled the things which were foretold in the prophet Isaias, where it is read: “He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all; surely he hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows” (Isa. 53:7, 6, 4). Hence also David in the person of Christ foretold: “They have dug my hands and feet; they have numbered all my bones” (Ps. 21:17–18). Then was fulfilled also that of Jeremias: “I was as a meek lamb that is carried to be a victim” (Jer. 11:19); and likewise that of Daniel: “After sixty-two weeks Christ shall be slain, and the people that shall deny him shall not be his” (Dan. 9:26). By Zacharias also Christ speaks: “They shall look upon me whom they have pierced” (Zach. 12:10). And again it is said: “They shall say to him: What are these wounds in the midst of thy hands? And he shall say: With these I was wounded in the house of them that loved me” (Zach. 13:6), that is, by the posterity of the Patriarchs, who loved me.

“And the robbers” the aforesaid ministers and soldiers of Pilate crucified (and they were four, as is clear from what is written in John: “The soldiers therefore, when they had crucified him, took his garments (and they made four parts, to every soldier a part)” John 19:23), *“one on the right hand, and the other on the left,”* that Jesus hanging in the midst of the robbers might be reputed as it were the prince of robbers and criminals. For to this the Jews procured it to be done; but God permitted it, that what Isaias foretold might be fulfilled: “And with the wicked he was reputed” (Isa. 53:12). And Christ bore this, that by His being so reputed and hung among the most wicked, we wretched sinners might be freed from the society of reprobate men and demons, from torments and the midst, and be happily placed among the elect of God and the holy angels.

Let us consider daily with deep heart how much we are bound to give thanks to the eternal Father, for that He permitted His natural and only and most beloved Son, whom He loves no less than Himself, so to be despised, trodden upon, and slain by a most bitter death for us, that we might be saved from eternal confusion, and recover the heavenly, true, perpetual and beatific honour. Let us not therefore neglect ourselves, for whose salvation the Son of God, truly equal to God the Father, deigned to suffer so great things. *(p. 239)* And since, as Seneca confessed, the greatest part of ingratitude is forgetfulness of benefits, and the greatest portion of gratitude the recognition of benefits, let us never forget what the Holy of Holies suffered for us; but with heart and work let us recognise the same, nor dishonour by an iniquitous life Him who has so incomprehensibly honoured us, lest we be viler and worse than all the brutes.

Moreover, in this hanging of Christ was fulfilled what the Psalmist foretold in the person of Christ: “But I am a worm, and no man; the reproach of men, and the outcast of the people” (Ps. 21:7); and likewise, “For thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face” (Ps. 68:8).

Furthermore, how the crucifixion of Christ was done is recited in different ways. For some say that, the cross being laid on the ground, He was fixed to the cross; others, that the cross being erected, so that the crucifiers went up by ladders. But St. Bridget writes that the cross being raised, they set up planks, and stood upon them.

Now we must consider how ineffably painful to Christ was that most cruel piercing of His most tender and most honourable feet and hands, and how bitter it was to His most affectionate sweetest Mother to behold this, or to hear those blows. What therefore lies upon us, but most heartily to condole with the Son of God and His Mother, and despise all vanity and vile delight? But this we ought most diligently to weigh, how most sorrowful to Christ was that most violent distension of His holy body on the cross, so that the joinings of His bones were dissolved, and no member remained in its natural and former place or position, and the sinews were broken. Truly so miserably, and so penally then hung the King of glory, the Lord of hosts (Ps. 23:10), the Saviour of the world, the Son of God, the Judge of the living and the dead (Acts 10:42), that by the sight alone stony hearts could have softened to compassion for Him. For the heavy weight of His wearied body tore and crushed His most worthy members by most violent extension, and by dilating His wounds embittered them painfully, and broke the sinews: so that from the whole body almost all the blood flowed out, as Christ had foretold in the Psalm: “I am poured out like water, and all my bones are scattered” (Ps. 21:15). Lastly it is to be pondered what pain Jesus Christ endured when before the crucifixion they again stripped Him: for then the wounds and the pain of the wounds were renewed. For already from the flowing of the blood the inner garment had stuck to the flesh, and was as it were entangled and coagulated in the deep wounds.

“And Jesus said: Father, forgive them” (Luke 23:34), that is, both the Jews procuring this punishment, and the Gentiles inflicting it, clemently pardon, both this their most grievous crime, and their other sins. Specially however Christ prayed this for the sin by which they then sinned against Him. For it is subjoined: *“for they know not what they do.”* For they did not know that they were butchering the Son of God, but thought they were slaying a most impious man and a blasphemer: and by this ignorance their sin, especially of the Gentiles and the simple Jews, was somewhat lightened. But the greater and more learned among the Jews had no excuse, because long since they had either certainly or probably known that Jesus was the Christ; but little by little their envious malice so blinded them that they now reputed the opposite, and deceived the simple (Wis. 2:21). They also saw and perceived so great miracles done by Christ that they were bound to believe. For which reason, when the passion was at hand, Christ said to the Apostles: “If I had not done among them the works that no other man hath done, they would not have sin; but now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father” (John 15:24). In this prayer Christ most perfectly fulfilled what He had before taught and commanded: “Pray,” saying, “for them that persecute and calumniate you” (Matt. 5:44); and what had been foretold of Him through Isaias: *(p. 240)* “He hath borne the sins of many, and hath prayed

for the transgressors" (Isa. 53:12). Finally this prayer of Christ was heard for many thousands of the Jews, nay for all for whom He poured it forth from deliberate reason: of whose conversion it is had in the Acts of the Apostles. For in that manner, namely from deliberate reason, Christ did not pray for the reprobate, but only for the elect. Whence also in John He says to the Father: "I pray not for the world, but for them whom thou hast given me out of the world, because they are thine" (John 17:9).

Ambrose says that Christ ascended the cross such as nature formed us, and such as the first man was in paradise, namely naked. Some however say that the blessed Virgin Mary wrapped the veil of her head about, in place of her Son's modesty. But St. Bridget writes that when Christ sat by the cross about to be crucified, a certain man out of compassion came up and covered the place of modesty, and that Christ received a certain consolation from that man's deed, and helped that man in binding that veil to the aforesaid place. And Christ so deigned to be stripped, that by the merit of His stripping we might be clothed now with the garments of virtue and grace, and afterwards in the future life with the garments of everlasting glory.

"But they, dividing his garments, cast lots" (Luke 23:34). How this was done is read more fully in John, where it is had: "The soldiers therefore, when they had crucified him, took his garments (and they made four parts, to every soldier a part), and also his coat. Now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout," that is, artificially made in network, that is, after the manner of a net and haircloth, not cut: which the most holy Virgin is believed to have made with her own hands for her Beloved. "They said then one to another: Let us not cut it," that is, let us not divide it into four parts as the other garments, "but let us cast lots for it, whose it shall be," that is, let us cast lot to whom the whole shall come. For perhaps on account of the subtlety and fineness of the work, each of the soldiers desired to obtain that coat entire. So it is plain that upon the seamless coat alone was lot cast, as is commonly said, "that the scripture might be fulfilled, saying" in the Psalm in the person of Christ: "They parted my garments amongst them, and upon my vesture," namely the seamless coat, "they cast lots" (John 19:23–24; Ps. 21:19).

"And the people stood beholding," (Luke 23:35) that is, desiring to see the issue of the matter, *"and the rulers with them derided him,"* namely Christ, the chief priests with them, that is with the people. Some however were there not moderately condoling; but they were so few in comparison of the others that they are reckoned for nothing. Therefore Christ says in the Psalm: "And I looked for one that would grieve together with me, but there was none; and for one that would comfort me, and I found none" (Ps. 68:21). By Isaias also: "I looked about, and there was none to help; I sought, and there was none to give aid" (Isa. 63:5). *"Saying: He saved others,"* that is, cured of many diseases; but more He saved spiritually, by converting them to God. Behold these darkened wicked men condemn themselves by their own sentence; and while they think to revile Christ, they chiefly commend Him, that He is a powerful worker of miracles. Of these most ungrateful Jews Christ foretold in the Psalm: "Instead of making me a return of love they detracted me, and they have repaid me evil for good, and hatred for my love" (Ps. 108:4–5). *"Let him save himself,"* that is, snatch Himself from these punishments, *"if he be Christ, the elect of God,"* that is, supremely elected by God according to His human nature. Of whom God testifies by Isaias: "Behold my servant, I will uphold him; my elect, my soul delighteth in him" (Isa. 42:1). Behold how ineffable was this madness, blindness and ignorance of the Jews. For what consequence was there, that Jesus should snatch Himself from those punishments, if He were Christ, and not rather bear them even to death inclusive? Did not the Prophets most openly foretell the slaying of Christ? Had not David in the person of Christ sung, "Thou hast brought me down into the dust of death" (Ps. 21:16)? *(p. 241)* And Isaias: "He hath delivered," he says, "his soul unto death" (Isa. 53:12); Daniel also: "After sixty-two weeks Christ shall be slain" (Dan. 9:26).

"And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, and saying: If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself" (Luke 23:36–37). These Gentiles conformed themselves to the speech and derision of the Jews. O how most hard was the cruelty of all these, that to a man placed in so incomparable a torment, they not only did not condole, but so contemptibly mocked! as was foretold in the Psalm, Christ speaking to

the Father: “For they have persecuted him whom thou hast smitten, and they have added to the grief of my wounds” (Ps. 68:27). Of this mockery of Christ Matthew says: “And they that passed by,” that is, going by that way, “blasphemed him, wagging their heads, and saying: Vah, thou that destroyest the temple of God, and in three days dost rebuild it; save thy own self; if thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. In like manner also the chief priests, with the scribes and ancients, mocking, said: He saved others, himself he cannot save; if he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him now deliver him if he will have him; for he said: I am the Son of God” (Matt. 27:39–43). All these things the most blessed contemplator of the secrets of God, holy David, in spirit most clearly foresaw, and most beautifully foretold, speaking in the person of Christ: “All they that saw me have laughed me to scorn; they have spoken with the lips, and wagged the head. He hoped in the Lord, let him deliver him; let him save him, seeing he delighted in him” (Ps. 21:8–9). And likewise: “And I became a reproach to them; they saw me and they shook their heads” (Ps. 108:25).

Moreover concerning the aforesaid offering of vinegar it is to be known that those impious ones gave Christ twice a drink of vinegar, gall, or bitter: First, about the crucifixion, namely before He was crucified, or straightway when He had been crucified. I rather think however that it was before the crucifixion, since Matthew says: “And they came to the place that is called Golgotha, which is the place of Calvary; and they gave him wine to drink mingled with gall; and when he had tasted, he would not drink” (Matt. 27:33–34). Then Matthew says: “And after they had crucified him.” Next, after many words interposed, he adds: “And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying: Eli, Eli,” etc. “And immediately one of them running took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink” (Matt. 27:46, 48). After this drinking Christ presently gave up the ghost. For Matthew subjoins: “And Jesus again crying with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost” (Matt. 27:50). John however writes this more clearly, saying: “Afterwards Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, said: I thirst. Now there was a vessel set there full of vinegar. And they, putting a sponge full of vinegar about hyssop,” that is, a reed or cane, “put it to his mouth. Jesus therefore, when he had taken the vinegar, said: It is consummated” (John 19:28–30). Whence Luke now speaks of this drink. Yet Mark says that He did not take this drink (Mark 15:23); but this is easily reconciled. For He took a little, that the Scripture might be fulfilled: but what is little is reckoned for nothing. Therefore Matthew says, “And when he had tasted, he would not drink”: from which it is plain that He took a little. And then was fulfilled that in the Psalm: “And they gave me gall for my food, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink” (Ps. 68:22).

But it is asked, how John and Luke call the drink vinegar, whereas Mark names it wine mingled with myrrh, and Matthew first calls it wine mingled with gall. And it must be answered that this drink, according to Augustine, was a most bitter wine, so that it was sour, on account of which it is called vinegar; and myrrh and gall were mixed with it. Moreover some say that the governor’s ministers gave such a drink to those condemned to death, that they might die the sooner, and so they themselves be rid of the keeping of them. Others report that the ancients of the Jews had ordained that to those adjudged to death good and aromatic wine be given to drink, that by such a drink *(p. 242)* they might attend the less to imminent death, and bear it the more easily: and they are said to have ordained this therefore because in Proverbs Solomon says: “Give strong drink to them that are sorrowful, and wine to them that are grieved in mind: let them drink and forget their want” (Prov. 31:6–7). In Jerusalem therefore (as they say) there were pious women, who provided such a drink for Christ and the robbers to the ministers: who, full of the poison of envy, instead of such a drink gave Christ wine with gall, when He had said, “I thirst” (John 19:28), because He thirsted not only spiritually for our salvation, but also had a most great and painful bodily thirst, from long affliction and vehement labour, and the most copious flowing of blood, from which there was in Him an excessive dryness causing most vehement thirst, which was a most great pain. Whence Christ says in the Psalm: “My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue hath cleaved to my jaws” (Ps. 21:16). But why did Christ will to suffer so great a thirst? but that we, by the merit of His thirst, might be filled beatifically and most joyously for ever

with the superabundant affluence of heavenly delights, as was foretold in the Psalm: “They shall be inebriated with the plenty of thy house, and thou shalt make them drink of the torrent of thy pleasure” (Ps. 35:9).

Let us consider daily this last table of Christ, at which for us He was fed with gall, and given vinegar to drink: and so let us learn to avoid the superfluity and pleasure of food and drink, by abstinence gladly and reasonably to chastise the flesh, and not to murmur at the scantiness of victuals: which belongs most of all to religious to fulfil.

“And there was also a superscription written over him” (Luke 23:38), that is, a title inscribed, containing the cause of the crucifixion of Christ, was affixed by Pilate’s command to the cross in its upper part. For the cross at first was of three arms, like the letter Tau (T). But Pilate added and set above a fourth part, where he placed a tablet, on which he wrote this title. Whence Matthew says: “And they put over his head his cause written” (Matt. 27:37). *“In letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew,”* that is, in the three principal idioms of the world, he wrote this title, that it might be read by all: *“This is the king of the Jews.”* Matthew expresses this more fully, saying it was written: “This is Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews” (Matt. 27:37), that is, the cause for which Jesus of Nazareth was crucified, because He said He was king of the Jews. Yet Pilate by these words did not intend to affirm that Jesus was king of the Jews, especially as to temporal and earthly dominion, lest he should seem rebellious to the emperor. Whence with a certain derision of the Jews he so wrote, as if he said: Behold what appearance it has, that this man wished to be king of the Jews. Whence the chief priests, having read this title, were indignant, saying to Pilate: “Write not, The king of the Jews; but that he said, I am the king of the Jews. Pilate answered: What I have written, I have written” (John 19:21–22).

“And one of those robbers who were hanged,” (Luke 23:39) namely hanging on the left, *“blasphemed him, saying: If thou be Christ, save thyself and us,”* that is, save us from this bodily death. Now, according to Matthew and Mark, both robbers reviled Christ, that is, uttered reproachful and blasphemous words to Him (Matt. 27:44; Mark 15:32). But Luke says this only of one robber. Which is reconciled in two ways: first, that Matthew and Mark put the plural for the singular, using a trope or manner of speaking in which a company is said to do what one of it does; second, that at first both robbers reproached Christ, but one of them, having seen the wonders which were done in the darkening of the sun and the shaking of the earth, repented, and rebuked his companion persisting in malice. Some say that, attending to Christ’s patience and the prayer in which He said, “Father, forgive them,” he was converted and made penitent, namely before the darkening of the sun: especially since Luke, Matthew and Mark recite this deed of the robbers before the darkening of the sun and the working of the other wonders. Now wonderful was the patience *(p. 243)* of Christ not answering the robber. For Chrysostom says: It is more wonderful to see a man suffer revilings and not be moved, than a man struck and wounded and not fall.

“But the other answering,” (Luke 23:40) namely the robber hanging on the right, *“rebuked him, saying: Neither dost thou fear God,”* as neither do the other Jews and servants of Pilate mocking Christ, *“seeing thou art condemned under the same condemnation?”* that is, notwithstanding that thou art now in like punishment of crucifixion with Christ, dost thou yet not fear God, since thou art already near death? As if he should say: Though in time of health and prosperity thou didst not fear God, now thou shouldst deservedly fear Him: whom if thou fearedst, thou wouldst not blaspheme this just man: since fear draws a man back from sin, as Solomon says, “By the fear of the Lord every one declineth from evil” (Prov. 15:27). *“And we indeed justly,”* (Luke 23:41) that is, thou and I justly suffer these things; *“for we receive the due reward of our deeds,”* that is, punishments due to our excesses; *“but this man hath done no evil”*: as is said in Isaias, “He did no iniquity, neither was there deceit in his mouth” (Isa. 53:9). *“And he said to Jesus: Lord, remember me”* (Luke 23:42), that is, clemently succour me, *“when thou shalt come into thy kingdom,”* the heavenly. For now the robber believed that Jesus was the king Messias promised in the law, whose is the kingdom of heaven. But this he believed from the wonders which he beheld, and from the ineffable patience, charity and

meekness of Christ: yet rather from the supernatural and most gracious illumination of the Holy Ghost, because he was a vessel of mercy. Whence in the conversion, illumination and salvation of this robber, to every sinner and penitent greatest hope of salvation is given, and every occasion of despair is taken away, since this robber, caught in so many crimes, suddenly obtained so great a fervour of charity, grace of penance, fulness of pardon, and acceleration of eternal salvation. For with so great contrition and fervour of love he confessed to Christ with a twofold confession, namely confession of the divine goodness and praise, and confession of his own guilt, so that Christ absolved him from penalty and guilt. For "charity covereth a multitude of sins" (1 Peter 4:8); and the greater the contrition, the more of guilt and penalty is taken away.

"And Jesus said to him: Amen," that is, truly, *"I say to thee: This day thou shalt be with me in paradise"* (Luke 23:43), that is, in the state and affluence of true beatitude. For Christ, because He satisfied for original sin, for the guilt of which alone the holy ones in limbo were detained in suffering, when He descended into hell, that is, into the limbo of the fathers, straightway beatified the souls found there, giving them the essential reward, namely the beatific fruition of the divine essence: the glory of which beatitude is now expressed by the name of paradise. The soul of this robber, separated from the body, descended straightway to limbo, and obtained the aforesaid beatitude. Paradise therefore is now not called the earthly paradise, nor the empyrean heaven, but participation of the beatific vision. As a physician of bodies, suddenly curing some one most languishing and a despaired-of sick man, displays his skill, and obtains great fame; so Christ, saving this robber, declared to us all His clemency, wisdom and power for pardoning and saving.

Now in this place Luke omits, and the other two Evangelists, what John writes of the mutual compassion of Christ and His most beloved Mother, saying: "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother" (John 19:25). O most affectionate, sorrowful word, most worthy of all compassion! "And his mother's sister," namely Mary the wife of Cleophas, mother of James the Less. "When Jesus therefore had seen his mother, and the disciple standing whom he loved, he saith to his mother: Woman, behold thy son," that is, I assign John the apostle to thee for a son: since I am now taken from thee, so that henceforth I shall not be with thee in this mortal life, and conversing with thee in human fashion. Then He says to the disciple: "Behold thy mother," that is, my Mother I commend to thee, that thou love her as a son, *(p. 244)* reverently guard her, assist her, serve her, provide for her. "And from that hour the disciple took her to his own," as his mother, in his faith, in his keeping (John 19:26–27).

"And it was almost the sixth hour" (Luke 23:44), namely when Jesus was crucified: how this is to be understood has been said above; *"and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened"* (Luke 23:45): not that light ceased to be in the sun, or that darkness existed in it, but because it poured no light on the earth, nor appeared, a certain medium being interposed between it and the inhabitants of the earth, as happens in an eclipse. And Origen says that this eclipse or darkening was made by the interposition of many dense clouds between the sun and the earth. Jerome however says it was made by a retraction of the solar rays, as in Egypt in the time of Moses (Exod. 10:21–23). Yet Origen and Jerome speak opinionatively rather than assertively, in assigning ways in which that eclipse could have been done. More therefore is to be believed the divine and holy Dionysius, who in his epistle to Polycarp writes that he saw this eclipse at Heliopolis, a city of Egypt, where Dionysius then was for leisure for astronomy, on account of the serenity and quiet of the air there especially. Dionysius therefore asserts that he saw the moon come from the east, and place itself under the sun, and cause the obscurity. — Dionysius moreover touches in the aforesaid epistle four supernatural things which happened in that eclipse. The first is, that a natural eclipse of the sun does not occur except at the time of the conjunction and kindling of the moon, namely when it is directly under the sun; but then it was opposition and full moon, as it was the fifteenth moon, when the Jews celebrate the Pasch. The second is, that although the moon had been placed under the sun at the sixth hour in the midst of heaven, yet at the evening hour it was restored to its place in the east: therefore the order of time was not confused. The third, that an eclipse naturally begins from the west, namely from the part of the sun

which looks west, which is first eclipsed, and goes on to the east: since the motion of the moon in its own orb is swifter than the motion of the sun in its own circle, and so it passes the sun coming from the west. But then the moon had already passed the sun, being distant from it by half the circle, existing in opposition to the sun. Therefore it was needful that it return from the east to the sun, and first touch it on the eastern side, and first eclipse that. The fourth is, that in a natural eclipse that part of the sun is first uncovered and seen which was first obscured; but then the part last obscured appeared first, since the moon was returning to the east whence it had come. A fifth miracle about that eclipse Jerome and Chrysostom add, that a natural eclipse lasts a short time, namely until the moon passes the sun; but then it lasted three hours, the moon so long remaining under the sun.

Moreover that eclipse was not only in the land of Judea, since Dionysius says it was in Egypt and at Athens. Other historians also write that it was in other lands. Finally the Athenian philosophers seeing so great wonders in that eclipse are read to have said: Either the God of nature suffers, or the elements and stars lie, or the machine of the world will perish. Nevertheless knowing that those wonders were done by virtue of some cause not natural but supernatural, they made an altar in honour of that cause, and called it, namely the cause, the unknown God. Hence in the Acts it is read that Paul the apostle found at Athens an altar consecrated to the unknown God, and said to the Athenians: “What therefore you worship, without knowing it, that I preach to you” (Acts 17:23). Whence when Dionysius had heard from the blessed apostle Paul the cause of those wonders, he quickly believed. — But, as Origen recites, against the aforesaid about this eclipse the sons of this world said: How did no Greek or barbarian describe so wonderful a thing? To which Origen answers that a certain man named Phlegon, in his Chronicles, described *(p. 245)* this as happening under the empire of Tiberius: yet he does not write that the moon was full. Lastly, if what is had in the text, “over all the earth,” be understood of the whole habitable earth, it could not have been done by the placing of the moon alone, on account of the smallness of the moon; but then the aforesaid way of Origen or Jerome would have to be added.

Moreover, as Jerome relates, certain writing against the Gospel of Christ said that the sun then suffered something natural, which the disciples of Jesus from ignorance said happened on account of the passion of Jesus. How false and feigned that is, is plain from what has been said.

“And the veil of the temple was rent in the midst” (Luke 23:45), that is, into two parts, “from the top even to the bottom,” as Matthew says (Matt. 27:51). Now there was a twofold veil of the temple then existing in Jerusalem: one outer at the entrance of the temple, which Remigius testifies was then divided; another inner at the entrance of the Holy of Holies, which St. Jerome says was rent. By the rending of the veil was signified that the mysteries, sacraments and figures of the Old Testament were fulfilled and laid open in the passion of Christ. Jerome also relates that he had read that the lintel of the temple was then rent and divided. But Josephus also says that the angelic powers, which until then had been the presidents and guardians of the temple, then likewise cried out together: Let us depart from these seats. But what Luke here writes of the rending of the veil, he narrated by anticipation, because, as Matthew most plainly says, the veil was rent at the death of Christ when He gave up the ghost (Matt. 27:50–51).

Finally, according to Matthew and Mark, about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying: “Eli, Eli, lamma sabacthani? that is, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34). This Christ uttered as man, not from impatience, but to insinuate the ineffable bitterness of His pains. And He said that He was forsaken by God, not that He was deprived of grace or glory, or that His humanity was separated from the personal being of the eternal Word; but because at that time there was no redundance of consolation from the superior part of His soul into its inferior part and bodily nature. But it was not so in the holy martyrs, many of whom during their passion felt so great consolation within themselves that they scarcely felt exterior pain. Therefore also He cried that He was forsaken, because He suffered so gravely, and was so exposed to the will of the wicked, as if He had been a sinner and despised by God, as was foretold by Isaias:

“And we have thought him as it were a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted” (Isa. 53:4). And Christ says in the Psalm to the Father: “Thy wrath is confirmed upon me; and all thy waves thou hast brought in upon me” (Ps. 87:8). For then, as Isaias foretold, “the Lord was pleased to bruise him in infirmity” (Isa. 53:10).

Moreover Matthew says: “And some of the standers by,” namely there, and hearing how Jesus had cried, Eli, Eli, said: “This man calleth Elias.” Some say these were Gentiles, not perfectly understanding the Hebrew idiom, therefore by Eli they thought Elias to be meant; and because they dwelt among the Jews, they could know something of Elias. Others say that they were Jews, who therefore said that Christ called on Elias, to defame Him for weakness, in that He sought help from Elias, who a little before had named Himself the Son of God. Then Jesus said: “I thirst.” “And immediately one of them running,” namely of Pilate’s ministers, as is said, “offered him vinegar. And the rest said: Let be,” that is, bear a little and wait or cease, “let us see whether Elias will come to deliver him.” This however they said not trusting, but mocking: as if to say, In vain He called Elias. “When Jesus therefore had taken the vinegar, he said: It is consummated,” that is, what was foretold of my passion, and what I ought to do and suffer for men, has been fulfilled; nor remains anything but that I offer and yield up my spirit to the Father (John 19:28–30; Matt. 27:48–49).

(p. 246) “And Jesus crying with a loud voice” (Luke 23:46). That voice was great and strong, because it was uttered with most affectionate mind, and with strong and high sonority. *“Said: Father, into thy hands”*, that is, into thy power and equity, *“I commend my spirit,”* that is, my soul. This the Saviour said, not as though His soul were exposed to some peril to be avoided, from which He might ask that it be preserved; but He said this as with thanksgiving and praise securely committing it to the Father. Finally some say that Christ said on the cross, in a low voice, the psalm in which this verse is written, namely, “In thee, O Lord, have I hoped,” from its beginning even to these words inclusive, which He uttered aloud (Ps. 30:2–6). Others assert that He said all the psalms from the place where He cried aloud: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” which is the beginning of the twenty-first psalm; until this verse: “Into thy hands,” etc. *“And saying this, he gave up the ghost”* (Luke 23:46), namely with head bowed, made obedient to the Father unto death (Phil. 2:8; John 19:30). And then Christ, giving up the spirit with so strong a cry, most openly showed it to be true what He had before said: “I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it up again” (John 10:18). In this expiring therefore Christ truly died, so that His soul was separated from the body, and descended into the limbo of the fathers, as a most glorious triumpher; and straightway at His coming the holy souls existing there were suffused and filled with the light of glory, and began to see God by sight, because the price was now paid, and satisfaction had been made for original sin. Although however the soul and body of Christ were separated from each other, yet each remained united to the eternal Word, because what the Word once assumed, He never laid aside meanwhile.

At this expiring of Christ the earth was supernaturally moved, and the rocks were rent, and the graves were opened by the vehement trembling of the earth. “And many bodies of the saints that had slept arose” (Matt. 27:51–52): not at this hour, but at the same hour in which Christ rose again. Therefore Matthew says: “And coming out of the tombs after his resurrection, they came into the holy city,” namely Jerusalem, “and appeared to many” men there, testifying that Jesus is the Christ, and truly raised from death, and that they themselves had risen, that they might be witnesses of this matter (Matt. 27:53). — Who those saints were that rose with Christ we do not know with certainty. Jerome however says that the ancient patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had so great solicitude to be buried in the land of promise, in which they knew Christ was to be born, to suffer and be buried, that they might be partakers of His resurrection. Hence some have thought that such Patriarchs and some of the Prophets, Adam also and Eve and David, rose with Christ. Again, according to Jerome, it is uncertain whether those so raised with Christ died again, or whether in them the resurrection was completed, so that in glorified body they reign with the Saviour. And it appears to some more probable that they so reign with Christ: otherwise, as they say, they would not be fit witnesses of the

perfect resurrection of the Lord. Nevertheless in the Revelations of St. Bridget the blessed Virgin is read to say to Bridget that no human body is in the heavenly kingdom, except the body of her Son and her own body.

"Now the centurion, seeing what was done, glorified God, saying: Indeed this was a just man" (Luke 23:47). This the other Evangelists write more fully. For Matthew says: "Now the centurion," that is, who was over a hundred soldiers and was of Pilate's household (whence Centurion is the name of an office, not of a person), "and they that were with him," namely his soldiers, guarding Jesus, lest before death He should be snatched away by anyone, or taken down from the wood without the governor's leave, "having seen the earthquake and the things that were done in the aforesaid eclipse, and that Jesus so crying had expired, feared exceedingly, saying: Indeed this was the Son of God," that is, those wonders which we have seen testify that He was truly the Son of God, *(p. 247)* as He asserted, and as was laid to His charge (Matt. 27:54). But Luke singularly says of the centurion that he glorified, that is, confessed and praised the Supreme God as glorious and omnipotent, from consideration of so great wonders, ascribing these to His power and saying: "*Indeed this was a just man,"* so that He was unjustly slain, because He uttered the truth. From these it is gathered that the centurion and those with him feared, and fearing glorified God, and both said both things, namely: "Indeed this was the Son of God"; "This was a just man." But because the centurion was the more principal, Luke writes this of him alone. The centurion also weighed that this was altogether miraculous, that Jesus, tortured and exhausted by such great and long torments, and dissipated in the whole body, in the very act of expiring cried out so strongly, whereas others so treated can then scarce emit a small sound. Some however read thus: "He glorified him," namely Christ: so that the sense is that the centurion, seeing these things, bore glorious testimony to Christ.

"And all the multitude of them that were come together to that sight" (Luke 23:48), that is, to the wonderful slaying of Christ, by which He overthrew death and the devil, and redeemed the world, and went forth as victor to immortality, *"and saw the things that were done,"* namely the darkening of the sun, the earthquake, and the loud cry of Christ in expiring, *"returned striking their breasts."* By the striking of the breast they insinuated that it had been most unjustly done with Jesus, and that they repented that they had consented to His crucifixion; but they also feared the stroke of divine vengeance. For therefore also the centurion with his men was greatly afraid. Whence what Luke says, "all the multitude," is to be understood as said on account of the multitude of those who so returned: yet not absolutely all who were present so acted; nay some of them, both Jews and Gentiles, persisted in their former malice.

"And all his acquaintance" (Luke 23:49), that is, the disciples and friends and kinsmen of Christ, speaking of those who were there, *"stood afar off,"* from the cross, for fear of the Jews and the crucifiers. Yet they did not stand very far from the cross; but in comparison of the adversaries of Christ standing near the cross, they stood afar off, as was foretold in the Psalm: "Friend and neighbour thou hast put far from me, and my acquaintance" (Ps. 87:19). *"And the women that had followed him from Galilee,"* also stood afar off in the aforesaid manner. Nor is it an objection that John testifies: "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister" (John 19:25). For they did not (as was said) stand far off, speaking absolutely, but relatively: and perhaps now nearer, now further off they stood. Among the aforesaid women were, according to Matthew, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the Less and Joseph his brother, who was sister of the most sacred Virgin and wife of Cleophas, and likewise the mother of the sons of Zebedee (Matt. 27:55–56). Joanna also was there, as is plain from what is said in the following chapter (Luke 24:10).

"And behold there was a man named Joseph" (Luke 23:50). Luke omits in this place what after him John wrote, saying: "The Jews therefore, because it was the Parasceve," namely the sixth day of the week next the Sabbath (singularly celebrated, namely both by reason of the paschal solemnity and by reason of the seventh day, which was commanded in the old law to be celebrated), "that the bodies might not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day," namely of Christ and the robbers ("for that was a great Sabbath day," that is, a

very solemn day), "besought Pilate that their legs might be broken by their crucifiers, and that they might be taken away," that is, the bodies be taken down from the cross, lest by the horror of their long punishment they should defile the solemnity of that day, by striking weariness and dread into passers-by. To this prayer Pilate consented. For John subjoins: "The soldiers therefore came; and they broke the legs of the first indeed," that is, of the robber hanging at the right of Christ; or, "of the first," that is, of the principal robber; or, "of the first," that is, of him who was first in the way as they came; "and of the other. But after they were come to Jesus," *(p. 248)* that is, to His lifeless body, putting the part for the whole, "when they saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs; but one of the soldiers with a spear opened his side" (John 19:31–34). This soldier, as is read, was called Longinus, and was purblind: and some part of Christ's blood dripping upon his eyes, he began to see clearly; nay he was also illuminated within, and converted; and afterwards lived long, and at length crowned with martyrdom, departed to the Lord. "And immediately there came out blood and water": true water. Which was not natural, but miraculous, and done for mystical reasons, namely to designate the inviolable purity of the body of Christ, and that His body was truly composed of the elements.

Then when it was evening, according to Matthew, it happened which Luke now says. *"And behold,"* because it is notable what is said, a man in sex, virtue and constancy of mind, *"named Joseph,"* imitator of the perfection of that holy Joseph the eminent patriarch, *"who was a counsellor,"* that is, powerful and noble, and also rich, according to Matthew (Matt. 27:57). *"And he was of Arimathea, a city of Judea,"* which by another name was called Ramatha, of which (as is had in the books of the Kings) were Samuel and his parents (1 Kings 1:19). Now he is called decurio (counsellor) because he was of the order of the curia, and perhaps administering some office of the curia. For he was a counsellor, according to Jerome. Sometimes however, even properly, he is called decurio who is over ten soldiers; as the centurion over a hundred. *"A good man,"* that is, pious and devoutly intent on God, *"and a just,"* toward his neighbours: which belongs chiefly to officials of the curia, although these are rarely found in them. So this Joseph was like Cornelius the centurion and decurion, who was a religious and good and God-fearing man, as is said in the Acts (Acts 10:1–2).

"The same had not consented to their counsel and doings" (Luke 23:51), namely of the Jews who took counsel among themselves how to put Jesus to death, and procured His death; *"who also himself looked for,"* by formed hope, which is a theological virtue, *"the kingdom of God,"* that is, heavenly felicity. For he was a disciple of Christ, according to Matthew (Matt. 27:57); hidden however, according to John, for fear of the Jews (John 19:38). But now, putting aside fear of them, *"he went to Pilate"* (Luke 23:52) more boldly, as Mark says, *"and begged the body of Jesus,"* that is, leave to take down and bury it (Mark 15:43). For this Joseph also, having seen so many wonders, was animated to bury the body of Christ honourably. But Pilate, as Mark says, wondered if Jesus were already dead. And when he had learned this from the centurion, he gave the body of Christ to this happy Joseph, on account of his dignity and reverence, and because he recognised that Jesus had been innocent; and likewise because perhaps he heard from the centurion that those wonders were done, to intimate that Jesus was unjustly slain, and was the Son of God (Mark 15:44–45).

"And taking him down," (Luke 23:53) the body of Christ from the cross, *"he wrapped him in fine linen,"* namely clean and linen cloth, *"and laid him in a sepulchre that was hewed in stone,"* that is, a stone tomb hewn in a great rock, *"wherein never yet any man had been laid,"* that is, no one had been buried there before. For if another had been buried there before, perhaps the Jews would have said that not Jesus', but that other's body had been taken from the tomb. Finally, according to John, describing these things more fully, "there came also Nicodemus, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pound weight," that is, an ointment made of such spices. "They took therefore the body of Jesus, Joseph and Nicodemus, and bound it in linen cloths," that is, with linen cloths, namely a sheet and a napkin, they wrapped His body, with spices. Whence it appears that they had not clear and perfect faith about the resurrection of Christ soon to be,

applying to Him this anointing against putrefaction. “Now there was in the place where he was crucified a garden,” that is, near the place of Calvary; “and in the garden a new sepulchre,” which Joseph had caused to be hewn for himself, according to Matthew (Matt. 27:60); “and there they laid the body of Christ” with great reverence (John 19:39–42). “And he rolled a great stone, Joseph with his helpers to the door of the sepulchre”: which, as is read, was made in the manner of a little house, in the middle of which was the sepulchre, and it had a small door for entering (Matt. 27:60). *(p. 249)*

“And it was the day of the Parasceve” (Luke 23:54), that is, the sixth day of the week, which the Sabbath followed: on which day Christ was crucified, and His people saved. Of which day the Lord says through Zacharias concerning Christ: “I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day” (Zach. 3:9). Now Parasceve is interpreted preparation, because on that day food was prepared for the following Sabbath, on which the Jews held that it was not lawful even to prepare food. This word the Jews took from the Greeks who dwelt among them. For this is not a Hebrew, but a Greek name. *“And the sabbath drew on,”* namely the seventh day of the week, that is, began to shine; not that the sun then began to appear, but that the stars began to appear at the beginning of the night of the Sabbath. For the Jews celebrated their solemnities from evening to evening: therefore the Sabbath then “drew on,” because the first evening of that Sabbath was now at hand.

“And the women that were come with him from Galilee, following after,” (Luke 23:55) of whom it has now been said, *“saw the sepulchre,”* that is, considered it attentively, purposing quickly to return and enter the sepulchre to anoint the body of Christ. Therefore it is added: *“and how his body was laid,”* that they might the more quickly touch it. *“And returning,”* (Luke 23:56) to Jerusalem with the blessed Virgin Mary, *“they prepared spices and ointments,”* wherewith after the Sabbath they might embalm the body of Christ, although Nicodemus had done this sufficiently. Whence it is plain that neither these women thought Christ would rise on the third day; but against stench they prepared spices, against corruption ointments, on the sixth day until sunset, namely as long as it was lawful for them to work. *“And on the sabbath day they rested,”* literally, “were silent,” that is, the whole of that most solemn Sabbath day they kept quiet from the preparation of spices and ointment until evening, *“according to the commandment”* of the law, which commanded that the silence of the Sabbath, that is, the rest, should be kept from evening to evening. But when the evening of the Sabbath was come, in which it was lawful to practise these works of piety, because in those women’s estimation the ointments applied were not sufficient for the anointing of Christ’s body, they bought spices again; and all that night, which was between the Sabbath and the Lord’s day, they prepared them, and in the morning took them with them to the sepulchre, that coming they might anoint Jesus (Mark 16:1).

Moreover, as Matthew relates, on the next day, which is after the Parasceve, the chief priests and Pharisees came together to Pilate, saying: “Sir, we have remembered, that that seducer said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again,” that is, on the third day immediately after its beginning. “Command therefore the sepulchre to be guarded until the third day,” inclusive, “lest perhaps his disciples come and steal him away, and say to the people, He is risen from the dead; and the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said to them: You have a guard,” that is, soldiers to keep the sepulchre, “I readily grant you. Go, guard it,” that is, cause the sepulchre to be guarded by soldiers, “as you know to be expedient. And they departing made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, with guards,” that is, soldiers appointed for the guarding of the sepulchre (Matt. 27:62–66). But as Solomon protests: “There is no wisdom, there is no prudence, there is no counsel against the Lord” (Prov. 21:30). Hence the more craftily the Jews thought to extinguish the name and fame and faith of Christ utterly, so much the more they glorified Him. For that they so diligently sealed the sepulchre and caused it to be guarded is a most certain sign that the body of Christ was not taken away by theft, but raised by divine power, as I have more clearly shown upon Matthew.

Finally, what Joseph and Nicodemus bodily rendered to the body of Christ, we ought to render to Christ spiritually: and to embalm Him with myrrh and aloes, that is, with the mortification of vices, and the sweet

odour of good conversation, *(p. 250)* to venerate and anoint Him with exemplary fame; and to lay Him in a new sepulchre, that is, to bury Him in the inmost depth of the heart renewed by virtues, imprinting Him on our hearts, by contemplation of His divinity and consideration of His humanity, and by continual memory of His benefits, by the burning love of His goodness, and by the cruciform imitation of His life and passion. We ought also to wrap Him in linen cloths, that is, in sincerity of conscience, and purity of mind, and vigilant guard of the heart, that He may abide always with us, who with the Father and the Holy Ghost is one God, above all exalted and blessed. Amen.

Luke 24

Article L — Exposition of the Twenty-Fourth Chapter: "Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came to the sepulchre"

(p. 250) After the blessed and most lucid evangelist Luke has gloriously described the incarnation of Christ, and His conversation in this world, His preaching and working, and His passion, he now in this last chapter describes His resurrection. At the end of the chapter he also touches something of His ascension and the sending of the Holy Spirit.

"And on the first day of the week" (Luke 24:1), that is, the first day after the Sabbath, which was a festival day of the Jews, that is, on the Lord's day, *"very early in the morning,"* as the dawn was beginning, when something of the darkness yet appeared, *"they came to the sepulchre"* of Christ, the women, of whom it was said at the end of the preceding chapter, *"bringing the spices which they had prepared."* For it was said at the end of the preceding chapter: "And the women that were come with him from Galilee, following after, saw the sepulchre, and how his body was laid; and returning, they prepared spices and ointments" (Luke 23:55–56). *"And they found the stone rolled back from the sepulchre"* (Luke 24:2). For after Christ rose from the closed sepulchre, as He came forth from the closed womb of the Virgin, an angel presently removed the stone laid upon the sepulchre, to show that the Lord was risen, as is had in Matthew: "An angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and coming, rolled back the stone, and sat upon it" (Matt. 28:2). *"And going in, they found not the body of the Lord Jesus"* (Luke 24:3). For He was already risen.

"And it happened, while they were astonished in mind at this" (Luke 24:4), that is, cast down in spirit and stupefied at the absence of the Lord's body, and the rolling back of the stone, of which they had said among themselves, with great anxiety, on the way: "Who shall roll us back the stone from the door of the sepulchre?" For it was exceeding great, as is read in Mark (Mark 16:3–4). *"Behold, two men stood by them in shining apparel,"* that is, two angels in the appearance of men, as also beside the Apostles when Christ ascended into heaven (Acts 1:10). Yet Matthew and Mark make mention of only one angel. But the greater number includes the less, and the less does not exclude the greater. Matthew also and Mark speak of the angel who rolled back the stone, and who spoke to the women on behalf of both. But if it be objected that, according to John, Mary Magdalene saw two angels sitting, one at the head, and one at the feet (John 20:12), Chrysostom answers that at first they sat, then rose up before the holy women.

"And as they were afraid, and bowed down their countenance towards the ground" (Luke 24:5). These women, seeing the angels, were exceedingly afraid: *(p. 251)* because their appearance was as lightning, as Matthew reports of one (Matt. 28:3), and there is no doubt the same is to be understood of the other; and they shone with heavenly brightness. And because they appeared in the likeness of young men, these devout women also blushed, and cast their faces down, as not daring to look upon them. *"They said to them."* It is the custom of Scripture that a multitude or company is said to do or say what a part of it, or one of it, does or says. So now these angels are written to have said what one said in the person of both. *"Why seek you the living with the dead?"* that is, why seek you Jesus Christ, living eternally and unchangeably according to His divinity, and now raised according to the nature assumed, in the sepulchre, as one of the dead not yet raised?

Yet before the angel uttered these words, he comforted the women, saying: "Fear not you, for I know that you seek Jesus" (Matt. 28:5; Mark 16:6). And then among other things he spoke the aforesaid and following words. *"He is not here"* (Luke 24:6), according to bodily presence, who fills all things by the uncircumscribable majesty of His divinity, *"but is risen"* by His own divine power. *"Remember how he spoke to you,"* that is, how truly and evidently and frequently He spoke to you, *"when he was yet in Galilee,"* (Luke 24:7) "*saying: The Son of man must,"* that is, it is fitting and convenient, and according to the divine pre-ordination necessary, *"be delivered into the hands of sinful men,"* namely of the Jews and Gentiles: who, by ill-treating and slaying the Son of God, became by eminence sinners, that is, most wicked transgressors, as deicides. On account of which crime the machine of the world was afraid, and the face of nature was discoloured, and the order of things confused. *"And be crucified."* For although the human race could have been redeemed in another way, this way was nevertheless the most fitting. *"And the third day rise again."* From which it is proved that Christ foretold His passion and resurrection not only to the disciples, but also to these devout women.

"And they remembered his words" (Luke 24:8), these women, already spoken, which from the greatness of compassion and grief they had forgotten. *"And going back from the sepulchre, they told all these things"* (Luke 24:9), which had befallen them, and these angelic words, *"to the eleven,"* Apostles, for Judas was already perished, *"and to all the rest"* of Christ's disciples, belonging to their company. *"And it was Mary Magdalene,"* (Luke 24:10) who was most familiar, most faithful and most fervent disciple of Christ, *"and Joanna,"* wife of Chusa the steward of Herod, whom the Lord Jesus healed, *"and Mary of James,"* mother, and also Salome, as is read in Mark (Mark 16:1), *"and the other women that were with them, who told these things to the apostles,"* and likewise to others, as has already appeared; but the Apostles, as the more principal, he now repeats. *"And these words seemed to them as idle tales"* (Luke 24:11), that is, fantastic, abusive, and they esteemed them to be of womanish lightness, by no means believing that Jesus was risen, nor that angels had truly appeared to these women, but that they were deluded. Yet the most blessed Peter did not altogether think the women raved, but desired to know the truth more certainly, as is subjoined.

"But Peter rising" (Luke 24:12), out of his pusillanimity, fear and torpor, and rising also bodily, because he was sitting on the ground most sorrowful, *"ran to the sepulchre."* As is read in John, not Peter only, but John also with him ran to the sepulchre (John 20:3–4); but Luke expresses Peter, as the elder, more fervent and more principal, by whose example John also ran. Yet this running was from the announcement of Mary Magdalene alone, as John appears to insinuate (John 20:1–2): and so the evangelist Luke does not here appear to keep the order of the event. *"And stooping down,"* that is, inclining himself to look in, *"he saw the linen cloths laid by themselves."* For the linen cloths in which the body of Christ had been wrapped were laid by themselves, that is, apart, decently arranged or folded, and separated from the napkin. *(p. 252)* The napkin also was decently rolled up, and placed apart. Which however was done by angelic service, to declare that the body of the Saviour was not stolen away by His disciples: since they would have hastened with all their might in doing this, for fear of the guards present; neither would they have so long or curiously occupied themselves with the arrangement of such linen cloths, but would rather have carried them off together with the body. Yet it is written in John that Peter entered the place of the sepulchre (John 20:6). Therefore it must be said that he first stooped down to look, as Luke recounts; then, that he might consider all things more diligently, he went in. *"And went away wondering with himself at that which was come to pass,"* namely that Christ was risen, as some expound, or rather that His body was so missing, and the linen cloths so disposed. And then, as is believed, Peter parted from John, and anxiously thought upon these things, and presently Christ appeared to him.

Next is described the appearance of Christ made to two disciples. *"And behold, two of them"* (Luke 24:13), not of the number of the Apostles, but of the seventy-two disciples, as is said, "*went, the same day,"* of the Lord's resurrection, "*to a town which was sixty furlongs from Jerusalem, named Emmaus."* Sixteen furlongs

make a league: and so sixty furlongs make four leagues, wanting four furlongs. Now a furlong contains a hundred and twenty-five paces; and a pace is a space of five feet. *"And they talked together of all these things which had happened"* (Luke 24:14) concerning Christ, and concerning the women visiting the sepulchre. So they conferred of profitable things. In which travellers ought to follow them, and avoid vain talk, and often be free in walking for prayers and meditations.

"And it came to pass, while they talked" (Luke 24:15), that is, conferred (taking this word, fabulari, as derived from the verb for, faris, not from fabula), *"and reasoned with themselves,"* that is, questioned one another, how the things done and told might be, *"that Jesus himself also drawing near,"* that is, joining Himself to them in the manner of a traveller and pilgrim, *"went with them."* For He Himself said: "Where there are two or three gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). And because they conferred of the passion of Christ, and piously compassionated Him, they were fit to be visited and consoled by Him. For compassion and conference about His passion especially please the Saviour.

"But their eyes were held, that they should not know him" (Luke 24:16): because, as Mark has, He appeared to them in another shape (Mark 16:12): and this, on account of their doubt and unbelief. Yet it is not to be thought that the disposition of Christ's face was changed: because He was truly glorified, nor was that other shape subjectively in the face of Christ, as the more probable opinion holds; although some say that Christ for a time changed the shape of His countenance, as in the transfiguration (Luke 9:29). It is more likely therefore reported that that other shape was subjectively only in the eyes of the disciples, or, as some think, in the air. Christ could indeed alter the sight of the disciples in diverse ways, by the mere impression of such and such visual species or rays. Hence some say that they were struck with that kind of blindness which is called acrisia: as the Syrians seeing Eliseus, and yet not recognising him (4 Kings 6:18); and the Sodomites seeking the house of Lot, and not finding it (Gen. 19:11). For acrisia is a certain blinding by which a thing is seen confusedly and imperfectly, and yet is not apprehended under its proper appearance. Whence according to Gregory, Christ exhibited Himself present to these disciples loving Him and speaking of Him, and yet took away the appearance of His being known from them doubting of Him.

"And he said to them: What are these discourses that you hold one with another as you walk, and are sad?" (Luke 24:17). He asked this not from ignorance, but that by their answer He might fittingly instruct them. *"And the one of them, whose name was Cleophas, answering, said"* (Luke 24:18): who was one of the seventy-two disciples; the other, *(p. 253)* according to Ambrose, was Ammaus. Gregory however in the prologue upon the Morals of Job says that this other is believed to have been Luke the evangelist himself, so that from humility he suppressed his name. He said: *"Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things that have been done there in these days?"* Cleophas uttered all this not assertively but interrogatively, as if he should say: Hast thou come alone into Jerusalem at this Pasch, that thou shouldst be ignorant of what has happened in it one of these days, that is, on the day of the Parasceve, and also before, when on Palm Sunday and afterwards Christ wrought many prodigies in Jerusalem? For thou carriest thyself in asking us as if thou hadst been the only stranger here, and therefore hadst heard nothing from other strangers: whereas it is certain that in these days there were innumerable strangers in Jerusalem, from whom thou mightest deservedly have learned what was done in it, since strangers gladly inquire and learn news.

"To whom he said: What things?" (Luke 24:19), that is, what are those things that have been done in Jerusalem these days? *"And they said: Concerning Jesus of Nazareth,"* that is, these things concern Jesus of Nazareth, and were done concerning Him and in Him, *"who was a man"* in sex and in all perfection of virtues, *"a prophet"* supreme, foreknowing all things to come: so that the grace of prophecy was in Him by way of a fixed habit, nay always in act and equally perfect; *"mighty in work,"* that is, in every virtuous and perfect act, *"and in signs, prodigies and miracles."* Whence also He said: "The works which the Father hath given me, give testimony of me" (John 5:36); and likewise, "If I had not done among them the works that no other man hath done, they would not have sin" (John 15:24). *"And word"*: because in words He was most

wise and most eloquent, according to that: “Grace is poured abroad in thy lips” (Ps. 44:3). “All wondered at the words of grace that proceeded from his mouth” (Luke 4:22). His adversaries also were compelled to say: “Never did man speak like this man” (John 7:46). And rightly it is now said that He was mighty in work and word, putting first, “in work”: for He began to do and to teach (Acts 1:1), so that He first did what He afterwards preached. But now many are as it were mighty in word, but weak in work: who copiously discourse of humility, patience, meekness, temperance, justice, charity, and yet are easily overcome by their own passions, and basely and unhappily succumb to the defilements of flesh and spirit. So then Jesus was mighty in work and word, *“before God,”* that is, truly and infallibly, virtuously, and meritoriously for Himself as to the accidental reward, and for others absolutely, *“and all the people,”* that is, according to the estimation of all, especially of the common sort: who said: “Never was the like seen in Israel” (Matt. 9:33); and, “A great prophet is risen up among us” (Luke 7:16). Now there are some mighty in work and word before men, but not before God, as hypocrites.

“And how,” (Luke 24:20) that is, how unjustly, *“our chief priests and princes delivered him,”* namely the pontiffs and elders, *“to be condemned to death,”* that is, judged him worthy of death, saying: “We have a law, and according to the law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God” (John 19:7). They also importunately obtained from the governor the sentence of condemnation to death against Christ. *“And crucified him,”* because they procured His crucifixion. *“But we hoped,”* (Luke 24:21) before His passion, *“that it was he that should have redeemed Israel,”* that is, should have delivered the Israelitic people, as the true Messias promised in the law and the Prophets, from original and all sin, and the captivity of the devil, and the servitude of sin. As if they said: This we hoped, but now we hope not. *“And now besides all this,”* that is, beyond what I have said, *“today is the third day since,”* that is, since the day of the Parasceve on which these things were done, namely on which Jesus was adjudged to death and crucified. *“Yea and certain women also of our company,”* (Luke 24:22) that is, belonging to our society, because they devoutly followed the Lord Jesus with us, *“have frightened us: who before it was light,”* that is, very early at dawn, *“were at the sepulchre,”* (Luke 24:23) *“and not finding his body,”* because *(p. 254)* He had already risen, *“came, saying that they had also seen a vision”*, that is, a visible form, *“of angels”*: so that they beheld the angels bodily in assumed bodies; *“who say that he is alive,”* that is, that Christ is risen. And so the disciples, having heard the words of these women, were frightened, perhaps because they feared that the unbelieving Jews would lay it to their charge that they had taken away their master’s body, and would therefore persecute them. *“And some of our people went to the sepulchre,”* (Luke 24:24) namely Peter and John (as has been said; John 20:3), *“and found it so as the women had said,”* namely the stone rolled back, and the linen cloths laid; *“but him they found not,”* that is, the body of Jesus.

“Then he said to them: O foolish ones” (Luke 24:25), that is, not having knowledge of the Scriptures, and lacking the light of true faith, *“and slow of heart to believe in all things which the prophets have spoken”* of my passion and resurrection: whereas you have sufficient inducement to believe that I am He of whom the Prophets foretold those things, for by words and sufficient miracles I proved that I am the Christ. It is asked why Christ called these disciples foolish, whereas elsewhere He says: “Whosoever shall say to his brother, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire” (Matt. 5:22). And it must be answered that sins of words are weighed by the intention and affection of hearts, since those things which are in the voice are the signs of the passions, affections and intentions which are in the soul. Christ therefore forbade to say to a neighbour, “Fool,” from contempt, derision, or a like vicious root, but not from charity and zeal of justice, a reasonable cause requiring it.

“Ought not Christ to have suffered these things” (Luke 24:26), on account of the pre-ordination of the eternal Father, and the verification of the Prophets, and the salvation of the human race, the bringing out of the saints from limbo, the opening of the heavenly country, the rebuilding of the heavenly Jerusalem, *“and so,”* namely by the passion, *“to enter into his glory,”* that is, to ascend into heaven, and be glorified in body,

and fully possess heavenly glory? For Christ by His humiliation, passion and death merited for Himself the accidental reward, and dominion over every creature, as the Apostle says: "He humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death; for which cause God also hath exalted him" (Phil. 2:8–9). And yet this glory was due to Christ also from another source, namely by reason of the hypostatic union with the Word, and on account of the fulness of the beatific vision, or essential felicity of His soul: which would have overflowed unceasingly into His body, and made it impassible, had not, by God's dispensation, that overflow been deferred until the resurrection, as Augustine speaks in his epistle to Dioscorus. And so that glory was properly the glory of Christ. But also the whole glory of the heavenly court was and is the glory of Christ, according as He is God, as lord and giver. If therefore Christ by passion and manifold tribulation ought to enter into His own glory, who are we, that without tribulations and adversities and penitential works we would enter into another's glory? Is the servant greater than his lord (John 13:16), or the member more excellent than the head, or the redeemed more sublime than the Redeemer, or a frail creature than its Creator, the only Son of God? Rightly therefore the Apostle said: "Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:21); and again, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12).

"And beginning at Moses and all the prophets" (Luke 24:27): that is, from the words of Moses He took the beginning, because he was first and principal among those who wrote the books pertaining to the Old Testament; then He alleged the oracles of the other Prophets; *"he expounded to them,"* that is, He made an exposition to these two disciples, *"in all the scriptures, the things that were concerning him,"* that is, the prophecies foretold of Himself He declared and alleged to them, either many in general and many in particular, or all that were to the purpose and sufficient.

(p. 255) "And they drew nigh to the town whither they were going: and he made as though he would go farther" (Luke 24:28). According to Gregory, "made" (finxit) is taken in this place for "composed," so that the sense is that the Lord Jesus composed or disposed Himself to go on further. It can also be said that He feigned, that is, pretended to go farther: because pretence of a deed is lawful and commendable when it is done for a reasonable cause and a good end. Whence Josue also with the children of Israel feigned flight (Josue 8:15). Christ however so pretended for a manifold reason: first, mystically, to intimate that He was as yet far from the minds of those not yet believing; second, that thereby He might give them occasion for a work of mercy, namely of inviting and constraining Him to hospitality; third, that thereby He might teach us to do likewise.

"But they constrained him" (Luke 24:29), that is, very instantly and in a certain manner importunately invited Him, *"saying: Stay with us,"* taking supper and lodging with us, *"because it is towards evening,"* and, as the Greek has, *"the day is now far spent,"* the sun tending to its setting. So let us also daily beseech and invite Christ to deign to abide in the chamber of our heart. For He Himself says in John: "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit" (John 15:5). And as is read in the book of Wisdom: "God loveth none but him that dwelleth with wisdom" (Wisd. 7:28). Finally, spiritually it grows toward evening, because our life tends daily to its setting; and the day is far spent, when the time of meriting begins to fail. Specially also it grows toward evening in the soul, when it draws near to guilt; and the day declines, when it is far removed from grace, that is, when it is disposed to sins. Moreover, as was touched before, from this place and example it is gathered how charitably, instantly, nay even importunately, strangers and the poor are to be called to table and lodging. For this is a work of mercy. Now works of mercy belong most of all to Christians, since the law of Christ is the law of all charity and piety. Of this also is the virtue of hospitality: concerning which in the Old Testament Abraham and Lot are specially commended (Gen. 18:1–8; 19:1–3). Whence also holy Job: "The stranger did not stay without, my door was open to the traveller" (Job 31:32). And Christ in the Gospel testifies that on the day of judgment He will say to the elect: "I was a stranger, and you took me in"; but to the reprobate: "I was a stranger, and you took me not in" (Matt. 25:35, 43). Hence the prince of the Apostles exhorts: "Using hospitality one towards another without murmuring" (1 Pet. 4:9). And

Paul: “Hospitality do not forget; for by this some, having entertained angels, have pleased God” (Heb. 13:2).

“And he went in with them”: in which He gave an example of complying with a reasonable petition, lest any be obstinate in his own sense. *“And it came to pass, whilst he was at table with them”* (Luke 24:30), that is, resting and eating with them, *“he took bread, and blessed, and brake,”* yet He did not convert it into His body, as at the supper, but as is the custom to bless food: in which He instructed us that before refection food and drink be blessed; *“and gave to them”* the bread now broken to eat. *“And their eyes were opened”* (Luke 24:31): not that their bodily eyes had hitherto been closed, but because now they saw Christ otherwise than before. For now they began to behold in His proper and recognisable and determinate shape Him whom before they saw confusedly. So the eyes of our first parents are said to have been opened after the perpetration of sin, as to seeing in another manner (Gen. 3:7); and in the books of the Kings Eliseus is read to have said: “Lord, open the eyes of these” (namely of the Syrians) (4 Kings 6:20). Therefore it is subjoined: *“and they knew him in the breaking of bread,”* as is added a little after (Luke 24:35). For the Saviour had the custom of so taking, blessing, breaking and distributing bread, as is proved from the Gospel: as when He refreshed the multitudes with five barley loaves, and afterwards with seven loaves (Matt. 14:19; 15:36). Some however say that Christ broke the bread with His hands, as if it had been divided with a knife, and by this they knew Him. It can also be understood of the interior eyes, which were opened, *(p. 256)* that is, illuminated, by knowing Christ. *“And he vanished out of their sight,”* that is, suddenly and as it were imperceptibly and most swiftly, by the endowment of agility, He disappeared from their view: whereby He showed that He had a glorified body; but He did not vanish as a phantasm.

“And they said one to the other” (Luke 24:32), those two disciples: *“Was not our heart,”* especially the will, *“burning within us,”* that is, inflamed with desire of the truth, and of Christ, *“whilst he spoke in the way,”* that is, when Christ rebuked and informed us, walking with us, *“and opened to us the scriptures?”* — Here it might be asked whether these disciples on the way were kindled with the fervour of true charity. And it seems that they were: for the Gloss says that their heart was kindled with the fire of the Holy Ghost and the ardour of charity. But the contrary seems, because they were not in faith, therefore not in charity. To this some answer that they were not in charity, nor had the fervour of true charity, and that this ardour was from the Holy Ghost, but not with the Holy Ghost, like servile fear. And if it be objected that of these two disciples Gregory says that those with whom the Truth walked could not be strangers to charity: it is answered that Gregory said this because they had something like charity and its effect. Moreover, if anyone holds this, he will be forced to concede that the women also going to anoint the body of Jesus were outside charity and in a state of damnation.

“And rising up the same hour, they went back to Jerusalem” (Luke 24:33): because by the ardour of charity which they now truly had with faith, they could not rest, and defer so most salutary a message, nor did they feel the labour of the way; and the ardour of love extinguished in them the servile fear of the Jews. *“And they found the eleven gathered together,”* the Apostles, in the upper room, *“and those that were with them,”* namely certain other disciples of Christ out of the seventy-two, or some women disciples of Christ. Thomas was then present, and a little after went out, not believing what he heard; and so he was absent from the appearance which is consequently described, as is read in John (John 20:24). *“Saying: The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon”* (Luke 24:34). This participle, “Saying,” some refer to the verb “found,” as being in the nominative case: and the sense will be that these two disciples, finding the eleven gathered together, said to them that the Lord was truly risen and had appeared to Peter. It seems more apt, however, that this word, “Saying,” be referred to the eleven gathered together, and be of the accusative case: so that the sense is that the two disciples found the eleven gathered, relating among themselves, and also saying to these two, that the Lord was truly risen. And this is proved by two things. First, because these two disciples seem not yet to have known that Christ had appeared to Peter, but Peter reported this to the Apostles. Second, from the Evangelist’s manner of speaking in the present place, because after the aforesaid

words there is straightway subjoined: *"And they told what things were done in the way"* (Luke 24:35). From which it appears that the participle "Saying," and the pronoun "They," are to be referred to different persons: so that these two, when they had heard the words of the Apostles, relating to them the resurrection of Christ and the appearance made to Peter, then they too related to those relating to them, what had been done in the way, namely how Christ joined Himself to them in the way, and questioned, rebuked, taught them, and how they knew Him in the breaking of bread.

Finally, according to the Gloss, among men the Lord Jesus first appeared to Peter: for as among women after the glorious Virgin Mary Magdalene was more devoted to Christ, and more ardent in His love, and more familiar with Him, so among men Peter; likewise, that by showing so great mercy to Simon Peter, He might instruct him to show all mercy to sinners; and again, lest Peter should be swallowed up with overabundant sadness, and lest from the threefold denial he should fall into despair. And it was *(p. 257)* indeed ineffable piety that He showed Himself first and specially to that disciple by whom He had been more dishonourably and more frequently denied: and deservedly St. Peter was afterwards most merciful to others.

Next is described yet another appearance of the Saviour, which is also described by John (John 20:19–23), where some things are had which are here omitted, as here also some are described which are not recited there. For not all wrote all things. *"Now while they were speaking these things"* (Luke 24:36), the Apostles and the two aforesaid disciples, *"Jesus stood in the midst of them,"* that is, suddenly, the doors being shut, He entered and stood in the midst, as He promised: "Where there are two or three gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). Now He stood in the midst literally, that He might be better seen and heard by all, and show Himself to be the same who before the passion was wont to stand in the midst of them; but spiritually, to commend humility, and to show Himself the master of virtues: for virtue consists in the mean ; and He Himself before the passion taught: "I am in the midst of you, as he that serveth" (Luke 22:27). By this also He showed His love toward His disciples.

"And he said to them: Peace be to you" (Luke 24:36), that is, the peace of the heart, which is tranquillity or quiet of mind in God, have now by grace, and have the peace of eternity now by hope, and some foretaste. So, as the Saviour before the passion commanded the disciples: "Into whatsoever house you enter, first say: Peace be to this house" (Luke 10:5); so He Himself after the resurrection, visiting them, first spoke: "Peace be to you." By which it is plain how great a good is true, spiritual and interior peace. *"It is I"*: I am truly your master and Lord, a little while ago crucified, and now truly raised: who according to the divinity am eternally and perfectly, whose being is full, infinite, most simple, and in every manner perfect; who said to Moses: "I am who am" (Exod. 3:14). *"Fear not"* with inordinate fear, as if I would deceive or hurt you.

"But they being troubled" (Luke 24:37) with astonishment, *"and frightened,"* as it is natural to human frailty to shrink from the apparition of the dead, and to be afraid of unwonted visions, and also on account of the danger, *"supposed that they saw a spirit,"* namely the soul of Christ, or some other perhaps deceiving spirit in an assumed body. But it is a wonder how they thought this, when a little before they had said that the Lord was risen indeed: which they heard from the holy women, and from Peter, and from the two disciples also, and, as I think, from James the Less, to whom Christ appeared before this hour. And it must be answered that perhaps they therefore thought they saw a spirit, not a true body, because He had entered the doors being shut: which they perhaps still esteemed impossible to a true and human body. Yet Peter and the two aforesaid disciples, and James the Less, did not doubt of the resurrection of Christ, although they did not yet know the power and endowments of a glorified body.

"And he said to them: Why are you troubled" (Luke 24:38), that is, immoderately disquieted, fearful and stupefied, *"and why do thoughts arise in your hearts,"* erroneous, from the weakness of your own understanding, because you suspect that you see a spirit? *"See my hands and feet"* (Luke 24:39), in which remain the scars of the wounds, to insinuate that I have truly risen in my own body, *"that it is I myself"*, who was dead, and now bodily live and appear; *"handle,"* that you may be certified even by touch, *"and see,"*

with exterior and interior eye, that I have truly risen and appear; *"for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see me to have"*: for a spirit in its own nature is simple. *"And when he had said this, he shewed them his hands and feet"* (Luke 24:40), *"and the scars in them"*: perhaps also His side, and its scar. Now He willed to retain the scars in His body: first, as was touched, to prove the truth of His resurrection; second, as a sign of victory; third, that thereby He might the more inflame the elect and Saints in heaven with His love; fourth, that He might present them to the Father for us; *(p. 258)* fifth, for the greater confusion of the impious and ungrateful.

"But while they yet believed not" (Luke 24:41), that they beheld a true body of Christ, for the cause aforesaid; nor were all equally incredulous, nay some altogether believed, and some not yet completely: therefore it is subjoined, *"and wondered for joy,"* because, as is read in John: "The disciples were glad when they saw the Lord" (John 20:20). In some way, therefore, they believed; but they wondered at so new and unhoped-for a consolation and appearance, at which they vehemently rejoiced; and for joy they wondered that and how so well and excellently it had befallen them, who a little before were so most desolate: because, as Augustine asserts, things that are very joyful are scarcely believed. For the mind secretly fears lest perhaps the opposite should happen, and then a twofold grief be born. So the patriarch Jacob, hearing from his sons that Joseph lived, as one waking from a heavy sleep, yet did not believe them (Gen. 45:26). He said, not asking from ignorance, but observing the customary manner of speaking, that He might be the more recognised: *"Have you here any thing to eat?"* (Luke 24:41), that not only by sight, touch and hearing, but also by taste I may demonstrate to you my resurrection. *"And they offered him a piece of a broiled fish,"* (Luke 24:42) of which perhaps they had already eaten a part, *"and a honeycomb." "And when he had eaten before them,"* (Luke 24:43) *"taking the remains, he gave to them"*, that they might eat with Him. Nor is it doubtful that He also drank with them, according as the prince of the Apostles said: "We did eat and drink with him, after he arose again from the dead" (Acts 10:41). Now Christ ate, yet nothing was converted into His body; but by power He consumed the food and drink, as the burning ray of the sun consumes water.

"And he said to them: These are the words which I spoke to you" (Luke 24:44), (when I was yet with you), that is, these effects, namely the appearances and proofs of my resurrection, are the things signified by the words which I foretold to you, when as yet before my passion I conversed among you passible, from which state I am now distant by the immortality of the flesh and the state of full beatitude. So then "word" here is taken for the thing signified by the word, as in the books of the Kings Ezechias says: "There was not any word in my house, nor in all my dominion, that Ezechias shewed them not," namely the messengers of the king of Babylon (4 Kings 20:13). *"That all things must needs be fulfilled which are written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me."* In the same manner they must needs be fulfilled in which it was necessary that Christ should suffer: which, how it behoved, has already been said. So then it was necessary that they be fulfilled by a conditioned necessity, not absolute, that is, by the necessity of the consequence, not of the consequent, or in the composed sense, not in the divided sense; not by necessity of coercion of free will, but of the pre-ordination of the divine decree. Now in the law of Moses many things were written of Christ: as what God said to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob: "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 22:18; 28:14; 26:4); and, "The Lord will raise up to you a prophet," etc. (Deut. 18:15). Moreover, although the Psalmist was a prophet, yet the book of Psalms is properly counted among the Hagiographa: and so now the Psalms are distinguished from the Scripture of the Prophets.

"Then he opened their understanding" (Luke 24:45), that is, illuminated their intellect, *"that they might understand the scriptures."* Yet He did not now enlighten them so perfectly as on the day of Pentecost, when He infused into them the most limpid understanding of the Scriptures; but now He illuminated them in some measure, because, as John has: "He breathed on them; and he said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost" (John 20:22).

“And he said to them: Thus it is written” (Luke 24:46), that is, thus it was prophesied of my passion and resurrection in Daniel, Osee, the Psalms, and the other Prophets. For it is written: “After sixty-two weeks Christ shall be slain” (Dan. 9:26). And Osee says: “He will revive us after two days: on the third day he will raise us up” (Osee 6:3). Sophonias also: “Expect me, saith the Lord, in the day of my resurrection that is to come” (Soph. 3:8). And in the Psalm: “But thou, O Lord, have mercy on me, and raise me up again; and I will requite them” (Ps. 40:11). *“And thus it behoved Christ” (p. 259) “to suffer”* for the salvation of the world, because that was the more fitting mode of human redemption, and God so pre-ordained, *“and to rise again from the dead the third day”*, since it was not fitting that the resurrection of Christ be deferred beyond the third day, *“and that penance and remission of sins should be preached in his name, unto all nations”* (Luke 24:47), that is, to all men of the world, Jews and Gentiles, that they should be evangelised, that in the faith of Christ they may do penance, and by His grace trust that they can receive remission of their sins, by the virtue and merit of His passion, through His sacraments, first in Baptism, then in the sacrament of Penance, which is the second plank after shipwreck. Hence in the Acts Paul says to the Jews: “Through him forgiveness of sins is preached to you, and from all the things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses” (Acts 13:38–39). And again speaking to the Gentiles: “God, indeed, having winked at the times of this ignorance, now declareth unto men that all should every where do penance, because he hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world in equity, by the man whom he hath appointed, giving faith to all, by raising him up from the dead” (Acts 17:30–31). And Peter again speaks: “To you first God, raising up his Son, hath sent him to bless you; that every one may convert himself from his wickedness” (Acts 3:26); and likewise, “Neither is there any other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

Of this conversion of all nations to Christ, and the diffusion of the Catholic Church throughout the whole world, the Prophets foretold most copiously and most openly. For it is written in the Psalms: “All the ends of the earth shall remember and shall be converted to the Lord; and all the kindreds of the Gentiles shall adore in his sight” (Ps. 21:28); and likewise, “In him shall all the tribes of the earth be blessed; all nations shall magnify him” (Ps. 71:17). Whence also through Isaias Christ speaks: “I am glorified in the eyes of the Lord. And he said: It is a small thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to convert the dregs of Israel. Behold I have given thee to be the light of the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation even to the farthest part of the earth” (Isa. 49:5–6). And in Daniel it is read: “All peoples, tribes and tongues shall serve him” (Dan. 7:14). All of which has been fulfilled: for although now great and very wide kingdoms have collapsed to the most stupid law of the filthy Mahomet and to other perfidies, yet for a long time the Christian religion flourished in them. None the less before the end of the world the foretold things will be more fully fulfilled. Moreover this preaching was made by the Apostles of Christ, *“beginning at Jerusalem”*: because after the ascension of Christ and the sending of the Holy Ghost, the Apostles began to preach in Jerusalem, as was foretold through Isaias: “Out of Sion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem” (Isa. 2:3); and in the Psalm: “The Lord will send forth the sceptre of thy power out of Sion” (Ps. 109:2). For Jerusalem was the metropolis of the Jews, to whom Christ was specially sent, and of whose seed He was born (Matt. 15:24); and with many gifts was that people adorned by God. Therefore it was fitting that it should be evangelised first, as Paul speaks to them: “To you it behoved us first to speak the word of God” (Acts 13:46). Jerusalem also was a holy city, in which was the temple of God, and His worship flourished, and the study of the law and the Prophets often bloomed, which also Christ chose beforehand for His passion. Therefore it was fitting that the evangelical preaching after the passion of Christ should be begun there, that the unbelieving Jews also should be rendered inexcusable. In which also the immensity of the divine piety is declared, that He willed the way of salvation to be preached first to those who procured the death of the Saviour, and slew the Son of God.

“And you are witnesses of these things” (Luke 24:48), namely of my resurrection and my other mysteries, who also before my passion were conversant with me, and are in many ways certified of my resurrection.

"And I send the promise of my Father upon you" (Luke 24:49), that is, the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father, whom the Father also through the Prophets and me promised that He would give you, I will send and infuse into your hearts: as we know was done on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1–4). For Christ frequently promised this in the discourse after the Supper, according to that of John: *(p. 260)* "When the Paraclete cometh, whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceedeth from the Father, he shall give testimony of me. And you shall give testimony, because you are with me from the beginning" (John 15:26–27). And it is certain that the authority of sending and giving the Holy Spirit would in no way belong to Christ, unless the Spirit proceeded from Him , and were true God.

"But stay you in the city" (Luke 24:49), Jerusalem, in the place where I speak these things to you, where I made the last Supper with you, *"till you be endued with power from on high,"* that is, until the hour when you shall receive the Holy Spirit, who shall clothe your hearts with every perfection of grace and virtues, from the heavenly throne and by the decree of the eternal Father, and so shall make you fit to preach and testify of me, giving you wisdom, constancy and fervour, knowledge of all tongues, skill in the whole Scripture, most ardent charity, insuperable strength of spiritual fortitude. Hence in the Acts Christ is read to have said to the disciples: "You shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and even to the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Yet it is not to be understood that Christ commanded the disciples to sit continually in the city, because after these words they went out at times for reasonable causes, namely to fish (John 21:3); but the intention of Christ was that they should not depart far, nor be long absent, but should frequently, or at opportune hours, remain there, especially after the ascension, and by prayers, fasts and other exercises of devotion prepare themselves for the full reception of the Holy Spirit. Hence it is written in the Acts: "Eating together with them, he commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but should wait for the promise of the Father, which you have heard (saith he) by my mouth" (Acts 1:4). Whence now it is subjoined:

"And he led them out as far as Bethania" (Luke 24:50). For on the day of the ascension He appeared to them twice: first, in Jerusalem; and then He commanded them to go to the mount of Olivet, which is near Bethania, where He appeared to them again: therefore it is said that He led them out as far as Bethania, although He did not go bodily with them, and because the Mount of Olives is near Bethania. And so He led them to Bethania, that is, on the way toward Bethania, as far as the aforesaid mount. *"And lifting up his hands, he blessed them"*: perhaps forming the sign of the cross over them, and uttering some words of blessing, that they themselves also might so do to others: for prelates also, when departing from their subjects, ought so to do. Nay, since the active blessing of God is the conferring of the gifts of His grace and the multiplying of them, Christ, as man, lifting up His hands and speaking words of blessing, as God infused into their hearts increases of grace and virtues. *"And it came to pass, whilst he blessed them, he departed from them"* (Luke 24:51), that is, began to be raised bodily in the air, *"and was carried up,"* that is, by His own power He ascended, *"into heaven"*: which He did principally by divine power, and likewise by the endowment of agility. Whence in the Acts it is had: "When he had said these things, while they looked on, he was raised up: and a cloud received him out of their sight" (Acts 1:9).

"And they adoring" (Luke 24:52) Christ as true God, as Thomas also, convinced by the evidence of truth, said: "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28), *"went back into Jerusalem,"* into the upper room which had been near the temple, *"with great joy,"* as well for the glorious ascension, felicity and glory of Christ their beloved master and sweetest Lord, as for the benefits of God given and to be given to them, and the conversion of the whole world to Christ at hand. For two angels also appeared to them as Christ ascended, saying: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand you looking up to heaven?" etc. (Acts 1:11).

"And they were always in the temple" (Luke 24:53), that is, at every opportune time, especially after the reception of the Holy Spirit: because until that time they lay hid in the house rather than showed themselves

in the temple, as not yet fully strengthened from above; *"praising and blessing God,"* praising Him for His benefits and promises, and *(p. 261)* for His own immense goodness, perfection and beatitude, blessing Him continually, as the Prophet says: "I will bless the Lord at all times" (Ps. 33:2). Hence it is read in the Acts: "And continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they took their meat with gladness, praising God" (Acts 2:46–47). And again: "And every day they ceased not in the temple, and from house to house, to teach and preach Christ Jesus" (Acts 5:42). All of which Luke recites as having happened after the reception of the Holy Spirit in visible sign. Theophilus, however, says that they also between the Ascension and Pentecost entered the temple with others for the sake of prayer and divine praise, because from the ascension of the Saviour they were in some measure strengthened, and raised up from their former fear. Yet what was first said is judged truer, and more in accord with what is written in the Acts of the Apostles. Finally, how the aforesaid arguments of the Lord's resurrection sufficiently prove the resurrection of Christ, Thomas teaches masterfully in the third part of his Summa.

Let us therefore also learn, with the holy Apostles, to remain always and with one accord in the temple, by prayers, fasts and other virtuous exercises to prepare ourselves for the daily increase of grace and virtues, continually to bless and praise the Almighty, who is God above all, exalted and blessed. Amen.

End of the Commentaries on the Gospel according to Luke.